

## HAYDOCK CATHOLIC BIBLE COMMENTARY

This Catholic commentary on the New Testament, following the Douay-Rheims Bible text, was originally compiled by Catholic priest and biblical scholar Rev. George Leo Haydock (1774-1849). This transcription is based on Haydock's notes as they appear in the 1859 edition of *Haydock's Catholic Family Bible and Commentary* printed by Edward Dunigan and Brother, New York, New York. For a detailed description of the changes made to the form and content of the original commentary text for this transcription see the "Transcriber's Notes" webpage at: <http://haydock1859.tripod.com>.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

The books of the New Testament:

**MATTHEW**  
**MARK**  
**LUKE**  
**JOHN**  
**ACTS**  
**ROMANS**  
**1 CORINTHIANS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS**  
**GALATIANS**  
**EPHESIANS**  
**PHILIPPIANS**  
**COLOSSIANS**  
**1 THESSALONIANS**  
**2 THESSALONIANS**  
**1 TIMOTHY**  
**2 TIMOTHY**  
**TITUS**  
**PHILEMON**  
**HEBREWS**  
**JAMES**  
**1 PETER**  
**2 PETER**  
**1 JOHN**  
**2 JOHN**  
**3 JOHN**  
**JUDE**  
**APOCALYPSE**

Hint: To quickly locate the commentary for a particular chapter of the New Testament, use your word processor's "Find" function (on the "Edit" menu) and enter the book title from the above list followed by the chapter number at the "Find what?" prompt. For example, entering **2 PETER 3** at the "Find what?" prompt, checking the "Match case" option, and then clicking on the "Find next" button should take you right to the commentary on the third chapter of the Second Epistle of St. Peter.

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**MATTHEW**

THE  
HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST,  
ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION.

THIS and other titles, with the names of those that wrote the Gospels, are not the words of the Evangelists themselves. The Scripture itself nowhere teacheth us, which books or writings are to be received as true and canonical Scriptures. It is only by the channel of *unwritten traditions*, and by the testimony and authority of the Catholic Church, that we know and believe that this gospel, for example of St. Matthew, with all contained in it, and that the other books and parts of the Old or New Testament, are of divine authority, or written by divine inspiration; which made St. Augustine say, *I should not believe the gospel, were I not moved thereunto by the authority of the Catholic Church: Ego evangelio non crederem, nisi me Ecclesiæ Catholicæ commoveret auctoritas.* (*Lib. con. Epist. Manichæi, quam vocant fundamenti.* tom. viii. chap. 5, p. 154. A. Ed. Ben.) (Witham)

S. MATTHEW, author of the gospel that we have under his name, was a Galilean, the son of Alpheus, a Jew, and a tax-gatherer; he was known also by the name of Levi. His vocation happened in the second year of the public ministry of Christ; who, soon after forming the college of his apostles, adopted him into that holy family of the spiritual princes and founders of his Church. Before his departure from Judea, to preach the gospel to distant countries, he yielded to the solicitations of the faithful; and about the eighth year after our Saviour's resurrection, the forty-first of the vulgar era, he began to write his *gospel*: i.e., the good tidings of salvation to man, through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Of the hagiographers, St. Matthew was the first in the New, as Moses was the first in the Old Testament. And as Moses opened his work with the generation of the heavens and the earth, so St. Matthew begins with the generation of Him, who, in the fullness of time, took upon himself our human nature, to free us from the curse we had brought upon ourselves, and under which the whole creation was groaning. (Haydock) ---This holy apostle, after having reaped a great harvest of souls in Judea, preached the faith to the barbarous nations of the East. He was much devoted to heavenly contemplation, and led an austere life; for he eat no flesh, satisfying nature with herbs, roots, seeds, and berries, as Clement of Alexandria assures us, *Pædag.* lib. ii. chap. 1. St. Ambrose says, that God opened to him the country of the Persians. Rufinus and Socrates tell us, that he carried the gospel into Ethiopia, meaning probably the southern or eastern parts of Asia. St. Paulinus informs us, that he ended his course in Parthia; and Venantius Fortunatus says, by martyrdom.---See *Butler's Saints' Lives*, Sept. 21st.

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**MATTHEW 1**

**Ver. 1.** The first English Testament, divided into verses, was that printed at Geneva, by Conrad Badius, in the year 1557. (Haydock) --- "The book of the Generation," is not referred to the whole gospel, but to the beginning, as in Genesis v. "This is the book of the generation of Adam." (Estius) --- *The book of the[1] Generation*, i.e. the generation or pedigree, which is here set down in the first sixteen verses. In the style of the Scriptures any short schedule or roll is called a book, as the bill or short writing of a divorce, is called a little book. (Matthew v. 31.) (Witham) --- Jesus, in Hebrew *Jesuah*, is the proper name of Him, who was born of the Virgin Mary, who was also the Son of God, "a name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." (Luke ii.) It signifies *Saviour*, "because he was to save his people from their sins." He was also called *Christ*, which signifies anointed; for though in the Old Testament kings, priests, and prophets were *anointed*, and though many were then designated by the name of *Jesus*, properly, and by an invariable custom of the New Testament, that person is exclusively signified, who, on account of the union of the divine and human nature, was anointed by the Holy Ghost *above all his fellows*. (Psalm xlv. and Hebrews i. 9.) Whence in this turn the hypostasis is understood, in which the two

natures, the divine and human meet. (Estius)

**Ver. 2.** He begins with Abraham, the father of the faithful, because to him the promise was made, that all generations should be blessed in his seed. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 3.** See Genesis xxxviii, ver. 6. & dein. and Zera of Thamar, her daughter-in-law. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** See Josue. chap. ii. & dein. We nowhere else find the marriage of Salmon with Rahab; but this event might have been known by tradition, the truth of which the divinely inspired evangelist here confirms. (Bible de Vence) Rahab was a debauched woman, preserved in the pillage of Jericho, where she had been born. In this genealogy only four women are mentioned, of which two are Gentiles, and two adulteresses. Here the greatest sinners may find grounds for confidence in the mercies of Jesus Christ, and hopes of pardon, when they observed how the Lord of life and glory, to cure our pride, not only humbled himself by taking upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, but by deriving his descent from sinners, and inspiring the holy evangelist to record the same to all posterity. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** Extract from St. John Chrysostom's first Homil. upon the first chapter of St. Matthew: "How, you say, does it appear that Christ descended from David? For if he be born not of man, but of a virgin, concerning whose genealogy nothing is said, how shall we know that he is of the family of David? We have here two difficulties to explain. Why is the genealogy of the Virgin passed over in silence, and why is Joseph's mentioned, as Christ did not descend from him? ... How shall we know that the Virgin is descended from David? Hear the words of the Almighty addressed to the archangel Gabriel: 'Go to a virgin espoused to a man, whose name is Joseph, of the house and family of David.' What could you wish plainer that this, when you hear that the Virgin is of the family of David? Hence it also appears that Joseph was of the same house, for there was a law which commanded them not to marry any one but of the same tribe. ... But whether these words, *of the house and family of David*, be applied to the Virgin or to Joseph, the argument is equally strong. For if he was of the family of David, he did not take a wife but out of the same tribe, from which he had descended. Perhaps you will say he transgressed this law. But the evangelist has prevented such a suspicion, by testifying beforehand that Joseph was a just man. Beware how you attach crime to him, whose virtue is thus publicly acknowledged. ... It was not the custom among the Hebrews to keep the genealogies of women. The evangelist conformed to this custom, that he might not at the very beginning of the gospel offend by transgressing ancient rites, and introducing novelty."

**Ver. 8.** *Joram begot Ozias*, three generations are omitted, as we find 2 Paralipomenon xxii; for there, *Joram begot Ochozias, and Ochozias begot Joas, and Joas begot Amazias, and Amazias begot Ozias*. This omission is not material, the design of St. Matthew being only to shew the Jews that Jesus, their Messiah, was of the family of David; and he is equally the son, or the descendent of David, though the said three generations be left out: for Ozias may be called the son of Joram, though Joram was his great-grandfather. (Witham) --- It is thought that St. Matthew omitted these three kings, Ochozias, Joas, and Amazias, to preserve the distribution of his genealogy into three parts, each of fourteen generations; and, perhaps, also on account of their impiety, or rather on account of the sentence pronounced against the house of Achab, from which they were descended by their mother Athalia. (3 Kings xxi. 21.) (Calmet)

**Ver. 11.** *Josias begot[2] Jechonias, &c.* The genealogy of Christ, as it appears by the 17th verse, is divided by the evangelist into thrice fourteen generations, and so it is to contain 42 persons. The first class of fourteen begins with Abraham, and ends with David. The second class begins with Solomon, and ends with Jechonias. The third class is supposed to begin with Salathiel, and to end, says St. Jerome, with our Saviour Christ. But thus we shall only find in the third class thirteen generations, and in all only forty-one, instead of forty-two. Not to mention in these short notes other interpretations, the conjecture of St. Epiphanius seems to most probable, that we are to understand two Jechonias's, the father and the son, who had the same name. So that the true reading should be, *Josias begot Jechonias and his brethren, and Jechonias begot Jechonias*,

and Jechonias begot Salathiel. Thus Jechonias named in the 12th verse is not the same, but the son of him that was named in the 11th verse; and from Jechonias the son, begins the third class, and so Christ himself will be the last or 14th person in that last series or class. There are several difficulties about reconciling this genealogy in St. Matthew with that in St. Luke, chap. iii. But without insisting on all the particulars in these short notes, I hope it may suffice to take notice, that no one can reasonably doubt that both the evangelists copied out the genealogical tables, as they were then extant, and carefully preserved by the Jews, and especially by those families that were of the tribe of Juda, and of the family of David, of which the Messiah was to be born. For if the evangelists had neither falsified, or made any mistake as to these genealogies, the Jews undoubtedly would have objected this against their gospels, which they never did. (Witham) --- The difficulties here are: 1. Why does St. Matthew give the genealogy of Joseph and not of Mary? 2. How is it inferred that Jesus is descended from David and Solomon, because Joseph is the son of David? 3. How can Joseph have two men for his father, Jacob of the race of Solomon, and Heli of the race of Nathan? To the 1st it is generally answered, that it was not customary with the Jews to draw out the genealogies of women; to the 2nd, that Jesus being the son of Joseph, either by adoption, or simply as the son of Mary his wife, he entered by that circumstance into all the rights of the family of Joseph; moreover, Mary was of the same tribe and family of Joseph, and thus the heir of the branch of Solomon marrying with the heiress of the branch of Nathan, the rights of the two families united in Joseph and Mary, were transmitted through them to Jesus, their son and heir; to the 3rd, that Jacob was the father of Joseph according to nature, and Heli his father according to law; or that Joseph was the son of the latter by adoption, and of the former by nature. (Haydock) --- *In the transmigration*, [3] transportation to *Babylon*; i.e. about the time the Jews were carried away captives to Babylon. For Josias died before their transportation. See 4 Kings xxiv. (Witham) --- Some think we are to read: Josias begot Joakim and his brethren; and Joakim begot *Joachim*, or Jechonias. Jechonias was son to Joakim, and grandson to Josias. The brothers of Jechonias are not known, but those of Joakim are known. (1 Paralipomenon iii. 15, 16.) Besides this reading give the number 14. (Haydock) --- St. Jerome says that Jechonias, the son of Josias, is a different person from Jechonias who begot Salathiel, for the latter was son of the former; see Paralipomenon iii. where it is said that Zorobabel was son of Phadaia; but Phadaia is the same as Salatheil. (Estius) --- Mat. Polus affirms that every one the least conversant in Jewish story, must know that several genealogies which appear to contradict each other, do not in reality. (*Synop. Crit.* ver. 4, p. 12.)

**Ver. 12.** By the text of the first book of Paralipomenon iii. 17, 19. it appears that Zorobabel was grandson to Salathiel. In comparing the present genealogy with that of St. Luke, (chap. iii.) we find that in this last part St. Matthew has suppressed many generations, to bring the list to the number 14; for there are a greater number from Zorobabel to Jesus Christ in St. Luke, but in a different branch. (Bible de Vence) --- The evangelist was well aware that the suppressed names could be easily supplied from the Jewish records; and that every person could reply most satisfactorily to any objection on that head, who was the least acquainted with the Jewish tables. In the first fourteen of these generations, we see the family of David rising to the throne; in the second, a race of kings descending from him; in the last, the royal family descending to a poor carpenter. Yet, when every human appearance of restoring the kingdom to David's house was at an end, Jesus arose to sit on his father's throne, (Luke i. 32.) and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Haydock)

**Ver. 16.** *The husband of Mary.* The evangelist gives us rather the pedigree of St. *Joseph*, than that of the blessed Virgin, to conform to the custom of the *Hebrews*, who in their genealogies took no notice of women: but as they near akin, the pedigree of the one sheweth that of the other. (Challoner) --- *Joseph the husband of Mary.* [3] So he is again called, ver. 19: but in ver. 18, we read, *when Mary his mother was espoused to Joseph*. These different expressions of being *husband*, and being *espoused*, have occasioned different interpretations. Some think that Joseph and the blessed Virgin were truly married at the time of Christ's conception: others, that they were only then espoused, or engaged by a promise to marry afterwards. St. Jerome says, when you hear the name of husband, do not from thence imagine them to be married, but remember the custom of the Scriptures, according to which, they who are espoused only, are

called husband and wives. (Witham) --- That Jesus, who is called Christ, was of the seed of David, is also evident, as St. Augustine affirms from various texts of the holy Scriptures, as in the epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul, (chap. i.) speaking of the Son of God, says, *who was made to Him of the seed of David, according to the flesh*. See also the promises made to David, 2 Kings vii. Psalms lxxxviii. and cxxxi. and spoken of Solomon, as a figure of Jesus Christ. (Estius)

**Ver. 18.** The account of the birth of Jesus Christ follows his genealogy. From these words, "before they came together," Helvidius and others have started objections, which have been answered long ago by St. Jerome, where he shews in many examples from Scripture, that the words *before* and *until* do not signify what happened afterwards; for that point is left indefinite, but only what was done before, or not done. Thus when it is said, *Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool*, Psalm cix, by no means signifies, that after the subjection of his enemies, the Son of God is no longer to sit at the right hand of his Father. In common conversation, when we say that a man died before he reached his 30th year, we do not mean that he afterwards attained it. Or, should we say that Helvidius died before he did penance, we cannot mean that he afterwards did penance: the same conclusion should be deduced from the words, "before they came together," the end being accomplished by the power of the operation of the Holy Ghost, without their going together. If we should advance, that such a man was cured before he went to a physician, the natural inference would be, that he did not go to a physician at all. Thus also in the language of Scripture, the word *first-begotten* does not mean after whom others were born, but before whom no one was born, where there were further issue or not. And the reason is, because the law required that a sacrifice should be offered for the first-born, and that he should be redeemed very soon after his birth; nor did it allow the parents to wait and see if any other son should be born. (Estius) --- True and perfect marriage, and continual living in the same, without knowing each other. (St. Augustine, lib. ii. Consen. Evang. chap. i.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 19.** And Joseph her husband, knowing her strict virtue, was surprised at this her pregnancy, but "being a just man," and not willing to expose her, by denouncing her, or giving her a bill of divorce, he had a mind to dismiss her privately, committing the cause to God. Let us learn from Joseph to be ever tender of our neighbour's reputation, and never to entertain any injurious thoughts, or any suspicions to his prejudice. (Haydock)

**Ver. 20.** *Fear not to take*, &c. i.e., fear not to marry her, if we suppose them not yet married, or if married already, the sense is, fear not to keep and remain with thy chaste wife; lay aside all thoughts of dismissing and leaving her. (Witham) --- As the incarnation of the Son of God was effected by the whole blessed Trinity, it may be asked why this operation is peculiarly attributed to the Holy Ghost, not only here, but in Luke ii., and in the apostles' creed? The answer is, because as power is attributed to the Father, wisdom to the Son, so goodness is attributed to the Holy Ghost, and the gifts of grace which proceed from it. (Estius in different location)

**Ver. 21.** *Jesus . . . he shall save*, &c. The characteristic name of Saviour was peculiar to the Messiah, by which he was distinguished, as well as by the adorable name of Jesus. The expectations of both Jew and Gentile looked forward to a saviour. St. Augustine, in the 18th book, 23d chapter, de Civitate Dei, introduces a curious anecdote. He mentions there, that he received from the eloquent and learned Proconsul Flactianus, a book containing in Greek the verses of one of the Sybils, which related to the coming of Christ. The substance of them is much the same as occurs in the prophecies of Isaiah, from which Virgil has likewise copied into his Pollio, many of the sublime thoughts which we find in that beautiful eclogue. It is remarkable that of the initials of these verses, St. Augustine had formed an acrostic to the following import, *Greek: Iesous Christos Deos huios soter*; that is, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Saviour. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22.** The Greeks in general, after St. John Chrysostom, look upon this as a continuation of the angel's speech to St. Joseph. The other Fathers and commentators think it a reflection of the evangelist.

**Ver. 23.** *Behold a virgin*, [5] &c. The Jews sometimes objected, as we see in St. Justin's dialogue with Tryphon, that the Hebrew word *alma*, in the prophet Isaias, signified no more than a *young woman*. But St. Jerome tells us that *alma* signifies a *virgin kept close up*. Let the Jews, says he, shew me any place in which the Hebrew word *alma*, is applied to any one that is not a virgin, and I will own my ignorance. Besides the very circumstances in the text of the prophet, are more than a sufficient confutation of this Jewish exposition; for there a *sign*, or miracle, is promised to Achaz; and what miracle would it be for a young woman to have a child, when she had ceased to be a virgin? (Witham) --- How happens it that nowhere in the gospels, or in any other part, do we find Christ called *Emmanuel*? I answer, that in the Greek expression the name is given for the thing signified; and the meaning is: He shall be a true Emmanuel, i.e. a God with us, true God and true man. (Estius) --- The text says, *they shall call*, i.e. all men shall look upon Him as an Emmanuel. Again, *his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty, the Prince of peace*, &c. i.e. He shall be all these, not so much nominally, as really and in effect. (Haydock)

**Ver. 24.** The heretic Helvidius argues from this text, and from what we read in the gospel of Christ's brethren, that Christ had brothers, and Mary other sons. But it is evident that in the style of the Scriptures, they who were no more than cousins were called brothers and sisters. (Haydock)

**Ver. 25.** See note on ver. 18. --- St. Jerome assures us, that St. Joseph always preserved his virginal chastity. It is "of faith" that nothing contrary thereto ever took place with his chaste spouse, the blessed Virgin Mary. St. Joseph was given her by heaven to be the protector of her chastity, to secure her from calumnies in the birth of the Son of God, to assist her in her flight into Egypt, &c. &c. We cannot sufficiently admire the modest reserve of both parties. Mary does not venture to explain to her troubled husband the mystery of her pregnancy; and Joseph is afraid of mentioning his uneasiness and doubts, for fear of troubling her delicate mind and wounding her exquisite feelings. So great modesty, reserve and silence, are sure to be approved by heaven; and God sends an angel to Joseph in his sleep, to dissipate his doubts, and to expound to him the mystery of the incarnation. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 1. Liber Generationis. *Greek: Biblos geneseos*. So Genesis ver. 1. Hic est liber generationis Adam, *Greek: Biblos*, &c.

[2] Ver. 11. See St. Epiphanius hæ. vi. pag. 21. Edit. Petav. *Greek: epeide tines* &c.

[3] Ver. 11. In transmigracione, *Greek: epi tes metoikesias*, i.e. circa tempus transmigracionis.

[4] Ver. 16. Joseph virum Mariæ, *Greek: ton anera Marias*. And Ver. 19, vir ejus, *Greek: aner autes*. But Ver. 18, *Greek: mnesteutheises*, desponsata, *Greek: mnesteuomai*, is not properly the same as *Greek: gamein*.

[5] Ver. 23. Ecce Virgo, *Greek: idou e parthenos*. So is it read, not only here in St. Matthew but in the Septuagint Isaias vii. St. Hier. [St. Jerome] lib. 1. Cont. Jovin. tom. iv. parte 2. pag. 174. Ostendant mihi, ubi hoc Verbo (Alma) appellantur et nuptæ, et imperitiam confitebor.

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## MATTHEW 2

**Ver. 1.** King Herod the Great, surnamed Ascalonite, was a foreigner, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion. St. Jerome. --- this city is called Bethlehem of Juda, to distinguish it from another Bethlehem, which was situated in the division of the tribe of Zabulon. (Haydock) *Wise men*. [1] Both the Latin and Greek text may signify wise philosophers and astronomers, which is the common exposition. The same word is also many times taken for a magician or soothsayer, as it

is applied to Simon, (Acts viii. 9,) and to Elymas, Acts xiii, ver. 6. and 8. Some ancient interpreters think these very men might have been magicians before their conversion. See a Lapide, &c. --- *From the east*. Some say from Arabia, others from Chaldea, others from Persia. Divers interpreters speak of them as if they had been kings, princes, or lords of some small territories. See Baron. an. i. sect. 29. Tillemont, note 12. on Jesus Christ. The number of these wise men is uncertain. St. Leo, in his sermons on the Epiphany, speaks of them as if they had been three, perhaps on account of their three-fold offerings. What is mentioned in later writers as their names, is still of less authority, as Bol[andus] observed. There are also very different opinions as to the time that the star appeared to these wise men, whether before Christ's birth, or about the very time he was born, which seems more probable. The interpreters are again divided as to the year, and day of the year, when they arrived at Bethlehem, and adored the Saviour of the world. Some think not till two years after Christ's birth. See St. Epiphanius hæc. xxx. num. 29. p. 134. And St. Jerome puts the massacre of the Holy Innocents about that time in his chronicle. But taking it for granted that the wise men came to Jerusalem and to Bethlehem the same year that Christ was born, it is not certain on what day of the year they adored him at Bethlehem. It is true the Latin Church, ever since the 4th or 5th age, has kept the feast of the Epiphany on the 6th day of January. But when it is said in that day's office, *This day a star led the wise men to the manger*, it may bear this sense only, this day we keep the remembrance of it; especially since we read in a sermon of St. Maximus (appointed to be read in the Roman Breviary on the 5th day within the octave of the Epiphany) these words: *What happened on this day, he knows that wrought it; whatever it was, we cannot doubt it was done in favour of us*. The wise men, by the 11th verse, found Jesus at Bethlehem, where his blessed mother was to remain forty days, till the time of her purification was expired. And it seems most probable that the wise men came to Bethlehem about that time, rather than within thirteen days after Christ's birth: for had they come so soon after Christ was born, and been directed to go, and make diligent inquiry at Bethlehem, which was not above five miles from Jerusalem, it can scarcely be imagined that so suspicious and jealous a prince as Herod was, would have waited almost a month for their return without searching for the new-born king. But it is likely, being again alarmed by what happened when Jesus was presented in the temple at his mother's purification, he therefore gave those cruel and barbarous orders for the massacre of those innocent infants. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *We have seen his star*. They knew it to be *his star*, either by some prophecy among them, or by divine revelation. This star was some lightsome body in the air, which at last seemed to point to them the very place where the world's Redeemer lay. We know not whether it guided them during the whole course of their journey from the *East to Jerusalem*. We read nothing more in the gospel, but that it appeared to *them in the East*, and that they saw it again, upon their leaving Jerusalem to go to Bethlehem. (Witham) --- the wise men, in the Syrian tongue maguseha, are supposed to have come from Stony Arabia, near the Euphrates. They might have preserved in this country the remembrance of the prophecy of Balaam, which had announced the coming of the Messiah by the emblem of a star, (Numbers xxiv. 17.) which was to arise from Jacob. The star which appeared then, was the symbol of the star which Balaam had predicted. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** Through fear of losing his kingdom, he being a foreigner, and had obtained the sovereignty by violence. But why was all Jerusalem to be alarmed at the news of a king so long and so ardently expected? 1. Because the people, well acquainted with the cruelty of Herod, feared a more galling slavery. 2. Through apprehension of riots, and of a revolution, which could not be effected without bloodshed, as the Romans had such strong hold. They had also been so worn down with perpetual wars, that the most miserable servitude, with peace, was to the Jews an object rather of envy than deprecation. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *And thou Bethlehem, &c.* This was a clear prophecy concerning the Messiah, foretold by Micheas; (chap. v. 2,) yet the words which we read in the evangelist are not quite the same as we find in the prophet, either according to the Hebrew or to the Greek text of the Sept. The chief difference is, that in the prophet we read: *And thou Bethlehem art little*; but in the evangelist, *thou art not the least*. Some answer that the words of the prophet are to be expounded by way of an

interrogation, *art thou little?* It is certain the following words, both in the prophet and in the gospel, *out of thee shall come forth a leader or a captain*, &c. shew that the meaning is, *thou art not little*. St. Jerome's observation seems to clear this point: he tells us, that the Jewish priests, who were consulted, gave Herod the sense, and not the very words of the prophet; and the evangelist, as an historian, relates to us the words of these priests to Herod, not the very words of the prophet. (Witham) --- The testimony of the chief priests proves that this text of Micheas was even then generally applied to the Messias, and that to Him alone it must be referred according to the letter. (Haydock)

**Ver. 11.** *And going into the house.* Several of the Fathers in their homilies, represent the wise men adoring Jesus in the *stable*, and in the *manger*. yet others, with St. John Chrysostom take notice, that before their arrival, Jesus might be removed into some little house in Bethlehem. --- Prostrating themselves, or *falling down*, they adored him, not with a civil worship only, but enlightened by divine inspiration, the worshipped and adored him as their Saviour and their God. --- *Gold, frankincense, and myrrh*. [2] Divers of the ancient Fathers take notice of the mystical signification of these offerings; that by *gold* was signified the tribute they paid to him, as to their king; by *incense*, that he was God; and by *myrrh*, (with which dead bodies used to be embalmed) that now he was also become a mortal man. See St. Ambrose lib. 2. in Luc. chap. ii.; St. Gregory &c. (Witham) --- The Church sings, "*hodie stella Magos duxit ad præsepium*," but it is not probable that the blessed Virgin should remain so long in the open stable, and the less so, because the multitude, who hindered Joseph from finding accommodations either among his relatives or in the public caravansaries, had returned to their own homes. (Estius) --- *They adored Him*. Therefore, in the eucharist also, Christ is to be adored. For it is of no consequence under what appearance he is pleased to give himself to us, whether that of a perfect man, a speechless child as here, or under the appearance of bread and wine, provided it is evident that he is there; for in whatever manner or place he appears, he is true God, and for that alone he is to be adored. Frivolous is the objection of certain sectarists, that Christ does not give himself to us in the blessed eucharist to be adored, but to be eaten. For Christ was not in Bethlehem, nor did he descend from heaven to be adored: He tells us in the xxth chap. of Matthew, ver. 28, *that the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*; yet he was adored on earth, even while he was in his mortal state, by the magi, by his disciples, by the blind man that was cured of his blindness, &c. &c. "Let us imitate the magi. Thou seest him not now in the crib, but on the altar; not a woman holding him, but the priest present, and the Holy Ghost poured out abundantly upon the sacrifice." (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiv. in 1 Cor. Hom. vii. de Sancto Philog.)

**Ver. 14.** It is very probable that Joseph, with Jesus and his Mother, remained in some part of Egypt, where the Jews were settled, as at Alexandria. That many Jews dwelt in Egypt, particularly from the time of the prophet Jeremias, is evident from Josephus, and also from the first chapter of the second book of *Machabees*. Mention is also made of them in Acts ii. and Act. iv. under the name of Alexandrines.

**Ver. 15.** *Out of Egypt have I called my son*. [3] St. Jerome understands these words to be taken out of the prophet Osee, (Chap. xi. 2.) and granted they might be literally spoken of the people Israel: yet as their captivity in Egypt was a figure of the slavery of sin, under which all mankind groaned, and as their delivery by Moses was a figure of man's redemption by our Saviour Christ, so these words in a mystical and spiritual sense apply to our Saviour, who in a more proper sense was the Son of God, than was the people of Israel. (Witham) --- The application of this passage of the prophet to Christ, whereas in the simple letter it might appear otherwise, teaches us how to interpret the Old Testament; and that the principal sense is of Christ and his Church. (Bristow)

**Ver. 16.** By this example, we learn how great credit we owe to the Church in canonizing saints, and celebrating their holydays: by whose only warrant, without any word of Scripture, these holy Innocents have been honoured as martyrs, and their holyday kept ever since the apostles' time, although they died not voluntarily, nor all, perhaps, circumcised, and some even children of pagans. (St. Augustine, ep. 28.; Origen, hom. iii. in diversos.) (Bristow)



**Ver. 18.** *A voice was heard in Rama.*[4] St. Jerome takes *Rama*, not for the name of any city, but for a *high place*, as appears by his Latin translation. (Jeremias xxxi. 15.) But in all Greek copies here in St. Matthew, and in the Septuagint in Jeremias, we find the word itself *Rama*, so that it must signify a particular city. Rachel, who was buried at Bethlehem, is represented weeping (as it were in the person of those desolate mothers) the murder, and loss of so many children: and Rama being a city not far from Bethlehem, in the tribe of Benjamin, built on a high place, it is said that the cries and lamentations of these children, and their mothers, reached even to Rama. Cornel. a Lapide on Jeremias xxxi. thinks that these words were not only applied by the evangelist in a figurative sense, but that the prophet in the literal sense foretold these lamentations. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *He shall be called a Nazarite, or a Nazarene.*[5] Jesus was called a *Nazarite*, from the place where he was bred up in Galilee; and the Christians by the Jews were sometimes called *Nazarenes*, from Jesus of Nazareth. The evangelist would shew that this name, which the Jews through contempt gave to Christ and his disciples, had an honourable signification: and that this title was given in the predictions of the prophets to the Messiah. But where, or in what prophet? For we find not the words exactly in any of the prophets. To this St. John Chrysostom answers, that St. Matthew took it from some prophetic writings that have been lost. St. Jerome gives two other answers: first, that the word *Nazarene*, from the Hebrew *Nezer*, signifies *separated*, and distinguished from others by virtue and sanctity: and so some that were particularly consecrated, and devoted to the service of God, were called *Nazareans*, as Joseph, (Deuteronomy xxxiii. 16.) Sampson, (Judges xvi. 17,) &c. Thus a Nazarene signifies one that is *holy*: and all the prophets, says St. Jerome, foretold that Christ should be holy. Therefore also it was that St. Matthew did not cite any one prophet, but the prophets in general. The second answer is, that a *Nazarean* (if derived from the Hebrew *Netser*) signifies a *flower*, or *bud*; and so in the prophet Isaia, chap. xi. ver. 1) it is foretold of the Messiah, that a *flower shall ascend from the root of David*. (Witham) --- The reason why Jesus is called of *Nazareth*, and not of Bethlehem, is, because he was educated there, and was generally supposed to have been born there. Hence he was called the Galilean; and the people argued from that circumstance, that he was not the Messiah, nor even a prophet, saying, *Can the Christ come from Galilee? Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not*. (John vii. 52.) Again, in Nazareth the word was made flesh, though in Bethlehem he was produced to the world; and our Lord gives himself the same title, when he addressed Saul. *I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest*. (Acts. xxii.) He remained at Nazareth till he was about 30 years of age. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 1. Magi, *Greek: oi Magoi*.

[2] Ver. 11. Aurum, &c. Pulcherrime, says St. Jerome on this place, Juvencus Munerum Sacramenta comprehendit, Thus, Aurum, Myrrham, Regique, Hominique, Deoque, Dona ferunt. See St. Ambrose in Luc. lib. ii. chap. ii. St. Gregory hom. x. in Evang. &c.

[3] Ver. 15. Ex Ægypto vocai filium meum. In the Septuagint *Greek: ta tekna autou*, filios ejus.

[4] Ver. 18. Vox in Excelso audita est. Jeremias xxxi. 15.

[5] Ver. 23. Nazaræus, *Greek: nazoraios*. St. John Chrysostom, hom. ix. in Matt. p. 66. Ed. Latinæ, Multa ex Prophetis periere monumenta. --- St. Hieron. [St. Jerome] in Matt. pluraliter Prophetas vocans, ostendit se non verba de Scripturis supsisse, sed sensum: Nazaræus Sanctus interpretatur, Sanctum autem Dominum futurum, omnis Scriptura commemorat. Possumus et aliter dicere, quod etiam iisdem verbis juxta Hebraicam veritatem in Isaia Scriptum sit. chap. ix. ver. 1. Exiet Virgo de radice Jesse, et Nazaræus de radice ejus conscendet.

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### MATTHEW 3

**Ver. 1.** "In those days," i.e. at the time of Jesus Christ, whose history this book contains. This expression does not always mean that what is going to be narrated, happened immediately after that which precedes. (Bible de Vence) --- 'Tis a way of speaking used by the Hebrews, even when there is no connection of time, as here are passed over 30 years of Christ's life. John the Baptist was so called from his baptizing the people in water. The Jews took this for some token of their Messiah: for they said to him, (John i. 25,) *why dost thou baptize if thou art not the Christ?* --- *In the desert*, not in the house of his Father Zacharias, as some pretend, but in a true wilderness, as appears by the circumstances of his food, apparel, &c. (Witham) --- The Baptist was about 30 years of age. He, as well as our Lord, in conformity with the Jewish law, did not enter upon his public ministry before that age. (Haydock)

**Ver. 2.** "Desert," in Greek *eremos*, hence hermit. St. John the Baptist is praised by St. John Chrysostom, as a perfect model, and the prince of an *Eremitical life*. (Hom. i. in Mar. and hom. i. in J. Bap.) Several sectarists do not approve of what St. John Chrysostom advances in favour of an ascetic life, and doing penance for past sins. (Bristow) --- *Do penance*.<sup>[1]</sup> Beza would have it translated *repent*. We retain the ancient expression, consecrated in a manner by the use of the Church; especially since a true conversion comprehends not only a change of mind, and a new life, but also a sorrow for past offences, accompanied with self-denials, and some severities of a penitential life. --- *The kingdom of heaven*, which many times signifies the present condition of Christ's Church. (Witham) --- In this and other places of holy writ, instead of "do penance," Protestants give "repent ye;" but general use has rendered *Greek: metanoia*, by *pœnitentia*, or penance; and in this text, not any kind of penance, or grief for sins committed, but that which is joined with a desire of appeasing Him who has been offended by sin; and this also by some external signs and works. For as many as heard this *Greek: metanoëite*, obeyed the voice, received from him the baptism of penance, confessed their sins, and it was said to them: *Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance*, ver. 8. Therefore, all this was contained in the penance preached by the baptist. And here we must not omit, that while sectarists preach faith alone, both the baptist and Jesus Christ begin their ministry which practising and preaching penance. (Tirinus) --- *Pœnitentiam agite*, *Greek: metanoëite*. Which word, according to the use of the Scriptures and the holy fathers, does not only signify repentance and amendment of life, but also punishing past sins by fasting, and such like penitential exercises. (Challoner)

**Ver. 3.** Isaias spoke these words of the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon; but this was a figure of the freedom of mankind through Jesus Christ. The Jews expected Elias would come in person to prepare the ways of the Messiah; but John the Baptist was raised up by God in the spirit and power of Elias, to precede the first coming of Jesus Christ, as Elias in person was to precede the second coming of this divine Saviour. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 4.** *His garment of camels' hair*,<sup>[2]</sup> not wrought camlet as some would have it, but made of the skin of a camel, with the hair on it. Thus Elias (4 Kings, i. 8,) is called *an hairy man*, with a leathern girdle about him. --- *Locusts*, not sea-crabs, as others again expound it; but a sort of flies, or grasshoppers, frequent in hot countries. They are numbered among eatables. (Leviticus xi. 22) St. Jerome and others mention them as food of the common people, when dried with smoke and salt. Theophylactus, by the Greek word, understands the tops of trees or buds. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** So great was the celebrity of St. John's sanctity, so much did his mortified life, and powerful preaching, weigh upon the minds of the people, that all wished to receive baptism at his hands. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *Baptized*. the word baptism signifies a *washing*, particularly when it is done by *immersion*, or by *dipping*, or *plunging* a thing under water, which was formerly the ordinary way of administering the sacrament of baptism. But the Church, which cannot change the least article of

the Christian faith, is not so tied up in matters of discipline and ceremonies. Not only the Catholic Church, but also the pretended reformed churches, have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water on the person baptized; nay may of their ministers do it now-a-days, by *filliping* a wet finger and thumb over the child's head, or by shaking a wet finger or two over the child, which it is hard enough to call a baptizing in any sense. --- *Confessing their sins*. [3] We bring not this as a proof for sacramental auricular confession; yet we may take notice, with Grotius, that it is a different thing for men to *confess their sins*, and to confess themselves sinners. And here is expressed a declaring of particular sins, (as also Acts xix. 18,) such as is recommended in the Protestant Prayer Book, in the visitation of the sick. (Witham) --- As the baptism of John was an external profession of penance, to this it was mett to add an external or oral confession of sins; and the more so, because such as were baptized by John, sought of him also, as we read in St. Luke, instructions how they were to amend their lives; now it is naturally expected of whoever asks for similar advice, that he should expose the defects of his past life. It is thus patients act with their physicians. (Haydock)

**Ver. 7. Pharisees and Sadducees.** These are the names of two sects at that time among the Jews. There are different conjectures about the name of the Sadducees. This at least we find by the Gospels, and by the Acts of the Apostles, that they were a profane sort of men, that made a jest of the resurrection, and of the existence of spirits, and of the immortality of souls. To these the Pharisees were declared adversaries, as being a more religious sect, who pretended to be exact observers of the law, and also of a great many traditions, which they had, or pretended to have, from their forefathers. St. Epiphanius (hær. 16, p. 34,) derives their name from the Hebrew word *Pharas*, signifying *separated*, divided, or distinguished from others by a more holy way of living. So the proud Pharisee (Luke xviii.) said of himself, *I am not like the rest of men*, &c. --- *Brood of vipers*. St. John the Baptist, and also our Saviour himself, (Matthew xxii. 33,) made use of this sharp reprehension to such as come to them full of hypocrisy. --- *the wrath to come*: meaning punishments for the wicked after death. Or as some expound it, the destruction that was shortly to fall on the city of Jerusalem, on the temple, and the whole nation of the Jews. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** See note for ver. 2.

**Ver. 9.** Do not, therefore, wantonly imagine, that the fear of destroying the posterity of this patriarch, and of annulling the promises which God had made to him and to his seed, will hinder Him from punishing you. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 10.** Without the least attention to its origin, or other advantages. Hence you must not rest your hopes of salvation on your birth alone, nor on the baptism alone you receive at my hands. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 11.** My baptism is only calculated to lead you to a penitential life, and not to give you true justice; but he who comes after me, is stronger than I, and whose shoes I am not worthy to carry: (it was customary with the attendant slave to carry a change of shoes for his master) he will baptize you in the Holy Ghost, and in the fire of his divine charity, which he will infuse into your hearts, to purify you from all your sins. (Bible de Vence) --- Here St. John tacitly insinuates the divinity of Jesus Christ. He acknowledges his unworthiness, and it is this his humility that makes him the more acceptable to God, "I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me?" (Tirinus) --- *Whose shoes I am not worthy to carry*. In St. Mark, (chap. i. 7.) and in St. Luke, (iii. 21.) we read, *the latchet of whose shoes . . . I am not worthy to untie*. The sense is the same, and St. John might use both these expression. His meaning is, that he was not worthy to do him the least, or the lowest service. --- *He shall baptize you in*, or with *the Holy Ghost*, i.e. by his baptism, he will give you the remission of your sins, and the graces of the Holy Ghost, signified also by *fire*, which may allude to the coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, in the shape of fiery tongues. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** Address yourselves then to Him, and prevent, by a prompt and sincere conversion, that dreadful judgment which the just and severe Judge, whom I now announce to you, will most undoubtedly pass upon sinners, when he shall remove the chaff from the good grain, i.e. the bad from the good, calling the latter with him to his heavenly kingdom, and sending the former to burn in unquenchable fire. (Haydock)

**Ver. 16.** *He . . . went up, &c.* Christ was in the river when he was baptized. As soon as he went out, and was *praying*, says St. Luke, (iii. 21,) *the heavens were opened to him*, or in favour of him; and he saw *the Spirit of God descending*: i.e. Christ himself saw the shape of the dove, which was also seen by the Baptist, as we find, John i. 33. And it was perhaps seen by all that were present. --- *As a dove*, or like a dove in a bodily shape. The dove was an emblem of Christ's meekness and innocence. (Witham) --- Calmet supposes that it was St. John that saw the Spirit of God descend thus upon Jesus Christ. The Greek text is favourable to this interpretation. But the Vulgate supposes it was Jesus Christ himself. St. John declares that he saw the Spirit; (John i. 32,) but this apparent disagreement is easily cleared, by supposing that both saw the shape of the dove, and also the surrounding crowd, and that they all heard the voice of the Father, as it was heard by the disciples in the transfiguration on Mount Thabor, (chap. xvii,) and by the crowd in the temple. John xii. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 17.** This most solemn testimony of God the Father, relative to his own beloved Son, is repeated below in chap. xvii; and is of such great moment, that the Holy Ghost would have it repeated not only by three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, but also by St. Peter, as a fourth evangelist, 2nd epistle chap. i. (Tirinus) --- In Greek, the emphatic article *Greek: o uios mou o agapetos*, strengthens the proof that Jesus Christ, upon whom the Spirit of God descended in the shape of a dove, was not the adoptive, but natural Son of God, born of Him before all ages, and should silence every blasphemous tongue and pen that can attempt to rob Jesus Christ of his divinity, and poor man of all hopes of salvation, through this God-man, Christ the Lord. But if it here be asked, why Jesus Christ, who was innocence itself, yes, and the very essence of sanctity, condescended so far as to be baptized with sinners, we answer, with the Holy Fathers, that it was, 1. to sanction the baptism and ministry of his precursor; 2. not to lose this opportunity of teaching humility, by placing himself among sinners, as if he had stood in need of the baptism of penance for the remission of sins; and lastly, with St. Ambrose, that it was to sanctify the waters, and to give to them the virtue of cleansing men from their sins by the laver of baptism. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 2. *Pœnitentiam agite. Greek: metanoete.* There is no need of translating in Latin, *recipiscite*, though more according to the etymology of the word. The judicious Mr. Bois, prebend. of Ely, in his book entitled, *Veteris Interpretis cum Beza, &c. Collatio. Londini. an. 1655*, commended by Walton in his *Polyglot*, declares he would not have this common translation of *pœnitentiam agite* changed: and brings these words of Melancthon, *Let us not be ashamed of our mother tongue; the Church is our Mother, and so speaks the Church.*

[2] Ver. 4. St. Hierom. [St. Jerome] lib. 2. con. Jovin. tom. 4. part. 2. p. 201. *Orientales, et Libyæ populos . . . locustis vesci, moris est.* Theophylactus by *Greek: akrides*, understands buds of trees.

[3] Ver. 6. *confitentes peccata sua. Greek: exomologoumenoi tas amartias auton.*

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## MATTHEW 4

**Ver. 1.** Jesus Christ was led by the Holy Ghost, immediately after his baptism, into the desert,[1] to prepare, by fasting and prayer, for his public ministry, and to merit for us by his victory over the

enemy of our salvation, force to conquer him also ourselves. By this conduct, he teaches all that were to be in future times called to his ministry, how they are to retire into solitude, in order to converse with God in prayer, and draw down the blessing of heaven upon themselves and their undertaking. What treasures of grace might we expect, if, as often as we receive any of the sacraments, we were to retire within ourselves, and shut out, for a time, the world and its cares. Then should we come prepared to withstand temptation, and should experience the divine assistance in every difficulty through life. The life of man is a warfare on earth. It was not given us, says St. Hilary, to spend it in indolence, but to wage a continual war against our spiritual enemies. In the greatest sanctity there are often the greatest and most incessant trials; for Satan wishes nothing so much as the fall of the saints. (Haydock) --- By these trials, we learn the strength we have received from above, we are preserved from self-complacency and pride in the gifts of heaven; we confirm the renunciation we made in baptism of the devil, and all his works and pomps; we become stronger, and better prepared for future attacks, and are feelingly convinced of the dignity to which we have been raised, and of which the enemy of souls endeavours all he can to deprive us. St. John Chrysostom hom. xiii. Both St. John the Baptist and our divine Master, by retiring into the wilderness for contemplation, prayer, fasting and suffering, have given a sanction and an example to those holy men called hermits, who have taken shelter in their sanctified retreats against the dangers of the world. (Bristow)

**Ver. 2.** Jesus wished to manifest a certain corporeal weakness, arising from his continued fast, that the devil might venture to tempt him; and after a fast of 40 days and 40 nights he was hungry. (Haydock) --- Christ was well acquainted with the thoughts of the wicked fiend, and his great desire of tempting or trying him. The devil had learnt that he was come into the world from the songs of the angels at his birth, and from the mouth of the shepherds and of St. John the Baptist. To fast 40 days without being hungry, was certainly far above the strength of man, but to be hungry at any time is inconsistent with God; for which reason our blessed Saviour, that he might not manifestly declare his divinity, was afterwards hungry. (St. Hilary) --- On this example, as well as that of Moses and Elias, who also fasted 40 days, the fast of Lent was instituted by the apostles, and is of necessity to be observed according to the general consent of the ancient Fathers. St. Jerome (ep. liv. ad Marcel.) says, we fast 40 days, or make one Lent in a year, according to the tradition of the apostles. St. Augustine (serm. lxi.) says, by the due observance of Lent, the wicked are separated from the good, infidels from Christians, heretics from Catholics. Our Saviour fasted 40 days, not because he stood in need of it, as we do, to subject the unruly members of the body, which lust against the spirit, but to set an example for our imitation. (Haydock) --- Another reason might be, to prevent the captious remarks of the Jews, who might object that he had not yet done what the founder of their law, Moses, and after him Elias, had done. (Palacios in Mat.)

**Ver. 3.** "And the tempter coming," *Greek: O peirazon*, who looked upon this hunger as a favourable moment to tempt him, and to discover if he were truly the Son of God, as was declared at his baptism, desired Jesus to change by a miracle the stones into bread, to appease his hunger and to recover his strength. (Haydock) --- By this we are taught, that amidst our greatest austerities and fasts, we are never free from temptation. But if your fasts, says St. Gregory, do not free you entirely from temptations, they will at least give you strength not to be overcome by them. (St. Thomas Aquinas.) The tempter is supposed to have appeared in a human form, and the whole temptation to have been merely external, like that which took place with our first parents in Paradise. It would have been beneath the perfection of Christ, to have allowed the devil the power of suggesting wicked thoughts to his mind. (Jansenius. p. 107) Had Jesus Christ converted the stones into bread, the devil, according to St. Jerome, would have thence inferred that he was God. But it was Christ's intention to overcome the proud fiend rather by humility than power. (St. Thomas Aquinas) Thus, if the first Adam fell from God by pride, the second Adam has effectually taught us how to overcome the devil by humility. (Haydock)

**Ver. 4.** *Man liveth not by bread only.* The words were spoken of the manna. (Deuteronomy viii. 3.) The sense in this place is, that man's life may be supported by any thing, or in any manner, as it pleaseth God. (Witham) --- St. Gregory upon this passage says: if our divine Redeemer, when

tempted by the devil, answered in so mild a manner, when he could have buried the wicked tempter in the bottom of hell, out not man, when he suffers any thing from his fellow man, rather to improve it to his advantage, than to resent it to his own ruin. Man consists of soul and body; his body is supported by bread, his soul by the word of God; hence the saying, "Lex est cibus animæ." (Mat. Polus.)

**Ver. 5.** In the text of St. Luke this temptation is the third: but most commentators follow the order of St. Matthew. In Palestine, all buildings had a flat roof, with a balustrade or a parapet. It was probably upon the parapet that the devil conveyed Jesus. The three temptations comprise the three principal sources of sin: 1. sensuality; 2. pride; and 3. concupiscence. 1st epistle John ii. 16. We may hope to conquer the first by fasting and confidence in divine Providence; the second by humility; the third by despising all sublunary things, as unworthy of a Christian's solicitude. (Haydock) --- *the devil took him*, &c.[2] If we ask in what manner this was done, St. Gregory answers, that Christ might permit himself to be taken up, and transported, and nailed to a cross by wicked men, who are members of the devil. Others think the devil only conducted him from place to place. The text of St. Luke favours this exposition, when it is said, the devil *led* him to Jerusalem, to a *high mountain*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** Heretics, says St. Augustine, quote Scriptures, as the devil does here, in a wrong and forced sense; the Church cites them, like Jesus Christ, in their true sense, and to confute their falsehood. (Cont. lit. Petil. lib. ii. chap. 51.) It is on this account, that the Catholic Church wishes persons who come to the study of the most mysterious and difficult book ever published, should bring with them some preparation of mind and heart; convinced that the abuse of the strongest and best food may be converted into deadly poison. The promoters of Bible societies have published in Ireland a tract to encourage the universal perusal of the Scriptures, as the sole rule of faith. In this they give not only a mutilated and corrupt version of the letter of his late Holiness Pius VI. to the now archbishop of Florence, (to be seen at the head of this edition of the Bible) but certain letters from German Jansenists, who are described as being good Catholics. (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** *Shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory*; and as St. Luke says, *in a moment of time*. We cannot comprehend how this could be done from any mountain, or seen with human eyes. Therefore many think it was by some kind of representation; or that the devil shewing a part, by words set forth the rest. (Witham) --- He shewed him the different climates in which each country was situated. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 9.** *All these will I give thee*. The father of lies here promised what was not his to give. For though he be called the prince of this world, (John xii. 31,) meaning of the wicked, who wilfully make themselves his slaves; yet so restrained is the devil's power, that he could not go into the swine till Christ permitted it. (Matthew viii. 31.) (Witham) --- What arrogance! what pride! The devil promises earthly kingdoms, whilst Jesus promises a heavenly kingdom to his followers. (St. Remigius) Behold the pride of this heart; as he formerly wished to make himself God, so now he wishes to assume to himself divine honours. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 10.** Jesus Christ does not here cite the words, but the substance of the text. (Deuteronomy v. 7. and 9; vi. 13; x. 20.) --- It is remarkable that our Lord bore with the pride and insolence of the devil, till he assumed to himself the honour due to God alone. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 11.** Then the devil having exhausted all his artifices, left him for a time, as St. Luke remarks; whence we are to learn, that after we have resisted with success, we are not to think ourselves secure, but avail ourselves of the truce to return thank to God for the victory, and to prepare for fresh combats, especially by fortifying ourselves with the bread of angels in the holy communion. by example he has taught us how to fight and to conquer. The struggle may be painful; but angels, as well as God, witness our struggle, ready to crown our victory. (Haydock)

**Ver. 12.** Jesus then left the wilderness, and passed a few day on the banks of the Jordan,

affording his holy precursor an opportunity of bearing repeated testimony of him and of his divine mission, as we read in the first chap. of St. John, and then retired into Upper Galilee to avoid the fury of the Jews. There were two Galilees, that of the Jews and that of the Gentiles; this latter was given by the king of Tyre to king Solomon. (St. Jerome) This conduct of Jesus Christ, shews that on some occasions it is not only lawful, but advisable, to flee from persecution. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Jesus Christ enters more publicly on his mission, and about to occupy the place of his precursor, the baptist, he chooses Galilee for the first theatre of his ministry, the place assigned by the ancient prophets. The Pharisees had prevailed upon Herod to arrest the baptist, nor could their hatred be less to Jesus Christ, who drew a still greater concourse of disciples after him.

**Ver. 13.** Nazareth was situated in Lower Galilee; and Capharnaum, a maritime town, in Higher Galilee. According to the historian, Josephus, it did not belong to Herod, the tetrarch, who sent the baptist to confinement, but to Philip, the tetrarch, his brother. (Calmet) --- He leaves Nazareth for good and all, and retires to Capharnaum, a very flourishing and much frequented emporium, both for the Jews and Gentiles. Here he makes his chief residence, a place well calculated for his preaching, being on the limits of both Galilee, although he made frequent excursions through Galilee to disseminate his doctrines. (Syn. crit.)

**Ver. 15.** St. Matthew has omitted in this place part of the prophecy, (Isaias ix.) because it was not to his purpose. He has likewise given us the mystical, though still true, interpretation of the prophecy, which was written in the first instance to foretell the deliverance of Jerusalem from Senacherib, in the time of Ezechias. (1 Kings, xix.) (Jansenius)

**Ver. 16.** *And a light is risen, &c.* This light, foretold by the prophet Isaias, (chap. ix, ver. 1,) was our Saviour Jesus Christ, the light of the world, who now enlightened them by his instructions, and by his grace. (Witham) --- Thus when the morning star has gone by and disappeared, the sun rises and diffuses its light to mortals, who rejoice that the darkness of night is removed from the earth. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 17.** Jesus began not to preach till St. John had announced his coming to the world, that the dignity of his sacred person might thus be manifested, and the incredulous Jews be without excuse. If after the preaching of St. John, and his express testimony of the divinity of our Redeemer, they could still say: thou givest testimony of thyself; thy testimony is not true: what would they not have said, if, without any precursor, he had, all on a sudden, appeared amongst them. He did not begin to preach till St. John was cast into prison, that the people might not be divided. On this account also St. John wrought no miracle, that the people might be struck with the miracles of our Saviour, and yield their assent to him. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. 14.) --- It may here be remarked, how different were the motives of the prophets from those which the baptist and Christ made use of to exhort to repentance. The former menaced evil, and held out a promise of good, but the good or evil was temporal. St. John begins his exhortations with the threat of eternal punishment --- but Christ sweetens the hardships of penance by reminding us of the reward. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Jansenius)

**Ver. 18.** Jesus wished not only to prove that the establishment of his religion was heavenly, but also to humble the pride of man; and therefore he did not choose orators and philosophers, but fishermen, says St. Jerome. Cyprian, the eloquent orator, was called to the priesthood; but before him was Peter, the fisherman. (St. John Chrysostom) --- *Jesus saw two brothers, &c.* If we compare what is related by the evangelists, as to the time that St. Peter and St. Andrew became Christ's disciples, we shall find Andrew, who had been a disciple of St. John Baptist, to have *brought to Christ his brother Simon*. (John i, ver. 40.) But at that time they staid not with him, so as to become his disciples, and to remain with him as they afterwards did, by quitting their boat, their nets, their fishing, and all they had in the world, which is here related; and by St. Mark, (chap. i,) and by St. Luke, chap. v. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** Jesus Christ here makes an allusion to the prior occupation of his apostles. David, in his

Psalms, makes similar allusions to his former occupation of shepherd: "He took him from the flocks of sheep, he brought him from following the ewes big with young, to feed Jacob, his servant, and Israel, his inheritance." (Psalm lxxvii. ver. 70.) (Menochius)

**Ver. 21.** It was objected by the ancient enemies of Christianity, Porphyrius, Julian the apostate, and others, that Christ chose for his apostles simple and ignorant men, easy to be imposed upon, and not such as would have been on their guard against deception; thus converting that into an argument against the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which of all other circumstances most solidly and forcibly establishes its divinity and authority. (Salmeron. trac. 25.) --- If Christ had persuaded the ignorant apostles only, there might be some room for such an argument. But if these 12 ignorant men triumphed over the learning, the eloquence, the sophisms of the philosophers themselves, over the strong arm of power in the hands of tyrants, and finally over the devils and passions of men, which were the last to give up the combat against a doctrine that established itself on their ruin, then we may conclude, with St. Paul, that it was wisdom in God to choose the weak things of this world to confound the strong --- the foolish and the things that are not, to confound those which are. (Haydock)

**Ver. 23.** The synagogues were religious assemblies with the Jews, wherein they met on the sabbath and festival days, to pray, to read and hear expounded the word of God, and to exercise the other practices of their law. (Calmet)

**Ver. 24.** Many came to Christ to beg to be cured of their corporal infirmities; nor do we read of a single one here, who came to be delivered from spiritual sickness. Our blessed Savior nevertheless, bearing with their imperfection, condescends to heal them, that he might thence take occasion of exciting their faith, and preparing them for their spiritual cure. (Jansenius) --- It is much to be regretted, that the conduct of Christians at the present day, is not more reasonable than that of the Jews here mentioned. If the Almighty, says the eloquent Masillon, had not the power or will of dispensing goods and evils, how small would be the number of those who would ever retire to the temple to present their petition to Him. (Haydock) --- Our Saviour asks not, if they believed, as he did on other occasions; they had given him sufficient proof, by bringing their sick from distant parts. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xiv.)

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[1] Ver. 1. St. Mark (chap. i, ver. 13) tells us, *Christ was with wild beasts, eratque cum bestiis, Greek: meta ton therion.*

[2] Ver. 5. Assumpsit, *Greek: paralambanei.* statuit eum, *Greek: istesin.* St. Gregory, hom. 16. in Evang. t. 1. page. 1492. Ed. Ben. Quid mirum si se ab illo permisit in montem duci, qui se pertulit etiam a membris illius crucifigi?

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## MATTHEW 5

**Ver. 1.** What is said here, does not follow immediately what was said in the preceding chapter. See Luke vi.

**Ver. 2.** *Opening his mouth.* It is a Hebraism, to signify he began to speak. (Witham) --- This is a common expression in Scripture, to signify something important is about to be spoken. Thus it is used in various other places, as "Job opening his mouth cursed his day, and said," &c. Daniel, chap. x. et alibi. (Jansenius) --- And why is it added, says St. John Chrysostom "and opening his mouth," without doubt that we might know, that not only when he spoke, but even when silent, he gave instruction: sometimes, therefore, he opened his mouth; at other times he spoke by his very actions. (Hom. xv.)



**Ver. 3.** *The poor in spirit*; [1] which, according to the common exposition, signifies the *humble* of mind and heart. Yet some understand it of such as are truly in poverty and want, and who bear their indigent condition with patience and resignation. (Witham) --- That is, the humble; and they whose spirit is not set upon riches. (Challoner) --- It is not without reason that the beatitudes are disposed of in this order. Each preceding one prepares the way for what immediately follows, furnishing us in particular with spiritual arms of such graces as are necessary for obtaining the virtue of the subsequent beatitude. Thus the poor in spirit, i.e. the truly humble, will mourn for their transgressions, and whoever is filled with sorrow and confusion for his own sins, cannot but be just, and behave to others with meekness and clemency; when possessed of these virtues, he then becomes pure and clean of heart. Peace of conscience reigns in this assemblage of virtues, and cannot be expelled the soul by any tribulations, persecutions, or injustices of men. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv.) What is this poverty of spirit, but humility and contrition? This virtue of humility is placed in the first place, because it is the parent of every other virtue, as pride is the mother of every vice. Pride deprived our first parents of their original innocence, and nothing but humility can restore us to our former purity. We may pray and fast, we may be possessed of mercy, chastity, or any virtues, if humility do not accompany them, they will be like the virtue of the Pharisee, without foundation, without fruit. (Hom. xv.)

**Ver. 4.** The land of the living, or the kingdom of heaven. The evangelist prefers calling it the land of the living in this place, to shew that the meek, the humble, and the oppressed, who are spoiled of the possession of this earth by the powerful and the proud, shall obtain the inheritance of a better land. (Menochius) "They shall possess the land," is the reward annexed by our Saviour to meekness, that he might not differ in any point from the old law, so well known to the persons he was addressing. David, in psalm xxxvi, had made the same promise to the meek. If temporal blessings are promised to some of the virtues in the beatitudes, it is that temporal blessings might always accompany the more solid rewards of grace. But spiritual rewards are always the principal, always ranked in the first place, all who practice these virtues are pronounced blessed. (Hom. xv.)

**Ver. 5.** Not those that mourn for worldly motives, but such as mourn for their sins, are blessed. The sorrow that is according to God, says St. Paul, worketh penance steadfast unto salvation, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. (2 Corinthians vii. 10.) The same is promised in St. John; (xvi. 20,) you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. (Menochius)

**Ver. 6.** *Hunger and thirst*; i.e. spiritually, with an earnest desire of being just and holy. But others again understand such as endure with patience the hardships of hunger and thirst. (Witham) --- Rupertus understands those to whom justice is denied, such as poor widows and orphans. Maldonatus those who from poverty really suffer hunger and thirst, because justice is not done them. (Menochius) --- They shall be filled with every kind of good in their heavenly country. I shall be filled when thy glory shall appear. (Psalm xvi.)

**Ver. 7.** Not only the giving of alms, but the practice of all works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual, are recommended here, and the reward will be given on that day when God will repay every one according to his works, and will do by us, as we have done by our brethren. (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** The clean of heart are either those who give themselves to the practice of every virtue, and are conscious to themselves of no evil, or those who are adorned with the virtue of charity. For nothing is so necessary as this purity in such as desire to see God. Keep peace with all and chastity, says St. Paul, for without this none can see God. Many are merciful to the poor and just in their dealings, but abstain not from luxury and lust. Therefore our Saviour, wishing to shew that mercy was not sufficient, adds, that if we would see God, we must also be possessed of the virtue of purity. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv.) By this, we shall have our heart exempt from all disordinate love of creatures, and shall be exclusively attached to God. (Haydock) --- *The clean of heart*, i.e. they who are clean from sin: who are pure in body and mind, says St. John Chrysostom. It seems to be a particular admonition to the Jews, who were mostly solicitous

about an outward and *legal cleanness*. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** To be peaceful ourselves and with others, and to bring such as are at variance together, will entitle us to be children of God. Thus we shall be raised to a participation in the honour of the only begotten Son of God, who descended from heaven to bring peace to man, and to reconcile him with his offended Creator. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv.)

**Ver. 10.** Heretics and malefactors suffer occasionally, but they are not on this account blessed, because they suffer not for justice. For, says St. Augustine they cannot suffer for justice, who have divided the Church; and where sound faith or charity is wanting, there cannot be justice. (Cont. epis. Parm. lib. i. chap. 9. ep. 50. ps. 4. conc. 2.) (Bristow) --- By justice here we understand virtue, piety, and the defence of our neighbour. To all who suffer on this account, he promises a seat in his heavenly kingdom. We must not think that suffering persecution only, will suffice to entitle us to the greatest promises. The persecutions we suffer must be inflicted on us on *his* account, and the evils spoken of us must be false and contradicted by our lives. If these are not the causes of our sufferings, so far from being happy, we shall be truly miserable, because then our irregular lives would be the occasion of the persecutions we suffer. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv.)

**Ver. 12.** Reward, in Latin *merces*, in Greek *misthos*, signifies wages done for hire, and due for work, and presupposes merit. (Bristow) --- If you participate in the sufferings of the prophets, you will equally participate in their glory, their reward. (Haydock)

**Ver. 13.** The former instructions Jesus Christ gave to the multitude. Now he addresses his apostles, styling them the salt of the earth, meant to preserve men from the corruption of sin, and to make them relish the truths of salvation. He tells them not to suffer their faith or their charity to slacken, in which all their power consists, lest they come to be rejected by God, and despised by man. (Calmet) --- I send you, says Jesus Christ, not to two, ten, or twenty cities, not to one single nation, as the prophets were sent, but to the whole world, a world oppressed with numberless iniquities. It is not the property of salt to restore what is already corrupted, but to preserve from corruption. Therefore the virtue of the merits of Christ delivers us from the corruption of sin; but the care and labour of the apostles preserves us from again returning to it. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv.) --- It appears from Luke xiv. 34, that this comparison is taken from agriculture. We observe these properties of salt in the different manures that fertilize the soil, but suffer the salts to evaporate, and all their virtue is lost. (Haydock)

**Ver. 15.** This light of the world, city on a mountain, and candle upon a candlestick, signify the Catholic Church, so built upon Christ, the mountain, that it must be visible, and cannot be hidden or unknown. (St. Augustine, cont. Fulg.) Therefore the Church being a candle not under a bushel, but shining to all in the house, i.e. in the world, what shall I say more, saith St. Augustine than that all are blind, who shut their eyes against the candle which is set on the candlestick? (Tract ii. in ep. Jo.)

**Ver. 17.** *Not to destroy the law, &c.* It is true, by Christ's coming, a multitude of ceremonies and sacrifices, and circumcision, were to cease; but the moral precepts were to continue, and to be complied with, even with greater perfection. (Witham) --- *To fulfil.* By accomplishing all the figures and prophecies, and perfecting all that was imperfect. (Challoner) --- Our Saviour speaks in this manner, to prepare the minds of the Jews for his new instructions. For although they were not very solicitous about fulfilling the law, still they were extremely jealous of any change exacted a more perfect morality. Our Lord fulfilled the law three several ways: 1. By his obedience to the prescribed rites; therefore he says, it behoveth us to fulfil all justice: and who shall accuse me of sin? 2. He observes the law, not only by his own observance of it, but likewise by enabling us to fulfil it. It was the wish of the law to make man just, but found itself too weak; Christ therefore came justifying man, and accomplished the will of the law. 3. He fulfilled the law, by reducing all the precepts of the old law to a more strict and powerful morality. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xvi.)

**Ver. 18. Amen.** That is, *assuredly, of a truth*. This Hebrew word *Amen*, is here retained by the example and authority of all the four evangelists, who have retained it. It is used by our Lord as a strong asseveration, and affirmation of the truth. (Challoner) --- *Not one jot* (or not one jota), nor *one tittle*, i.e. not the least letter, nor stroke of a letter; that is, not the least moral precept. Besides every type and figure of the former law, now by my coming shall be fulfilled. (Witham) --- *Greek: Amen*, is retained in the Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Armenian languages, as well as in all vulgar idioms. It is a term of asseveration, and equivalent to an oath; and in many places, to make the asseveration still stronger, it is repeated. St. Luke very accurately translates it into *Greek: nai*. St. Paul and St. John unite them *Greek: nai* and *Greek: amen*. (Haydock)

**Ver. 19. He shall be called;** i.e. (by a frequent Hebrew idiom) he shall be *the least* in the kingdom of heaven; that is, according to St. Augustine he shall not be there at all; for none but the great in sanctity and virtue shall find admittance into heaven. (Witham) --- Do not then imitate the Scribes and Pharisees, who content themselves with instructing other in the precepts of the law, without practising them themselves, or if they observe the letter, neglect the spirit of the law, performing what it ordain, not to please God, but to satisfy their vanity. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20. Of the Scribes and of the Pharisees.** The *Scribes* were the doctors of the law of Moses; the *Pharisees* were a precise set of men, making profession of a more exact observance of the law: and upon that account greatly esteemed among the people. (Challoner) --- See how necessary it is, not only to believe, but to keep all the commandments, even the very least. (Bristow) --- Our Saviour makes this solemn declaration at the opening of his mission, to shew to what a height of perfection he calls us. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- "Your justice." It is our justice when given us by God. (St. Augustine, in Ps. xxx. lib. de. spir. & lit. chap. ix.) So that Christians are truly just, and have in themselves inherent justice, by observing God's commandments, without which justice of works, no man can be saved. (St. Augustine, de fide & oper. chap. xvi.) Whereby we see salvation, justice and justification, do not come by faith only, or imputation of Christ's justice. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21. Shall be liable to the judgment.** That is, shall deserve to be punished by that lesser tribunal among the Jews, called the *judgment*, which took cognizance of such crimes. (Challoner) --- Among the Jews at the time of Christ, there were three sorts of tribunals: the first composed of three judges to try smaller causes, as theft; there was one in each town: the second of twenty-three judges, who judged criminal causes, and had the power of condemning to death. This was called the Little Sanhedrim, and of this it is supposed Jesus Christ speaks: the third, or Great Sanhedrim of seventy-two judges, who decided on the most momentous affairs, relating to religion, the king, the high priest, and the state in general. It is this last that is designated under the name of *council* in the next verse. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22. Whosoever is angry**<sup>[2]</sup> *with his brother*. In almost all Greek copies and manuscripts we now read *angry without a cause*: yet St. Jerome, who corrected the Latin of the New Testament from the best copies in his time, tells us that these words, *without a cause*, were only found in some Greek copies, and *not in the true ones*. It seems at first to have been placed in the margin for an interpretation only, and by some transcribers afterwards taken into the text. This as well as many other places may convince us, that the Latin Vulgate is many times to be preferred to our present Greek copies. --- *Roca*.<sup>[3]</sup> St. Augustine thinks this was no significant word, but only a kind of interjection expressing a motion of anger. Others take it for a Syro-Chaldaic word, signifying a light, foolish man, though not so injurious as to call another a fool. --- *Shall be guilty of the council*.<sup>[4]</sup> that is, shall deserve to be punished by the highest court of judicature, called the *council*, or *sanhedrim*, consisting of seventy-two persons, where the highest causes were tried and judged, and which was at Jerusalem. --- *Thou fool*; this was a most provoking injury, when uttered with contempt, spite, or malice. --- *Shall be in danger of hell fire*.<sup>[5]</sup> *Gehennom* was the valley of Hinnom, near to Jerusalem, where the worshippers of the idol Moloch used to burn their children, sacrificed to that idol. In that place was a perpetual fire, on which account it is made use of by our Saviour (as it hath been ever since), to express the fire and punishments of hell.

(Witham) --- Here is a plain difference between sin and sin; some *mortal*, that lead to hell; some *venial*, and less punished. (Bristow)

**Ver. 23.** He commands us to leave unfinished any work we may have begun, though in its own nature most acceptable to God, in order to go and be reconciled to our brother; because God will have mercy and not sacrifice. Thus he in a manner seems to prefer the love of our neighbour to the love of himself. (Menochius)

**Ver. 24.** *Leave thy offering.* This is not to be understood, as if a man were always bound to go to the person offended; but it is to signify, that a man is bound in his heart and mind to be reconciled, to forgive every one, and seek peace with all men. (Witham) --- Beware of coming to the holy table, or to any sacrament, without charity. Be first reconciled to your brother, and much more to the Catholic Church, which is the whole brotherhood of Christian men. (Hebrews xiii. 1.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 25. & 26.** Agree whilst you are in the way, or wayfaring men, i.e. in this life, lest you be cast into prison, i.e. according to Sts. Cyprian, Ambrose, and Origen, into purgatory; according to St. Augustine, into hell, in which, as the debt is to be paid to inflexible justice, it can never be acquitted, and of course no release can be hoped for from that prison. (Haydock)

**Ver. 27.** Jesus Christ here perfects the old law, which makes no mention of the acts of the mind and will. (Menochius)

**Ver. 29.** Whatever is an immediate occasion of sin, however near or dear it may be, must be abandoned (Menochius), though it prove as dear to us, or as necessary as a hand, or an eye, and without delay or demur. (Haydock)

**Ver. 32.** *Excepting the cause of fornication.* A divorce or separation as to bed and board, may be permitted for some weighty causes in Christian marriage; but even then, he that *marrieth her* that is dismissed, commits adultery. As to this, there is no exception. The bond of marriage is perpetual; and *what* God hath joined, no power on earth can separate. See again Matthew xix. 9. (Witham) --- The know of marriage is so sacred a tie, that the separation of the parties cannot loosen it, it being not lawful for either of the parties to marry again upon a divorce. (St. Augustine, de bon. conjug. chap. vii.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 34.** *Swear not at all.* We must not imagine that here are forbidden all oaths, where there is a just and necessary cause of calling God to witness. An oath on such an occasion is an act of justice and religion. Here are forbidden unnecessary oaths in common discourse, by which the sacred name of God, which never ought to be pronounced without reverence and respect, is so frequently and scandalously profaned. (Witham) --- 'Tis not forbidden to swear in truth, justice and judgment; to the honour of God, or our own or neighbour's just defence; but only to swear rashly, or profanely, in common discourse, and without necessity. (Challoner)

**Ver. 35.** The Anabaptists and other sectarists, following the letter, and not the spirit of the Scripture, and walking in the footsteps of their predecessors, the Waldenses, and the Pelagians, will allow of no oath to be lawful, not even before a judge. (Bristow)

**Ver. 38.** Hence your doctors have concluded that revenge, equal to the injury, was permitted.

**Ver. 39.** *Not to resist evil;*[6] i.e. not to resist or revenge thyself of him that hath done evil to thee. --- *Turn him the other cheek. Let him have also thy cloak.* These are to be understood as admonitions to Christians, to forgive every one, and to bear patiently all manner of private injuries. But we must not from hence conclude it unlawful for any one to have recourse to the laws, when a man is injured, and cannot have justice by any other means. (Witham) --- what is here commanded, is a Christian patience under injuries and affronts, and to be willing even to suffer still more, rather than to indulge the desire of revenge; but what is further added does not

strictly oblige according to the letter, for neither did Christ, nor St. Paul, turn the other cheek. (St. John xviii. and Acts xxiii.) (Challoner) --- Hence also the Anabaptists infer, that it is not lawful to go to law even for our just rights; and Luther, that Christians ought not to resist the Turks. (Bristow)

**Ver. 41.** *Go with him other two.*[7] I know many interpreters would have it to signify no more than two in all. But the literal sense of the Latin, and also of the best Greek manuscripts. (as Dr. Wells takes notice in his amendments to the Prot. translation) express *two more*, i.e. not only as far again, but twice as far. And thus it is expounded by St. Augustine, Serm. Domini in monte. t. iii. p. 193. Ed Ben. (Witham) --- Continue to be his guide sooner than lose patience, or be wanting in charity. (Haydock)

**Ver. 43.** *And hate thy enemy.* The words of the law (Leviticus xix. 18.) are only these: *thou shalt love thy friend as thyself*; but by a false gloss and inference, these words, *and hate thy enemy*, were added by the Jewish doctors. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** I come to establish the purity of the law, which they have corrupted. (Haydock)

**Ver. 46.** *The publicans.* These were the gatherers of the public taxes: a set of men, odious and infamous among the Jews, for their extortions and injustice. (Challoner)

**Ver. 48.** Jesus Christ here sums up his instructions by ordering us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect; i.e. to imitate, as far as our exertions, assisted by divine grace, can reach, the divine perfection. (Witham) --- See here the great superiority of the new over the old law. But let no one hence take occasion to despise the old. Let him examine attentively, says St. John Chrysostom, the different periods of time, and the persons to whom it was given; and he will admire the wisdom of the divine Legislator, and clearly perceive that it is one and the same Lord, and that each law was to the great advantage of mankind, and wisely adapted to the times of their promulgation. For, if among the first principles of rectitude, these sublime and eminent truths had been found, perhaps neither these, nor the less perfect rules of mortality would have been observed; whereas, by disposing of both in their proper time, the divine wisdom has employed both for the correction of the world. Hom xviii. Seeing then that we are thus blessed as to be called, and to be the children of so excellent a Father, we should endeavour, like Him, to excel in goodness, meekness, and charity; but above all in humility, which will secure to us the merit of good works, through the infinite merits of our divine Redeemer, Master, and model, Christ Jesus the Lord. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 3. *The humble.* See St. John Chrysostom hom. xv. in Matt. St. Jerome on this place in his Commentary on St. Matt. St. Augustine, Serm. Domini in Monte. tom. iii, part 2 p. 166, &c.

[2] Ver. 22. *Greek: eike*, sine causa, is in most Greek copies at present, as also in St. John Chrysostom; and so it is in the Protestant translation. But St. Jerome, who examined this reading, says positively that *Greek: eike* was wanting in the true copies. In quibusdam Codicibus additur *sine causa*, Cæterum in veris definita sententia est, et ira penitus tollitur.

[3] Ver. 22. *Raca.* St. Augustine (Serm. Domini in Monte. p. 174) affirms it to be, non vocem significantem aliquid, sed indignantis animi motum, &c.

[4] Ver. 22. reus erit Concilii, *Greek: to sunedrio.*

[5] Ver. 22. gehennæ ignis, *Greek: enochos estai eis ten geennan tou puros.*

[6] Ver. 39. Non resistere malo, *Greek: to ponero*, as before, a malo est, *Greek: ek tou ponerou estin.* In both places *Greek: o poneros*, seems to signify an evil spirit, or an evil man.

[7] Ver. 41. Vade cum eo et alia duo. In the ordinary Greek copies, we only read *Greek: upage*

*met autou duo.* But in other manuscripts *Greek: upage met autou eti alla duo.*

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## MATTHEW 6

**Ver. 1.** *Your justice;*[1] in the common Greek copies, your alms, which seems to be the sense in this place. (Witham) --- Hereby it is plain that good works are justice, and that man doing them doth justice, and is thereby just and justified, and not by faith only. All which justice of a christian man, our Saviour here compriseth in the three eminent good works, alms deeds, prayer, and fasting. (St. Augustine lib. perf. just. chap. viii.) So that to give alms is to do justice, and the works of mercy are justice. (St. Augustine, in Psalm xlix, ver. 5.) (Bristow) --- St. Gregory says, that the man who by his virtuous actions would gain the applause of men, quits at an easy rate a treasure of immense value; for, with what he might purchase the kingdom of heaven, he only seeks to acquire the transitory applause of mortals. This precept of Christ, says St. John Chrysostom, beautifully evinces the solicitude and unspeakable goodness of God, lest we should have the labour of performing good works, and on account of evil motives be deprived of our reward. (Hom. xix.) "Shut up alms in the heart of the poor." (Ecclesiasticus xxix. 15.)

**Ver. 2.** This must be understood figuratively, that we must avoid all ostentation in the performance of our good works. Many respectable authors are of opinion, that it was customary with the Pharisees and other hypocrites, to assemble the poor they designed to relieve by sound of trumpet. (Menochius) --- Let us avoid vain glory, the agreeable plunderer of our good works, the pleasant enemy of our souls, which presents its poison to us under the appearance of honey. (St. Basil)

**Ver. 3.** Be content to have God for witness to your good works, who alone has power to reward you for them. They will be disclosed soon enough to man, when at the day of general retribution the good and the evil will be brought to light, and every one shall be rewarded according to his works. (Haydock)

**Ver. 4.** This repaying or rewarding of good works, so often mentioned here by Jesus Christ, clearly evinces that good works are meritorious, and that we may do them with a view to a reward, as David did, propter retributionem. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** Hypocrisy is forbidden in all these three good works of justice, but not the doing of them openly for the glory of God, the edification of our neighbour, and our own salvation. Let your light so shine before men, i.e. let your work be so done in public, that the intention remain in secret. (St. Gregory)

**Ver. 6.** Because he who should pray in his chamber, and at the same time desire it to be known by men, that he might thence receive vain glory, might truly be said to pray in the street, and sound a trumpet before him: whilst he, who though he pray in public, seeks not thence any vain glory, acts the same as if he prayed in his chamber. (Menochius) --- Jesus Christ went up to the temple, to attend public worship on the festival days.

**Ver. 7.** Long prayer is not here forbidden; for Christ himself spent whole nights in prayer: and he sayeth, we must pray always; and the apostle, that we must pray without intermission, 1 Thessalonians v.; and the holy Church hath had from the beginning her canonical hours for prayer, but rhetorical and elaborate prayer, as if we thought to persuade God by our eloquence, is forbidden; the collects of the Church are most brief and most effectual. (St. Augustine, ep. 121. chap. viii, ix, x.) (Bristow) --- Perseverance in prayer is recommended us by the example of the poor widow, who by her importunity prevailed over the unjust judge. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xix.) --- The Greek word means, to babble or trifle.

**Ver. 9.** As God is the common Father of all, we pray for all. Let none fear on account of their lowly station here, for all are comprised in the same heavenly nobility. ... By saying, "who art in heaven," he does not mean to insinuate that he is *there* only, but he wishes to withdraw the humble petitioner from earth, and fix his attention on heaven. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xx.) Other prayers are not forbidden. Jesus Christ prayed in different words (John, chap. viii.), and the apostles; (Acts i, 24,) but this is an example of the simple style to be used in prayer, and is applicable to all occasions. --- *Hallowed* be thy name, from the word *holy*; be held and kept holy, be glorified by us, and that not only by our words, but principally by the lives we lead. The honour and glory of God should be the principal subject of our prayers, and the ultimate end of our every action; every other thing must be subordinate to this. (Haydock)

**Ver. 10.** Those who desire to arrive at the kingdom of heaven, must endeavour so to order their life and conversation, as if they were already conversing in heaven. This petition is also to be understood for the accomplishment of the divine will in every part of the world, for the extirpation of error, and explosion of vice, that truth and virtue may everywhere obtain, and heaven and earth differ no more in honouring the supreme majesty of God. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xx.)

**Ver. 11.** *Our supersubstantial bread.*[2] So it is at present in the Latin text: yet the same Greek word in St. Luke, is translated *daily bread*, as we say it in our Lord's prayer, and as it was used to be said in the second or third age, as we find by Tertullian and St. Cyprian. Perhaps the Latin word, *supersubstantialis*, may bear the same sense as daily bread, or bread that we daily stand in need of; for it need not be taken for supernatural bread, but for bread which is daily *added*, to maintain and support the substance of our bodies. (Witham) --- In St. Luke the same word is rendered *daily bread*. It is understood of the bread of life, which we receive in the blessed sacrament. (Challoner) --- It is also understood of the supernatural support of the grace of God, and especially of the bread of life received in the blessed eucharist. (Haydock) --- As we are only to pray for our daily bread, we are not to be over solicitous for the morrow, nor for the things of this earth, but being satisfied with what is necessary, turn all our thoughts to the joys of heaven. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xx.)

**Ver. 12.** Of all the petitions this alone is repeated twice. God puts our judgment in our own hands, that none might complain, being the author of his own sentence. He could have forgiven us our sins without this condition, but he consulted our good, in affording us opportunities of practising daily the virtues of piety and mildness. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xx.) --- These debts signify not only *mortal* but *venial* sins, as St. Augustine often teaches. Therefore every man, be he ever so just, yet because he cannot live without venial sin, out to say this prayer. (Cont. 2 epis. Pelag. lib. i. chap. 14.) --- (lib. xxi. de civit. Dei. chap. xxvii.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 13.** God is not the tempter of evil, or author of sin. (James i. 13.) He tempteth no man: we pray that he would not suffer the devil to tempt us above our strength: that he would remove the temptations, or enable us to overcome them, and deliver us from evil, particularly the evil of sin, which is the first, and the greatest, and the true efficient cause of all evils. (Haydock) --- In the Greek we here read, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory; which words are found in some old Greek liturgies, and there is every appearance that they have thence slipped into the text of St. Matthew. They do not occur in St. Luke (vi. 4.), nor in any one of the old Latin copies, nor yet in the most ancient of the Greek texts. The holy Fathers prior to St. John Chrysostom, as Grotius observes, who have explained the Lord's prayer, never mention these words. --- And not being found in Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, &c., nor in the Vatican Greek copy, nor in the Cambridge manuscripts. &c. as Dr. Wells also observes, it seems certain that they were only a pious conclusion, or doxology, with which the Greeks of the fourth age began to conclude their prayers, much after the same manner as, *Glory be to the Father*, &c. was added to the end of each psalm. We may reasonably presume, that these words at first were in the margin of some copies, and afterwards by some transcribers taken into the text itself. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** Here he again recommendeth the forgiving of others, as the means of obtaining

forgiveness. (Haydock)

**Ver. 16.** He condemns not public fasts as prescribed to the people of God, (Judges xx. 26. 2 Esdras ix. Joel ii. 15. John iii.) but fasting through vain glory, and for the esteem of men. (Bristow)

**Ver. 17.** The forty days' fast, my dear brethren, is not an observance peculiar to ourselves; it is kept by all who unite with us in the profession of the same faith. Nor is it without reason that the fast of Christ should be an observance common to all Christians. What is more reasonable, than that the different members should follow the example of the head. If we have been made partakers with him of good, why not also of evil. Is it generous to exempt ourselves from every thing that is painful, and with to partake with him in all that is agreeable? With such dispositions, we are members unworthy of such a head. ... Is it much for us to fast with Christ, who expect to sit at the table of his Father with him? Is it much for the members to suffer with the head, when we expect to be made one day partakers with him glory? Happy the man who shall imitate such a Master. He shall accompany him whithersoever he goes. (St. Bernard Serm, in Quad.) --- Wherefore, my dear brethren, if the taste only has caused us to offend God, let the taste only fast, and it will be enough. But if the other members also have sinned, let them also fast. Let the eye fast, if it has been the cause of sin to the soul; let the ear fast, the tongue, the hand, and the soul itself. Let the eye fast from beholding objects, which are only calculated to excite curiosity and vanity; that being now humbled, it may be restrained to repentance, which before wandered in guilt. Let the ear fast from listening to idle stories and words that have no reference to salvation. Let the tongue fast from detraction and murmuring, from unprofitable and sacrilegious discourse; sometimes also, out of respect to holy silence, from speaking what appears necessary and profitable. Let the hand also fast from useless works, and from every action that is not commanded. But above all, let the soul fast from sin and the doing of its own will. Without these fasts, all others will not be accepted by the Lord. (St. Bernard, Serm. 2 de Jejun. Quad.) --- Fast from what is in itself lawful, that you may receive pardon for what you have formerly done amiss. Redeem an eternal fast by a short and transitory one. For we have deserved hell fire, where there will be no food, no consolation, no end; where the rich man begs for a drop of water, and is not worthy to receive it. A truly good and salutary fast, the observance of which frees us from eternal punishment, by obtaining for us in this life the remission of our sins. Nor is it only the remission of former transgressions, but likewise a preservative against future sin, by meriting for us grace to enable us to avoid those faults we might otherwise have committed. I will add another advantage, which results from tasting, one which I hope I am not deceived in saying you have frequently experienced. It gives devotion and confidence to prayer. Observe how closely prayer and fasting are connected. Prayer gives us power to fast, fasting enables us to pray. Fasting gives strength to our prayer, praying sanctifies our fast, and renders it worthy of acceptance before the Lord. (St. Bernard, Serm. de Orat. & [Jejun.]

**Ver. 20.** By doing good works, distributing your superfluities to the indigent. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22.** Every action is lighted or directed by the intention. If the intention be upright, the whole body of the action is good, provided it proceed not from a false conscience. If the intention be bad, how bad must be the action! Christ does not here speak of an exterior, but an interior eye. He, therefore, who directs all his thoughts to God, may justly be said to have his eye lightsome, and consequently his heart undefiled with worldly affections; but he who has all his thoughts corrupted with carnal desires is, beyond a doubt, enveloped in darkness. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 24.** Behold here a fresh motive to detach you from the love of riches, or mammon. We cannot both serve God and the world, the flesh and the spirit, justice and sin. The ultimate end of action must be one, either for this or for the next life. (Haydock)

**Ver. 25.** A prudent provision is not prohibited, but that over-solicitude which draws the soul, the heart, and its affections from God, and his sweet all-ruling providence, to sink and degrade them in empty pursuits, which can never fill the soul. (Haydock) --- *Be not solicitous*;[4] i.e. too



solicitous with a trouble and anxiety of mind, as appears by the Greek. --- *For your life*; lit. *for your soul*, which many times is put for life. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** Why should the children of God fear want, when we behold the very birds of the air do not go unprovided? Moreover, what possible good can this anxiety, this diffidence procure them? Almighty God gives life and growth, which you cannot do with all your solicitude, however intensely you think. Apollo may plant, Paul may water, but God alone can give the increase. (1 Corinthians iii. 6.) Of how much greater consequence is it then to love and serve Him, and to live for Him alone! (Haydock)

**Ver. 30.** "O ye of little faith;" that is, of little confidence in God and his providence. (Menochius)

**Ver. 32.** It is not without reason that men are in such great fear and distress, when they are so blind as to imagine that their happiness in this life is ruled by fate. But such as know that they are entirely governed by the will of God, know also that a store is laid up for them in his hands. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 33.** [5] Your Father knoweth; he does not say God knoweth, but your Father, to teach us to apply to him with greater confidence. (St. John Chrysostom) --- He that delivers himself entirely into the hands of God, may rest secure both in prosperity and adversity, knowing that he is governed by a tender Father. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 34.** The morrow will bring with it cares enough, to occupy you in providing what will then be necessary for you. Christ does not prohibit all care about temporal concerns, but only what hinders us from seeking the kingdom of heaven in the first instance; or what makes us esteem more the things of this world, than those of the next. (Menochius) --- The affliction and labour which each day brings with it is a sufficient trial, nor ought we seek by our anxiety for labour and affliction before it arrive; for why should man forestall the evil day, which has not arrived, and perhaps may never arrive? But again, this does not prohibit us from making a provision for the morrow, for Jesus Christ does not say to us, provide not for the morrow, but, be not solicitous for to-morrow. (Estius, in different location) He who supplied our wants to-day, will supply them also to-morrow. The evil of the day is sufficient, without borrowing to-morrow's burden to increase the load. It is the curse of the envious and wicked to be self-tormented, whilst they who live by faith, can always rejoice in hope, the true balm of every Christian's breast, the best friend of all in distress.

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[1] Ver. 1. Justitiam. In almost all Greek copies, *Greek: eleemosunen*.

[2] Ver. 7. Nolite multum loqui, *Greek: me battologesete*, which is balbutire, nugari, &c.

[3] Ver. 11. Supersubstantialem, *Greek: epiousion*, which Greek word is translated, quotidianam, Luke xi. 3. So it is expounded by St. John Chrysostom *Greek: om xv. p. 138. Greek: ti estin ton arton ton epiousion*. St. Gregory of Nyssa (tom. i, p. 750, Edit. Paris. an. 1638) calls it, *Greek: o artos tes semerines chreias esti*. Panis hodiernæ, or quotidianæ necessitatis. Suidas expounds it, *Greek: o te onsia emon armozon*, qui est conveniens nostræ substantiæ or *Greek: o kathemerinos*, quotidianus.

[4] Ver. 25. *Greek: Me merimnate*. It does not seem well translated, take no thought.

[5] Ver. 33. Et justitiam ejus, *Greek: dikaiosunen autou*, non *Greek: autes*, Dei, not Regni.

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## MATTHEW 7

**Ver. 1.** *Judge not,*[1] or condemn not others rashly, that you may not be judged or condemned. (Witham) --- St. Jerome observes, Christ does not altogether forbid judging, but directs us how to judge. Where the thing does not regard us, we should not undertake to judge. Where it well bear a favourable interpretation, we should not condemn. Magistrates and superiors, whose office and duty require them to judge faults, and for their prevention to condemn and punish them, must be guided by evidence, and always lean towards the side of mercy, where there are mitigating circumstances. Barefaced vice and notorious sinners should be condemned and reprobated by all. (Haydock) --- In this place, nothing more is meant than that we should always interpret our neighbor's actions in the most favourable light. God permits us to judge of such actions as cannot be done with a right intention, as murder. As to indifferent actions, we must always judge in the most favourable sense. There are two things in which we must be particularly on our guard: 1. With what intention such an action was done. 2. Whether the person who appears wicked will not become good. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 2.** This rule, which God will infallibly follow, should put a check to the freedom with which we so frequently condemn our neighbour. (Haydock) --- As we behave towards our neighbours, interpreting their actions with charitableness, and excusing their intentions with mildness; or, on the contrary, judging them with severity, and condemning them without pity; so shall we receive our judgment. (Menochius) --- As the pardon of our sins is proportioned to the pardon we afford to others, so also will our judgment be proportioned to the judgment we pass on others. If our neighbour be surprised by sin, we must not reproach or confound him for it, but mildly admonish him. Correct your brother, not as an enemy, taking revenge, but as a physician, administering appropriate remedies, assisting him with prudent counsels, and strengthening him in the love of God. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiii.)

**Ver. 3.** "*Mote and beam,*" light and grievous sins. (Menochius)

**Ver. 5.** *Thou hypocrites, cast out first the beam,* &c. Correct first thy own greater faults, before thou censure the lesser failings of others. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Give not that which is holy,* holy things, (as in the Greek) *to dogs;* i.e. to scandalous libertines, or infidels, who are not worthy to partake of divine mysteries and sacraments, who sacrilegiously abuse them, and *trample them under their feet,* as hogs do pearls. (Witham) --- The sacred mysteries should not be given to those that are not properly instructed in the sublime nature of them; nor should we hold any communication of religion with those that are enemies to the truths of Christ, which they tread under their feet and treat contemptuously, and will be so far from having any more friendship for you on account of such a criminal complaisance, that it is more probable they will betray you and turn against you. (Haydock)

**Ver. 7.** After having preached these great and wonderful truths, after having commanded his apostles to keep themselves free from the vices of mankind, and make themselves like not to angels or archangels only, but to the Lord of all things; and not only observe justice themselves, but likewise to labour for the correction of others, lest they should be disheartened at these almost insurmountable difficulties: our Redeemer subjoins, *Ask, and you shall receive,* &c. When we offer our petitions to the Almighty, we must imitate the example of Solomon, who immediately obtained what he asked of the Lord, because he asked what he ought. Two things, therefore, are necessary to every prayer, that it be offered up with perseverance and fervour, and that it contain a lawful prayer. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiv.) --- The reasons why so many do not obtain the effects of their prayers, are, --- 1st. Because they ask for what is evil; and he that makes such a request, offers the Almighty an intolerable injury by wishing to make him, as it were, the author of evil: 2nd. Although what they ask be not evil, they seek it for an evil end. (St. James iv.): 3rd. Because they who pray, are themselves wicked; (St. John ix.) for God doth not hear sinners: 4th. Because they ask with no faith, or with faith weak and wavering: (St. James i.) 5th. Because although what we ask be good in itself, yet the Almighty refuses it, in order to grant us a greater good: 6th. Because God wishes us to persevere, as he declares in the parable of the friend

asking bread, Luke, ch. ii.; and that we may esteem his gifts the more: 7th. We do not always receive what we beg, because, according to St. Augustine, (lib. ii, de Serm. Dom. et epis. 34, ad Paulinum) God often does not grant us what we petition for, that he may grant us something more useful and profitable. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 8.** Whatever we ask necessary to salvation with humility, fervour, perseverance, and other due circumstances, we may be assured God will grant when it is best for us. If we do not obtain what we pray for, we must suppose it is not conducive to our salvation, in comparison of which all else is of little moment. (Haydock)

**Ver. 9.** Lest any one considering the great inequality between God and man, should despair of obtaining favours of God, and therefore should not dare to offer up his petitions, he immediately introduces this similitude of the Father; so that if we were on the point of despairing on account of our sins, from his fatherly tenderness we might still have hopes. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 12.** *For this is the law and the prophets;* that is, all precepts that regard our neighbour are directed by this golden rule, *do as you would be done by.* (Witham) --- The whole law and all the duties between man and man, inculcated by the prophets, have this principle for foundation. The Roman emperor Alexander Severus, is related to have said, that he esteemed the Christians for their acting on this principle. (Haydock) --- This is the sum of the law and of the prophets, the whole law of the Jews. (Menochius)

**Ver. 13.** *Enter ye in at the narrow gate, &c.* The doctrine of these two verses needs no commentary, but deserve serious attention. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** Our Saviour in another place says, my yoke is sweet, and my burthen light. How comes it then that so few bear it, or how can we reconcile these texts together? The answer is at hand; for if soldiers and mariners esteem wounds, storms, and shipwreck, easy to be borne with, in hopes of temporal rewards, surely no one can complain that the duties of a Christian are difficult, when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It may also be added that God, by his heavenly consolations, makes them not only supportable, but even easy and pleasant. Thus the martyrs occasionally did not feel their torments through the sweet unction of divine love, and the excessive joy which God poured into their souls. (Haydock)

**Ver. 15.** *In the clothing of sheep.* Beware of hypocrites, with their outward appearance of sanctity, and sound doctrine --- *by their fruits you shall know them.* Such hypocrites can scarcely ever continue constant in the practice of what is good. (Witham) --- Heretics usually affect an extraordinary appearance of zeal and holiness, calling themselves evangelical preachers and teachers of the gospel, as if that Church which preceded them, and which descends by an uninterrupted succession from the apostles, did not teach the pure gospel of Christ. (Haydock) --- *Beware of false prophets,* or heretics. They are far more dangerous than the Jews, who being rejected by the apostles, are also avoided by Christians, but these having the appearance of Christianity, having churches, sacraments, &c. &c. deceive many. These are the rapacious wolves, of whom St. Paul speaks, Acts xx. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xix.) Origen styles them, the gates of death, and the path to hell. (Com. in Job. lib. i. Tom. 2.)

**Ver. 16.** As the true Church is known by the four marks of its being one, holy, catholic, and apostolical, so heretics and false teachers are known by certain vices, and the pernicious effects of their novelties in religion. As the true Church is one, by its members submitting with humility to the authority established by Christ, (*he that will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as the heathen and the publican.* Matthew xviii. 17.) so are false teachers known by their separation from the ancient Church, and their divisions among themselves, the necessary consequences of rebelling against the authority established by Christ, and alone capable of determining controversies. The same pride and other secret vices which make them *despise government*, (2 Peter ii. 10.) make them also *not afraid to bring in sects of perdition, blaspheming*, and this in civil government as well as ecclesiastical. Those that call themselves Reformers, in the beginning of

the 16th century, of all others were remarkable in this. What bloody tumults and wars were there not produced in Germany, by the first Reformers in that country! Calvin overturned the government of Geneva; and his followers, under the name Hugonots, filled France for a great length of time with slaughter and civil wars, frequently shaking the throne itself. In this country, the first cause of its separation from the universal Church, was the unbridled passion of a tyrant: the effects were adultery, and the murder of the successive queens that he had taken to his adulterous bed. In the reign of his successor, the insatiate avarice of a corrupt nobility, gratified with the sacrilegious plunder of the Church, established what is called the Reformation. The fear of being compelled to disgorge the fruits of their rapine, contributed much to the confirmation of that order of things in the reign of Elizabeth. She was inclined to it by the circumstances of her birth, which could not be legitimate, if her father's marriage with Catharine of Arragon was valid, as the first authority in the Catholic Church had declared. The natural spirit of this heresy, though checked a while and kept under the despotical government of this queen, appeared in its own colours soon after, and produced its natural fruits in the turbulence of the times that succeeded, and the multiplicity of sects that are continually springing up to this very day. --- As the true Church is holy, recommending various exercises of religion tending to purify human nature, and render men holy, as fasting, confession of sins, evangelical counsels, &c. so false teachers cast off all these, *promising liberty*, (2 Peter ii. 16.) and giving full rein to the lustful passions, thus giving a liberty of living, as well as a liberty of believing. --- Another fruit of false teachers is, separation from what was the Universal Church before their time, and which continues to be still the far greater part, not being confined to one state or country. If some modern principles, of not allowing any communion of religion out of each state, were admitted, as many religions should have been established by heaven as men think proper to establish different states; nor could Christ have given one for all mankind, under whatever state or form of government they might live. --- Finally, false teachers are to be known by their not being able to shew, that they have received their doctrine and mission from the apostles, in a regular succession from them. Some of our modern divines would spurn at the idea of holding their doctrine and orders from the Catholic Church, such as it existed at the time of the Reformation, which is precisely such as it exists at the present moment. --- In answer to this it has been retorted, that the fruits of the Catholic religion have been as bad, or worse; and the horrors of the French revolution are particularly mentioned, as a proof. ... That great crimes have been committed by those who professed themselves Catholics, is not denied; but that they were prompted to them by the nature of their religion, is certainly not admitted. The revolution of France in particular, was the effect of the people falling off from their religion. As well may the Puritans, that brought Charles to the block, be said to be Catholics, because they or their parents once had been such: as well may the present bench of Protestant bishops be said to be Catholics, because the bishops of their sees once were so; or that Robespierre, Marat, and the Jacobins that persecuted catholicity in France, and brought its too indulgent sovereigns to the guillotine, were Catholics, or directed in the least by Catholic principles. (Haydock)

**Ver. 17.** It is not to be understood from this text, that a man who is once bad can never bring forth good fruit; but that as long as he remains in the state of sin, he cannot perform any meritorious action. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiv.)

**Ver. 18.** *A good tree cannot yield bad fruit, &c.* Not but that both good and bad men may change their lives. This, according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers, is only to be understood while they remain such. If a bad tree begin to produce good fruit, it becomes a good tree, &c. (Witham) --- For not those who do one or two good works are just, but those who continue permanently to do good: in the same manner, not those who commit one or two bad actions are wicked, but those who continue in evil. (Menochius)

**Ver. 21.** Here Jesus Christ shews, that it is not sufficient to believe in him and hear his words, but that in order to salvation, we must join works with faith; for in this shall we be examined at the last day. (Menochius) --- Without faith they could not cry out, *Lord, Lord*. (Romans x.) But the strongest faith without the works of justice, will not be available to salvation. (1 Corinthians xiii.) (Bristow) --- Many who have the lord continually in their mouths, but care little about *putting on*

*the Lord*, or penetrating themselves with his true spirit, will find their presumption, and the false consciences they have made to themselves, woefully disappointed. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22.** *Have not we prophesied in thy name?* The gift of prophecy, and of doing miracles, many sometimes be granted to bad men, as to Caiphas, and Balaam. (Witham) --- Under the name of *prophets*, the Hebrews comprised not only such as predicted future events, but also in general all such as gave themselves out for inspired, or who undertook teaching and interpreting the holy Scriptures; and here by *prophesying* is understood, in a general acceptation, all public functions, predicting futurity, expounding Scripture, instructing the people, preaching, &c. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 23.** So as to approve and reward your works. Here he shews that even prophecy and miracles will not save us without good works. (Menochius) --- How much less will faith, unassisted by good works, preserve us from condemnation. (Haydock) --- the gift of miracles is bestowed on men not for their own good, but for the advantage of others. We must not then be surprised if men, who had indeed faith in Christ, but whose lives did not correspond with their faith, should be honoured with these extraordinary gifts, since the Almighty sometimes employs as his instruments in working similar wonders, men destitute both of faith and virtue. Balaam, void of faith and probity, still by the will of God, prophesied for the advantage of others. To Pharaoh and Nabuchodonosor were revealed future events of the greatest moment; and the wicked Judas himself cast out devils. Therefore St. Paul said, "if I had all faith so as to remove mountains, and if I knew all mysteries, and was possessed of all wisdom, but had not charity, I am nothing." (St. John Chrysostom, Hom. xv.)

**Ver. 24.** In the Greek text, "I will compare him;" an apposite comparison, to shew the necessity of good works. It is the duty of each individual to erect this spiritual edifice of good works in the interior of his soul, which may be able to resist all the attacks of our spiritual enemy: whilst those men who have true faith and no works are compared to a fool, and are sure to perish. (Menochius) --- Here again our Saviour dispenses his rewards to such as order their lives according to his instructions; but as before he promised the kingdom of heaven, divine consolations, and other rewards, so here he promises them the numberless blessings attendant on virtue in this life. The just alone are surrounded with virtue as with a strong guard, and amidst the high swelling waves of worldly troubles, enjoy a calm and unchangeable tranquillity. Thus was Job strengthened by his virtue against the attacks both of men and satan. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxv.)

**Ver. 25.** The Scribes and Pharisees only explained the law, and laid open the promises of Moses, whereas our Saviour gives new laws, and makes new promises in his own name; But I say to you, &c. The energy also with which our Saviour spoke, together with the miracles which he wrought, had far greater influence on the minds of the people than the frigid manner in which the Scribes delivered their doctrines. (Menochius)

**Ver. 26.** Nothing can be more foolish than to raise an edifice on sand: it carries punishment with it, causing indeed abundance of labour, but yielding neither reward nor repose. The slaves of malice, luxury, and voluptuousness, labour in the pursuit of their desires, yet not only receive no reward, but, on the contrary, the greatest punishment. They sow in the flesh, from the flesh they shall reap corruption. (Galatians vi.) (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxv.)

**Ver. 27.** Such again shall be the end of all false prophets. Their death shall be in the same proportion, ignominious and miserable, as their life had been glorious and attractive. They shall be punished with so much greater severity, than others, as their sins have proceeded from greater knowledge and greater malice. (Haydock)

**Ver. 28.** With reason were the people enraptured with his doctrines; for he taught as having authority from himself, and not like their doctors, who only spoke in the name of Moses, and whose only ambition was to please, and not to correct. In the Greek text there is only mention of the Scribes or doctors, but not of the Pharisees.

**Ver. 29.** He taught as one having power, *Greek: exousian*, to found a law of his own. Hence he said: Ego autem dico vobis; "But I say to you, " viz. as a legislator, announcing to you not the law of Moses, or of any other, but my own law. (Estius, in different location) --- All agree that St. Matthew anticipates the sermon on the mount, in order thus to prefix the doctrines of Christ to the account of his miracles; for we cannot doubt that the discourse on the mount, which is mentioned by St. Matthew, is the same as that recorded by St. Luke. The beginning, the middle, and the conclusion correspond with each other. If St. Matthew mentions some particulars omitted by St. Luke, it is because his design was to collect together several instructions, which Jesus delivered on different occasions; and these, for the most part, are to be found in other parts of St. Luke. --- This admirable sermon may be divided into three parts, viz. the exordium, the body of the discourse, and the conclusion. The exordium comprises the eight beatitudes, and merits our most serious attention. The body of the discourse is chiefly addressed to the apostles, whom Jesus had recently chosen, in order to instil into them, and all succeeding pastors of the Church, a right sense of the great duties belonging to their ministry; and, in the second place, it refers to all the faithful in general. The conclusion consists of an exhortation to a life of piety, and contains several advices, some of which chiefly regard pastors, others indiscriminately all the faithful in general. --- May this excellent abridgment of thy doctrine, O Jesus! be the rule of our manners, the pattern of our life. Amen. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 1. Nolite judicare, *Greek: krinein*, which signifies either to judge, or to condemn.

[2] Ver. 18. Non potest Arbor bona, &c. St. Jerome on this place, brings divers examples to shew, that men's natures are not necessarily or unchangeably good or bad. See St. Augustine, lib. ii. de Serm. Domini in Monte. chap. xxiv. p. 232. Non potest esse nix calida, cum enim calida esse cæperit, non jam eam nivem, sed aquam vocamus. See also St. John Chrysostom *Greek: om kg*, pag. 168. linea 1. Edit. Savil.

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## MATTHEW 8

**Ver. 1.** *And when he was come down from the mountain.* St. Matthew says, that Jesus Christ *ascended* the mountain, and *sat down* to teach the people; while St. Luke affirms, that he *descended*, and *stood* in a plain place. But there is no contradiction; for he first ascended to the top of the mountain, and then descended to an even plain, which formed part of the descent. Here he *stood* for a while, and cured the sick, as mentioned by St. Luke; but afterwards, according to the relation of St. Matthew, he *sat down*, which was the usual posture of the Jewish doctors. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 2.** As the three evangelists relate the cure of the leper in nearly the same words, and with the same circumstances, we may conclude they speak of the same miracles. St. Matthew alone seems to have observed the time and order of this transaction, viz. after the sermon of the mount; the other two anticipate it. The Bible de Vence seems to infer, from the connection St. Matthew makes between the sermon of the mount and the cure of the leper, that it was not the same leper as that mentioned, Mark i. 40. Luke v. 12. (Bible de Vence) --- *Adored him.* In St. Mark it is said, *kneeling down*, chap. i. 40. In St. Luke, *prostrating on his face*. It is true, none of these expressions do always signify the adoration or worship which is due to God alone, as may appear by several examples in the Old and New Testament; yet this man, by divine inspiration, might know our blessed Saviour to be both God and man. (Witham) --- "Make me clean;" literally, "purify me;" the law treated lepers as impure. (Bible de Vence) --- The leper, by thus addressing our Saviour acknowledges his supreme power and authority, and shews his great faith and earnestness, falling on his knees, as St. Luke relates it. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi.) Our prayer should be such with great faith and confidence, qualified with profound humility, and entire

diffidence of self.

**Ver. 3.** *Jesus, stretching forth his hand, touched him.* By the law of Moses, whosoever touched a leper, contracted a *legal uncleanness*: but not by touching in order to heal him, says Theophylactus. Besides, Christ would teach them that he was not subject to this law. (Witham) --- "Touched him." To shew, says St. Cyprian, that his body being united to the Divinity, had the power of healing and giving life. Also to shew that the old law, which forbade the touching of lepers, had no power over him; and that so far from being defiled by touching him, he even cleansed him who was defiled with it. (St. Ambrose) --- When the apostles healed the lame man, they did not attribute it to their own power, but said to the Jews: Why do you wonder at this? But when our Saviour heals the leper, stretching out his hand, to shew he was going to act of his own power, and independently of the law, he said: "I will. Be thou clean;" to evince that the cure was effected by the operation of his own divine will. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi.)

**Ver. 4.** *For a testimony to them.* That is, when the priest finds thee truly cured, make that offering which is ordained in the law. (Witham) --- He did this to give us an example of humility, and that the priests, by approving of his miracle, and being made witnesses to it, might be inexcusable, if they can still call him a transgressor of the law, and prevaricator. He moreover gives this public testimony to them of his divine origin. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi.) St. John Chrysostom, in his third book on the priesthood, says: "the priests of the old law had authority and privilege only to discern who were healed of leprosy, and to denounce the same to the people; but the priests of the new law have power to purify, in very deed, the filth of the soul. Therefore, whoever despiseth them, is more worthy to be punished than the rebel Dathan and his accomplices." Our Saviour willeth him to go and offer his gift or sacrifice, according as Moses prescribed in that case, because the other sacrifice, being the holiest of all holies, viz. his body, was not yet begun. (St. Augustine, lib. ii. & Evang. ii. 3. & cont. adver. leg. & Proph. lib. i. chap. 19, 20.)

**Ver. 5.** *A centurion.* The same who (Luke vii. 3.) is said to have sent messengers to our Saviour. But there is no contradiction: for what a man does by his servants, or friends, he is many times said to do himself. He came not in person out of humanity, but by his message shewed an extraordinary faith. (Witham) --- The centurion shews a much stronger faith in the power of Christ, than those who let down the sick man through the roof, because he thought the word of Christ alone sufficient to raise the deceased. And our Saviour, to reward his confidence, not only grants his petition, as he does on other occasions, but promises to go with him to his house to heal his servant. St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvii. The centurion was a Gentile, an officer in the Roman army. According to St. Luke he did not come to him in person, but sent messengers to him, who desired him come: "Lord, I am not worthy," &c. These difficulties may be easily removed. A person is said to appear before the judge, when his council appears for him; so he may be that he first sent his messengers, and afterwards went himself. As to the second difficulty, it may be said the messengers added that of their own accord, as appears from the text of St. Luke. (Menochius) --- St. Augustine is of opinion that he did not go himself in person, for he thought himself unworthy, but that he sent first the ancients of the Jews, and then his friends, which last were to address Jesus in his name and with his words. (lib. ii. de cons. Evang. chap. xx.) Thus we see that the request of the two sons of Zebedee was made by themselves to Jesus Christ, according to St. Mark; (x. 35,) and by the mouth of their mother, according to St. Matthew, xx. 20.

**Ver. 7.** On this occasion our Saviour does what he never did before: every where indeed he meets the will of his supplicants, but here he runs before his request, saying: "I will come;" and this he does to teach us to imitate the virtue of the centurion.

**Ver. 8.** Origen says, when thou eatest and drinkest the body and blood of our Lord, he entereth under thy roof. Thou also, therefore, humbling thyself, say: Domine, non sum dignus; Lord, I am not worth, &c. So said St. John Chrysostom in his mass, Litturg. Græc. sub finem; and so doth the Catholic Church say at this day in every mass. (See St. Augustine, Ep. cxviii. ad Janu.) (Bristow) --- See Luke vii. 6.

**Ver. 10.** Christ here compares the faith of the centurion with that of the people in general, and not with that of his blessed mother and the apostles, whose faith was beyond a doubt much greater. (Menochius) --- The Greek says, "neither in Israel." --- *Jesus hearing this, marvelled.* That is, by his outward carriage, says St. Augustine seemed to admire: but knowing all things, he could not properly admire any thing. --- *I have not found so great faith in Israel.* This need not be understood of every one, but of those whom he had cured. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** In consequence of the faith of this Gentile, Jesus Christ takes occasion to declare that many Gentiles would be called to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, which is frequently represented under the figure of a feast. See chap. xxii. 2; Luke xii. 29. and xvi. 16; Apocalypse xix. 9. In ancient times, the guests were reclined on beds when they took their means. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 12.** Whilst the Jews, who glory in descending from the patriarchs, and who, on this title, are children and heirs of the celestial kingdom which had been promised them, shall be excluded for having rendered themselves unworthy by their unbelief. (Bible de Vence) --- *Shall be cast out into exterior darkness.* This is spoken so as to imply a comparison to a supper in a great room, with a number of lights, when they who are turned out in the night, stand without, starving, weeping, and gnashing their teeth. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Into Peter's house.* That is, which had been Peter's house; for now he had quitted house, and all things to follow Christ. (Witham) --- According to St. Mark, (i. 29,) and St. Luke, (iv. 38,) the cure of Peter's mother-in-law seems to have been performed previously to the sermon on the mount, of which St. Luke makes mention in chap. vi. We may suppose that St. Matthew mentions it in this order, on occasion of the miracle performed in the same place on the centurion's servant. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 17.** In the Greek of the seventy-two interpreters, for infirmities we have *Greek: amartias*, sins; but the evangelist refers this to our bodily infirmities, because, as St. John Chrysostom observes, diseases are the punishment of sins, and frequently arrive from the diseases of the soul. (Menochius) --- The text of Isaias here quoted, regards the Messiah literally. (Bible de Vence) --- *He took our infirmities.* The words signify both the distempers of the body and the infirmities of the soul, for Christ cured both. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** By the fox is meant craft and cunning, by the birds pride. Thus then our blessed Lord answered him; pride and deceit dwell in your heart, but you have left no place for the Son of Man to rest his head, who can rest only in the meek and humble. St. Augustine --- Jesus Christ rejected this scribe, because he wished to follow Jesus rather through the desire of glory and wealth, hoping to be great in his kingdom, than with the design of perfecting himself in virtue; so that our Saviour answers him: You cannot expect riches from me; who am poorer than the beasts of the field, or birds of the air; they have a place of rest, whereas I have none. (Menochius)

**Ver. 22.** *Let the dead bury their dead.* The first words, *let the dead*, cannot mean those that were dead by a corporal death; and therefore must needs be understood of those who were spiritually dead in sin. (Witham) --- Two similar answers are mentioned in Luke ix. 57, 60. Jesus Christ may have given the same answers on two different occasions. (Bible de Vence) --- God will not suffer us to go and bury a deceased parent, when he calls us to other employments. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 23.** This bark is the Catholic Church. The sea denotes the world, the winds and tempests shew the attempts of the wicked spirits to overturn the Church. The Lord seems to sleep, when he permits his Church to suffer persecution and other trials, which he permits, that he may prove her faith, and reward her virtue and merits. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiii. in Mat. viii.) The apostles had followed their divine Master. They were with him, and executing his orders, and it is under these circumstances they are overtaken with a storm. If their obedience to Jesus Christ, if his presence did not free them from danger, to what frightful storms do those persons expose



themselves, who undertake the voyage of the present life without him? What can they expect but to be tossed to and fro for a time, and at last miserably to founder? Faithful souls ought, from the example here offered them, to rise superior to every storm and tempest, by invoking the all-powerful and ever ready assistance of heaven, and by always calling in God to their help before they undertake any thing of moment. (Haydock)

**Ver. 25.** Should God appear to sleep, with the apostles, we should approach nearer to him, and awaken him with our repeated prayers, saying: "Lord, save us, or we perish." (Haydock) --- Had our Saviour been awake, the disciples would have been less afraid, or less sensible of the want of his assistance: he therefore slept, that they might be better prepared for the miracle he was about to work. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxviii.)

**Ver. 26.** Why are you fearful, having me with you? Do you suppose that sleep can take from me the knowledge of your danger, or the power of relieving you? (Haydock) --- *He commanded the winds.* Christ shewed himself Lord and Master of the sea and winds. His words in St. Mark (iv. 39,) demonstrate his authority: *Rising up he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea: Peace, be still.* (Witham) --- As before our Lord restored Peter's mother-in-law on the spot, not only to health, but to her former strength; so here he shews himself supreme Lord of all things, not only by commanding the winds to cease, but, moreover, by commanding a perfect calm to succeed. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiv.) How many times has he preserved his Catholic Church, when (to all human appearance, and abstracting from his infallible promises) she has been in the most imminent danger of perishing? How many times by a miracle, or interposition of his omnipotence, less sensible indeed, but not less real, has he rescued our souls, on the point of being swallowed up in the infernal abyss? (Haydock) --- He commands the mute elements to be subservient to his wish. He commands the sea, and it obeys him; he speaks to the winds and tempests, and they are hushed; he commands every creature, and they obey. Man, and man only, man honoured in a special manner by being made after the image and likeness of his Creator, to whom speech and reason are given, dares to disobey and despise his Creator. (St. Augustine, hom. in Mat.)

From this allegory of the ship and the storm, we may take occasion to speak of the various senses in which the words of Scripture may be occasionally taken. ... The sense of Scripture is twofold, *literal* and *spiritual*. The literal is that which the words immediately signify. The spiritual or mystic sense is that which things expressed by words mean, as in Genesis xxii, what is literally said of the immolation of Isaac, is spiritually understood of Christ; and in Colossians ii. 12, by the baptism of Christ, St. Paul means his burial. The spiritual sense in its various acceptations, is briefly and accurately given in the following distich:

Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,  
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.

**Ver. 28.** *Two that were possessed with devils.* St. Mark (chap. v.) and St. Luke (chap. viii.), in the same passage, mentions but one man, who is also said to be possessed with a *legion of devils*. Those evangelists seem to make mention only of one of them, because he might be much more fierce and famous than the other. (Witham) --- These sepulchres were caverns excavated in the rocks, which served them as places of retreat. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 29.** Before the time which God has marked to drive us from the world, and to bury us for ever in the prison of hell. (Bible de Vence) --- *What have we to do with thee?* Or what hast thou to do with us? what harm have we done thee? *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* That is, before the time and day of judgment, after which the torments and punishments of the devils will be increased. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *And not far from them.*[1] In all Greek copies at present we read, *There was afar off.* Beza himself here owns, that the Latin Vulgate is to be preferred before all Greek copies and manuscripts. (Witham) --- The Greco-Latin manuscript of Cambridge has not the word *non* in the Latin; but in the Latin of the ancient Vulgate it occurs. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 31.** *"Send us into the herd of swine."* According to St. Luke, they begged of him two things;

the first, that they might not be sent into hell, there to be tormented with more grievous torments, as they will be at the end of the world; the second, that they might be permitted to go into the herd of swine, that these being destroyed, the inhabitants of that country might be ill affected towards our Saviour, and refuse to receive him. The event seems to confirm this opinion. (Menochius)

**Ver. 32.** Many reasons might be brought why our Saviour suffered the devils to enter into the swine: 1. To shew that the devils had no power even over swine without his permission. 2. That such as were freed from their power, might acknowledge the greatness of the favour done them, by seeing from how great a multitude they were liberated. 3. To punish those Jewish citizens, who fed upon swine's flesh contrary to their law. And, 4. To shew how willingly the devils dwell in the hearts of those who are addicted to the voluptuous and carnal life, aptly designated by the swine. (Menochius) --- St. John Chrysostom says that our Saviour permitted the devils to enter the swine, not for their own sakes, but for our instruction. 1. That we might know how very desirous the enemy of our salvation is to bring upon us the greatest evils. 2. That the devil has not any power, even over swine, without the permission of God. And, 3. That these cruel fiends would, if the Almighty allowed them, inflict still more grievous torments on their unhappy slaves. (Hom. xxix.) Jesus Christ here confutes the Sadducean doctrine, which denies the existence of spirits, good or bad. (Haydock)

**Ver. 34.** *That he would depart from their coasts.* St. Jerome thinks these people did this out of a motive of humility, looking upon themselves unworthy of his presence: others judge that the loss of the swine made them apprehend lest Christ, being a Jew, might do them greater damages. (Witham) --- The fear lest his presence might cause them some fresh loss, seems to have overbalanced, in their estimation, the advantages they might have expected from his visit. (Bible de Vence) --- How often has our good Lord wished to visit us, to honour us with his sacred presence, to enrich us with his divine inspirations; and how often, like these Gerasens, have we desired him to depart from our territories? Some worldly interest, sensual enjoyment, or supine listlessness on our part, has occasioned us to neglect the proffered advantages. Oh! can there be more marked ingratitude than this! Oh! how shall we one day grieve for having lost, by our culpable indifference, immense spiritual treasures, which have been made over to others far more deserving than ourselves! Yes, the day will certainly arrive, when we shall value a single additional degree of the divine favor and grace, infinitely more than all the united honours, riches, and pleasures of this world. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 30. *Erat non longe*, but now in all Greek copies, *erat longe*, *Greek: en de makran*. Beza says the reading in the Latin is to be followed, *repugnante fide omnium Græcorum Codicum*, *sed rectius*.

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## MATTHEW 9

**Ver. 1.** The cure of the paralytic (ver. 2), is generally supposed to have been anterior in point of time, to the cure of two possessed persons, chap. viii. Carrieres supposes the contrary. (Bible de Vence) --- *Into his own city.* Not of Bethlehem, where he was born, nor of Nazareth, where he was brought up, but of Capharnaum, says St. John Chrysostom, where he is said to have dwelt since he began to preach. See Matthew iv. 13. (Witham) --- St. Jerome understands this city to be Nazareth, which was Christ's own, because he was conceived there. St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, Euthymius, Theophylactus, think it was Capharnaum, because this miracle was performed at the last mentioned place, according to St. Mark's relation; and St. Matthew calls it Christ's own city, because after leaving Nazareth, he chose Capharnaum for the chief place of his abode. If St. Jerome's interpretation be admitted, we must suppose that St. Matthew having told us that Christ came to his own city, Nazareth, and omitting to relate what happened there, passed immediately to the history of the cure of the paralytic, which took place at Capharnaum. Such

omissions and change of place without the reader's being informed of the transition, are not unfrequent in the evangelists. We must likewise observe that they frequently invert the order of facts, as to the time of their happening. (Jansenius) --- Christ may be said to have had three cities: *Bethlehem*, in which he was born; *Nazareth*, in which he was educated; and *Capharnaum*, in which he most frequently resided, during his sacred ministry. It is most probable, and most generally understood, that in this place of the Scripture Capharnaum is meant; though several understand it of Nazareth, and some few with Sedulius, lib. 3. carn.

Intravit natale solum, quo corpore nasci  
Se voluit, patriamque sibi pater ipse dicavit.

**Ver. 2.** *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* We do not find that the sick man asked this; but it was the much greater benefit, and which every one ought to prefer before the health of the body. (Witham) --- He says this, because he wished to declare the cause of the disease, and to remove it, before he removed the disease itself. He might also desire to shew the paralytic, what he ought to have prayed for in the first place. (Menochius) --- The sick man begs for corporal health, but Christ first restores to him the health of his soul, for two reasons: 1st. That he might insinuate to the beholders, that the principal intent of his coming into the world was to cure the evils of the soul, and to let them know that the spiritual cure ought most to be desired and petitioned for. Corporal infirmities, as we learn in many places of the sacred text, are only the consequences of the sins of the patient. In St. John (chap. iii.), Christ bids the man whom he had healed, to sin no more, lest something worse should befall him; and St. Paul says, that many of the Corinthians were afflicted with various diseases, and with death, on account of their unworthily receiving the body of the Lord. A second reason why Christ forgave the sick man his sins, was, that he might take occasion from the murmurs of the Pharisees, to speak more plainly of his power and divinity, which he proved not only by restoring the man instantaneously to health, but by another miracle equally great and conclusive, which consisted in seeing the thoughts they had never expressed; for the evangelist observes, that they murmured in their hearts. He afterwards cures the sick man to shew, says he, that the Son of man has power to forgive sins. (Jansenius) --- We may here observe likewise, that when Christ afterwards gave his apostles their mission, and empowered them to preach to the whole world, he communicates this same power to them, and seems to refer to the miracles which he had wrought, to prove that he himself had the power which he gave to them. All power, says he, is given to me in heaven and on earth. As the Father sent me, so I send you. ... Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. (Haydock) --- *Seeing their faith.* It does not follow from hence, as Calvin would have it, that faith alone will save us. For St. John Chrysostom says, "Faith indeed is a great and salutary thing, and without it there is no gaining salvation." But this will not of itself suffice without good works; for St. Paul admonishes us, who have made ourselves deserving a participation of the mysteries of Christ, thus, (Hebrews chap. iv.) "Let us hasten, therefore, to enter into that rest." He tells us to hasten, that is, faith alone will not suffice, but we must also strive all our life by good works to render ourselves worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven: for if those Israelites, who murmured and would not bear the calamities of the desert, were not, on that account, permitted to enter the land of promise, how can we think ourselves worthy of the kingdom of heaven, (figured by the land of promise) if we will not in this world undergo the labours of good works. (St. John Chrysostom) --- From hence St. Ambrose concludes, that our Saviour is moved to grant our petitions through the invocation of saints, as he even forgave this man his sins through the faith of those that brought him. Of how much greater efficacy then will not the prayers of the saints be? Baradius. --- Christ does not always require faith in the sick who desire to be cured, but seems to have dispensed with it on many occasions; for example, in the cases of those he cured possessed by the devil. (St. John Chrysostom) --- *Son, &c.* O the wonderful humility of the God-man! Jesus looks with complacency on this miserable wretch, whom the Jewish priests disdain to look upon, and in the midst of all his miseries calls him his son. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- They had read what Isaias had said: I am, I am he who destroyeth thy sins: ego sum, ego sum ipse, qui deleo iniquitates tuas, xliii. 25.: but they had not read, or, at least they had not understood what the same prophet says, liii. 6. The Lord hath heaped upon him the iniquity of us all: posuit Dominus in eo iniquitatem omnium nostrum. Nor had they remembered the testimony of the Baptist: behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world. (John i. 29.) (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 3.** *This man blasphemeth*, by pretending to have a power to forgive sins, which none but God can do; and they looked upon Jesus as a man only. It is true, and what all Catholics teach, that *God alone* hath power of *himself* to forgive sins. But Christ, who was both God and man, could, and did communicate this power of forgiving sins *in his name*, to bishops and priests, as *his ministers and instruments* in the sacraments of baptism and penance. We have Christ's clear words for it, (John xx. 23.) *whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, &c.* (Witham) --- *And behold some of the scribes.* The Jewish rulers wished to defame the character of our divine Redeemer, but by this means they rendered the miracle much more famous, and Christ turned their wicked designs to their own confusion. (St. John Chrysostom) --- For Christ says, *Why do you think evil in your hearts?* in which words Jesus plainly evinces to them the reality of his divinity; for who knows the secrets of man's heart, but God alone? (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 4.** *Jesus seeing their thoughts.* By shewing that he knew their hidden thoughts, as well as by healing the man, to confirm his words and doctrine, he gave them a proof of his divine power. (Witham) --- Not because they betrayed them by any exterior sign, but, as St. Mark says, knowing in his spirit that they so thought within themselves, because he was God, in whose hands are our hearts, (Proverbs chap. xv. and chap. xxi.) and to whose eyes all things are naked and open. (Tostatus.) --- Had not our Saviour been truly God, and equal to his Father, he would have rebuked the scribes, for attributing that to God only which he exercised. But so far from denying their assertion, he immediately admits the truth of it, and answers them by another no less wonderful act of his almighty power. He tells them publicly the evil they had thought in their hearts, whilst the Scriptures repeatedly affirm that God alone can know the secrets of hearts. *Thou alone knowest the hearts of the children of men*, 3 Kings, chap. viii. and 2 Paralipomenon chap. vi ver. 30. *And man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart.* And 1st Kings, chap. xvi, ver. 7, *The searcher of reins and hearts is God.* Psalm vii, ver. 10, *The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable. Who can know it? I am the Lord that search the heart and prove the reins.* (Jeremias, chap. xvii, ver. 9. and 10.); and innumerable other texts of Scripture might be brought to prove that God only can know the minds and thoughts of men. Our Saviour, therefore, shews himself to be equal to his Father, by thus revealing to all, the malicious murmurs of his enemies, who for fear of the multitude, dared not to publish themselves what their wicked hearts devised. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxx.) --- *Said: Why do you think, &c.* Here St. Cyril exclaims, Oh! thou Pharisee, who sayest, who is able to forgive sins, except God alone! I will answer thee; who is able to search into the secrets of the heart but God alone, who calls himself, by his prophet, the searcher of the hearts and the reins of men! (St. Cyril) --- If thou art incredulous about my power of remitting sin, behold I exercise another, whilst I lay open thy interior. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 5.** The power of working miracles, and of forgiving sins, is proper to God, but can be communicated by God to man equally in the sacraments of baptism and penance. (Haydock) --- *Which is easier.* It is more difficult to remit sins than restore the health of the body. St. Augustine remarks, (tract. lxxii in Joannem) it is more difficult to justify a man than to create the heavens and the earth; but Christ speaks thus, because the Pharisees might otherwise have said, that as he could not confer visible health upon the body, he had recourse to the invisible remission of sins, and that it was easy to grant in words, what no one could discern whether it was really granted or not. In this sense, therefore, the word, "Be thou healed," is more difficult than simply to say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" which any one could say, though he might not effect what his word implied. (Menochius) --- Doubtless the healing of the body was easier, for as much as the soul is more excellent than the body, so much is the healing of the soul more difficult and more excellent than that of the body. But since the one is visible, the other invisible, therefore he performs the less, but more evident miracle, in testimony of the performance of the other more excellent, but less evident exertion of his power. Thus he truly verifies what the Baptist said of him, "This is he that taketh away the sins of the world." (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxx.)

**Ver. 6.** *But that you may know.* This may be understood differently, either as spoken by Christ to the Jews present, or by the evangelist to the people to whom he wrote his gospel. (St. Thomas

Aquinas) --- Thus Christ proves that he had the power of remitting sins; as a falsity cannot be confirmed by a miracle, since in this case God would bear testimony to a falsity. (Menochius) --- *Take thy bed, &c.* This doubtless was commanded him, to convince the whole world that this was no phantom, and to add still greater credibility to the fact, *and he rose, &c.* --- He who was pleased to become man, is truly the Son of God; and, in this quality, he possesses all power. This he proves by the double exercise of his power over both soul and body. (Haydock) --- *Surge, tolle, and vade,* Christ added these words for the greater evidence of the cure. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 8. Feared, and glorified God.** Here it may be observed, that the people, before they praised, feared God, for the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. And St. Basil says, that fear, as a good guide, necessarily leads us to piety; and charity takes us, after having been exercised a little in fear, makes us perfect men. (St. Basil)

**Ver. 9. Named Matthew.** 'Tis remarked by St. Jerome, that the other evangelist, out of respect to this apostle, did not call him Matthew, (the name he generally went by) but Levi; whereas he, in his own gospel, to shew the goodness of God who from a publican had made him an apostle, styles himself Matthew the publican. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- (St. Augustine, de Concor. Evan.) It is most probable, says St. Augustine, that St. Matthew does not mention what had happened to him, before he began to follow Jesus; for it is supposed that this evangelist was called antecedent to the sermon on the mount; for St. Luke named the 12 that were chosen, and calls them apostles. St. Matthew mentions his vocation to the apostleship as one of the miracles that Jesus performed, for certainly it was a great miracle for a publican to become an apostle. --- *Rose up, and followed him.* When we hear the voice of God calling us to virtue, we must not delay. The devil, says St. Basil, does not advise us to turn entirely from God, but only to put off our conversion to a future time. He steals away our present time, and gives us hopes of the future. But when that comes, he steals that also in the same manner; and thus by giving us present pleasure, he robs us of our whole life. (St. Basil) --- *Sitting in the custom-house.* Jesus called St. Matthew with two words only, *follow me;* and presently he left all, and became his disciple; doubtless by a particular inspiration and motive of divine grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 12. They that are in health.** The explication of which is, I converse with sinners, that I may heal their souls from incredulity. (Menochius)

**Ver. 13. I am not come.** The just appear to be mentioned ironically, as it is said in Genesis, *Behold Adam is become as one of us: and if I hunger, I will not tell thee.* (Psalm xlix.) For St. Paul asserts, that none on earth were just: *all have sinned, and need the glory of God.* (Romans iii.) (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxi.) --- Christ came to call all men, both just and unjust, since he called Nathanael, who was a just man. But the meaning of these words is, I came not to call you, Scribes and Pharisees, who esteem yourselves just, and despise others, and who think you have no need of a physician; but I came to call those who acknowledge themselves sinners. Theophylactus. --- Or the meaning may be, "I came not to call the just to penance, of which they have no need;" thus in St. Luke, (chap. v.) *I came not to call the just, but sinners to repentance.* Or again, the meaning may be, I came not to call the just, because there are not just of themselves, and who stand not in need of my coming. St. Paul says, *All have sinned,* as above. (Menochius) --- *Mercy, and not sacrifice.* Christ here prefers mercy to sacrifice; for, as St. Ambrose says, there is no virtue so becoming a Christian as mercy, but chiefly mercy to the poor. For if we give money to the poor, we at the same time give him life: if we clothe the naked, we adorn our souls with the robe of justice: if we receive the poor harbourless under our roof, we shall at the same time make friends with the saints in heaven, and shall afterwards be received by them into their eternal habitations. (St. Ambrose) --- I will have mercy and not sacrifice: these words occur in the prophet Osee, chap. vi. The Pharisees thought they were making a great sacrifice, and acceptable to God, by breaking off all commerce with sinners; but God prefers the mercy of the charitable physician, who frequents the company of sinners; but merely to cure them. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 14. Then came.** When the Pharisees in the prior question had been discomfited. By St.

Mark, (ii. 18,) we learn that the Pharisees joined with the disciples of the Baptist, and thus is reconciled what we read in St. Luke v. 33, who only mentions the Pharisees. (Bible de Vence) --- *Why do we, and the Pharisees fast.* It is not without reason that the disciples of St. John should ask this question, fasting being always esteemed a great virtue, witness Moses and Elias; the fasts which Samuel made the people observe in Masphat, the tears, prayers, and fasting of Ezechias, of Judith, of Achab, of the Niniites, of Anna, the wife of Eleana, of Daniel, of David, after he had fallen into the sin of adultery. Aaron, and the other priests, also fasted before they entered into the temple. Witness also the fasts of Anna, the prophetess, of St. John the Baptist, of Christ himself, of Cornelius the centurion, &c. &c. &c. (St. Jerome) --- This haughty interrogation of St. John's disciples was highly blameable, not only for uniting with the Pharisees, whom they knew their master so much condemned, but also for calumniating him, who, they knew was foretold by John's own testimony. (St. Jerome) --- St. Augustine is likewise of opinion, that John's disciples were not the only persons that said this, since St. Mark rather indicates that it was spoken by others. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver 15.** *Can the children of the bridegroom.*[1] This, by a Hebraism, signifies the friends or companions of the bridegroom, as a *lover of peace*, is called a *child of peace*: he that deserves death, *the son of death*, &c. (Witham) --- the disciples had not yet ascended to the higher degrees of perfection, they had not yet been renewed in spirit; therefore they required to be treated with lenity; for had the higher and more sublime mysteries been delivered to them without previous preparation, they would never, not even in the natural course of things, have been able to comprehend them. I have many things to say to you, said our Saviour, but you cannot bear them now. (St. John xvi.) Thus did he condescend to their weakness. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxi.)

**Ver. 16.** *A piece of raw cloth.*[2] By the Greek is signified new-woven cloth, that has not yet passed the hands of the fuller. (Witham) --- *And no one putteth*, &c. Christ, by these similitudes, justifies the manner of life which he taught his disciples, which at first was adapted to their understandings; lest, if in the beginning, he had required them to fast contrary to what they had been accustomed, they might have been frightened at the austerity of his institute, and deserted him. He compares, therefore, his disciples to an old garment, and to old bottles; and an austere mode of life to new clothes and new wine. And he argues, that if we do not put new cloth to an old garment, because it tears the garment the more, nor put new wine into old bottles, because by its fermentation it would easily break them, so in like manner his disciples, who had been accustomed to a less rigid mode of life, were not at once to be initiated into an austere discipline, lest they should sink under the difficulty, and relinquish the pursuit of a more perfect life. (Menochius)

**Ver. 17.** *New wine into old bottles.*[3] These vessels were made of skins, or were leather bottles, in which wine used to be carried and kept. (Witham) --- They were made of goat-skins prepared and sewed together, as is common in Spain and other southern countries to this day. (Haydock) --- they were to wait till they were renewed by the Holy Ghost, before they could enter with advantage on the hard ways of penance. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 18.** *A certain ruler.*[4] Lit. *a prince of a synagogue*. He is called Jairus. (Mark v. Luke viii.) --- *My daughter is just now dead*: or, as the other evangelists express it, is at the *point of death*; and her father having left her dying, he might think and say she was already dead. It is thus that some commentators explain the apparent difference found in Mark v. 22, and Luke viii. 41. --- *But come, lay thy hand*, &c. Let us admire and imitate the humility and kindness of our Redeemer; no sooner had he heard the request of the ruler, but rising up, he followed him. Though, says St. John Chrysostom, he saw his earthly disposition, requesting him to come and lay his hand upon her.

**Ver. 20.** *And behold a woman.* This woman, according to Eusebius, came from Cæsarea Philippi, who, in honour of her miraculous cure, afterwards erected a brazen monument, descriptive of this event, before the door of her house in Cæsarea Philippi. (Eusebius)

**Ver. 22.** *Greek: Epistrapseis kai idon*, turning about and seeing, as if he were ignorant, and wished to see who it was that had touched him, as the other evangelists relate. In St. Mark (v. 29,) we see she was cured on touching the garment; and Jesus only confirms the cure by what he says in verse 34. --- *But Jesus turning about.* Our divine Saviour, fearing lest he might alarm the woman by his words, says immediately to her, *Take courage*; and at the same time calls her his daughter, because her faith had rendered her such. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 23.** *And when Jesus ... saw the minstrels.* It was a custom among the Jews at funerals to hire persons to make some doleful music, and great lamentations. (Witham) --- Ovid also mentions the lugubrious music attendant on funerals. --- *Cantabat moestis tibia funeribus.* (4. *Fast.*)

**Ver. 24.** *The girl is not dead.* Christ, by saying so, insinuated that she was not dead in such a manner as they imagined; that is, so as to remain dead, but presently to return to life, as if she had been only asleep. (Witham) --- *But sleepeth.* In the xi. chapter of St. John, Christ again calls death a sleep. *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.* Thus he teaches us to be no longer in dread of death, since it was reduced to the condition of a sleep. If you believe this, why do you vainly weep? why do you afflict yourself? this the Gentiles do, who have not faith. Your child is asleep, not dead, is gone to a place of rest, not to destruction. Therefore the royal prophet says, "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest, for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee." (Psalm cxiv.) If then it is a kindness, why should you weep? what else could you do at the death of an adversary, an enemy, the object of your greatest aversion? (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxii.) --- Christ here asserts that the girl is only asleep, to shew that it was easy for him to raise her from death as from sleep. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 25.** He took her by the hand, and as in his hands is the key both of life and death, (Apocalypse i. 18,) so he commanded the soul to return and the girl to arise. (Haydock) --- *and when the crowd*, &c. That is, if after a sinful and worldly life we wish to rise again, and be cleansed from the miserable condition of moral sin, denoted by the girl who was dead, we must cast out of our minds the great multitude of worldly concerns; for whilst these have possession, the mind is unable to recollect itself and apply seriously to consideration. (St. Gregory)

**Ver. 27.** *Son of David, have mercy on us.* The blind men style our Saviour *Son of David*, to shew the great respect they had for him. Thus the prophets also did, when they addressed those kings to whom they wished to testify particular respect and esteem. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 30.** *And Jesus strictly charged them.* Although our Saviour strictly charged them to keep the miracle silent, they nevertheless published it throughout all that country; not being able to contain themselves, they became the evangelists and publishers of what they were commanded to conceal. Thus we are admonished not only to keep silent ourselves whatever is to our own commendation, but likewise to endeavour to hinder others from publishing it; to act otherwise would be to render ourselves odious to men, and abominable in the sight of God. But if we are silent, we shall obtain greater glory in the sight both of God and men. On the other hand, whatever redounds to the glory of the Almighty, we must ourselves publish, and exhort others to make it known to the whole world. Therefore it is said, *Go and relate the glory of God.* (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 31.** *Spread him fame abroad.* Unable to confine their gratitude within the narrow limits of humility prescribed them by Jesus Christ. (Haydock)

**Ver. 32.** *A dumb man.* The Greek rather signifies a *deaf* man: but these defects generally go together, because he that is deaf cannot learn to speak. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *By the prince of the devils.* What more foolish ever entered the mind of man. Is it possible, as he afterwards says, that devils should be expelled by devils? They assist and

strengthen, not weaken and destroy one another. Moreover, he did not only cast out devils, but he cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, appeased the storm, forgave sins by his own power, preached the eternal felicity of heaven, and brought back man to God: all which the devil never could, never would bestow upon mankind. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 36.** *He had compassion on them.* The bowels of his compassion yearned to see multitudes cast down and oppressed, like sheep that are without a shepherd. The Pharisees indeed were their shepherds; but they acted the part of ravenous wolves, not only neglecting to lead the people to virtue, but even hindering, as much as they could, their advancement in good; for when the admiring multitude cried out, "Never did the like appear in Israel," they immediately decried it, saying, "By the prince of devils he casteth out devils." (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.)

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[1] Ver. 15. Filii sponsi, *Greek: ui oi tou numphonos*, so filius pacis, filius mortis, &c.

[2] Ver. 16. Panni rudis, *Greek: agnaphou*.

[3] Ver. 17. In uteres, *Greek: eis askous*, uteres ex corio.

[4] Ver. 18. Modo defuncta est. *Greek: arti eteleutesen*. Mark v. 23. In extremis est, *Greek: eschatos echei*. (Luke viii. 42.) moriebatur, *Greek: apethnesken*.

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## MATTHEW 10

**Ver. 1.** Before this time the 12 were called *disciples*, and not *apostles*. But now he selects these from the disciples, and makes them, as it were, masters and interpreters of the ways of God to man. He sent afterwards 72 other disciples, (Luke x. 1,) but these 12 only to the whole world. (Haydock) --- *His twelve*, &c. Christ chose 12 apostles, that they might correspond to the number of the Jewish patriarchs, by whom they may be said to have been prefigured; and that as the whole Jewish people were descended according to the flesh from the 12 patriarchs, so the whole Christian people might be descended according to the spirit from the 12 apostles. (Menochius) --- Others say he chose 12, neither more nor less, to correspond with the 12 prophets of the old law, with the 12 fountains in Elim; and the 12 stones selected from the river Jordan, and preserved in the ark of the testament. Others compare the 12 apostles to the 12 months of the year, and the four evangelists to the four seasons: thus Sedulius, lib. i. carm.

Quatuor hi proceres una te voce canentes,  
Tempora ceu totidem latum sparguntur in orbem.  
Sic et apostolici semper duodenus honoris  
Fulget apex numero menses imitatus, et horas,  
Omnibus ut rebus semper tibi militet annus.

**Ver. 2.** *First, Simon.*[1] Simon was the first of the apostles, not in the time of his vocation, as his brother Andrew was called to the apostleship before him, but in dignity, in as much as he was constituted the vicar of Christ, and the head of the Church. (Menochius) --- *Who is called Peter*. When he first came to our Saviour, (John i. 42,) he said, *Thou art Simon, son of Jonas*, (or John) *thou shalt be called Peter*; in Chaldaic, *Cephas*; that is to say, *a rock*, designing to make him the first fundamental stone or head of his whole Church. See also Matthew xvi. 18. Beza, without any grounds, would have the word *first* to be an addition. But it is found in all Greek manuscripts as well as in the ancient fathers. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Go not into the way of the Gentiles*, or among the Gentiles. In this first mission, the apostles were ordered to preach to the Jews only, or *to the children of the kingdom*. (Matthew vii. 12.) See also Matthew xv. 24. and Acts xii. 46. (Witham) --- *These twelve Jesus sent*. In this



mission of the apostles we may observe three things: first, whither Jesus sent them; secondly, what he ordered them to teach; and thirdly, what they were to do. As to the first, he tells them not to go in the way of the Gentiles, nor enter in the city of the Samaritans; but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. We must here take notice that this commandment, given by Christ to the apostles, of confining their preaching to the house of Israel, does not contradict one related in Matthew, (chap xxviii.) *Go teach all nations*, &c. We observe that these two commandments were given at two very different times; the first indeed, (the subject of our present annotation) the apostles received before the resurrection of Christ; the other after. It was necessary first to warn the Jews of the arrival of the Messias amongst them; otherwise they might have excused themselves for having rejected him, by saying, "He had sent his apostles to preach, not to them but to the Gentiles and Samaritans." (St. Jerome) --- St. Chrysostom assigns another reason why the apostles were sent first to preach in Judea, viz. that having withstood the opposition of one nation, they might be more prepared to hold out against the attacks, which they would no doubt have afterwards to sustain, in their endeavours to convert the whole world. (St. John Chrysostom) --- He forbids them to preach to the Gentiles, because it was proper that the word of God should first be announced to the Jews, children of the kingdom. See Acts chap. xiii, ver. 42. (Menochius)

**Ver. 7.** *And going*, &c. What the apostles were to preach, is the second thing to be taken notice of in their mission. We here learn what it is, viz. that *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*. We here behold the great dignity to which the apostles were raised, when sent to preach. For, says St. Chrysostom, they are not sent to announce sensible things, like Moses and the prophets, but something wholly new, and before unheard of. They are not like the prophets, to confine themselves to the preaching of temporal things, their doctrine is wholly heavenly; they are sent to announce the good things of eternity. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 8.** *Heal the sick*, &c. This verse contains the third observation respecting the mission of the apostles: Christ not only gave them power to preach, but also to work miracles, in order, says St. Gregory, that works might give force and efficacy to their words, that as their doctrine was new, so their works might be new, and such as were before unheard of. St. Jerome also says, men would never have given any credit to the apostles, unlearned and illiterate as they were, had they not been able to work miracles in proof of the great promises they made to them of heaven. It was necessary that the greatness of their work should confirm the greatness of their promises. (St. Jerome) --- *Gratis you have received*. Here our Saviour admonishes his apostles not to work for the sake of lucre; but having themselves received gratuitously the light of faith, they should in the same manner communicate it to others. (St. Jerome) --- St. Aquinas also observes on this passage, that our Saviour probably wished to repress the avarice of Judas, who as he kept the common purse, might be tempted to increase their stock, by receiving pecuniary rewards for their labours. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- St. Chrysostom says, that the apostles were warned by this admonition of our Saviour against two vices, to which they might be tempted on account of the great favours and graces they had received from heaven, viz. pride and avarice: 1st. Against pride, *gratis you have received*; i.e. whatever you have received is the gift of God, without any merit of yours: 2ndly. Against avarice, *gratis give*; that is, since every thing you have received has been given you gratuitously; so if you make use of the same gifts for the good of others, act also gratuitously, without expecting any temporal reward from them. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 10.** *Nor two coats, nor shoes*;[2] i.e. provide not yourselves with another coat for a reserve, but go like poor people, who have but just what is necessary. They were not to wear *shoes*, but they were allowed *sandals*, or soles with tops tied to their feet. (Mark vi. 9.) --- *Nor a staff*. So Luke, Chap. ix. ver. 3: yet St. Mark says, *but a staff only*. To reconcile these expressions, some distinguish betwixt a staff necessary to walk with (which even the poorest people had) and another staff for their defence, which at least they were not to seek for. And the meaning of these admonitions is that they were to go on their mission, not regarding whether they had a staff or not, unless it were necessary for them to walk with. (Witham) --- In many Greek manuscripts we read *staves* in the plural, so that Jesus Christ orders them not to take any other than the one in

their hand.

**Ver. 11.** *And there abide, &c.* That is, stay in the same house as long as you remain in the same city; remove not from *house to house*, as it is said Luke x. 7, but be content with what you meet with. (Witham) --- St. Chrysostom give three reasons for this precept: 1st. that they might not afflict those whom they left; 2ndly. that the apostles might avoid the accusation of inconstancy; 3rdly. of gluttony also. (Baradict.) *Into whatsoever, &c.* Lest the apostles should be induced to thin, by what our Saviour had said in the preceding verse, viz. *the workman is worthy, &c.* that every door would be open for their entrance, he here tells them to inquire at their entry into any city, who amongst the inhabitants were worthy. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.) --- And since they could not be expected to know who in every city were worthy, they were to be informed of this by the report and opinion of the people, that so their dignity and great character of apostles might not be defamed by the bad characters of any who might receive them. (St. Jerome, in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- But, if such was the rule given by Christ to the apostles, some one will perhaps ask, why did not Christ also follow the same maxim, since we read in Scripture, he entered into the house of Zacheus, the publican? St. Chrysostom answers, Zacheus was made worthy by his conversion to Christ. (St. John Chrysostom, in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 12.** *Peace be to, &c.* Heb. *shalom*, "peace be to you." The custom of salutation here recommended by our Saviour to his disciples, as St. Jerome informs us, was very prevalent among the Hebrews and Syrians. --- This was an ordinary salutation among the Jews, by which they wished happiness and prosperity. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *And if that house, &c.* i.e. if it be worthy to receive your peace. In St. Luke (Chap. x, ver. 6) it is written, *And if the son of peace be there*: that is, a lover of peace, or one worthy of peace and prosperity. Thus a son of death means one deserving of death. (Menochius) --- *Your peace shall come upon it.* If men will not hearken to your instructions, you have this comfort and peace of mind, that you have discharged you duty. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Shake off the dust from your feet.* It was common enough with the Jews, or at least with the preachers and prophets, to use some extraordinary outward actions, to make what they said more taken notice of by the people, as here the shaking off the dust from their feet was to denote to the obstinate unbelievers, that the very dust which their feet had contracted, in coming to preach to them the gospel, should hereafter rise in judgment against them. (Witham) By this, the apostles were to testify that they took nothing away with them belonging to these reprobate cities. They likewise shewed the long and painful journeys they had undertaken for their salvation. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii.) --- He orders them to do this, to shew that they would have nothing in common with them, since they left them even their dust. Or it may be to shew, that the dust which they had gathered in their journey, would be a testimony against them in the day of judgment, because they had refused to receive them, as the Jews were accustomed to perform some remarkable action, for some great crime committed; thus, when they heard blasphemy, they tore their garments. (Menochius)

**Ver. 16.** *Wise as serpents, &c.* It is a proverbial way of speaking; and an admonition to be circumspect and discreet, but harmless, innocent, sincere in all our actions and dealings. (Witham) --- *Simple.* That is, harmless, plain, sincere, and without guile. (Challoner) --- *In the midst of wolves.* Although Christ sent his apostles not only against wolves, but even into the very midst of wolves, still he commands them to behave with the meekness of sheep, and simplicity of doves. Thus he evinces the greatness of his power, in overcoming the wolves by the sheep, which were continually exposed to be devoured and torn in pieces by them, still never failing to change the fierce nature of the ravenous wolf into their own nature, in mildness and innocence. As long as we retain the nature of sheep, we easily overcome our adversaries; but no sooner are we changed into wolves, than we become the derision of our enemies: the supreme Pastor, who superintends the sheep, not the wolves, withdrawing from us the powerful protection of his grace, and leaving us to the misery of our own weakness. --- Our Saviour, in his infinite wisdom, knew full well the nature of things; passion was not to be overcome by passion, but by meekness only.

Thus the apostles did, when the Jews having apprehended them, said, Have we not again and again commanded you not to teach in this name? (Acts, Chap. iv.) Though they had the power of working the greatest miracles, yet they let nothing harsh, nothing severe, escape them, either in words or actions. With simplicity they made answer, *Judge ye, if it be just to hear you rather than God*; and at the same time shewed their prudence, saying, *We cannot but speak what we have heard and seen*. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiv.) --- *As sheep*, &c. He compares them to sheep, not only because of their innocence, but also because they were sent unarmed and destitute of all human support. (Menochius) --- *Wise*, &c. That you may guard against the snares of your enemies. The prudence of the serpent is celebrated, because when it cannot escape, it strives at least to preserve its head free from hurt, whilst it leave the rest of its body exposed. Thus Christians, who have Christ for their head, must preserve his faith and religion, though with the loss of every thing else. (Menochius)

**Ver. 17.** *They will deliver you up in councils.* Christ, in this and the following verse, warns his apostles of the many troubles and persecutions to which the preaching of the faith would expose them. St. Chrysostom assigns several reasons for his choosing to foretell them such sufferings: 1st. that he might shew that he had the gift of prophecy; 2nd. that they might not think such evils came upon them on account of his weakness; 3rd. that knowing beforehand the great trials to which they would be exposed, they might not be discouraged when they happened. (St. John Chrysostom, in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 18.** *For a testimony to them*, &c. That is, that by suffering with fortitude and constancy, you may bear testimony of me, as men must know, that it is not any vain thing for which they see you are prepared to die. Or the sense may be, that this may be for you a testimony against them in the day of judgment, and may render them inexcusable, since they will be unable to say that they have not heard the gospel. (Menochius)

**Ver. 19.** *Be not thoughtful*, with too great a concern of mind. (Witham) --- That the apostles might not be discouraged at the description, which our Saviour gave them in the two preceding verses, of the troubles which they would have to sustain in their ministry, he now endeavours to console them. When you are called before councils, says he, do not think how or what to speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. A truly comfortable thought for all who should afterwards engage in the ministry of Christ. Whatever troubles, whatever persecutions may fall to your lot, if even you should be cited before kings and councils to answer for your faith, do not be troubled. You engage in the conflict, I will fight: you speak, but I will tell you what you ought to say. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22.** *He that shall persevere*, &c. We are here told, that to be saved it is not sufficient that we were once virtuous, we must persevere to the end. We are also assured of the same truth in Ezechiel. *If the just man shall turn away from his justice, and shall commit iniquity, he shall die in his sins, and his justice which he hath done shall not be remembered*. (Chap. iii, ver. 20.) (Haydock) --- Some, says St. Chrysostom, are accustomed to be fervent at the beginning of their conversion, but afterwards grow remiss; of what advantage are seeds that flourish in the beginning, but afterwards wither and die? (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 23.** *Flee into another*. Tertullian, with some others, held it never lawful to fly in the time of persecutions, against both the doctrine and example of our Saviour, Christ. --- *You shall not finish*, &c. St. Chrysostom thinks the sense of these words is, you shall not go through, and have finished your preaching in all the cities of Israel, till I, who follow you, shall come, and join you again. Others expound it, till the coming of me, your Messiah, shall be published, and owned after my resurrection. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *The disciple is not above*, &c. If we therefore are disciples of Christ, we ought to embrace with joy, opprobrious and evil language, willingly receive and bear with patience all those things which our noble Lord and Master underwent for us. But if we will not bear these things with patience, how shall we dare to call ourselves his followers, his disciples, his servants,

his children, or his domestics. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 25.** *Beelzebub.* In the Greek *Beelzeboul.* It was the name the Jews gave to the greatest of the devils, and also to the idol of Accaron. The word signifies the *lord of flies*; either because of the multitude of flies that were in the temple of that idol, or because the people used to sacrifice to this idol, when they were molested with flies. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *For there is nothing hid, &c.* Even in this life, for truth, however much oppressed, is yet accustomed at length to rise superior to oppression. What Christ therefore says here is, although the wicked persecute you, yet your virtue shall at length be known. (Menochius) --- Patience for a while, and soon your charity, which is now unknown, shall be renowned throughout the whole earth. You shall be blessed by all as the greatest benefactors, and the cultivators of virtue, while the words of your adversaries shall be heard with the greatest contempt. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxv.)

**Ver. 27.** *That which I tell you, &c.* We must not suppose that our Saviour was accustomed to deliver his instructions to his apostles in the secret of the night, or teach them in private by whispers. But here he uses a figure of speech, to convey to the minds of his apostles the insignificancy of Judea, where he was speaking in comparison of the whole world, which they were to instruct; and the low whisper of his voice, compared to the sound which they shall send forth to the ends of the earth. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxv.) --- *Upon the house-tops.* the tops of the houses in Palestine were flat, and the inhabitants were accustomed to assemble on them and discourse together in great numbers. To preach, therefore, on the top of a house, is the same as to preach where there is a great concourse of people. (Menochius)

**Ver. 28.** *Fear not those that, &c.* Men are afraid of a prison, yet they are not afraid of hell fire. They fear temporal punishments, but dread not the torments of eternal fire. St. Augustine in Baradius. --- He who continually fears hell, will never fall into it; but he who is negligent, will undoubtedly fall. (St. John Chrysostom in Baradius)

**Ver. 29.** *Are not two sparrows?* The sense is, sparrows are of very small value, and yet divine Providence defends and feeds them; how much more, therefore, will not God take care of you, who so far excel them? No one, therefore, will be able to rob you of life without God's permission. (Menochius)

**Ver. 30.** *The very hairs, &c.* God numbers not the hairs of our heads after the manner of men: but by this our Saviour shews the infinite knowledge the Almighty has of all things, and the goodness of his Providence, watching over every, even the most minute part of the creation. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxv.)

**Ver. 31.** *Fear not therefore, &c.* Here Christ admonishes us, in our greatest undertakings, to put our trust in God. (St. Bernard)

**Ver. 34.** *I came not to send, &c.* That is, dissension and war, in order that the false peace of sinners may be destroyed, and that those who follow me, may differ in morals and affections from the followers of this world. The sword, therefore, is the gospel, which separates those parents who remain in infidelity, &c. &c. &c. (Menochius) --- It must be observed, that the gospel does not necessarily of itself produce dissensions amongst men, but that Christ foresaw, from the depravity of man's heart, that dissensions would follow the propagation of the gospel. The blame of this, however, does not attach to the gospel itself, since those who embrace it, after their conversion sought more than ever to keep peace with all men, even with their most bitter persecutors; whilst those who rejected the gospel, forgetting even the ties of kindred, persecuted even to death the followers of Christ. (Haydock) --- *Send peace, &c.* Indeed before Christ became man, there was no sword upon the earth; that is, the spirit had not to fight with so much violence against the flesh; but when he became man, he shewed us what things were of the flesh, and what of the spirit, and taught us to set these two at variance, by renouncing always

those of the flesh, which constantly endeavour to get master over us, and follow the dictates of the spirit. (Origen)

**Ver. 35.** *I am come to set a man at variance, &c.* Not that this was the end or design of the coming of our Saviour; but that his coming, and his doctrine would have this effect, by reason of the obstinate resistance that many would make, and of their persecuting all such as should adhere to him. (Challoner) --- Not that Christ came for this end, to cause divisions between father and son, &c. On the contrary, the Scriptures teach us to love every one without exception, and especially our kindred; but this is to shew, and foretell what would happen in the same families, when some of them were Christians. We have divers instances of the truth of this in the Lives of the Saints. (Witham) --- No one can be connected with the earth and joined to heaven. Those who wish to enjoy the peace of heaven, must not be united to the lovers of this world by any connection. (Baradius)

**Ver. 36.** *And a man's enemies, &c.* He here alludes to our own passions of love, hatred, anger, envy, &c. which are our greatest enemies; and it is against these that we must make use of the sword our Saviour came to send amongst men. (Baradius)

**Ver. 37.** *Is not worthy of me, &c.* That is, is not worthy to be my disciple, and to enjoy my kingdom. (Menochius)

**Ver. 38.** *He that, &c.* There are two kinds of crosses which our Saviour here commands us to take up: one corporal, and the other spiritual. By the former, he commands us to restrain the unruly appetites of the touch, taste, sight, &c. By the other, which is far more worthy our notice, he teaches us to govern the affections of the mind, and restrain all its irregular motions, by humility, tranquillity, modesty, peace, &c. Precious indeed in the sight of God, and glorious is that cross, which governs and brings under proper rule the lawless passions of the mind. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 39.** *He that findeth, &c.* Behold the great losses that befall such as love their souls above measure; and on the contrary, the advantages that follow from hating them as they ought. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxvi.) --- That is, he that findeth in this life pleasures and comforts, and places his affections upon them, will certainly soon lose them. For Isaias says, (Chap. xl, ver. 6,) All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field. The grass is withered, and the flower is fallen. So man's glory seems to flourish and appears great, but falls away and dies before it has come to its full bloom; for what duration is there in the flesh? and what stability in the pleasures of this world? To-day you may behold a young man, strong, beautiful, healthy, admired, and flourishing in virtue; and to-morrow you will find him quite changed, oppressed with either sin, labour, want, or sickness. (St. Ambrose) --- But if he continues moderately happy as to temporal concerns till death, and places his affections on them, he hath found life here, but shall lose it in the next world. But he that shall, for the sake of Christ, deprive himself of the pleasures of this life, shall receive the reward of a hundred fold in the next. (Haydock)

**Ver. 41.** *The reward of a prophet.* That is, shall be partaker of the reward of a prophet, or shall receive the same reward as a prophet; as, according to the law of David, (1 Kings, Chap. xxx, ver. 24,) He who descended to the battle, and he who remained with the baggage, shared equally. So Saul, whilst he kept the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, stoned him by the hands of them all, as St. Augustine observes. (Menochius)

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[1] Ver. 2. Primus Simon, *Greek: protos Simon.* See St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, &c.

[2] Ver. 10. Neque virgam, *Greek: mede rabdon,* and in divers manuscripts both here and in St. Luke, ix. 3. *Greek: mete rabdous,* neque Virgas. But in St. Mark, (vi. 8.) nisi Virgam tantum *Greek: ei me rabdon monon,* in all manuscripts.

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## MATTHEW 11

**Ver. 2.** The order of time is not here observed by the evangelist. St. John's deputation to Jesus Christ took place some time before; and the text of the 7th chap. of St. Luke, gives it soon after the cure of the centurion's servant; hence all that follows, in chap. xi. of St. Matthew, is placed by persons who have drawn up *evangelical harmonies*, immediately after the first 17 verses of chap. viii. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** *Art thou he that is to come?*{1} (Greek, *who cometh?*) i.e. the Messiah. John the Baptist had already, on several occasions, declared that Jesus was the Messiah. (John i). He could not then doubt of it himself, but sent his disciples to take away their doubt. (Witham) --- St. John the Baptist sent his disciples not to satisfy his own doubts, but for the sake of his disciples, who, blinded by the love they bore their Master, and by some emulation, would not acknowledge Christ to be the Messiah. (St. John Chrysostom in Baradius) --- This expression of St. John is much taken notice of, as conveying with it a very particular question. "Tell me, says St. John, now that I am departing out of this world, whether thou art coming to redeem the patriarchs and holy fathers; or wilt thou send another?" (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- And St. Chrysostom also explains it thus, *Art thou he that art to come to limbo?* but the Baptist omitting this last word, sufficiently indicated to our Saviour what was the purport of this question. St. Jerome and St. Gregory say, that by his death, he was going to preach to the holy fathers that Christ, the Messiah, was come. John does not here propose this question as ignorant of the real case, but in the same manner as Christ asked where Lazarus was laid. So John sends his disciples to Jesus, that seeing the signs and miracles he performed, they might believe in him. As long, therefore, as John remained with his disciples, he constantly exhorted them to follow Jesus; but not that he is going to leave them, he is more earnest for their belief in him. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 4.** *Go and relate, &c.* St. Luke here relates that Christ wrought more miracles when the disciple of St. John came than usual, by which he proved in a much stronger manner than he could have done by words, that he was the Messiah. For the prophets only wrought miracles by invoking the name of God, whereas he did it by his own authority. (St. Cyril) --- The reason why our Saviour did not return a plain answer in words to St. John's disciples is, because as the Jews expected the Messiah to be a great and powerful king, had he acknowledged himself to be the Messiah in the presence of the multitude, he might have given umbrage to the secular power, or afforded a pretext to the Scribes and Pharisees of calumniating him, and putting him to death before the time preordained for his passion. (Baradius)

**Ver. 5.** *The blind see, &c.*[2] Christ shews them who he was by the miracles, which were foretold concerning the Messiah. --- *The poor have the gospel preached to them.* This is the sense held forth by the prophet Isaias. (Chap. lxi. ver. 1) (Witham) --- That is, they are declared to have the kingdom of heaven, and are styled blessed. Here also he fulfils the prophecy of Isaias, (Chap. lxi) which in the Septuagint version is rendered, *He sent me to preach the gospel to the poor.* (Nicholas de Lyra.)

**Ver. 6.** *Scandalized in me.* That is, who shall not take occasion of scandal or offence from my humility, and the disgraceful death of the cross which I shall endure: (Challoner) or on my account, that is, at the doctrine of the cross; or when I shall die on an infamous cross. (Witham) --- *Blessed is he, &c.* That is, who shall not be offended by my doctrine or manners; for Christ was a stumbling block to many, but this was entirely their own fault. He seems indeed directly to mark the disciples of St. John, and at the same time to shew that he knew their hearts. (Menochius)

**Ver. 8.** *Clothed in soft, &c.* That the Baptist was not like the reeds, changeable by nature, the respect that the whole Jewish people paid him sufficiently evince. Our Redeemer, therefore,

proceeds to shew that St. John was not changeable by his manner of life. Delicacies and effeminacy (the ordinary sources of fickleness of behaviour,) being found in the houses of kings, and the great ones of this earth, were far from being desired by the precursor. This he shewed to the world by his garments of camels' hair, his habitation in the wilderness, his slender and insipid food of wild honey and locusts, and the prisons to which his constancy brought him. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxviii).

**Ver. 9.** *More than a prophet.* John was a prophet, because he foretold the coming of Christ; and he was more than a prophet, because he saw him, which was a privilege that none of the ancient prophets enjoyed; and not only did he see him, but pointed him out, before he was acknowledged in that character. Again, he was more than a prophet, in as much as he was the precursor of the Messiah, who even deigned to receive baptism at his hands. (Menochius)

**Ver. 11.** *He that is the lesser, &c.* Many understand this of Christ, who is less in as much as he is more humble, younger in age, and according to the erroneous opinion of men, of less sanctity than John. Maldonatus and Tolletus suppose the meaning to be, that he who is the least in sanctity in the Church of Christ is greater than John; not that John did not excel in sanctity many, nay even most of the children of the Church of Christ, but that those who belong to the Church, on account of this circumstance of their being under the new law, which is the law of children, are greater than those under the old law, which was the law of bondsmen, as the least among the children is greater than the greatest among the bondsmen. Now John in this respect did not belong to the Church of Christ, as he was slain before Christ's death, before which time the gospel was not fully established. (Menochius) --- *There hath not risen ... a greater, &c.* This comparison, by what we find, Luke vii. 28, is only betwixt John and the ancient prophets, to signify that John was greater than any of the prophets, at least by his office of being the immediate precursor of the Messiah. The comparison cannot be extended to Christ himself, who was both God and man, nor to his blessed Virgin Mother; nor need we understand it of this apostles. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Suffereth violence, &c.* It is not to be obtained but by main force, by using violence upon ourselves, by mortification and penance, and resisting our perverse inclinations. (Challoner) --- Certainly it is great violence for a man to look for a seat in heaven, and to obtain that by his virtue which was refused him by his nature. (St. Jerome in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- *The kingdom of heaven, &c.* That is, the kingdom of heaven is to be obtained by mortification, penance, poverty, and those practices of austerity which John, both by word and example, pointed out. According to this interpretation, *the kingdom of heaven* means eternal life. Or the meaning may be, the kingdom of heaven is taken by the violent, because it is not now confined, as in the old law, to one people, but open to all, that whoever will may enter in and take possession of it. The kingdom of heaven, in this interpretation, is taken for the Church of Christ, for the gospel, and also for eternal life. (Menochius)

**Ver. 13.** *All the prophets and the law prophesied until John:* as if he had said, all they who prophesied before, foretold the coming of the Messiah; but now John points him out present with you, so that now all the types and figures of the ancient law will be fulfilled, and are at an end. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *He is Elias, &c.* Not in person, but in spirit. (Luke i. 17) (Challoner) --- John is here styled Elias, not in the same manner as those who taught the transmigration of souls; but the meaning is, that the precursor came in the spirit and virtue of Elias, and had the same fulness of the Holy Ghost. The Baptist is not undeservedly styled Elias, both for the austerity of his life, and for his sufferings. Elias upbraided Achab and Jezabel for their impieties, and was obliged to flee. John blamed the unlawful marriage of Herod and Herodias, and died for his virtue. (St. Jerome in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 16.** *Is like to children, &c.* This similitude signifies that there was nothing necessary for their salvation, which God had not abundantly provided for; but they had pertinaciously continued in

their incredulity. To explain this, he uses a similitude taken from morose children, whom nothing can please; he appears to refer to some custom of that time which we are little acquainted. (Menochius)

**Ver. 17.** *We have piped.* Christ, says, St. Jerome on this place, was represented by the children that piped, or played on pipes, and St. John by those that mourned; because Christ refused not upon occasions, to eat and converse with sinners. (Witham) --- Jesus shews the Jews by this simile, that he had endeavoured to induce them, by the common life he led, to an imitation of his virtues; and they had not complied with his desire. --- *We have lamented.* This part is to be understood of St. John, who led a most austere life, and notwithstanding was despised by the Jews. (St. Jerome in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Similar to this is the complaint of the Almighty, by the mouth of the prophet Isaías: *What is there that I should have done to my vineyard, and have not done?* Our Redeemer and the Baptist imitated the skilful huntsmen, who made use of various and opposite stratagems, that if the nimble animal escape one, he may fall into another. As men are commonly more engaged by fasting and austerities, therefore did the Baptist practise them in the highest degree, that they thus might be prevailed upon to believe his words. Christ, condescending more to their weakness, did not embrace this rigid manner of life, though at the same time he sanctified and approved it by his fast of forty days, and extreme poverty, not having where to recline his head. It was better that our Saviour's doctrine should be approved of by one who practiced austerity, than that he himself should fast and live rigidly. If the Jews admired fasting and penance, whose words should have led them to the Son of God? If fasting appeared sorrowful and forbidding, why did they not join themselves to Jesus, who came eating and drinking, and compassionating their infirmities? which way soever they chose they might have arrived at salvation? (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxviii.)

**Ver. 18.** *He hath a devil.* Those possessed by devils, were often accustomed to pass their time in the open air, to use unusual food, and sometimes to refrain a considerable time from meat and drink. (Menochius)

**Ver. 19.** *Come eating and drinking.* Whereas John came living in the wilderness on locusts, wild honey, &c. Yet most part of the Jews neither regarded Christ nor St. John: nay the Pharisees here (ver. 18) say of John, that he is possessed with a devil. --- *Wisdom is justified by her children.* That is, by such as are truly wise; and the sense seems to be, that the divine wisdom and Providence hath been justified, i.e. approved, owned, and declared just and equitable by those that being truly wise, have made good use of the favours and graces offered them at this time of their redemption, when others have remained obstinate in their blindness, and refused to believe in Christ. (Witham) --- That is, the multitude of believers by their faith justify the providence and justice of God, against the calumnies of the wicked; for as these believed, what hindered others also from believing? where it appears that Divine Providence omitted nothing of those things, which were necessary to procure and promote the salvation of men. (Menochius)

**Ver. 21.** *Woe to thee, Corozain, &c.* These four verses shew us how dangerous it is to resist the divine graces, and not to make good use of those favourable opportunities which the divine Providence hath placed us in, of working our salvation and of improving ourselves in virtue and sanctity. (Witham) --- *Sack-cloth and ashes, &c.* It was the custom for those who were in mourning, to be clothed with sack-cloth, and sit in ashes. (Menochius)

**Ver. 22.** *More tolerable, &c.* For as the fault of him who never had the truth announced to him, was less than of him who rejected it when offered, so also his punishment would be less. (Menochius)

**Ver. 23.** If we compare this with Luke x. 15, it will appear that Jesus Christ made twice this reproach to these two impenitent cities. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 25.** *Jesus answered, &c.* lit. *Jesus answering, said:* where we may take notice, that *answering*, in the style of the Scripture, is often put when it is no answer to any thing that was



said before. (Witham) --- *Because thou hast hid*, &c. Jesus gives thanks to his heavenly Father, because he had revealed the secrets of his coming to his disciples, who, according to the false opinion of men, are called children and fools, and had hid it from the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he in ridicule calls the wise and prudent. By this prayer, he also begs that his heavenly Father would complete what he had begun in his apostles. (St. Jerome) --- Christ does not rejoice that it was not revealed to the wise and prudent, but because it was revealed to his little ones. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 26.** *Yea, Father*, &c. St. John Chrysostom interprets this passage as if Christ would say, Go on, Father, as you have begun; or the sense may be, I give thee thanks, O Father, that it has pleased thee to act thus, that since the wise men of this world have rejected the gospel, thou hast deigned to manifest it to little ones. (Menochius)

**Ver. 28.** *All you that*, &c. That is, you who are wearied with the heavy load of your sins, and the grievous yoke of the old law. (Menochius)

**Ver. 29.** *Take up my yoke*, &c. Fear not the yoke of Christ, for it is a yoke of the greatest sweetness. Be not disheartened when he mentions a burden, because it is a burden exceeding light. If then our Saviour says, that the way of virtue is exceeding narrow, and replete with difficulties and dangers, we must call to mind that it is so to the slothful only. Perform therefore with alacrity what is required, and then will all things be easy; the burden will be light, and the yoke sweet. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxix.)

**Ver. 30.** *For my yoke is sweet*, &c. For though, in regard of our weak nature, it be a very heavy yoke, yet the grace of God renders it easy and light, because our Lord himself helps us to bear it, according to that of the prophet Osee, (Chap. xi, ver. 4) *I will be unto them as he that takes the yoke from off their head*. St. Bernard says, that our Saviour sweetens by the spiritual unction of his grace, all the crosses, penances, and mortifications of religious souls. St. Augustine owns that before he knew the power of grace, he could never comprehend what charity was, nor believe that any one was able to practice it; but the grace of God renders all things easy. (Rodriguez, On Mortification. Chap. xix.)

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[1] Ver. 3. *Qui venturus es*, *Greek: o erchomenos*, qui venit, who cometh.

[2] Ver. 5. *Pauperes Evangelizantur*, *Greek: ptochoi euaggelizontai*. In the prophet Isaias, *Greek: euaggelizesthai ptochois epestalke me*.

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## MATTHEW 12

**Ver. 1.** *And his disciples being hungry*. How truly admirable is the conduct of the apostles, who would not depart from the company of Jesus, though pressed by the greatest hunger and fatigue, not even to take a little refreshment for the body. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It is remarked by St. Jerome, that the Pharisees did not accuse the disciples of theft, but of a breach of the sabbath. St. Luke calls this sabbath, *Sabbatum secundo primum*, which is differently explained by interpreters. Ribeira, following St. John Chrysostom and Theophilactus, thinks that every sabbath was so called, which followed immediately any feast. Maldonatus is of opinion that some particular sabbath is pointed out by this name, and conjectures that it was the sabbath of Pentecost, because it is the second of the great feast, viz. the Passover, Pentecost, Scenopegia, or of the Tabernacles. --- In the Greek, sabbath is in the plural, and means the days of the sabbath or rest, which were a part of the feast. The three great feasts lasted a whole week each. They were all three called *Greek: prota*, i.e. great, solemn feasts. The first was that of the Passover, with the seven days of unleavened bread, called *Greek: protoproton*, the first-first

sabbath by excellence: the second was the great feast of Pentecost, *Greek: deteroproton*, the second-first sabbath, (which seems to have been the feast meant by the evangelist in this place, as at this season the corn was ripe in Palestine) and the third was the feast of tabernacles, *Greek: tritoproton*, the third-first great sabbath. Many, however, are of the opinion, that by the second-first sabbath is meant the octave day of the feast, which was ordered to be equally solemnized with the first day of the feast. (Leviticus xxiii. 36. 39. and Numbers xxix. 35.)

**Ver. 2.** *That which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days.* The Pharisees blame not the disciples for plucking the ears of corn, as they passed by, (this being allowed, Deuteronomy xxiii. 25.) but for doing it on a sabbath-day, as if it had been a breach of the sabbath. (Witham) --- *Behold, &c.* The Pharisees here mildly rebuke our Lord; but afterwards, when he restored the withered hand, they rose up against him with such rage, that they formed upon the spot designs of killing him, as in ver. 14. When there is nothing great or sublime, they are more quiet, but when with his word only he restores health to the infirm, like furious beasts, they grow enraged. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xl.)

**Ver. 3.** *What David, &c.*[1] Christ shews them that the law need not always be taken according to the bare letter. --- *Into the house of God;* i.e. where the tabernacle was then kept: not into the temple, which at that time was not built. --- *Eat the loaves, &c.* Christ speaks of those loaves which were ordered to be placed on a table within the tabernacle, and changed from time to time. This translation seems as literal as may be, and more intelligible than *loaves of proposition, or shew-bread.* (Witham) --- To refute this calumny of the Jewish leaders, Jesus reminds them of the conduct of David when pursued by Saul, who, reduced to the like extremity, eat of that bread which the priests alone were allowed to touch. Achimelec, the high priest, thinking it a more pleasing sacrifice to God to preserve the life of man, than to make an offering of bread. (St. Jerome) --- *And they that were with him.* In the place alluded to, (1 Kings xxi.) it is said, *that he was alone.* It may be answered, that no one was with him when he received the loaves. (Menochius)

**Ver. 4.** *How he entered, &c.* The house of God was then at Nobe. In St. Mark, the high priest is called Abiathar. See Chap. ii. 26. To this difficulty some answer, that the father and son bore these two names, Achimelec and Abiathar. This they attempt to prove from 2 Kings viii. 19, and 1 Paralipomenon xxiv. 3. Others say that Abiathar, son of Achimelec, was present, and sanctioned the action of his father, thus making it his own. Others again contend, that it ought to have been translated, *in the chapter called Abiathar*, instead of *under Abiathar*: for the Jews divided the Scriptures into parts, and called them by the names of the most remarkable person or thing spoken of in them. Thus *Romans*, ii. 2. *In Elias*, means in the part called *Elias*. --- *The loaves of proposition.* So were called the twelve loaves which were placed before the sanctuary, in the temple of God. (Challoner) --- These were exposed every sabbath, on the golden table, before the Lord. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5.** *Break the sabbath;* i.e. they do that, which if the divine worship did not require, would not be allowed on the sabbath, as the work they do, of its own nature, is servile.

**Ver. 6.** *A greater than the temple:* so what can be done for the temple without a sin, may be done for him without a crime. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 7.** *Mercy, and not sacrifice.* (Osee vi. 6.) The meaning of this is, if you then approve of the mercy of the high priest, who refreshed the famished fugitive David, why do you condemn my disciples? (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 8.** *Lord ... of the sabbath.* He proves that he can dispense with the observation of the feast, because he is master of the feast. In St. Mark (ii. 27.) it is written, *the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath;* i.e. man's salvation is to be preferred to the observation of the sabbath. (Menochius) --- In the concurrence of two incompatible precepts, we must give the preference to that which is the end and object of the other; thus we must prefer the preservation

of life to the observance of the sabbath. (Haydock) --- These loaves were twelve, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. They were set six and six, one upon another, at each end of the table. Upon the uppermost loaf of each heap stood a vessel, smoking with the sweetest incense. These loaves at the week's end were, according to God's order, eaten by the priests only, when they were replaced by twelve fresh ones, made like them, with the finest flour, tempered with oil. This offering of the *shew-bread before the Lord*, was a continual sacrifice, as the holy Fathers observe, and a figure of a more excellent kind of shew-bread, viz. Jesus Christ himself in the holy eucharist. (Haydock)

**Ver. 9.** *He came into the synagogue.* This happened some days later, but again on a sabbath. (Menochius)

**Ver. 10.** *Is it lawful?* His enemies perceiving in what manner he excused his disciples, have recourse to a fresh stratagem. (St. Jerome) --- By this question they did not seek learning or improvement, but merely an occasion to ensnare Jesus in his words. If he answered in the affirmative, they would accuse him of violating the repose of the sabbath, enjoined by the law of Moses; if in the negative, of cruelty and want of feeling, and would infallibly have objected his own practice against him, as he had before justified his disciples for plucking corn on the sabbath. Jesus seeing their malice, avoids their captious question by proposing one to them, as we read in St. Mark. *Is it lawful to do good or ill on the sabbath?* As if he had said, whether is it better to assist your neighbor on the sabbath, or to abandon him in his distress, when you are able to afford him relief? Unable to give an answer, that would not be a justification of his actions, they remain silent; but he still presses the subject, by retorting their own actions upon themselves. They afforded relief to brute animals that stood in need of it on the sabbath. It was therefore cruelty, or mere malice, to cavil at his relieving the sick man on the sabbath. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 13.** *Stretch forth.* Our Saviour places the man that had the withered hand in the midst of the Jews, and looking round upon the multitude, (according to St. Mark) he ordered him to stretch out his hand, that by these several ways, he might excite the pity of the stiff-necked people; but no sooner had he performed this act of charity, than they, swelling with anger, went out, meditating destruction. So ruinous and pestiferous is the vice of envy! (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xli). --- St. Matthew having mentioned this miracle, takes occasion to narrate others which Christ performed on his second return from Judea. We have frequently to mention that the particle *tunc*, *then*, and such like, do not always relate to what immediately goes before. A soul in sin may be said to resemble the withered hand, but obedience with faith to God's commands can and will restore it to its pristine state. Jesus bids him stretch out his hand, and power accompanies the command; he stretches it forth, and is made whole like the other. (Haydock)

**Ver. 18.** *Behold my servant, &c.* The words are out of the prophet Isaias, Chap. xli. 1. And it is observed that the Jews, before the coming of Jesus, used to expound them of their Messias. (Witham) --- Our Lord Jesus Christ may be called the Servant of the Almighty, because, as himself assures us, he came down not to be served, but to serve; or, as St. Remigius says, not on account of his divinity, but on account of his humanity, which he received from the pure flesh and blood of the immaculate Virgin. (in St. Thomas Aquinas) There is some difference in the text of Isaias, whence this is taken. The apostles and evangelists did not confine themselves to cite the very words of the text, but only the sense. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 19.** *He shall not contend.* These words do not occur in the prophet, but are added by St. Matthew to express more fully the sense, because he offered himself up to the will of his heavenly Father, and delivered himself into the hands of those who persecuted him. (St. Thomas Aquinas) *Nor cry out;* because, like a lamb, in the hands of the shearer, he opened not his mouth.

**Ver. 20.** *The bruised reed.* The prophet here shews the mildness of our Saviour, who, though he could have broken them like a reed, and as a bruised reed, yet would not do it; and though he could have easily extinguished their rage and anger, yet he bore with it for a while, with singular

clemency, till he should send forth *judgment unto victory*, i.e. till justice shall have appeared triumphant, till Christ shall have fulfilled all things, and raised his most illustrious trophy: till the Gentiles shall have placed their confidence in his most adorable name, and the Jews have no plea, notwithstanding their unparalleled obduracy, to make in reply. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xli). --- *Judgment unto victory*. St. Jerome and St. Hilary expound these words in conformity with their interpretation of the two foregoing verses, as follows: "The Lord will cherish and support the infirm and weak in this time of penance and probation, inviting them to greater strength, and light, and perfect charity, till the power of death be taken away, till he return to judge the world, when his judgment shall be victorious; though, in the mean while, it often may appear suppressed, and even subdued by the obstinate will of man." But the exposition, most conformable to the literal sense of the prophet, is: he will support the weak by his mildness, until it come to pass that his judgment, which he came to announce to the Gentiles, be led to victory, by his truth becoming universally triumphant over the world, and in his name all nations shall hope. (Jansenius). --- Thus will he bear with the little light and virtue of his enemies, till the bright light of his faith, and the warmth and strength of his grace, obtain in their hearts, and triumph over every opposition. (Haydock)

**Ver. 21.** *In his name the Gentiles.* Here are two words differing from those used by the prophet: in the Hebrew text we have, in his *law* the *islands* shall hope: probably the oversight of the amanuensis substituting *Greek: onoma* for *Greek: nomo*; the latter variation is of still less moment, as the prophets understand by islands, countries far removed; and also the poet,

Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.

And, *Mittam ad insulas longe ad eos, qui non auderunt de me.* (Isaias, lx. 9, and lxvi. 19)

**Ver. 25.** *Every kingdom.* Strong as a kingdom may appear, it is easily overturned by divisions; and lest it should be objected, that ruin was brought upon it by a multiplicity of clashing affairs, it is added that cities and families share the same fate, if subject to similar divisions. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlii). --- The Pharisees, on a former occasion, had laid a similar accusation against him. Then indeed he did not correct them, wishing them to discover his virtue from the miracles he performed, and the dignity of his character from the doctrines he delivered; but as they still continue the old accusation, he now wishes to convince them of their error. Envy does not so much seek *how* to speak, as *what* to speak. Yet Christ does not despise them, but answers them in the most meek and humble manner, teaching us to be charitable to our enemies, though they behave to us in the most inimical manner. By this also, our divine Saviour evidently demonstrates the falsity of the accusation; for it is never in the power of a possessed person to know another's thoughts, nor give so mild an answer. And as his enemies did not dare, from fear of the people, openly to broach this base calumny, seeing their thoughts, he answered them; still he does not expose to public infamy the malice of their hearts, but gives them a private solution of their difficulty. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 27.** *Your children, &c.* Some by their children understand, *exorcists*, that were among the Jews, that sometimes cast out devils; but it is more commonly taken for Christ's disciples and apostles, who were of the Jewish nation, to whom he had given power to cast out devils: as if he had said, If you allow them to cast out devils by divine power, why do not you also believe this of me, their master? (Witham) --- St. John Chrysostom says the apostles and disciples of Christ are here meant, for they had already cast out devils in virtue of the power conferred upon them by their divine Master, without ever having it said of them, that in the prince of devils they cast out devils. Thus he shews that envy was the origin and cause of their persecuting spirit, and that not his actions but his person gave them such great umbrage. (hom. xlii). --- If Christ alludes here to their own exorcists, who drove out devils by the invocation of the adorable name of God, he confounds the unjust malice and prevention of the Pharisees; if to the apostles, he constitutes them his umpires. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 28.** *Kingdom of God.* Christ either calls himself and his coming the kingdom of God, because it was the beginning of the kingdom of God, and laid open the way to us: or the sense

may be, If I, as proved in an argument above, cast out devils by the spirit of God, therefore what I, my apostles, and John preach, is true, viz. that the kingdom of God is at hand; because the Holy Ghost, who worketh miracles by us, proveth that our preaching is true. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 29.** *How can any one enter; how can I drive Satan from his possession? i.e. cast him out from the bodies of men, unless I am stronger than he, and first unarm him.* (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 30.** *He that is not with me.* This sentence is not to be understood as directly spoken of heretics and schismatics, although at first sight it may appear so, but of the devil, who wishes to dead the souls of men captive, whilst Christ wishes to free them. He entices men to wickedness, Jesus Christ draws them to virtue: how therefore can the works of Christ be compared with those of Satan! (St. Jerome) --- There is no medium. We must either be with Christ, or against Christ: if we are not of Christ, whose then must we be, when nothing but sin can separate us from Christ and God? Oh, where will the generality of Christians, who shew themselves so indifferent with regard to salvation, find themselves at the last day? Can they say they are with Christ?

**Ver. 31.** *The blasphemy[2] against the Spirit, or against the Spirit and the Holy Ghost.* St. Augustine takes notice, that this is one of the most difficult places in the Scriptures. According to the common exposition, here is not meant a sin committed by speaking against the third person of the blessed Trinity, the Holy Ghost, but that sin by which the obstinate Jews wilfully opposed Christ, and attributed those miracles to Beelzebub, which he performed by the Spirit of God, of which they could not be ignorant, but by a wilful blindness. (Witham) --- The sin here spoken of is that blasphemy, by which the Pharisees attributed the miracles of Christ, wrought by the Spirit of God, to *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils. Now this kind of sin is usually accompanied with so much obstinacy, and such wilful opposing the Spirit of God, and the known truth, that men who are guilty of it are seldom or ever converted; and therefore are never forgiven, because they will not repent. Otherwise there is no sin which God cannot, or will not forgive to such as sincerely request, and have recourse to the keys of the Church. (Challoner) --- *Therefore* I say: this *therefore* is not referred to what immediately precedes, but to what is said in verse 24. (Maldonatus) --- Whosoever he be, says St. Augustine, that believeth not man's sins to be remitted in the Church of God, and therefore despiseth the bounteous mercies of God, in so mighty a work, if he continue in his obstinate mind till death, he is guilty of sin against the Holy Ghost. (Euchir. lxxxiii. ep. 50. in fine.)

**Ver. 32.** *Whosoever, &c.* It was their duty to have a knowledge of the Holy Ghost, and they obstinately refused to admit what was clear and manifest. Though they were ignorant of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and might take him to be merely the son of a poor artizan, they could not be ignorant that the expelling of demons, and miraculous healing of all diseases, were the works of the Holy Ghost. If, therefore, they refused to do penance for the insult offered to the Spirit of God, in the person of Christ, they could not hope to escape condign punishment. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlii). --- *Against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him;* i.e. they who for want of sufficient instruction, were invincibly ignorant that Christ was God, might more easily be brought to the true knowledge and faith of Christ, and so receive forgiveness of their sins: but if *he shall speak against the Holy Ghost*, i.e. against the Spirit of God in Christ, and shall oppose the known truth, by attributing to the devil that doctrine, and those miracles, which evidently were from the Spirit and the hand of God, that sin shall never be forgiven him. But how is this consistent with the Catholic doctrine and belief, that there is no sin any man commits of which he may not obtain pardon in this life? To this I answer, that in what manner soever we expound this place, it is an undoubted point of Christian faith, that there is no sin which our merciful God is not ready to pardon; no sin, for the remission of which, God hath not left a power in his Church, as it is clearly proved by those words, *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, &c.* St. John Chrysostom therefore expounds these words, *shall not be forgiven them*, to imply no more, than shall scarcely, or seldom be forgiven; that is, it is very hard for such sinners to return to God, by a true and sincere repentance and conversion; so that this sentence is like that (Matthew xix. 26.) where Christ seems to call it an impossible thing for a rich man to be saved. In the same place St. John Chrysostom tells us, that some of those who had blasphemed against the Holy

Ghost, repented, and had their sins forgiven them. St. Augustine, by this blasphemy against the Spirit, understands the sin of *final impenitence*, by which an obstinate sinner refuseth to be converted, and therefore lives and dies hardened in his sins. (Witham) --- *Nor in the world to come*. From these words St. Augustine (De Civ. lib. xxi. chap. 13.) and St. Gregory (Dial. iv, chap. 39.) gather, that some sins may be remitted in the world to come; and consequently that there is a purgatory, or a middle place. (Challoner) --- St. Augustine says these words would not be true, if some sins were not forgiven in the world to come; and St. Gregory says, we are to believe from these words in the existence of the fire of purgatory, to expiate our smaller offences, before the day of judgment. St. Isidore and Ven. Bede say the same. St. Bernard, speaking of heretics, says, they do not believe in purgatory: let them then inquire of our Saviour, what he meant by these words. --- It is well known that Ven. Bede, on his death-bed, bestowed several small tokens to the monks who were present, that they might remember to pray for his soul in the holy sacrifice of the mass. (Haydock)

**Ver. 33.** *Either make the tree good, &c.* This is connected with what had been said of their attributing his works to Beelzebub. He condemns them for blaspheming him on all occasions, when at the same time they were not able to find fault with his life and doctrine. Christ therefore tells them, that the tree is known by its fruit; and that if they cannot blame his actions, and his doctrine, they ought to allow him to be good, to be like the good tree; and that if they continue to blame him, they ought consequently to condemn his doctrine, yet this they were not able to do. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** As the Pharisees were ever boasting of, and glorying in their ancestry, Christ here shews, that they have not much reason to boast, since their ancestors were but vipers. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 36.** *That every idle word.*[3] By *idle words*, St. Jerome, &c. expound words that are neither profitable to the speaker nor the hearer: but St. John Chrysostom says, false and abusive language. (Witham) --- If, of every idle word, how much more of blasphemy, as when you say in Beelzebub I cast out devils. (Menochius) --- This shews there must be a place of temporal punishment hereafter, where these slighter faults shall be punished. (Challoner) --- If of every idle word we must make account before God in judgment, and yet shall not for every such idle word be damned eternally, there must necessarily be some temporal punishment in the next life. (Bristow)

**Ver. 38.** *We would see a sign.* They wanted to see some new and unusual miracles. They wished, says St. Jerome, either that he would call down fire from heaven, like Elias; or, like Samuel, cause it to rain, to thunder and lighten in summer, contrary to the nature of the country. (Menochius) --- That they might be assured he was sent by God, and acted by his Spirit.

**Ver. 39.** *Sign of Jonas.* I will give no other sign than my death and resurrection, as then, though unwillingly, they will acknowledge me, and people will believe and be converted: so in John (Chap. viii.) it is said, When you shall have exalted the Son of man, then you shall know that I am he. (Menochius)

**Ver. 40.** *In the whale's belly.*[4] The word signifies a great fish, and was not perhaps that which we commonly call a whale. In the prophet Jonas, it is called, a *great fish*. --- *Three days and three nights*; not three whole days and three nights, but part of three natural days, from which, in common computation, the nights used not to be separated. We have an instance of this, Esther iv. 16, where the Jews were ordered to fast with her *three days, and three nights*: and yet (Chap. v, ver. 1) Esther, after part of three days, went to the king. --- *In the heart of the earth*: by which is signified, Christ's descent into hell; as St. Paul says (Ephesians iv. 9.) that he descended into the *inferior parts of the earth*, and this cannot be understood of the grave only. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ expired on the cross about the ninth hour, or 3 p.m. when the general and supernatural darkness that covered the earth, may be counted for the first night, and the light which again appeared, for the term of the first day. (Bible de Vence) --- As Jonas was a sign to the Ninivites,

so is Christ to the Jews; for as he by the prodigy of remaining so long in the fish's belly, and afterwards coming forth alive, gave such authority to his preaching, that the Ninivites were converted; so Christ, by his death and resurrection on the third day, shall shew that he is the true Christ, and this generation shall acknowledge him for the Messiah. (Menochius)

**Ver. 42.** *Queen of Saba*, a province of Arabia, situated to the south of Judea. (3 Kings x. 1. and seq.)

**Ver. 45.** *Seven* is taken frequently, in Scripture, for an indefinite number; for several. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 46.** *His mother and his brethren*; i.e. his mother and relations. (Witham) --- See verse 55 of the next chapter. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 3. *Panes Propositionis*. *Greek: tous artous protheseos*. They are also elsewhere called, *panes faciales*, *Greek: artous enopious*, (Deuteronomy xxv. 30.) and *faciei*, *Greek: tou prosopou*. (2 Esdras x. 33.)

[2] Ver. 31. *Spiritus blasphemia*, *Greek: e de tou pneumatos blasphemia*. St. Augustine (serm. lxxxi. de verbis Evang. Matt. chap. v. p. 388. tom. v.) says of this place: *Forte in omnibus Scripturis Sanctis, nulla major quæstio, nulla difficilior*. And again, (chap. xii. page. 394) he give this interpretation: *ipsa ergo impœnitentia, est Spiritus blasphemia*. See also St. Jerome on this place. St. John Chrysostom's exposition is more easy, when he thinks the sense is, that such a sin shall *scarcely be forgiven*. *Greek: uper part e amartia asuggnostos dm. ma. p. 274*.

[3] Ver. 36. *De omni verbo otioso*, *Greek: pan rema argon*. Some manuscripts have, *Greek: poneron*. St. Jerome says, *Otiosum verbum est, quod sine utilitate et loquentis dicitur, et audientis*. In like manner, St. Gregory, hom. vi. in Evang. St. Bernard &c. But St. John Chrysostom adds, *Greek: to pseudes, to sukophantian echon*.

[4] Ver. 40. *In ventre Ceti*, *Greek: tou ketous*. By *Cete*, is signified, any very large fish, and so it is said in the prophet Jonas to have been, *piscem grandem*.

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## MATTHEW 13

**Ver. 1.** On the same day Jesus left the house, in which he had performed the miracle, and delivered the preceding discourse, and sat himself down on the shore of the sea of Galilee, were multitudes crowded unto him.

**Ver. 3.** To them he spoke many things, from a ship, in parables; probably many more than are here recorded. By familiar and well-known objects, Jesus Christ would thus convey more pleasingly his divine instructions, and teach them to spiritualize their daily labours, and by natural things, which meet the senses, lead them to knowledge of things divine, which we cannot naturally comprehend. (Haydock) --- Several reasons may be assigned why our Lord made use of parables: 1st. The lively imagination of the Orientals made them relish these figurative expressions, which awaken the attention, and exercise the understanding. 2d. The indisposition of his hearers made him frequently veil his instructions under similitudes or parables; but in private, he expounded the meaning to his disciples, who were better disposed, and was ever ready to give every necessary and satisfactory explanation to as many as sincerely wished for it. --- A third motive, given by St. Matthew, was the accomplishment of the prophecies; for one of the characteristics of the Messiah was, that he would express himself in this parabolical manner; and Jesus Christ was pleased that the most minute circumstances should be fulfilled in his person, in

order that the resemblance between him and the ancient prophets, in the mode of instructing, might induce the Jews to consider him as the great prophet, foretold by Moses. There are few Christians that do not dwell with delight and improvement on our Lord's parables. Their imagination, warmed with the singular beauty of the imagery, more easily retains them; and the greatest geniuses have ever esteemed them as very superior and striking lessons of *morality* and *religion*. --- In his sermon on the mount, Jesus Christ does not make use of parables to convey his instructions to the Jews, for then his auditors were composed of a mixed multitude, and the major part of them illiterate people; but here, on the contrary, they are the Scribes and Pharisees, the doctors of the law. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Jesus Christ speaks sometimes in plain, and sometimes in obscure terms, that, by what they understand, they may be led to the search of what they do not understand. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 4.** *And whilst he soweth.* St. Matthew and St. Mark subjoin the following parables to what goes before, but St. Luke places the parable of the sower immediately after the second journey through Galilee, which he anticipates. Jesus Christ successively proposed four parables to the people, and then dismissed them; and being now retired with his disciples, he unfolded to them the meaning of the parables when in the house. (ver. 36) St. Matthew, however, interrupts the course of the parables, and after the first, anticipates the request of the disciples to have it explained; but from St. Mark, we learn that this did not take place till Christ was alone in the house. Of the eight parables, all spoken by Jesus on the same day, the first five were addressed to the people assembled on the sea-shore, the other three were added by him when alone with the apostles in the house, and are in some measure explanations of the former. In the first, we see the different success of the word of God from the different dispositions of the hearers. And as we find that only one-fourth part of the seed produced fruit, we may thence infer how many and great are the obstacles in the way of salvation, and how few will be the number of the elect. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** *Had no deepness of earth;* and therefore the seed, not able to shoot downwards, shot upwards, and for want of necessary moisture and nutriment, was burned by the scorching heat of the sun.

**Ver. 8.** *Some a hundred-fold.* This difference of fruits is the difference of merit *here*, and of the rewards *hereafter*, according to the diversity of states, &c. St. Augustine, in his work, (*de Virginitate, chap. xlv, and seq.*) saith, that the hundred-fold agreeth with professed virgins; the sixty-fold with religious widows; the thirty-fold with married persons. This old heretic, Jovinian, and many of modern date, deny, affirming that there is no difference of *merits* or *rewards*. (St. Jerome, lib. ii. adv. Jovin. St. Ambrose, ep. lxxxii. St. Augustine, ep. lxxxii.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 9.** *He that hath ears to hear.* By these words, we are exhorted to examine the meaning of the parables. (St. Jerome) See Chap. xi. 15. --- We are also taught that not all, but only such as have had the sense of the Scriptures opened to their understanding from above, can properly understand them. The apostles themselves were in ignorance till Jesus Christ gave them the true meaning: *aperuit illis sensum, ut intelligerent Scripturas*: "he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." (St. Luke xxiv. 45.) It is God who speaketh in the Scripture, and it is God who giveth us to understand what is therein delivered. His truths he conceals from the proud, while he reveals them to the little and humble. How can any persons pretend that the most mysterious, as well as the most sacred book in the world, is open to every understanding? St. Paul (*Acts xiii. 26.*) tells the Jews, that although the Scriptures were read to them every sabbath-day, their very rulers did not understand them; and St. Peter, in his 2d Epistle (iii. 17.) assures us, that there are many passages hard to be understood. --- all comes from God. It is He who openeth our ears to hear, our heart to believe, and our mind to understand. Agar was near a well, and yet she wept, because she had no water to give her son to drink, God opened her eyes, and she saw the well that was close to her. Thus, says Origen, we may read the Scripture, and find no nourishment for the soul, unless God opens our mind, to see therein on what we are to nourish it. It contains salutary waters, but only those can be benefited by them, who see how to drink of the heavenly source. It is the Holy Ghost alone who can effectually open



our eyes, to see these waters that spring up to life eternal; and this special grace we are to obtain by humble and fervent prayer. *Knock, and it shall be opened to you.*

**Ver. 10.** *And his disciples came.* How great was the concern of the apostles for the welfare of their countrymen. They did not say to Jesus, Why speakest thou thus to us; but, why speakest thou to them in parables? (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 11.** *To you it is given.* The mysteries of the kingdom of God are not disclosed to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were unwilling to believe in him, (though it was the duty and occupation of the Scribes to expound the sacred oracles to others) but to those who adhered closely to Christ, and believed in him: let us therefore run in company with the apostles to Jesus Christ, that he may disclose to us the mysteries of his gospel. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Can we then suppose, for a single moment, that the mere putting of a Bible into every man's hand, will convert the world. The command given to the apostles and their successors in the ministry is, *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c. teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you all days, even to the end of the world.* (St. Matthew xxviii. 20). There is not a single word to them about *writing*. During 2,500 years, from Adam to Moses, were the patriarchal families and other servants of God in a state of ignorance, concerning either the positive instructions of the Almighty respecting the sabbath-day, the rites of sacrifice, or their moral duties? Yet there was no Scripture during all that period. For more than 400 years after Jesus Christ, the canon of Scripture, as now generally received by Protestants, remained unsettled. Had the apostles and evangelists done nothing more than publish their writings, and disseminate them to every pagan country, not a single nation, not a single pagan, would have abandoned their gods to believe in a crucified Jesus. --- *To them it is not given;* i.e. to such as are unworthy, and by hardening their hearts, have made themselves unworthy. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *But he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.* We read again, (Matthew xxv. 29.) *That also which he thinketh he hath.* One passage helps to expound another: so that each of these texts, with a little reflection, will be found true; and such a truth, as ought to be a subject of fear and apprehension to all that are negligent and indolent in the service of God. For, as St. Augustine observes, they who have received graces and favours from God, and have not made good use and profited by them, they may be said *not to have them*, although they are not yet take from them. And why? but because they make no more use of them, than if they had them not. See the parables of the talents, Matthew xxv, and Luke xix. (Witham) --- He that hath, to him shall be given the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. But such as are incredulous, and resist my words, like the Pharisees and other Jews, so far from being enriched with the spiritual gifts in my kingdom, shall even be deprived of the benefits they now possess. Thus the Jews were deprived of their temple, priesthood, kingdom, and even the true worship of God. (St. Jerome) --- They rejected Jesus Christ, the fountain and corner-stone of virtue; all therefore they had acquired, or possessed, shall be taken from them, and given to the apostles. (Idem.) --- Whoever has a desire of complying with the divine precepts, that desire shall not only be increased, but all other virtues shall be added unto him; but if he be devoid of this desire, the virtues he already possesses, or seems to possess, shall be taken from him, not that God will deprive him of these without cause, but he will render himself unworthy of them. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 13.** *Because seeing they see not, &c.* i.e. they see not as they might, and ought to do, by shutting their eyes against the lights given them. --- *Therefore do I speak to them in parables: because seeing they see not, &c.* This passage, by which the prophet Isaías (vi. 9.) was ordered to foretell the obstinate blindness of the Jews, in refusing to receive and believe in their Messiah, is cited six times in the New Testament; to wit, here in St. Matthew, also Mark iv. 14, Luke viii. 10, John xii. 40, Acts xxviii. 26, and Romans xi. 8. In all these places we must detest the false interpretation of those who, not without heresy and blasphemy, would have God to be the author and cause of sin. When it is said, (Isaías vi. 9.) *blind the heart of this people, &c.* the prophet is only commanded to foretell their blindness, of which, by their wilful obstinacy, they were the true

cause. And when we read in St. Mark, that *to those that are without, all things are done in parables, that seeing they may see, and not see*, &c. the word *that* does not signify the cause, nor the end, but only the event, and the consequence of what would happen by the wilful blindness of the Jews, and by the just permission of God. St. Matthew here expounds to us the words of the prophet, by which it clearly appears that they were the cause of their own blindness; and that, by their obstinacy, they had made themselves unworthy of particular lights from God. *For the heart of this people* (ver. 18.) *is grown gross ... and their eyes they have shut*, &c. The Jews therefore shut their own eyes, hardened their own hearts, which God only permitted. See Romans ix. 18. &c. (Witham) --- If this blindness were natural, then indeed I would have opened their eyes to see and understand, but since this blindness is voluntary, he says, *that seeing they see not, and hearing, they hear not*; i.e. they have seen me cast out devils, and they said, *in Beelzebub he casteth out devils*; they heard I drew all to God, and they say, *this man cometh not from God*. Since, therefore, they assert the very contrary to what they both see and hear, the gift of seeing and hearing me shall be taken away from them.

**Ver. 15.** *And should be converted.* In this the prophet shews the atrocity of the Jewish wickedness, and the malice of their hearts, but that he may attach them to God, their Father, he immediately subjoins, *lest being converted, I should heal them*; and this he says, in order to manifest to them the goodness of God, if they would repent. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- There is some difference between the text of Isaias, given by St. Matthew, and the original. But we have elsewhere observed, that the evangelists attend more to the sense than the words. The Septuagint have translated this text in the same manner. The prophecy here mentioned regarded the Jews in the time of Isaias, according to the strict letter, but still more particularly the Jews in the time of Christ. (Bible de Vence) --- They were authors of their own blindness, sin, damnation, and not Jesus Christ, as Calvin teaches. See also *Acts of the Apostles*, xxviii. and *Romans*. i. and ix. 18. &c. God is not the author of evil. (Bristow)

**Ver. 16.** *But blessed are your eyes.* As the eyes of such as see and will not believe are miserable, so, he says, blessed are your eyes; you see my miracles, you hear my heavenly doctrines, &c. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Had we not read in a preceding part, that Christ exhorted his auditors to search after the knowledge of his words, we might perhaps have thought that Jesus here spoke of corporal eyes and ears; but the eyes here mentioned, seem to me to be those which can discern the mysteries of Christ. (St. Jerome in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 17.** *Amen, I say to you.* St. Jerome remarks, that these words of our Saviour seem to contradict another part of Scripture, where it is said, *Abraham desired to see my days; he saw them, and rejoiced*. But St. Jerome answers his own objection thus: Abraham indeed saw my days, but only in a dark manner, in enigma, but not in reality, whilst you have your Lord with you; you speak to him, and interrogate him at pleasure. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Christ declares his disciples more blessed than the ancient patriarchs and prophets. ... They say him only by faith, but the disciples with their corporal eyes. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 19.** *When any one heareth.* This seed faileth upon four different kinds of soil, which represent four different sorts of persons. The 1st, such as continue obdurate in vice; the 2d, such as are unsteady and inconstant in their good resolutions; the 3d, such as are absorbed in the cares and pleasures of life; the 4th, such as have every proper disposition for receiving the word of God with fruit. --- *There cometh the wicked one, Greek: o poneros*, the devil, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts, lest believing they should be saved. (Haydock)

**Ver. 21.** *And suffers shipwreck in his faith.* (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 24.** *Another parable he proposed.* As in the preceding parable our Lord spoke of those who did not receive the word, so in this he speaks of those who receive the corrupted word; for it is a diabolical machination to confound error with truth. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- There are three things worthy of observation in this parable. 1st. That the Church of God on earth consists of both good and bad; the 2d. that God is not the author of evil; the 3d. that God

does not always punish the wicked on the spot, but patiently bears with them. (Menochius)

**Ver. 25.** *Were asleep.* When the superiors or pastors of the Church were lulled asleep or negligent, or, when the apostles were dead, as St. Augustine expounds it, the devil spread the tares or error and sin amongst a great number of Christians. These falling from the state of grace, or becoming heretics, are yet mingled with the rest of the faithful in the same outward profession of Christianity, not unlike the good corn and cockle in the same field.

**Ver. 27.** *Then the servants.* St. John Chrysostom observes, there are many circumstances in the parables that have no connexion with the instruction designed to be conveyed in the parables, and which are merely added to connect the different parts together.

**Ver. 29.** *No, lest, &c.* The prayers of repenting sinners are never despised. We are taught also by this example not to cut off too hastily a fallen brother; for, whatever he may be to-day, to-morrow perhaps he may see his error and embrace the truth. (St. Jerome). --- Jesus Christ exhorts us to bear with infidels and heretics, not on our own account only, as wicked men are frequently of use to the virtuous, but also on their account; for sometimes the persons who have been corrupted and perverted, will return to the paths of virtue and truth. Let, therefore, both grow until the harvest, i.e. to the day of judgment, when the power of rectifying another's error shall be no more. (St. Augustine in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- When many are implicated in one misfortune, what remains but to bewail their condition. Let us then be willing to correct our brethren to the utmost of our power, but let it be always with mercy, charity and compassion; what we cannot correct, let us bear with patience, permitting what God permits, and interceding with him to move and convert their hearts. But when an opportunity offers, let us publicly advocate the truth, and condemn error. (St. Jerome) --- St. Augustine affirms, that no one should be compelled by force to an unity of religious tenets: such as dissent for us must be persuaded by words, overcome by argumentation, and convinced by reason. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 32.** *The least of all seeds.* That is, it is one of the least seeds; but in hot countries it is observed to grow to a considerable height, and to become a bush or a little tree. (Witham) --- The gospel of Christ, compared in this verse to the grain of mustard seed, has indeed little show of grandeur and human greatness. St. Paul calls it a scandal to the Jew, and a stumbling block to the Gentile. But Jesus Christ here assures us, that when it has been spread and promulgated by his ambassadors, viz. the apostles, it shall surpass every other mode of instruction both in fame and extent. (St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine)

**Ver. 33.** *In three measures.* *Sata*, the word here used, was a particular Hebrew measure, which corresponds not to any particular measure that we make use of, and therefore I have put *measures*, as it is in other English translations. See Walton de Ponderibus & mensuris, before his first tome. p. 42. (Witham) --- It was the *Seah* of the Jews, the third part of the *Epha*, and contained about ten pints, and appears to be the ordinary quantity they baked at a time. (Bible de Vence) --- By the woman here mentioned, St. Jerome understands the Church gathered from all nations; or the power and wisdom of God, according to St. Augustine.

**Ver. 35.** *By the prophet.* It is taken from Psalm lxxvii. 2. St. Jerome remarks that many copies have, *Isaias, the prophet*, but supposes that the evangelist wrote, *Asaph, the prophet*, to whom the title of this psalm seems to attribute it; but it was probably chanted by Asaph, and composed by David, who is simply characterized under the name of *prophet*, because he prophesied in composing his canticles. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 44.** *Like unto a treasure.* This hidden treasure is the gospel of Christ, which conducts to the kingdom of heaven. Thus he who by the knowledge which the gospel affords, has found the kingdom of heaven, should purchase it at the expense of every thing most near and dear to him: he cannot pay to great a price for his purchase.

**Ver. 46.** This eternal kingdom faith opens to your view, but it does not put you in possession

without good works. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 52.** *Every scribe*; i.e. master or teacher. (Witham) --- Because you know how invaluable is the treasure, the pearl, the kingdom, here mentioned; you, who are scribes and teachers, should cultivate it yourselves, and communicate the same blessing to others. Thus imitating a father of a family, who draws from his treasure both new and old things, and distributes them to his children, according to their several wants and necessities. This was a proverbial expression with the Jews, to signify every thing useful or necessary for the provision of a family. (St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, Ven. Bede, and Tirinus.) --- Thus also a pastor of souls throws light upon the mysteries of the New Testament, by the figures of the Old, and explains the workings of grace, by the operations of nature.

**Ver. 55.** *Is not this the carpenter's son?*[1] I find carpenter in all translations, though the Greek word signifies, in general, a workman or craftsman. The Latin is also a general word, which of itself signifies no more a carpenter than a *smith*. But the common belief of the faithful is, that St. Joseph was a carpenter, which may be confirmed by what Theodoret relates (lib. iii. Hist. chap. xviii.) of one Libanius, under Julian the apostate, who asking scornfully of a holy man, what the carpenter's son was doing at that time? the holy man made him this smart reply, that he was making a coffin for Julian; who was killed not long after. (Witham) --- O! how truly astonishing is the stupidity of the Nazareans! They wonder whence wisdom itself possesses wisdom, and virtue itself virtue. The reason is evident: they only considered him as the son of a carpenter. (St. Jerome) --- Was not David the son of an husbandman, and Amos a shepherd? They should then have honoured our Lord, when they heard him speak in this manner. What wonderful mildness in Christ! Though calumniated and reviled, he still answers with the greatest humility and charity, *a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country.* (ver. 57.) (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- *His brethren.* These were the children of *Mary*, the wife of *Cleophas*, sister of our blessed Lady; (Matthew xxviii. 56. John xix. 25.) and therefore, according to the usual style of the Scripture, they were called *brethren*, that is, *near relations* to our Saviour. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 55. Fabri filius. *Greek: tou tektonos*, artificis. St. Hilary (Can. or cap. xiv. in Matt. p. 678. Ed. Ben.) thought that St. Joseph wrought with fire and iron. We find in a manner the same in St. Ambrose Lib. iii. in Luc. in initio. p. 52. See also St. Chrysologus, Sermon. xlviii. St. Justin (Dialogo cum Tryphone, p.69) says, Christ made aratra and juga; and in the Greek edition, (Parisiis, an. 1551, p. 93) *Greek: arotra kai zuga*. Theodoret, (lib. iii. Hist. chap. xviii, p. 656) Sandalipam fabricat, *Greek: glossokomon ... kataskeuazei*.

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## MATTHEW 14

**Ver. 1.** *Tetrarch.* This word, derived from the Greek, signifies one that rules over the fourth part of a kingdom: as *Herod* then ruled over *Galilee*, which was but the fourth part of the kingdom of his father. (Challoner) --- St. John had been now imprisoned in the castle of Machærus about a year, at the instigation of Herodias. It is very probable that before this he would have fallen a sacrifice to her vindictive temper, had it not been for the great personal respect in which (on account of the singular holiness of his life) he was held, not only by the people, but by Herod himself. --- Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, gives the following account: This Herod, who was also called Antipas, was the son of Herod the great, by his sixth wife, Cleopatra, of Jerusalem. A general opinion obtained among the Jews, that Herod's discomfiture by the Parthians, was the effect of divine vengeance upon himself and his army, for the blood of John, surnamed the Baptist. He was a man of immaculate character, whose object was to exhort the Jews to the practice of virtue and piety, point out the necessity of repentance, and hold forth by baptism the import of regeneration to a new life, which he made to consist, not in abstaining from a particular sin, but in an habitual purity of both mind and body. Such was the influence of this

great and good man, as appeared from the multitude of his disciples, and the veneration of his life and doctrines, that Herod was apprehensive of a revolt. He therefore sent him bound to prison, where by the malice of Herodias, his brother's wife, he was afterwards put to death, which inhuman act was shortly followed by the marked vengeance of heaven on its execrable author, as the Jews were firmly convinced. (Book xviii, chap. vii.) --- For Herod going to Rome, at the instigation of Herodias, expecting to be made king, was severely reprov'd by the emperor Caius, (Caligula) who transferred his tetrarchy to Agrippa, in consequence of which, Herod retired with his wife to Spain, and died in exile. (*Wars of the Jews*. Book ii, chap. viii.) In the 18th book, and 9th chapter, Josephus says, the place of his exile was Lyons, in Gaul; that his goods were also confiscated, and that both himself and Herodias died in great misery.

**Ver. 2.** *Risen from the dead.* St. Jerome thinks these words are spoken by Herod ironically; but they are generally supposed to be his real sentiments, the dictates of a guilty conscience. For he respected John, as appears from ver. 9, and was afraid he was returned to avenge his unjust murder. (Jansenius) --- *Mighty works shew forth themselves in him,[1] or work in him.* (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Because of Herodias, his brother's wife.* In the common Greek copies we read, his brother Philip's wife, as it is in the Latin in St. Mark, vi. 17. (Witham) --- He is a different person from Philip the tetrarch, mentioned in St. Luke. iii. 1. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5.** *He feared the people.* The fear of God corrects us, the fear of man restrains us, but removeth not the desire of evil. Hence it renders such as have been restrained by it for a time, more eager afterwards to indulge their evil propensities. (Glossa.)

**Ver. 7.** *He promised.* Wicked promises and wicked oaths are not binding. That promise is wicked, in which the thing promised is wicked, and that oath is not binding, by which impiety is promoted. (St. Isidore)

**Ver. 9.** *Yet because of his oath,* which could not bind him, being unjust. (Witham) --- See the preposterous religion of this wicked prince. He feels no remorse for his impious conduct to his brother and his own wife; murder, adultery, and incest do not appal him; and yet he is terrified with the thought of violating a vain and wicked oath on no occasion and in no circumstances obligatory. Herod did wrong in taking such a rash oath, but he did worse in fulfilling it. (Jansenius) --- David swore to Nabal. He swore rashly; but with greater piety, he refused to keep his oath. Perhaps it is because Catholics inculcate this principle, that they have been accused by their adversaries of teaching that faith is not to be kept, and also the doctrine of expediency. (Haydock)

**Ver. 11.** *His head was brought.* How wonderful are the ways of the Almighty towards his servants! He permits them in this life to be afflicted, and to be given up to the will of the impious, because he knows this is good for them, and beneficial to their eternal salvation. We behold here St. John, the precursor of the Messiah, who is declared by our Saviour to be the most distinguished personage ever born of woman, cast into prison, and, after a year's confinement, slain at the request of an impious vile adulteress. How can any one be heard to complain of the small trials to which he may be exposed for the faith of Christ, when he beholds so eminent a servant of God suffering so much in the same cause. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 13.** *Which, when Jesus had heard.* Our Saviour did not retire till he was informed of the death of the Baptist, by message; and this he did, not because he was ignorant of it before, but that he might shew to the world, not only by his appearance, but also by his manner of acting, the reality of the mystery of his incarnation. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. 1.) --- He did not retire through fear, as some may think. Hence the evangelist does not say, *he fled*, but *he retired*, to shew us that he did not fear his enemies. (St. Jerome) --- The desert was called Bethsaida, not because it was on the same side of the town, but opposite it. Wherefore those who wished to join Jesus, not able to pass the lake, went round by the northern extremity, which they passed either by means of a bridge or in boats, and made such haste as to arrive at the desert before Jesus Christ, as St. Mark relates; (vi. 33.) whilst others, not equally expeditious, followed after,

according to Sts. Matthew, Luke, and John; so that there is no contradiction in the evangelists. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 15.** *And when it was evening.*[2] To understand this, and other places, we may take notice that the Hebrews counted two evenings: the first began when the sun was declining, about three in the afternoon; and such was the evening here mentioned. The second evening was after sunset, or the night-time, as it is taken here in this chap. ver. 23 (Witham) --- *That ... they may buy.* Jesus Christ does not always anticipate the intentions of his supplicants: on this occasion, he waited for the multitude to ask of him to feed them; but they, though their great respect for him, did not dare to request the favour. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 16.** *But Jesus said.* It may perhaps be asked here, if then our Lord, as St. John relates, looking upon the multitude, inquired of Philip how so great a multitude could be fed in the desert, how can this be true, which St. Matthew relates, that the disciples first desired Jesus to send away the multitude? But we are to understand, that after these words our Lord looked upon the multitude, and said to Philip what St. John mentions, which St. Matthew and the other evangelists omit. (St. Augustine, de concord. evang.) --- *They have no need to go: give you them to eat.* This he says for our instruction, that when the poor ask us alms, we send them not to other persons and other places, if we are able to relieve them ourselves. (Estius) --- This happened when the Passover was near at hand, (being the third since the commencement of our Saviour's ministry.) St. John does not usually relate what is mentioned by the other evangelists, especially what happened in Galilee. If he does it on this occasion, it is in order to introduce the subject of the heavenly bread, vi. 37. He seems also to have had in view to describe the different Passovers during Christ's preaching. As he, therefore, staid in Galilee during the third Passover, he relates pretty fully his transactions during that time.

**Ver. 19.** *Commanded the multitude to sit down.*[3] Lit. *to lie down*, as it was then the custom of the Jews, and of other nations, at meat. See Mark vi, and John vi. &c. --- *He blessed.* St. Luke (ix. 16.) says, *he blessed them.* St. John (vi. 11.) says *when he had given thanks*: some think this *blessing* and *giving thanks*, for the same; but *blessing them*, must be referred to the loaves, and *giving thanks*, must be to God. The loaves miraculously increased partly in the hands of Christ, when he broke them, partly in the hands of the disciples, when they distributed them about. (Witham) --- *He blessed and brake.* From this let Christians learn to give thanks at their meals, begging of God that his gifts may be sanctified for their use. From this miracle it appears, that it is no impossibility for bodies, even in their natural state, to be in many places at the same time; since, supposing these loaves to have been sufficient for 50 persons, as there were a hundred such companies, the loaves must have been in a hundred different places at one and the same time. It cannot be said, as some pretend, that other loaves were invisibly put into the apostles' hands, since it is said that they filled 12 baskets of fragments of the five barley loaves; and again, he divided the two fishes among them all. If God could cause bodies, in their natural state, to be in many places at one and the same time, how much more easy would it be to do the same with spiritual bodies, with the properties of which we are entirely unacquainted; so that from this it appears, that the objection that Christ's body cannot be in many different places in the holy Eucharist, is nugatory. But, who are we, to ask such a question of the Almighty, who know not what is possible, and what is not possible for him to do! (Bp. Hay, Sincere Christian.)

**Ver. 20.** *And they did all eat, and were filled.* This miraculous multiplication of the loaves was effected on a Thursday evening --- an excellent figure of the blessed Eucharist. On the next morning, Friday, he cured the sick at Genesareth, and arrived at Capharnaum for the first vespers of the sabbath; where, in the Synagogue, he made his promise of the holy Eucharist, which he instituted on a Thursday evening, the eve of his death. See *Evangile medite*. Tom. iii, p. 425.

**Ver. 22.** *And forthwith Jesus, &c.* In this we have the genuine picture of a Christian life. After eating of the miraculous bread, we must like the disciples, prepare ourselves for labour. As bread was given Elias, to enable him to walk 40 days to the mountain of God, Horeb, so the blessed Eucharist, the true heavenly bread, is given us that we may be able to support the hardships to

which we are exposed. (Paulus de Palacio.) --- We here also see the ardent love of the disciples for their Lord, since they were unwilling to be separated from him even for a moment. Theophylactus also adds that they were unwilling for him to go, ignorant how he could return to them.

**Ver. 23.** *Alone to pray.* By our Saviour's conduct on this occasion, we are taught to leave occasionally the society of men, and to retire into solitude, as a more proper place to commune with heaven in earnest and fervent prayer. The company of mortals is often a great distraction to the fervent Christian. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 25.** *And in the fourth watch of the night.* The Jews, under the Romans, divided the night, or the time from sunset to sunrise, into four watches, each of them lasting for three hours. And the hours were longer or shorter, according as the nights were at different seasons of the year. At the equinox, the first watch was from six in the evening till nine; the second, from nine till twelve; the third, from twelve till three in the morning; and the fourth, from three till six, or till sunrise. (Witham) --- They had been tossed by the tempest almost the whole night. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 28.** *And Peter ... said.* Everywhere Peter appears full of faith and love. He now with his usual ardour believes he can do at the command of his Master, what by nature he is unable to perform. He desires to be with his Lord, and cannot bear delay; and, in reward of his eagerness, Christ works a miracle in his favour. (Jansenius) --- *Lord, if it be thou.* Peter, by saying *if*, did not doubt in faith, as Calvin pretends; nor was he guilty of any arrogance, as others conjecture; for our Lord granted his request. Peter knew that his request would be pleasing to Christ, who had shewn himself so very considerate for his apostles. Peter had also worked miracles himself in the name of Christ, and observing that he wished to pass by, Peter hastened to be with him, to embrace him, and serve him. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 29.** Let those who argue that the body of our Saviour was not a *real* but an *aerial* body, or phantom, because he walked upon the waters, explain to us how St. Peter, whom they will not deny to be a true man, walked on the waters. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 30.** *He was afraid.* As long as Peter had his eye and faith fixed on Christ, the liquid element yielded not to his steps; but the moment he turns his thoughts on himself, his own weakness, and the violence of the winds and waves, he begins to lose confidence, and on that account to sink. Again his faith saves him; he calls upon the Lord, who stretcheth forth his arm, and takes hold of him. (Jansenius) --- By his confidence in God, we learn what we can do by the divine assistance; and by his fear, what we are of ourselves: also, that no one receives from God the strength he stands in need of, but he who feels that of himself he can do nothing. (St. Augustine, ser. 76.)

**Ver. 31.** *And immediately Jesus.* Five miracles are here wrought: 1. Christ walks upon the water; 2. enables Peter to do the same; 3. when Peter begins to sink, preserves him; 4. suddenly stills the tempest; 5. the ship is immediately in port, which may be mystically explained thus: a Christian is with Jesus Christ, to tread under foot the whole world, with the whirlpools of earthly distractions, whilst God calms all tempestuous passions, temptations, and persecutions, and leads him with faithful and continued support to the harbour of eternal rest and life. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 32.** *And when they were come up into the boat.* St. Mark (vi. 51.) tells us, Christ went up with St. Peter into the boat. Nor is this denied by St. John (vi. 21.) when he says, *They were willing therefore to take him into the boat: and presently the boat was at the land.* They not only would, but did also take him into the boat, which was presently at the shore. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** It may be doubted, whether the mystery of the blessed Trinity had been at this time explicitly revealed to the Jews. Most probably not. By "thou art the Son of God," they only mean to bear testimony of his sanctity, and shewed themselves willing to acknowledge him for their Messiah, as formerly prophets and holy men were styled, *sons of God*. Or we may suppose that the Almighty enlightened their understanding by an interior ray of his light, to know a truth which

was obscure to others, and therefore they come and adore him. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 36.** Hence the veneration Catholics pay to holy relics is vindicated. Not only Christ's words, but his very garments had a virtue and power communicated to them. (Bristow)

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[1] Ver. 2. Operantur in eo, *Greek: energousin en anto*; which shews that operantur is taken actively, not passively, as in some places.

[2] Ver. 15. Vespere facto, *Greek: opsias genomenes*. See Matthew xxvi. 20.

[3] Ver. 19. Benedixit. St. Luke, (ix. 16.) benedixit illis, *Greek: eulogese autous*, which is not the same as *Greek: eucharistein*.

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## MATTHEW 15

**Ver. 1.** The *Pharisees* observed a rigid and simple mode life, disdaining all luxurious delicacies. They scrupulously followed the dicta of reason, and paid the greatest veneration and implicit obedience to the opinions and traditions of their seniors. All contingencies they ascribe to fate, but not to the exclusion of free-will. The immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, were favourite tenets with them, and their fame for wisdom, temperance, and integrity was proverbial. (Josephus, *Antiq.* Book xviii, chap. ii.)

**Ver. 2.** *Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition.* The Pharisees had various traditions delivered down from their ancestors, called *Greek: deuterseis*, of which some were works of supererogation, others were contrary to the law. (Estius) --- It is a great proof of malice in the Pharisees, and of irreproachable character in our Lord, that they should be reduce to notice trifles, no ways connected with either piety or religion. ... They moreover betrayed their superstition, by insisting on the observance of these outward ceremonies, as essential parts of piety, which were not commanded by any law, (were certainly of no divine origin) and which, at most, were duties of civility, or emblems of interior purity. (Jansenius) --- *The tradition of the ancients?* They do not say the written law, which did not prescribe these washings of hands, cups, pots, beds, &c. These traditions came only from the doctors of their law, who are called *elders*, which is a name of dignity, as was that of *senator* among the Romans, and so, in English, are the names of *major*, *alderman*, &c. See Acts v. 6. &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Why do you also.* The Jews understanding the saying of the prophets, "wash yourselves and be clean," in a carnal manner, they made a precept of not eating without first washing their hands. (Ven. Bede) --- The traditions here alluded to, and which they call the *oral law*, were respected equally with the written law, by all the Jews, except the sect of Caraites; they were collected in seventy-two books, and composed the *cabbala*, and were kept by Gemaliel and other heads of the sanhedrim, till the destruction of Jerusalem. About 120 years after this, Rabbi Judas composed a book of them, called *Mishna*, or *second law*; afterwards two supplements and explanations were given, viz. the *Talmud* of Jerusalem, and the *Talmud* of Babylon. By these the Jews are still governed in ecclesiastical matters.

**Ver. 5.** *The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee.* [1] This gift is called *Corban*, Mark vii. 11. Now, as to the sense of this obscure place, I shall mention two expositions that seem preferable to others. The first is, as if a son said to his father or mother, Whatsoever was mine, (with which indeed I might have assisted you, my parents) I have given, i.e. promised to give to the temple: and being to keep this promise, I need not, or I cannot now assist you. The second interpretation is, as if the son said to his father or mother, Whatsoever gift I have made to God *will be profitable to you*, as well as to me; or, *let it be profitable to you*, (which is more



according to the Greek text, both here and in St. Mark) and therefore I am no further obliged to assist you. (Witham) --- That is, the offering that I shall make to God, shall be instead of that which should be expended for thy profit. This tradition of the Pharisees was calculated to enrich themselves, by exempting children from giving any further assistance to their parents, if they once offered to the temple and the priests that which should have been the support of their parents. But this was a violation of the law of God, and of nature, which our Saviour here condemns. (Challoner) --- They committed a double crime. They neither offered the gift to God, nor succoured their parents in their distress. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lii.)

**Ver. 6.** *And he shall not honour; that is, assist his father or his mother.* It is doubtful whether these may not be the words of the Pharisees; but they rather seem the words of our Saviour Christ, especially seeing that in St. Mark, Christ himself adds: *And, farther, you suffer him not to do any thing for his father or mother, making void the word of God by your tradition.* (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *In vain they worship, or think they worship God, who neglect the divine commandments to observe the commands of men.* We must not here suppose that Christ censures the commands of the Church, or the tradition of the apostles, because these are in nowise contrary to the divine law, but rather serve to enforce it, and reduce it to practice; nor are they so much the commands of men, as of God, delivered to us by his ambassadors. Christ censures such as are merely human, such as those mentioned here, which are vain and futile, as the superstitious washing of hands or erroneous, as that the soul is defiled by meat; or openly contrary to natural and divine law, as the defrauding parents of their just support. (Tirinus) --- It is evidently erroneous to argue from this text against apostolic traditions. St. Paul tells the Thessalonians, to stand fast, and hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word of mouth or by epistles. (2 Thessalonians ii. 14.) --- *Commandments of men.* The doctrines and commandments here reprehended, are such as are either contrary to the law of God, (as that of neglecting parents, under pretence of giving to God) or at least are frivolous, unprofitable, and no ways conducing to true piety, as that of often washing hands, &c. without regard to the purity of the heart. But as to the rules and ordinances of the holy Church, touching fasts, festivals, &c. these are no ways repugnant to, but highly agreeable to God's holy word, and all Christian piety; neither are they to be counted among the *doctrines and commandments of men*, because they proceed not from mere human authority, but from that which Christ has established in his Church; whose pastors he has commanded us to hear and obey, even as himself. (Luke x. 16. Matthew xviii. 17) (Challoner)

**Ver. 11.** *Not that which goeth into the mouth, &c.* We must heartily pity and pray to God for those who blindly pretend from hence, that to eat any kind of meats, or as often as a meats, or as often as a man pleaseth on fasting-days, *can defile no man.* (Witham) --- No uncleanness in meat, nor any dirt contracted by eating it with unwashed hands, can defile the soul; but sin alone, or a disobedience of the heart to the ordinance and will of God. And thus, when *Adam* took the forbidden fruit, it was not the apple which entered into his mouth, but the disobedience to the law of God, which defiled him. The same is to be said if a *Jew*, in the time of the old law, had eaten swine's flesh; or a Christian convert, in the days of the apostles, contrary to their ordinance, had eaten blood; or if any of the faithful, at present, should transgress the ordinance of God's Church, by breaking the fasts: for in all these cases the soul would be defiled, not indeed by that which goeth into the mouth, but by the disobedience of the heart, in wilfully transgressing the ordinance of God, or of those who have their authority from him. (Challoner) --- Jesus Christ by no means prohibits fasting and abstinence from certain food, and at certain times, or he would have been immediately accused of contradicting the law; he only says, that meat which they esteem unclean does not of itself, and by its own nature, defile the soul; which is what the Pharisees (and before them Pythagoras, and after them the Manicheans) maintained, and which St. Paul warmly confutes. (1 Timothy iv. 4) (Tirinus) --- If a man gets intoxicated, adducing this same plea, that *what entereth by the mouth, &c.* is not the answer obvious; that it is not the *wine*, but the *intemperance*, contrary to the law of God, which defileth him: *for drunkards shall not possess the kingdom of God.* (1 Corinthians vi. 10)

**Ver. 12. *Scandalized.*** When the Pharisees had received our Lord's answer, they had nothing to reply. His disciples perceiving their indignation, came and asked Jesus if he observed they were scandalized, i.e. offended. It is probable the disciples were also a little hurt, or afraid lest his words were contrary to the law of Moses or the tradition of the ancients, and took this occasion of having their scruples removed. St. Hilary, St. John Chrysostom and Theophylactus understand this answer, *Every plant*, &c. to signify that every doctrine not proceeding from God, consequently the traditions of the Pharisees here in question, were to be eradicated by the promulgation of the gospel truths, which were not to remain unpublished on account of the scandal some interested or prejudiced persons might choose to take therefrom. (Jansenius) --- It must be here observed, that Christ was not the direct cause of scandal to the Jews, for such scandal would not be allowable; he only caused it indirectly, because it was his doctrine, at which, through their own perversity, they took scandal. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 14. *Let them alone.*** It must not be hence inferred, that he desired not the conversion of the Scribes and Pharisees. He only says: if, through their own perversity, they choose to take scandal, let them do it; we must not neglect to teach the truth, though it displease men. (St. Jerome) --- When, says St. Gregory, we see scandal arise from our preaching truth, we must rather suffer it to take place than desert the truth. Our Lord says they are blind, let us leave them. For the land which has often been watered with the dews of heaven, and still continues barren is deserted. Behold your house shall be left desolate. (Luke xiii. 35) And Isaias (v. 6.) says, It shall not be pruned, and it shall not be digged, but briers and thorns shall come upon it; and I will command the clouds to rain no more rain upon it. For, although God never refuses man grace sufficient to enable him to rise, if he pleases, yet he sometimes denies such assistance as would render his rise easy. The state of a sinner is then desperate indeed, when Christ tells his disciples to leave him. For as the Sodomites were destroyed, so soon as Lot, who was just and good in the sight of God, had departed from them, and as Jerusalem was laid waste when Jesus went out of it, (for he suffered without the gates) so the sinner is in a very dangerous state, when he is left by the ministers of religion as one infected with a mortal distemper. (Paulus de Palacio)

**Ver. 19. *For out of the heart.*** We must here observe, that our divine Redeemer mentions offences against our neighbour, to shew us that he is even more desirous we should love our neighbour than worship himself. (Idem.)

**Ver. 21. *Confines of Tyre.*** It perhaps may be asked, why Jesus went among the Gentiles, when he had commanded his apostles to avoid those countries? One reason may be, that our Saviour was not subject to the same rules he gave his disciples; another reason may be brought, that he did not go then to preach; hence St. Matthew observes that he kept himself retired. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Tyre and Sidon were both situated on the Mediterranean sea, about 20 miles distant from each other, and the adjoining country to the west and north of Galilee was called the coast or territories of Tyre and Sidon. The old inhabitants of this tract were descendants of Chanaan, (for Sidon was his eldest son) and continued in possession of it much longer than they did of any other part of the country. The Greeks called it Phœnicia; and when, by right of conquest, it became a province of Syria, it took the name of Syrophœnician and Gentile; as being both by religion and language a Greek.

**Ver. 22.** It is probable that woman first cried out before the door, and assembled a crowd, and then went into the house. *Have mercy on me.* The great faith of the Chanaanæan woman is justly extolled. She believed him to be God, whom she calls her Lord, and him a man, whom she styles the Son of David. She lays no stress upon her own merits, but supplicates for the mercy of God; neither does she say, have mercy on my daughter, but have mercy on me. ... To move him to compassion, she lays all her grief and sorrow before him in thee afflicting words: *my daughter is grievously afflicted by a devil.* (Glossa.)

**Ver. 23. *He answered her not.*** It must not be supposed that our Saviour refused to hear the woman through any contempt, but only to shew that his mission was in the first instance to the Jews; or to induce her to ask with greater earnestness, so as to deserve more ample assistance.

(Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 26-7.** *And to cast it to the dogs;* i.e. to Gentiles, sometimes so called by the Jews. (Witham) --- The diminutive word *Greek: Kunarios*, or whelp, is used in both these verses in the Septuagint. Our Lord crosses the wishes of the Chanaanæan, not that he intended to reject her, but that he might bring to light the hidden and secret treasure of her virtue. Let us admire not only the greatness of her faith, but likewise the profoundness of her humility; for when our Saviour called the Jews children, so far from being envious or another's praise, she readily answers, and gives them the title of lords; and when Christ likened her to a dog, she presently acknowledges the meanness of her condition. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. liii.) He refused at first to listen to her petition, says the same saint, to instruct us with what faith, humility, and perseverance we ought to pray. To make his servants more sensible of his mercy, and more eager to obtain it, he often appears to pay no attention to their prayers, till he had exercised them in the virtues of humility and patience. Ask, and you shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened to you. (Haydock)

**Ver. 28.** *Be it done.* In the beginning God said, *Let there be light, and there was light;* here Jesus Christ says, *let it be done,* &c. and her daughter was healed from that hour. So powerful with God is earnest and fervent prayer. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. liii.)

**Ver. 30.** *And he healed them.* The Chanaanæan was long in obtaining her request, and only prevailed by her importunity; whereas the Jews were cured on declaring their infirmities. Thus were they left without excuse, seeing how much greater was the faith of this poor Gentile woman, than that of the descendants of Abraham. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. liii.)

**Ver. 32.** *They continue with me now three days,* eager to hear his divine instructions, and to witness the greatness of his miracles. The disciples, as if not remembering what Jesus had done on a similar emergency, (see Matthew, xiv. 16,) expressed their solicitude and uneasiness for the hungered multitude. (Haydock)

**Ver. 36.** He gave thanks to his heavenly Father, for that providential care with which he supplies our wants, even miraculously, when necessary for us. Everywhere his goodness and attention to the wants of his children are manifested, but not more so in the manna of the desert, than in the fertility of the holy land. (Haydock)

**Ver. 37.** *Seven baskets full* remained, to intimate that God remunerates with a liberal hand all alms given for his sake. Various are the circumstances attending the present multiplication of the loaves with that in the preceding chapter. In the former, there were five loaves and two fishes; here there are seven loaves and a few little fishes: In the former, 5,000 men were filled, here 4,000: in the former case, 12 baskets full of fragments remained, here seven. (Tirinus) --- All which sufficiently prove that these were two distinct miracles, to both of which Jesus Christ refers in chap. xvi, ver. 9. and 10. (Haydock)

**Ver. 39.** *Magedan.* Some copies read *Greek: Magdalan*, others *Greek: Magadan*, or Magedan: this last is found in the Vulgate, and in the best manuscript copies. (Mat. Polus, T. iv, p. 409.)

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[1] Ver. 5. Mark vii. 11. *Quodcunque ex me, tibi profuerit.* In the Greek, both in St. Matthew and St. Mark, *Greek: doron, o ean ex emou, ophetheles, tibi prosit.*

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## MATTHEW 16

**Ver. 1.** *The Pharisees and Sadducees.* These were widely opposite in their religious sentiments to each other, but closely united in their design of persecuting Jesus Christ, and they come and

ask of him a sign or prodigy from heaven, to convince them that he was the Christ, the Messiah. (Bible de Vence) --- The Sadducees deny the immortality of the soul, and affirm that our only obligation is the observance of the law; insomuch, that they prided themselves on their right of disputing the most important points with their teachers. This sect is not numerous, and chiefly composed of men of condition, who, when properly qualified for offices of state, are compelled to conform, at least in appearance, to the principles of the Pharisees; otherwise, they would incur the resentment of the Pharisees. (Josephus, Book xviii. chap. ii.) See also note on ver. 7, chap. iii, above. --- St. John Chrysostom is of opinion he would have granted them any sign they wished, had they been willing to believe; but as their object was curiosity and censure, he refused to comply. They mistrusted, it would seem, his other miracles as the effect of some occult quality inherent in him, and wished to see a miracle performed upon distant objects in the heavens or clouds, which would be to them less suspicious and objectionable. (Haydock)

**Ver. 4.** *You know then how to discern the face of the sky, &c.* Jesus Christ does not condemn every observation made upon the weather, from external appearances in the heavens. He only upbraids the Jews for so closely examining these signs, and neglecting at the same time to notice the many signs and predictions which so plainly manifested him to be the promised Messiah. (Denis the Carthusian) --- The reasoning of Jesus Christ is this: you know how to judge of the weather from observation, and cannot you then know the certain signs so often promised, and now completed in my coming? The signs of this event were, the taking away the sceptre from the tribe of Juda. (Genesis xxxix. 10.) The completion of the 70 weeks of years of *Daniel* ix. 25, amounting to 490 years, which were now on the eve of being completed. The miracles of Jesus Christ, as the curing of the blind, the lame, the deaf and dumb, foretold by *Isaias* xxxv. 5. and lxi. 1. To which may be added the apparition of angels to the shepherds at Bethlehem, the miraculous star which appeared to the magi, the testimony of his heavenly Father, the descent of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. Besides, the testimony of the Baptist, and so many miracles of every kind wrought to establish this truth, most certainly, clearly, and infallibly demonstrate, that the long expected Messiah had already come, and that this Jesus was the Messiah. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 5.** *Forgotten to take bread.* The disciples had just filled seven baskets with fragments, but had forgotten to take any with them into the ship; or, according to others, had distributed all among the poor. (Barradius) --- They were so taken with the company of Christ, that they even forgot the necessities of life. (St. Anselm) --- The disciples, ever constant attendants on our Redeemer, were retained so strongly by the love of his company, that they would not be absent from him for one moment. We may also remark how far they were from an eager search after delicacies, when they even forgot the daily pittance requisite for their support. (St. Remigius) --- It was the custom of those times, and that country, for persons on a journey to carry their own bread. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 6-7.** *Beware of the leaven, &c.* The disciples, not understanding the meaning of Christ's words, supposed he was instructing them not to touch the bread of the Scribes and Pharisees. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 8.** *Why do you think?* That we might know what effect this discourse of our Saviour had upon his disciples, the evangelist immediately subjoins, *then they understood, &c.* This exposition of Christ freed them from the accusation of the Jews; it made them who were negligent and inattentive, both diligent and attentive, and confirmed them in their faith. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 13.** *Cæarea Philippi*, was first called Paneades, and was afterwards embellished and greatly enlarged by Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod the great, and dedicated in honour of Augustus, hence its name. There was moreover another Cæsarea, called Straton, situated on the Mediterranean: and not in this, but in the former, did Christ interrogate his disciples. He first withdrew them from the Jews, that they might with more boldness and freedom deliver their sentiments. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lv.) --- The Cæsarea here mentioned continued to be

called by heathen writers Panea, from the adjoining spring Paneum, or Panium, which is usually taken for the source of the Jordan.

**Ver. 14.** *Some say, &c.* Herod thought that Christ was the Baptist, on account of his prodigies. (St. Matthew xiv. 2.) Others that he was Elias: 1st. because they expected he was about to return to them, according to the prophecy of Malachias; *behold I will send you Elias*; 2d. on account of the greatness of his miracles; 3d. on account of his invincible zeal and courage in the cause of truth and justice. Others again said he was Jeremias, either on account of his great sanctity, for he was sanctified in his mother's womb; or, on account of his great charity and love for his brethren, as it was written of Jeremias: *he is a lover of his brethren*. Or, again, one of the prophets, viz. Isaias, or some other noted for eloquence; for it was the opinion of many of the Jews, as we read in St. Luke, that one of the ancient prophets had arisen again. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 15.** *Whom do you say that I am?* You, who have been continually with me; you, who have seen me perform so many more miracles; you, who have yourselves worked miracles in my name? From this pointed interrogation, Jesus Christ intimates, that the opinion men had formed of him was very inadequate to the exalted dignity of his person, and that he expects *they* will have a juster conception of him. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lv.)

**Ver. 16.** *Simon Peter answering.* As Simon Peter had been constituted the first in the college of apostles, (Matthew x. 2.) and therefore surpasseth the others in dignity as much as in zeal, without hesitation, and in the name of all, he answers: thou art the Christ, the Redeemer promised to the world, not a mere man, not a mere prophet like other prophets, but the true and natural Son of the living God. Thus Sts. Chrysostom, Cyril, Ambrose, Augustine, and Tirinus. When our Saviour inquired the opinion of him, Peter, as the mouth of the rest, and head of the whole college, steps forth, and prevents the others. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lv.) --- *Tu es Christus, filius Dei vivi*; or, as it is in the Greek, *o christos, o vios*; The Christ, the Son, the Christ formerly promised by the law and the prophets, expected and desired by all the saints, the anointed and consecrated to God: *Greek: o vios*, the Son, not by grace only, or an adoptive filiation like prophets, to whom Christ is here opposed, but by natural filiation, and in a manner that distinguishes him from all created beings. --- *Thou art*[1] *Christ, the Son of the living God*, not by grace only, or by adoption, as saints are the sons of God, but by nature, and from all eternity, the true Son of the living God. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona.* *Greek: Simon is undoubtedly Greek: Sumeon*, as written 2 Peter i. 1. *Greek: Bariona* is son of Jona, or John, an abridgment for *Greek: Barioanna*. Bar, in Chaldaic, is son; hence St. Peter is called, in John xi, 16. and 17, *Simon, son of John*. It was customary with the Jews to add to a rather common name, for the sake of discrimination, a *Greek: patronumikon*, or patronymic, as appears from Matthew x. 3. and xxiii. 35. Mark ii. 14. John vi. 42. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 18.** *Greek: Kago.* And I say to thee, and tell thee why I before declared, (John i. 42.) that *thou shouldst be called Peter*, for thou art constituted the rock upon which, as a foundation, I will build my Church, and that so firmly, as not to suffer the gates (i.e. the powers) of hell to prevail against its foundation; because if they overturn its foundation, (i.e. thee and thy successors) they will overturn also the Church that rests upon it. Christ therefore here promises to Peter, that he and his successors should be to the end, as long as the Church should last, its supreme pastors and princes. (Tirinus) --- In the Syriac tongue, which is that which Jesus Christ spoke, there is no difference of genders, as there is in Latin, between *patra*, a rock, and *Petrus*, Peter; hence, in the original language, the allusion was both more natural and more simple. (Bible de Vence) -- *Thou art Peter*;<sup>[2]</sup> *and upon this* (i.e. *upon thee*, according to the literal and general exposition of the ancient Fathers) *I will build my church*. It is true St. Augustine, in one or two places, thus expounds these words, *and upon this rock*, (i.e. upon myself:) or upon *this rock, which Peter hath confessed*: yet he owns that he had also given the other interpretation, by which Peter himself was the rock. Some Fathers have also expounded it, *upon this faith*, which Peter confessed; but

then they take not faith, as separated from the person of Peter, but on Peter, as holding the true faith. No one questions but that Christ himself is the great foundation-stone, the chief *corner-stone*, as St. Paul tells the Ephesians; Chap. ii, ver. 20.) but it is also certain, that all the apostles may be called foundation-stones of the Church, as represented Apocalypse xxi. 14. In the mean time, St. Peter (called therefore *Cephas*, a rock) was the first and chief foundation-stone among the apostles, on whom Christ promised to build his Church. (Witham) --- *Thou art Peter*, &c. As St. Peter, by divine revelation, here made a solemn profession of his faith of the divinity of Christ, so in recompense of this faith and profession, our Lord here declares to him the dignity to which he is pleased to raise him: viz. that he, to whom he had already given the name of Peter, signifying a *rock*, (John i. 42.) should be a *rock* indeed, of invincible strength, for the support of the building of the church; in which building he should be next to Christ himself, the chief foundation-stone, in quality of chief pastor, ruler, and governor; and should have accordingly all fulness of ecclesiastical power, signified by the keys of the kingdom of heaven. --- *Upon this rock*, &c. The words of Christ to Peter, spoken in the vulgar language of the Jews, which our Lord made use of, were the same as if he had said in English, *Thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build my church*. So that, by the plain course of the words, Peter is here declared to be the rock, upon which the church was to be built; Christ himself being both the principal foundation and founder of the same. Where also note, that Christ by building his house, that is, his Church, upon a rock, has thereby secured it against all storms and floods, like the wise builder. (Matthew vii. 24, 25.) --- *The gates of hell*, &c. That is, the powers of darkness, and whatever Satan can do, either by himself or his agents. For as the Church is here likened to a house, or fortress, the gates of which, i.e. the whole strength, and all the efforts it can make, will never be able to prevail over the city or Church of Christ. By this promise we are fully assured, that neither idolatry, heresy, nor any pernicious error whatsoever shall at any time prevail over the Church of Christ. (Challoner) --- *The gates*, in the Oriental style, signify the powers; thus, to this day, we designate the Ottoman or Turkish empire by the *Ottoman port*. The princes were wont to hold their courts at the gates of the city. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 19.** *And I will give to thee the keys*, &c. This is another metaphor, expressing the supreme power and prerogative of the prince of the apostles. The keys of a city, or of its gates, are presented or given to the person that hath the chief power. We also own a power of the keys, given to the other apostles, but with a subordination to St. Peter and to his successor, as head of the Catholic Church. --- *And whatsoever thou shalt bind*, &c. All the apostles, and their successors, partake also of this power of *binding* and *loosing*, but with a due subordination to one head invested with the supreme power. (Witham) --- *Loose on earth*. The loosing the bands of temporal punishments due to sins, is called an indulgence: the power of which is here granted. (Challoner) --- Although Peter and his successors are mortal, they are nevertheless endowed with heavenly power, says St. John Chrysostom nor is the sentence of life and death passed by Peter to be attempted to be reversed, but what he declares is to be considered a divine answer from heaven, and what he decrees, a decree of God himself. *He that heareth you, heareth me*, &c. The power of binding is exercised, 1st. by refusing to absolve; 2d. by enjoining penance for sins forgiven; 3d. by excommunication, suspension or interdict; 4th. by making rules and laws for the government of the Church; 5th. by determining what is of faith by the judgments and definitions of the Church. (Tirinus) --- The terms *binding* and *loosing*, are equivalent to *opening* and *shutting*, because formerly the Jews opened the fastenings of their doors by untying it, and they shut or secured their doors by tying or binding it. (Bible de Vence) --- Dr. Whitby, a learned Protestant divine, thus expounds this and the preceding verse: "As a suitable return to thy confession, I say also to thee, that thou art by name Peter, i.e. a rock; and *upon thee, who art this rock*, I will build my *making laws to govern my Church*." (Tom. i, p. 143.) Dr. Hammond, another Protestant divine, explains it in the same manner. And p. 92, he says: "What is here meant by the keys, is best understand by Isaias xxii. 22, where they signified ruling the whole family or house of the king: and this being by Christ accommodated to the Church, denotes the power of governing it."

**Ver. 20.** *Tell no one that he was Jesus, the Christ*. In some manuscripts both Greek and Latin, the name Jesus is not here found, and many interpreters think it superfluous in this place. The Greek expressly says the Christ adjoining the article, which the Latin tongue does not express.

(Bible de Vence) --- "In a preceding part of Scripture, Jesus sending his apostles, commanded them to publish his coming; but here he seems to give a contrary mandate, *tell no one*, &c. but in my opinion it is one thing to preach the Christ, and another to preach Christ Jesus; for Christ is a name of dignity, but Jesus is the particular name of the Redeemer." (St. Jerome) --- He did not forbid them to teach that there was a Messiah a Redeemer, but to declare then that he was the person; 2d. the disciples (Matthew x,) are not sent to preach the gospel, strictly speaking, but only to prepare the minds and hearts of the people for the coming of the Messiah, as is evident from Matthew x. 23. See Mark xiv. 61. and 62. John v. 18. and viii. 58. and x. 30. and xi. 27. But why did he lay this injunction? To avoid the envy of the Scribes, and not to appear to raise his own glory. He wished the people to be induced to own him for their Messiah, not from the testimony of his retainers, but from his miracles and doctrines; and lastly, because as his time was not yet come, the apostles were not yet fit to deliver, nor the people to receive, this grand tenet. (Mat. Polus.) --- It might moreover have proved a hinderance to his death.

**Ver. 21.** *From that time*, &c. Now when the apostles firmly believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and the true Son of God, he saw it necessary to let them know he was to die an infamous death on the cross, that they might be disposed to believe that mystery; (Witham) and that they might not be too much exalted with the power given to them, and manifestation made to them. (Haydock)

**Ver. 22.** *Peter taking him*, &c. out of a tender love, respect and zeal for his honour, began to expostulate with him, and as it were to *reprehend him*,<sup>[3]</sup> saying, Lord, far be it from thee, God forbid, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Go after me, Satan*.<sup>[4]</sup> The words may signify, begone from me; but out of respect due to the expositions of the ancient fathers, who would have these words to signify *come after me*, or *follow me*, I have put, with the Rheims translation, *go after me*. *Satan* is the same as an adversary: (Witham) and is here applied to Peter, however, unknowingly or innocently, raised an opposition against the will of God, against the glory of Jesus, against the redemption of mankind, and against the destruction of the devil's kingdom. He did not understand that there was nothing more glorious than to make of one's life a sacrifice to God. (Bible de Vence) --- *Thou dost not*, i.e. thy judgment in this particular is not conformable with that of God. Hence our separated brethren conclude that Christ did not, in calling him the *rock* in the preceding verses, appoint him the solid and permanent foundation of his Church. This conclusion, however, is not true, because, as St. Augustine and theologians affirm Peter could fall into error in points regarding morals and facts, though not in defining or deciding on points of faith. Moreover, St. Peter was not, as St. Jerome says, appointed the pillar of the Church till after Christ's resurrection. (Tirinus) --- And it was not till the night before Christ suffered that he said to Peter: *Behold, Satan hath desired to have thee; but I have prayed for thee, that "thy faith fail not," and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren*. (Luke xxii. 31.) (Haydock)

**Ver. 24.** *If any man will come*. St. John Chrysostom, Euthymius, and Theophylactus, shew that free will is confirmed by these words. Do not expect, O Peter, that since you have confessed me to be the Son of God, you are immediately to be crowned, as if this were sufficient for salvation, and that the rest of your days may be spent in idleness and pleasure. For, although by my power, as Son of God, I would free you from every danger and trouble, yet this I will not do for your sake, *that you may yourself contribute to your glory*, and become the more illustrious. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lvi.)

**Ver. 25.** *Whosoever will save his life*. Lit. *his soul*. In the style of the Scriptures, the word *soul* is sometimes put for the life of the body, sometimes for the whole man. (Witham) --- Whosoever acts against duty and conscience to save the life of his body, shall lose eternal life; and whoever makes the sacrifice of his life, or the comforts and conveniences of life for conscience sake, shall be rewarded with life eternal.

**Ver. 26.** *And lose his own soul*. Christ seems in these words to pass from the life of the body to

that of the soul. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Shall come in the glory.* Jesus Christ wishing to shew his disciples the greatness of his glory at his future coming, reveals to them in this life as much as it was possible for them to comprehend, purposely to strengthen them against the scandal of his ignominious death. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 28.** *Till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.* Some expound this, as fulfilled at his transfiguration, which follows in the next chapter. Others understand it of the glory of Christ, and of his Church, after his resurrection and ascension, when he should be owned for Redeemer of the world: and this state of the Christian Church might be called the kingdom of Christ. (Witham) --- This promise of a transitory view of his glory he makes, to prove that he should one day come in all the glory of his Father, to judge each man according to his works: not according to his mercy, or their faith, but according to their works. (St. Augustine, de verb. apos. serm. 35.) --- Again, asks St. Augustine how could our Saviour reward every one according to his works, if there were no free will? (lib. ii. chap. 4. 5. 8, de act. cum Fœlic. Manich.) (Bristow)

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[1] Ver. 16. Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi. *Greek: o christos o vios tou theou.* Where the Greek articles seem significant.

[2] Ver. 18. St. Augustine, serm. 13, de Verbis Domini, in the new edit. serm. 76. t. v. p. 415, expounds these words super hanc Petram, i.e. super hanc Petram, quam confessus es, super meipsum. See also tract. 24. in Joan, t. iii. p. 822. But he elsewhere gave the common interpretation, as he says, lib. i. Retrac. and in Psal. lxi. Petrus, qui paulo ante Christum confessus erat filium Dei, & in illa Confessione appellatus erat Petra, super quam fabricatur Ecclesia, &c. See St. Jerome on this place, lib. iii. p. 97. ædificabo (inquit Christus) super te Ecclesiam meam. (St. John Chrysostom hom. lv. in Matt. &c.)

[3] Ver. 22. Increpare *Greek: epitiman*, by saying absit a te Domine, *Greek: ileos soi*, propitius sit tibi Deus, &c.

[4] Ver. 23. Vade post me, *Greek: upage opiso mou.*

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## MATTHEW 17

**Ver. 1.** *And after six days.* St. Matthew reckons neither the day of the promise, nor the day of the transfiguration; St. Luke, including both, calls the interval *about eight days*, *Greek: osei emerai okto.* (St. John Chrysostom) --- He took Peter, as head of the apostolic college; James, as first to shed his blood for the faith; and John, as he was survive all the rest, and to transmit to posterity the circumstances of this glorious mystery; or, according to St. John Chrysostom on account of their more excellent love, zeal, courage, sufferings and predilection. The mountain is generally believed to be Tabor, and as such is considered by Christians as holy, and was much frequented by pilgrims, as St. Jerome testifies. Ven. Bede tells us that three churches were built upon it; and Mr. Maundrell, in his *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 112, says there are still three grottoes, made to represent the three tabernacles proposed by St. Peter. According to Le Brun, Tabor is situated about 12 miles from the sea of Galilee, and eight from Nazareth. Others, however, do not think the transfiguration took place on Mount Tabor, which was in the middle of Lower Galilee, because St. Mark (ix. 29,) says, that Christ and his apostles, departing thence, passed *through* Galilee, and not *out* of Galilee, and suppose it might be Libanus, because it was near Cæsarea Philippi; in the borders of which Christ appears at this time to have been, at least the promise of the transfiguration was made there, and this place is distant about 60 miles from Mount Tabor. (Matthew xvi. 13.) --- Mount Lebanon is the highest in Palestine, according to St.



Jerome; and of it Isaías prophesied: "*the glory of Libanus is given to it, the beauty of Carmel and Saron; they shall see the glory of our God,*" xxxv. 2. (Tirinus) --- But, as we said above, Thabor is very generally supposed to have been the mountain.

**Ver. 2. Transfigured.** Let no one think that he changed his natural form, laying aside his corporeal, and assuming a spiritual form; but when the evangelist says his countenance shone like the sun, and describes the whiteness of his garments, he shews in what the transfiguration consisted. He added to his former appearance splendour and glory, but laid not aside his substance. ... The Lord was transfigured into that glory with which he will appear again at the day of judgment, and in his kingdom. (St. Jerome) --- Calvin translates *Greek: metamorphousthai, transformed*, but contrary to the sentiment of the holy fathers. He did not shew them his divinity, which cannot be seen by the eyes of the body, but a certain glimpse or sign of the same: hence the hymn:

Quicumque Christum quæritis,  
Oculos in altum tollite;  
Illic licebit visere  
Signum perennis gloriæ.

**Ver. 3. Moses and Elias.** Jesus Christ had been taken by the people for Elias, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He therefore chose the chief of all the prophets to be present, that he might shew his great superiority over them, and verify the illustrious confession of Peter. The Jews had accused Christ of blasphemy, and of breaking the sabbath; the presence of Moses and Elias refuted the calumny; for the founder of the Jewish laws would never have sanctioned him who was a transgressor of those laws; and Elias, so full of zeal for the glory of God, would never have paid homage to one who made himself equal to God, had he not really been the Son of the Most High. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lvii.) --- St. Hilary thinks that Moses and Elias (who represent the law and the prophets, and who here bear witness to the divinity of Jesus Christ,) will be the precursors of his second coming, alluded to in Revelations, chap. xi, though the general opinion of the Fathers is, that the two witnesses there mentioned are Enoch and Elias. (Jansenius) --- It is hence evident, that the saints departed can and do, with the permission of God, take an interest in the affairs of the living. (St. Augustine, *de cura pro mort.* chap. xv. 16.) --- For as angels elsewhere, so here the saints also, served our Saviour; and as angels, both in the Old and New Testament, were frequently present at the affairs of men, so may saints. (Bristow) --- All interpreters agree that Elias appeared in his own body, but various are their opinions with regard to the apparition of Moses. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6. And were very much afraid.** There were two causes that might produce this fear in the apostles, the cloud that overshadowed them, or the voice of God the Father, which they heard. Their human weakness could not bear such refulgent beams of glory, and trembling in every limb, they fall prostrate on the ground. (St. Jerome) --- The Almighty, it seems, was pleased to fulfil the wish of Peter, thereby to shew that Himself is the tent or pavilion, under the shade of which the blessed shall live for ever, and to sanction the public and explicit confession of Peter relative to the divinity of Jesus Christ, by his own no less public and explicit confession, joined with an express command to hear and obey him. St. John Chrysostom very justly remarks, that this voice was not heard till after the departure of Moses and Elias, that no possible doubt might exist to whom it was referred, and that it was to Christ only and to no other. --- *Hear ye Him:* i.e. as the law and the prophets are fulfilled and verified in Jesus Christ, your new legislator and prophet, you are to hear and obey Him in preference to either Moses or Elias, or any other teacher. (Haydock)

**Ver. 7. And Jesus came and touched.** The terrified disciples were still prostrate on the ground, and unable to rise, when Jesus, with his usual benevolence, approaches, touches them, expels their fear, and restores them to the use of their limbs. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 9. Tell the vision to no man, till the miracle of his resurrection has prepared the minds of men for the belief of this.** Expose not an event so wonderful to the rash censure of the envious

Pharisees, who calumniate and misrepresent my most evident miracles. Jesus Christ also gave a lesson here to his followers to observe the closest secrecy in all spiritual graces and favors.

**Ver. 10.** *Elias must come first.* The prophet Elias will come again in person before my second coming to judgment, and will *re-establish all things*, by the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, according to the common opinion. But John the Baptist who was Elias in spirit, is already come. See Matthew xi. 14. (Witham) --- This was a vulgar error spread by the Scribes among the Jewish people. It proceeded from an erroneous interpretation of Scripture. They confounded the two comings of our Saviour. The Baptist was the precursor of Christ at his first coming, and was styled by our Lord Elias, because he performed the office of Elias; and *he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias.* (Luke i. 17.) --- But this prophet in person will be the precursor of the second coming of Christ. Whereby Malachias, predicting this coming of Christ, says: *I will send to you Elias the Thesbite*; thus evidently distinguishing him from the Baptist, who was also Elias in spirit and in the dignity of his office. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lviii.) --- Jesus Christ here confirms the literal sense of the prophecy; (Malachias iv. 5,) but in the next verse, he shews a prior, though less perfect accomplishment of the same in the person of John the Baptist, who was raised by God to prepare the ways of the Lord.

**Ver. 11.** *Shall ... restore all things.* According to St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, and others, these words signify that Elias shall restore all the Jews to the one true faith towards the end of the world; or, according to St. Augustine, he shall strengthen those that shall be found wavering in the persecution of Antichrist.

**Ver. 12.** *So also shall the Son of man.* Jesus in a most beautiful manner takes advantage of this conversation, to remind them of his future passion, and from the recollection of the sufferings of John, affords them comfort in his own. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 14.** *And when he was come.* Peter, by wishing to remain on the holy mount, preferred his own gratification to the good of many. But true charity seeketh not its own advantage only; what therefore appeared good to Peter, did not appear so to Christ, who descends from the mountain, as from his high throne in heaven, to visit man. (Origen)

**Ver. 15.** *I brought him to thy disciples.* By these words the man here mentioned privately accuses the apostles, though the impossibility of the cure is not always to be attributed to the weakness of God's servants, but sometimes to the want of faith in the afflicted. (St. Jerome) --- Stand astonished at the folly of this man! how he accuses the apostles before Jesus! But Christ frees them from this inculpation, imputing the fault entirely to the man himself. For it is evident, from many circumstances, that he was weak in faith. Our Saviour does not inveigh against this man alone, not to wound his feelings too sensibly, but against the whole people of the Jews. We may infer, that many of the bystanders entertained false notions of his disciples, from these words of deserved reproach: *O! unbelieving and incredulous generation, how long shall I be with you?* In which words, he shews us how much he wished for his passion, and his departure hence. (St. John Chrysostom) --- We must not imagine that our Saviour, who was meekness and mildness itself, uttered on this occasion words of anger and intemperance. Not unlike a feeling and tender physician, observing his patient totally disregarding his prescriptions, he says, How long shall I visit you; how long shall I order one thing, and you do the contrary? Thus Jesus is not angry with the man, but with the vices of the man; and in him he upbraids the Jews, in general, for their incredulity and perversity. (St. Jerome) --- The general sentiment is, that these reproaches are limited to the people; some extend them to the apostles. See below, ver. 19. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 18.** *Why could not we?* The disciples began to apprehend that they had incurred their Master's displeasure, and had thereby lost their power of working miracles. They come therefore secretly to Jesus Christ, to learn why they could not cast out devils. He answered them, that it was their want of faith, which probably failed them on this occasion, on account of the difficulty of the cure, little reflecting that the virtue of the Lord, which worked in them, was superior to every possible evil of both mind and body. --- St. Hilary is of opinion, that during the absence of Christ

on the mountain, the fervour of the apostles had begun to abate. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 19.** *If you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed.* Christ insinuates to his apostles, as if they had not yet faith enough to work great miracles, which require a firm faith joined with a lively confidence in God. The mustard-seed is brought in with an allusion to its hot and active qualities. (Witham) --- That is, a perfect faith; which, in its properties and its fruits, resembles the grain of mustard-seed in the parable. (Chap. xii. 31.) (Challoner) --- By faith is here understood, not that virtue by which we assent to all things that are to be believed of Christ, the first, of the theological virtues, in which the apostles were not deficient, but that confidence in the power and goodness of God, that he will on such an occasion exert these, his attributes, in favour of the supplicant. To have a true faith of this kind, and free from all presumption, is a great and high privilege, which the Holy Ghost breathes into such only as he pleases. (Jansenius) --- Examples of this efficacious faith are given by St. Paul. (Hebrews chap. ii.) St. Gregory of Neo-Cæsarea is also related, by Eusebius and Ven. Bede, to have removed by the efficacy of his faith a rock, which obstructed the building of a church; thus literally fulfilling the promise of Jesus Christ. (Tirinus) --- The faith of the apostles, especially of those that had not been present at the transfiguration, was not perfect and complete in all its parts, till after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. (Haydock) --- St. Jerome understands by *mountains*, things the most difficult to be effected.

**Ver. 20.** See here the efficacy of prayer and fasting! What the apostles could not do, prayer accompanied with fasting can effect. How then can that be genuine religion, which makes fasting an object of ridicule? We see also here that the true Church in her exorcisms follows Scripture, when she uses besides the name of Jesus, many prayers and much fasting to drive out the devils, because these, as well as faith, are here required. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21.** Jesus then taking the road to Jerusalem with his disciples, and whilst they were in Galilee, which they had to pass through, he spake to them of his suffering, death, and resurrection. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 22.** *They were troubled exceedingly,* not being able to comprehend the mystery of Christ's sufferings and death, which were so opposite to the nations they had of the glorious kingdom of the Messias. (Witham) --- This grief was the consequence of their attachment to their divine Master. They were ignorant, as St. Mark and St. Luke notice, of the word that was spoken. They full well understood that he would be put to death, but did not sufficiently comprehend the shortness of his rest in the grave, the nature of his triumphant resurrection, nor the inestimable benefits which his death would bring on the world. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lix.)

**Ver. 23.** *They that received the didrachmas,* (Greek: *ta didrachma*) in value about fifteen-pence of our money. (Witham) --- A tax, according to some, laid on every person who was twenty years of age, for the service of the temple. See Exodus xxx. St. John Chrysostom thinks it was paid for the first-born only, whom the Lord would have redeemed for the first-born of the Egyptians, whom he slew. Others think it was a tribute paid to the Romans, as Christ, in ver. 24, seems to insinuate, by mentioning the kings of the earth; and the Jews were tributary to them at this time. In ver. 24, the evangelist uses the word Greek: *Kensos*, taken from the Latin *census*, or tax.

**Ver. 24.** *Then the children.* From these words and the following, *that we may not scandalize them*, some argue that Christians are exempt from taxes. The fallacy of this deduction is victoriously demonstrated from the express words of St. Paul, (Romans xiii.) commanding us to be subject to the higher powers, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake: *Render tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom, &c.* The word children then does not mean subjects, but must be understood in its natural limited sense. (Jansenius) --- Jesus Christ argues *a minori ad majus* thus, if the kings of the earth exact money from their subjects only, and exempt their own children, how much more ought I to be exempt, who do not claim my descent from a temporal prince only, but from the supreme King of heaven. This example our Saviour would never have adduced, says St. John Chrysostom had he not really been the Son of God. (hom.

lix.) Our Saviour uniformly waved his right to exemptions in temporal things: he declares every where that temporal princes have nothing to fear from him, or his doctrines, since his kingdom is not of this world. (Haydock)

**Ver. 26.** *But that we may not.* Jesus Christ pays the tribute, not as one subject to the law, but as consulting the infirmity of the people; but he first shews himself exempt from the above example, lest his disciples might take occasion of scandal therefrom. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lix.) --- *For me and thee.* A great mystery this: Jesus Christ paid not only for himself, but for the future representative of Him and his Church, in whom, as chief, the rest were comprised. (St. Augustine, q. ex Nov. Tes. q. lxxv. tom. 4.) Jesus Christ here, as well as on many other occasions, pointedly marks the precedence of Peter, which might give rise to the strife and contention of the disciples, in the commencement of the ensuing chapter, on the subject of superiority. Thus St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, Tirinus, &c.

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## MATTHEW 18

**Ver. 1.** *Who, thinkest thou?* This altercation for superiority among the apostles, whilst they were upon their road to Judea, might have arisen from another cause besides the precedence given by Jesus Christ to Peter above, as St. John Chrysostom (hom. lix. in Mat.) affirms. A report prevailed among the disciples, that Christ would soon die; and they wished to know who would be the first, when he was gone. (Jansenius) --- Or expecting that by his future resurrection he would enter into full possession of his temporal kingdom, they wished to learn which of them should be the greater in this new and glorious state. Calmet supposes that Peter was not with them, but that he had gone before with his Master to Capharnaum. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *And Jesus calling ... a little child.* In St. Mark (ix. 32) we find that Jesus did this in the house, when they were arrived at Capharnaum.

**Ver. 3.** *You shall not enter, &c.* i.e. you shall have no place in my kingdom of glory, in heaven, where none shall find admittance but they that are truly humble. (Witham) --- Our Lord in this and the next chapter teaches us, 1st, To sit down in the lowest place; 2nd, to bear patiently with our neighbor; 3rd, not to scandalize a weak brother; 4th, mildly to correct him when faulty; and 5thly, to forgive him when repentant.

**Ver. 4.** *Greater in the kingdom of heaven,* because more conformable to me here on earth. Humble souls, who are little in their own eyes, are so dear and closely united to the Almighty, that Christ declares them to be the most acceptable, the first in merit, not highest in authority or dignity either in church or state, as some idle fanatics pretend. (Jansenius) --- The kingdom of heaven is not the reward of ambition, but the boon of simplicity and humility.

**Ver. 5.** *He that shall receive.* To receive, in the style of the Scriptures, is to honour and favour, to be charitable, and kind to any one. (Witham) --- Who does not admire here the great goodness of God! Jesus, knowing that he was soon to leave the world, and that his disciples would no longer have it in their power to manifest their charity for him by their kind services, substitutes the poor in his place, declaring, that if they receive or honour them, they received Christ himself. (Denis the Carthusian) --- What greater proof can we wish for the merit of good works!!!

**Ver. 6.** *But he that shall scandalize,* shall by their evil doctrine or example draw others into sinful ways. The words *scandalize*, and *scandal*, being sufficiently understood, and authorized by use, both in English and French, might I thought be retained. The words *offend* and *offences*, in Protestant translation, do not express sufficiently the sense. (Witham) --- That is, shall put a stumbling-block in their way, and cause them to fall into sin. (Challoner) --- By these strong expressions of our Lord, we may judge of the enormity and malice of scandal. Rather than be the

cause of scandal to any of the faithful, and occasion the loss of his soul, we must be ready to undergo every torment, yes, and suffer death itself. (Denis the Carthusian) --- The ancient punishment among the Greeks for sacrilege was drowning, with a mill-stone fastened about the neck, according to Diodorus Siculus.

**Ver. 7.** *It must needs be*, not absolutely, but the weakness and wickedness of the world considered *that scandals should happen*. (Witham) --- Considering the wickedness and corruption of the world, such things always will happen; but the judgments of God, though slow, will be terrible in the extreme. Lento quidem gradu Divina procedit Vindicta, sed tarditatem gravitate compensat. (Val. Max.) --- We must not suppose for a moment that Christ subjects human actions to the control of rigid fatality. It is not the prescience or prediction of Christ, which causes these evils to take place; they do not happen, because Christ foretold them; but, Christ foretold them, because they would infallibly happen. The Almighty permits scandals, because the good are benefited by them, making them more diligent and more watchful: witness the great virtue of Job, of Joseph, and many others perfected in temptation. If the less virtuous receive any detriment from scandals, they owe it to their own sloth and laziness. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lx.) --- Jesus Christ pronounces a double woe to the man who bringeth scandal, and to the world which is punished by it. But why, asks St. John Chrysostom does he bewail the miseries of the world, when it depended upon him to stretch forth his hand and remove them? He imitates the conduct of a good physician, who, after prescribing various remedies, feels himself obliged to declare to his patient, that by neglecting the prescriptions, he is increasing his distemper. Jesus Christ had left the throne of his glory, taken upon him the form of a servant, and suffered the greatest extremities, but seeing man so perverse as to reap no advantage from all he had done and suffered for him, he weeps over his miserable state. Nor is this without its particular fruit; for it frequently happens, that whom good counsel cannot move, prayers and tears, and the relation of the dismal consequences attendant on sin, bring to repentance. This also manifests his tenderness and boundless charity, since he weeps over the people, who of all others most contradicted him. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lx.)

**Ver. 8.** *And if thy hand, or thy foot, &c.* These comparisons are to make us sensible, that we must quit and renounce what is most dear to us, sooner than remain in the occasions of offending God. (Witham) --- These words more properly mean our relatives and friends, who are united to us as closely as the different members of the body. This he had touched upon before, yet he again repeats it, for nothing is so pernicious, nothing so dangerous, as the company and conversation of the dissolute. Connections of friendship and affinity, are sometimes more powerful in inclining us to good or evil, than open compulsion. On this account Christ, with great earnestness, commands us to cut with those most near and dear to us, when they are to us the immediate occasions of scandal. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lx.)

**Ver. 10.** *Their angels.* The Jews also believed that men had their good angels, or angels appointed to be their guardians. See Genesis xlviii. 16. (Witham) --- Observe the dignity of the humble and little, whom the world despises. They have angels constantly pleading their cause in the divine presence. They are now weak and unable to defend themselves, but they have their advocates in heaven, accusing those who offer them any injury or scandal. It is evident from many parts of Scripture, that angels are appointed guardians of kingdoms, countries, cities, and even individuals, Exodus xxiii. Daniel x. Apocalypse xii. & alibi. *The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear him, and he shall deliver them.* (Psalm xxxiii.) St. Jerome does not hesitate to affirm that every man has an angel assigned him at his birth, which he confirms from Chap. xii, of Acts, where it is related that the girl thought she saw Peter's angel. The thing is so plain, that Calvin, dares not deny it, and yet he will needs doubt of it. (Lib. i. Inst. chap. xiv. sect. 7.) Origen thinks that only the just have their guardian angels, and these only at their baptism. The opinion of St. Augustine is universal in the Catholic Church. "I esteem it, O my God, an inestimable benefit, that thou hast granted me an angel to guide me from the moment of my birth, to my death." (De dilig. Deo. Medit. chap. xii.) How much are we indebted to the Providence of God, for extending itself also to the wicked. They likewise have their angels, without whose assistance they would fall into many more grievous sins, and the evil spirits would

have more power over them. Let us then with gratitude remember our dignity, and fear to commit any thing in their presence, which may make them grieve and withdraw from us their protection and assistance.

**Ver. 12.** *If a man have a hundred sheep.* This is to shew the goodness and mercy of God towards sinners. By the *one sheep*, some understand all mankind, and by the ninety-nine, the angels in heaven. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ manifests his tender regard and solicitude for us poor weak creatures, by becoming himself the Son of man, thus abandoning in some measure the angels who are in heaven. He is come down upon earth to save by his death what was lost, imitating thus, with regard to men, the conduct themselves observe with regard to their sheep. (Bible de Vence) --- In the Greek, it is dubious whether the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in the mountains, or, whether he himself goeth into the mountains in quest of the lost sheep.

**Ver. 14.** *Even so it is not.* Here some may perhaps object, that since the Almighty does not wish any of his little ones to perish, he must consequently wish all to be saved, and therefore that all will be saved. Now this is not the case: the will of the Almighty is therefore sometimes frustrated in its effects, which is contrary to Scripture. To this objection, St. John Damascene replies, that in God we must distinguish two distinct wills; the one *antecedent*, the other *consequent*. A person wills a thing *antecedently*, when he wills it merely as considered in itself. For instance, a prince wishes his subjects to live, in as much as they are all his subjects. But a person wills a thing *consequently*, when he wills a thing in consideration of some particular circumstance. Thus, though the king wishes all his subject to live, he nevertheless wills that some should die, if they turn traitors, or disorganize the peace of society. In the same manner, the Almighty wishes none of his little ones to perish, in as much as they are all his creatures, made to his own image, and destined for the kingdom of glory; though it is equally certain that he wills the eternal punishment of many who have turned away from his service, and followed iniquity. If we observe this distinction, it is easy to see what our Saviour meant, when he said that it was not the will of his Father that any of these little ones should perish. (St. John Damascene)

**Ver. 15.** *Offend against thee.* St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome understand from this verse, that the injured person is to go and admonish his brother. Other understand *against thee*, to mean in thy presence, or to thy knowledge, because fraternal correction is a duty, not only when our brother offends us, but likewise when he offends against his neighbour, and much more when he offends God. It is moreover a duty not peculiar to the injured, but common to all. When the offence is not personal, our advice will be less interested. This precept, though positive, is only obligatory, when it is likely to profit your brother, as charity is the only motive for observing it. Therefore, it not only may, but ought to be omitted, when the contrary effect is likely to ensue, whether it be owing to the perversity of the sinner, or the circumstances of the admonisher. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 17.** *Tell the church.* This not only shews the order of fraternal correction, but also every man's duty in submitting to the judgment of the Church. (Witham) --- There cannot be a plainer condemnation of those who make particular creeds, and will not submit the articles of their belief to the judgment of the authority appointed by Christ. (Haydock)

**Ver. 18.** *Whatsoever you shall bind, &c.* The power of *binding* and *loosing*, which in a more eminent manner was promised to St. Peter, is here promised to the other apostles and their successors, bishops and priests. (Witham) --- The power of binding and loosing, conferred on St. Peter, excelled that granted to the other apostles, inasmuch as to St. Peter, who was head and pastor of the whole Church, was granted jurisdiction over the other apostles, while these received no power over each other, much less over St. Peter. (Tirinus) --- Priests receive a power not only to *loose*, but also to *bind*, as St. Ambrose writeth against the Novatians, who allowed the latter, but denied the former power to priests. (Lib. i. de pœnit. chap. ii.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 19.** *That if two of you.* From these words, we learn how superior is public to private prayer. The efficacy of the former is attributed to the presence of Christ in those assemblies. The Father,

for his Son's sake, will grant petitions thus offered. (Jansenius) --- The fervour of one will supply for the weakness and distractions of the other.

**Ver. 20.** *There am I in the midst of them.* This is understood of such assemblies only, as are gathered in the name and authority of Christ; and in unity of the Church of Christ. (St. Cyprian, de Unitate Ecclesiæ.) (Challoner) --- St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, and Euthymius explain the words *in his name*, thus assembled by authority received from Christ, in the manner appointed by him, or for his sake, and seeking nothing by his glory. Hence we may see what confidence we may place in an œcumenical council lawfully assembled. (Tirinus) (St. Gregory, lib. vii. Regist. Epist. cxii.)

**Ver. 21.** St. Peter knew the Jews to be much given to revenge; he therefore thought it a great proof of superior virtue to be able to forgive seven times. It was for this reason he proposed this question to our Lord; who, to shew how much he esteemed charity, immediately answered, not only seven times, but seventy times seven times. He does not mean to say that this number must be the bounds of our forgiving; we must forgive to the end, and never take revenge, however often our brother offend against us. There must be no end of forgiving poor culprits that sincerely repent, either in the sacrament of penance, or one man another his offences. (Bristow) --- To recommend this great virtue more forcibly, he subjoins the parable of the king taking his accounts: and, for the great severity there exercised, he intimates how rigid will his heavenly Father be to those who forgive not their enemies. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 22.** *Till seventy times seven;* i.e. 490 times; but it is put by way of an unlimited number, to signify we must pardon private injuries, though even so often done to us. (Witham) --- When our brother sins against us, we must grieve for his sake over the evil he has committed; but for ourselves we ought greatly to rejoice, because we are thereby made like our heavenly Father, who bids the sun to shine upon the good and the bad. But if the thought of having to imitate God alarms us, though it should not seem difficult to a true lover of God, let us place before our eyes the examples of his favourite servants. Let us imitate Joseph, who though reduced to a state of the most abject servitude, by the hatred of his unnatural brethren, yet in the affliction of his heart, employed all his power to succour them in their afflictions. Let us imitate Moses, who after a thousand injuries, raised his fervent supplications in behalf of his people. Let us imitate the blessed Paul, who, though daily suffering a thousand afflictions from the Jews, still wished to become an anathema for their salvation. Let us imitate Stephen, who, when the stones of his persecutors were covering him with wounds, prayed that the Almighty would pardon their sin. Let us follow these admirable examples, then shall we extinguish the flames of anger, then will our heavenly Father grant us the forgiveness of our sins, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxii.)

**Ver. 24.** *Ten thousand talents.* It is put as an example for an immense sum. It is not certainly agreed what was the value of a talent. A talent of gold is said to be 4900 lb.; of silver 375 lb. See Walton's Prologomena, Dr. Harris's Lexicon, &c. (Witham) --- The 10,000 talents, according to some authors, amount to £1,875,000 sterling, i.e., 740,000 times as much as his fellow-servant owed him; the hundred pence amounting to not more than £3 2s. 6d.

**Ver. 35.** *So also shall my heavenly Father do to you.* In this parable the master is said to have remitted the debt, and yet afterwards to have punished the servant for it. God doth not in this manner with us. But we may here observe, once for all, that in parables, diverse things are only ornamental to the parable itself; and a caution and restriction is to be used in applying them. (Witham) --- Not that God will revoke a pardon once granted; for this would be contrary to his infinite mercy, and his works are without repentance. It means that God will not pardon, or rather that he will severely punish the ingratitude and inhumanity of the man, who, after having received from God the most liberal pardon of his grievous transgressions, refuses to forgive the slightest offence committed against him by his neighbour, who is a member, nay a son of his God. This ingratitude may justly be compared with the 10,000 talents, as every grievous offence committed against God, exceeds, in an infinite degree, any offence against man. (Tirinus) --- This

forgiveness must be real, not pretended; from the heart, and not in word and appearance only; sacrificing all desire of revenge, all anger, hatred and resentment, at the shrine of charity.

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## MATTHEW 19

### MATTHEW CHAPTER XIX.

**Ver. 3.** *Is it lawful?* Here again the Pharisees, ever anxious to ensnare Jesus in his words, come to him and ask him, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? Thinking now they had to a certainty succeeded, they argue thus with themselves: shall he say that it is not lawful, we will accuse him of blasphemy, contradicting the Scriptures. For, it is written, Deuteronomy iv. 1. *If a man take a wife, and she find not favour in his eyes, for some uncleanness, he shall write a bill of divorce.* And Malachias, ii. 16. *When thou shalt hate her, put her away.* --- On the other hand, if he shall say it is lawful, we will accuse him of favouring the passions. But Jesus Christ, the wisdom of the eternal Father, silences them with the authority of that Scripture they attempted to bring against him. *What God has joined together, let no man put asunder;* intimating, that the connexion between husband and wife is so strict, that by it they become as one flesh, and can no more be separated than one member from another. (Denis the Carthusian) --- *To put away his wife for every cause,*<sup>[1]</sup> or upon every occasion. They did not doubt it, if the cause was considerable. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *In the beginning.* It is remarked by St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, and Theophylactus, that the Almighty does not say of any of the animals which he created, as he does of man and woman, that he joined one male to one female; from which it appears, according to the reasoning of St. Augustine, that monogamy, as well as the indissolubility of marriage, was instituted from the beginning by the Almighty. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 5.** These words were pronounced by Adam. Genesis xi. 24. [sic; ii. 24] --- *And they shall be in one flesh.*<sup>[2]</sup> I translate thus with submission to better judges; yet the sense may be, by a kind of Hebraism, they shall be esteemed as one person. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** The Pharisees, not satisfied, again attack our Saviour. To this second attack he replies: Moses indeed permitted you to put away your wives on account of the hardness of your hearts, and to prevent a greater evil, lest through your cruelty you should poison them, or put them to violent death; but in the natural law, signified by *the beginning*, it was not so. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 8.** *Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you, &c.* Whether this was permitted in the old law, so that the man who was divorced from his wife could marry another woman, is disputed. Some think this second marriage was still unlawful for the man or woman so separated to marry another. (Witham) --- The latter part of this verse, of St. Paul, (Romans vii. 3,) and the constant tradition of the Church, shew that the exception only refers to separation, but not to the marrying another during the life of the parties. In this place Christ restores the original condition of the marriage state, and henceforth will have it to be a perfect figure of the hypostatic union of his divine person with our human nature, as also of his nuptial union with his Church, and consequently that it should be indissoluble. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 9.** *And I say to you.* It is worthy of remark, that in the parallel texts, St. Mark x. 2. and St. Luke xvi. 18. and St. Paul to Corinthians vii. 10. omit the exception of fornication; and also that St. Matthew himself omits it in the second part of the verse; and says absolutely, that he who shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery. It perhaps crept in here from chap. v. 23, where it is found in a phrase very similar to this, but which expresses a case widely different. Divorce is in no case admitted but in that of adultery. This is what Christ teaches in chap. v. 32, and to this the



exception is referred, marked in the two texts. But in this very case the separated parties cannot contract a second marriage without again committing adultery, as we must infer, from a comparison of this text with the parallel texts of St. Mark and St. Luke. (Bible de Vence) --- If we did not understand it in this manner, the case of the adulteress would be preferable to the case of her who should be put away without any crime of her own; as in this supposition, the former would be allowed to marry again, which the latter would not be allowed. (Tirinus) --- St. Augustine is very explicit on this subject. See lib. 11. de adult conjug. chap. xxi. xxii. xxiv. --- St. Jerome, in his high commendation of the noble matron, Fabiola, says of her: "that though she was the innocent party, for the unlawful act of marrying again, she did public penance." (In Epitaph. Fabiolæ.) --- This universally received doctrine of the Catholic Church was confirmed in the general council of Trent. (Session xxiv. canon 6.)

**Ver. 11.** *All receive not this word.*[3] To translate all *cannot* take, or cannot receive this word, is neither conformable to the Latin nor Greek text. To be able to live singly, and chastely, is given to every one that asketh, and prayeth for the grace of God to enable him to live so. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ take occasion from the remark of the Pharisees to praise holy virginity, which he represents as a great and good gift of heaven; and such it has ever been considered in the eye of true and genuine religion. Hence it appears that besides commandments, there are evangelical counsels, to the observance of which it is both lawful and meritorious for a Christian to devote himself, especially for the purpose of employing himself with greater liberty and less encumbrance in the service of his God. --- Our Lord does not approve of the conclusion his disciple drew from his doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage, lest he should seem to condemn matrimony both good and necessary; neither does he reprove them for it, lest he should seem to prefer it before the state of continency. His answer therefore prudently avoids both difficulties, by seeming to grant, on the one hand, that it was more expedient not to marry, because chastity is a great gift of God; (1 Corinthians vii.) and plainly shewing on the other, that only few can have this privilege, because *all do not receive this word*, i.e. all are not called to this state. (Jansenius) --- All cannot receive it, because all do not wish it. The reward is held out to all. Let him who seeks for glory, not think of the labour. None would overcome, if all were afraid of engaging in the conflict. If some fail, are we to be less careful in our pursuit of virtue? Is the soldier terrified, because his comrade fights and falls by his side? (St. John Chrysostom) --- He that can receive it, let him receive it. He that can fight, let him fight, overcome and triumph. It is the voice of the Lord animating his soldiers to victory. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 12.** *And there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs, &c.* It is not to be taken in the literal sense, but of such who have taken a firm and commendable resolution of leading a single life. --- *He that can receive it, let him receive it.* Some think that to *receive*, in this and the foregoing verse, is to *understand*; and so will have the sense to be, he that can understand what I have said of different eunuchs, *let him understand it*; as when Christ said elsewhere, *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. But others expound it as an admonition to men and women, not to engage themselves in a vow of living a single life, unless, after serious deliberation, they have good grounds to think they can duly comply with this vow, otherwise let them not make it. Thus St. Jerome on this place, and St. John Chrysostom where they both expressly take notice, that this grace is granted to every one that asketh and beggeth for it by prayer. (Witham) --- To the crown and glory of which state, let those aspire who feel themselves called by heaven.

**Ver. 13.** *That he should lay his hands upon them.* It was the custom to present children to men reputed holy, as it is now the custom for bishops and priests to pray and give a blessing to others. (Witham) --- It was customary with the Jews to present their children to the elders, that they might receive their blessing; hence they present them on this occasion to our Lord. (St. Remigius) --- *And the disciples rebuked them*, not because they were unwilling that the children should be blessed by the hands of our Saviour, but as they were yet weak in faith, they thought that, like other men, he would be teased by the importunity of the offerers. (St. Jerome) --- The people thought that the same hands, which could restore instantaneous health to the sick, must necessarily impart every good to such children as they should touch. The disciples thought they made too free with their Master, requesting what, in their ideas, was beneath his dignity.

(Haydock)

**Ver. 14.** *Jesus said ... Suffer the little children, &c.* He here blames the conduct of the apostles, and shews that his assertions in praise of virginity, were not meant as derogatory from the holiness of the marriage state, by giving his blessing to these little ones, the fruits of lawful wedlock; and declares that the kingdom of heaven is the portion of such as resemble these little ones, by the innocence of their lives and simplicity of their hearts. He, moreover, shews that confidence in our own strength, in our own free-will, and in our merits, is an invincible obstacle to salvation. St. Mark (x. 16) says, that embracing them, and laying hands upon them, he blessed them. Hence probably arose the ancient custom of presenting children to bishops and priests, to receive their blessing, beside that of confirmation immediately after baptism. --- Nicephorus tells us that the celebrated St. Ignatius, afterwards bishop of Antioch, was one of these children who, on this occasion, received Christ's blessing. --- If we would enter into the kingdom of heaven, we must imitate the virtues of little children. Their souls are free from every passion; void of every thought of revenge, they approach those who have grieved them as to their best friends. Though the parent repeatedly chastise his child, it still will adhere to him, still it love him, and prefer him in all his poverty to all the fascinating charms of dazzling gold and purple. They seek not beyond what is necessary, they admire not the beauty of the body, they are not grieved at the loss of worldly wealth, therefore does the Saviour of the world say, that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxiii.)

**Ver. 16.** *Behold one came.* St. Luke (xviii. 18.) calls him *a prince or lord*. Some conjecture this young man came only in a dissembling way, to try or tempt our Saviour, as the Pharisees sometimes did, and without any design to follow his advice; but by all the circumstances related of him, by the evangelists particularly, when St. Mark (Chap. x. 22.) tells us, he *went away sorrowful*, he seems to have come with sincerity, but without resolution strong enough to leave his worldly goods and possessions. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Why askest thou me concerning good?*<sup>[4]</sup> In the ordinary Greek copies, *why dost thou call me good?* (Witham) --- *One is good, &c.* God alone, by his own nature, is essentially, absolutely, and unchangeably good; at the same time, he is the source of all created goodness, as all goodness is a mere emanation from his. The person here addressing our Saviour, appears not to have believed that Christ was God: wherefore our Saviour, to rectify his misconception, tells him that God alone is good, insinuating thereby, that he should believe him to be God, or cease to address him by the title of good. (Tirinus) --- The sense is, that only God is good *necessarily*, and by his own nature. The Arians bring this place to shew, that Christ is not truly and properly God: but by this way of speaking, Christ does not deny that he is good, even by his nature, and consequently God; but seems to speak in this manner, to make the man know who he was. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** St. Jerome thinks his answer was not conformable to truth, or he would not have been sorry when ordered to distribute his goods among the poor.

**Ver. 21.** *If thou wilt be perfect.* This shews there is a difference betwixt things that are of *precept*, and those that are of *counsel only*, which they aim at, that aspire to the greatest perfection. (Witham) --- Evangelical perfection essentially consists in the perfect observance of God's commandments, which is greatly assisted by embracing not only *voluntary poverty*, but also the other counsels given to us in the gospels, such as *perpetual chastity*, and *entire obedience*. --- *Follow me*. Thus to follow Christ, is to be without wife and care of children, to have no property, and to live in community; this state of life hath a great reward in heaven. This state, we learn from St. Augustine, the apostles followed; and he himself not only embraced it, but exhorted as many others as he possibly could to embrace it. (St. Augustine, ep. lxxxix, *in fine*, and in Ps. ciii. conc. 3. post. med.) (Bristow) --- The whole perfection of a Christian life consists in following Christ, by an imitation of his virtues. So that he who possesses poverty and chastity, does not immediately become perfect, but only enters upon the way of perfection, by facilitating his progress to perfection, removing hindrances, and laying aside all care of temporal concerns.

(Nicholas de Lyra.) --- In this chapter Jesus Christ delivers the evangelical counsels. In ver. 12, he recommends continency -- here he proposes voluntary poverty, and immediately adds that of obedience, *follow me*. St. Augustine teaches, that the apostles bound themselves by vow to the observance of these three counsels. (De civit. Dei. Book xvii. chap. 4.)

**Ver. 22.** *Sorrowful.* I know not how it happens, that when superfluous and earthly things are loved, we are more attached to what we possess in effect than in desire. For, why did this young man depart sad, but because he had great riches? It is one thing not to wish for, and another to part with them, when once we have them. They become incorporated, and, as it were, a part of ourselves, like food; and, when taken, are changed into our own members. No one easily suffers a member of his body to be cut off. (St. Augustine, ep. xxxi. ad Paul.)

**Ver. 24.** *It is easier for a camel,*[5] &c. This might be a common saying, to signify anything impossible, or very hard. Some by a *camel*, would have to be meant a *cable*, or ship-rope, but that is differently writ in Greek, and here is commonly understood a true *camel*. (Witham) --- But nothing is impossible to God.

**Ver. 25.** *They wondered very much.* The apostles wondered how any person could be saved, not because all were rich, but because the poor were also included, who had their hearts and affections fixed on riches. (St. Augustine and Nicholas de Lyra.)

**Ver. 27.** *Behold we have left all!* What confidence this in Peter! He had been but a fisherman, always poor, living by his industry, and gaining his bread by the sweat of his brow; yet with great confidence he says, we have left all. (St. Jerome) --- For, we are not to consider what he left, but the will with which he left his all. He leaves a great deal, who reserves nothing for himself. It is a great matter to quit all, though the things we leave be very inconsiderable in themselves. Do we not observe with how great affection we love what we already have, and how earnestly we search after what we have not? It is on this account that St. Peter, and his brother, St. Andrew, left much, because they denied themselves even the desire and inclination of possessing any thing. (St. Gregory, on S. Mat. hom. v.) --- Though I have not been rich, I shall not, on that account, receive a less reward; for, the apostles, who have done the same thing with me, were no richer than myself. He therefore leaves all the world, who leaves all he has, and the desire of ever having more. (St. Augustine, ep. lxxxix. ad Hilar.)

**Ver. 28.** *In the regeneration.* Jesus Christ here calls the general resurrection the regeneration, because there will then be a renovation of the human body, and of the whole world. The promise which is here made to the apostles of sitting on thrones at the general judgment, and passing sentence on the 12 tribes of Israel, must not be understood as limited to the apostles, or to the Jews. For St. Paul says, (1 Corinthians vi. 2. and 3,) that not only he, but also many of the Corinthians to whom he was writing, would judge not merely the 12 tribes, but the whole world, and moreover angels themselves. It is the opinion of many of the Fathers, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, and others, that all apostolical men, i.e. such as, renouncing the good of this life, adhere to Christ in mind and affection, and by every possible means promote his reign and the propagation of his gospel, will be so far honoured as to sit in judgment with him at the general resurrection. (Tirinus) --- *You also shall sit on twelve seats*, or thrones, meaning at the general resurrection, when Christ will appear on the throne of his majesty, with his heavenly court, and with his elect, shall condemn the wicked world. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *Shall receive a hundred-fold.* In St. Mark we read a *hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come life everlasting*. Which *hundred-fold* is to be understood of the blessings in this life, or interior consolations, or the peace of a good conscience, and in general of spiritual gifts and graces, which are much more valuable than all temporal goods. And besides these spiritual graces in this world, he shall have everlasting glory in the world to come. (Witham) --- Our Saviour does not here lay down a precept of separating from wives; but, as when he before said, he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it, he did not counsel, much less command us to lay violent hands upon ourselves; so here he teaches us to prefer the duties of piety to every

other consideration. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv.) --- The reward will be a hundred-fold, by the accumulation of spiritual gifts and graces in this life, infinitely superior to all we have left, and the inheritance of life eternal in the next. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 3. Quacunque ex causa, *Greek: kata pasan aitian*, ex qualibet causa.

[2] Ver. 5. Erunt duo in carne una, *Greek: duo eis sarka mian*, in carnem unam, as Genesis ii. 7. factus est homo in animam viventem. See Maldonat.

[3] Ver. 11. Non omnes capiunt, *Greek: ou pantes chorousi*. Maldonat will needs have *Greek: chorein*, to signify intelligere, as it does sometimes. But St. Jerome on this place, unusquisque consideret vires suas, &c. And St. John Chrysostom (hom. lxxiii.) ut singulare esse certamen perdiscas. St. Jerome adds, Sed his datum est, qui petierunt; qui voluerunt; qui ut acciperent, laboraverunt. And St. John Chrysostom, His enim datum est, qui sponte id eligunt. *Greek: dedotai gar ekeinois tois boulomenois*. Ed. Sav. p. 397.

[4] Ver. 17. Quid me interrogas de bono? *Greek: erotas peri agathou*. In the common Greek copies, *ti me legeis agathon*.

[5] Ver. 24. Camelum, *Greek: kamelun*, which is observed to be different from *Greek: kamilos*, a cable, or ship-rope. See Mr. Legh, Critica Sacra.

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## MATTHEW 20

**Ver. 1.** *For the kingdom.* The participle *for*, is found in the Greek, and connects the present parable with the last verse of the preceding chapter: indeed it is a comment on that text, and describes to us the gospel dispensation. Thus the conduct of God in the choice he makes of members for his spiritual kingdom, the Church, and of his elect for the kingdom of heaven, is not unlike that of the father of a family, who hires workmen to labour in his vineyard. There are various opinions respecting who are meant by *the first*, and by *the last*, in this parable. Many of the fathers suppose that the saints of different states and degrees are here designed, whose reward will suffer no diminution from the circumstances of their having come to the service of Christ at a late age of the world, according to Sts. Hilary, Gregory, and Theophylactus; or, at a late age of life, according to Sts. Basil, Jerome, and Fulgentius. In the latter case, however, we must understand that their greater fervour in co-operating with divine grace, in the latter part of their life, has supplied and compensated for the defect of their preceding negligence; hence it may sometimes happen that the reward of such as enter late in life on the service of God, will exceed that of the less fervent who have entered at an earlier period. But as Christ rather seems to speak here of his *militant* than his *triumphant* Church, many commentators explain the parable of the Jews and Gentiles. For the Jews, after bearing the yoke of the Mosaic law for so many ages, received nothing more than what was promised to the observance of that law; whilst Christians receive a more plentiful reward for their more easy labour under the sweet yoke of the gospel. In which sense Christ says to the Jews, Luke xiii. 29: Publicans and harlots shall go before you into the kingdom of heaven. "And, strangers shall come from the east, and from the west, and the north, and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold they are last that shall be first, and they are first that shall be last." (Luke xiii. 30.) --- Hence the Jews may be supposed to murmur, that they who are first in their vocation to be the people of God, and first in the observance of his law, should not be preferred to others, who in these respects have been far posterior to them. (Tirinus) --- By the vineyard, says St. John Chrysostom, we here understand, the commandments of God. The time for labour is the present life. In the first, third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours, i.e. in infancy, youth, manhood, declining years, and extreme decrepitude of age, many individuals, yielding to the effective call of God, labour in the exact performance of the

divine commandments. (Hom. lxxv.)

**Ver. 2.** The Roman penny, or denarius, was the 8th part of an ounce; which, at the rate of 5s. per ounce, is 7½d. It is put here for the usual hire of a day-labourer.

**Ver. 3.** *About the third hour.* As the Jews divided their nights into four watches, each watch comprehending three hours, so they divided their days into four greater hours, from sunrise to sunset, and each of these great hours contained three lesser hours; so that the whole day from sunrise to sunset, consisted of 12 hours, as also did the night. The first of the great hours, comprehending the three first lesser hours, contained half of the space betwixt the rising of the sun and mid-day; and the end of this time was called the *third hour*. The next great hour was from that time till mid-day, called the *sixth hour*. The following great hour contained half of the time betwixt noon and the setting of the sun, the end of which was called the *ninth hour*. The fourth great hour comprehended the last three lesser hours remaining till sunset, so that at the end of the *eleventh hour*, mentioned here, ver. 6, began the last lesser hour of the twelve hours of the day; of which our Saviour said, (John xi. 9,) *are there not twelve hours in the day?* --- As to the moral sense of the parable, by the *day* is commonly expounded all the time from the *creation* to the end of the world, and so the third hour is reckoned from *Adam* to *Noe*; the sixth from *Noe* to *Abraham*; the ninth from *Abraham* to *Moses*; and from the ninth to the eleventh, was from *Moses* till *Christ's* coming; and the time from *Christ* to the *end of the world*, is the 12th hour. Other interpreters, by the *day* understand *human life*; and by the different hours, *infancy*, *youth*, *the age of manhood*, *old age*, and the last hour *man's decrepit age*. God is master and disposer of all, who by his grace calls some sooner, some later. The *market-place*, in which men are so often found idle, as to the great concern of their eternal salvation, is the *world*. The design of this parable was to shew that the Gentiles, though called later than the Jews, should be made partakers of the promises made to the Jews; this is also the meaning of verse 16, where it is said: *the last shall be first, and the first last.* (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *I will give you what shall be just.* The prospect of a reward is therefore a good motive, authorized here by Christ himself.

**Ver. 7.** *No man hath hired us.* St. John Chrysostom again puts us in mind, that in parables all the parts are not significant, but some things are to be taken as mere ornaments of parabolical discourses, as here *murmurings*, which cannot be found in heaven: nor can men pretend they *are not hired* into God's service; God hath given lights, called, hired, and promised heaven to all. The rewards in heaven are also different. And they who are last called, if they labour with greater fervour, may deserve a greater reward than others called before them. (Witham) --- The Greek text finishes with, *you shall receive what is reasonable.* --- We must observe here, says St. John Chrysostom on the words, *because no man hath hired us*, that this is the voice of the labourers only, in excuse for their not having entered upon their work before this late hour; for the master of the vineyard had shewn his willingness to hire them all, by going out early for that purpose. Though the fault was their own, he does not upbraid them, but abstains from all harshness and severity, that he may the more easily engage them. (Hom. lxxv.)

**Ver. 11.** *And when they received it.* By those who laboured all the day in the vineyard, we are to understand such as have spent their whole lives in the service of God; but we are not thence to infer, that in the kingdom of heaven, where all receive their just reward, there is envy, discontent, or any complaint. By these words, Christ wishes to convey to our minds an idea of the immense honours that will be heaped upon all such as return with sincerity, though at the decline or even verge of life, to the Almighty. So exceeding great will be their reward, that it would excite envy, were it possible, even in the elect. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv.)

**Ver. 14.** *I will also give.* Some are called to the service of their God, and to a life of virtue, from their infancy, whilst others, by a powerful call from above, are converted late in life, that the former may have no occasion to glory in themselves, or to despise those who, even in the 11th hour, enter upon the path of rectitude; and that all might learn that there is time sufficient,

however short, left them to repair by their diligence and fervour their past losses. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv.) --- Jesus Christ does not count so much the number of years, as the fervour and diligence we employ in his service. Calvin is rather unhappy in his choice of this parable to prove his favourite tenet, that salvation is not the reward of good works, but of faith alone, or predestination, since Jesus Christ represents heaven as given wholly as a just reward of meritorious labour in the vineyard, though some labour a shorter, and others a longer time, and God of his great goodness may give more to some than to others, while to all He gives at least their due. And a truly humble Christian will be ever satisfied with his lot, without envying that of others. (Haydock) --- *As star differeth from star in glory* in the firmament, (1 Corinthians xv. 41,) so will there be different degrees of glory in heaven. (St. Augustine, de virgin. chap. xxvi.)

**Ver. 16.** *Few chosen:* only such as have not despised their caller, but followed and believed him; for men believed not, but of their own free will. (St. Augustine, lib. i, ad Simplic. q. ii.) (Bristow) --- Hence the rejection of the Jews and of negligent Christians, and the conversion of strangers, who come and take their place, by a conversion both of faith and morals. On the part of God all are called. (Matthew xi. 28.) *Come to me all, &c.* In effect, many after their call, have attained to faith and justification; but few in comparison are elected to eternal glory, because the far greater part do not obey the call, but refuse to come, whilst many of those who come fall away again; and thus very few, in comparison with those that perish, will at the last day be selected for eternal glory. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 18.** *Behold we go, &c.* Jesus here, for the third time, foretells his death; (the first time, Matthew xvi. 21; the second time, Matthew xvii. 21.) Our salvation and happiness are owing to the death of Christ; neither is there any thing that more loudly calls for our gratitude than his sufferings and death. Jesus takes the 12 apart, and reveals to them the mystery of his passion. He had previously declared it in public, but in ambiguous terms, saying: *destroy this temple, &c. A sign shall not be given, but the sign of Jonas the prophet;* but here he manifestly expounds to his disciples the mystery: *behold we go up to Jerusalem, &c.* This discourse of our Saviour is remarkable for an energetic strength of expression. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Jesus had repeatedly spoken to his apostles of his passion; but as much of what he had said had escaped their memory, now that he is upon the road to Jerusalem in company with his disciples, he brings it back to their recollection, to fortify them against the scandal they might take at his ignominious death. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 19.** *The third day he shall rise again.* We may take notice, that as often as Christ mentioned his sufferings and death, he also joined his resurrection, that they might take notice, and not lose their faith. (Witham) --- Like the rest of the Jews, the apostles were so fully prepossessed with the idea that the Messiah would be immortal, that they could not understand what Jesus Christ said to them. He, however, did reveal these things, that, on a future day, recollecting how their Lord and Master had foreseen and foretold to them the most material circumstances relating to his passion and death, they might believe more firmly in him, and be convinced that he suffered of his own free choice. (Haydock)

**Ver. 20.** *Then came to him.* Upon Christ's informing his apostles that he should die and rise again, they conceived that he would immediately reign in Jerusalem with great glory and power; and it was this made the mother of the sons of Zebedee petition that they might take precedence, and be honoured by the other apostles. But Christ answers them that they knew not what they asked, for honours were to be bestowed not on relationship, but on merit: in like manner, the dignities of the Church are not to be conferred upon relatives, but upon the worthy. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- On comparing the 27th chapter of St. Matthew with the 15th of St. Mark, it will appear that she was the same as Salome. --- In St. Mark x. 35, we find that the sons themselves made this petition: both the sons and their mother might make it; at least the sons may be said to have done what they got their mother to desire for them; and therefore Christ directed his answer to them: *you know not what you ask.* You think, says St. John Chrysostom of temporal preferments, of honours, and crowns, when you should be preparing yourselves for conflicts and battles. (Witham) --- Our Lord suffers these occasional weaknesses in his apostles, that he might, from

his instructions and corrections, render his doctrines more intelligible to them and to posterity. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 22.** *The chalice.* It is a metaphor signifying Christ's sufferings and death. See Psalm x. 7. and lxxiv. 9. Isaías li. 17. The apostles replied, *we can drink thy cup.* Their answer shewed their readiness, but want of humility. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Of my chalice indeed you shall drink.* St. James was the first apostle that suffered martyrdom at Jerusalem. (Acts xii. 2.) And St. John at Rome was put into a cauldron of boiling oil, and banished into Patmos. --- *Is not mine to give you.*[1] The Arians objected these words against Christ's divinity. St. Augustine answers that the words are true if taken of Christ, as he was man. The easier answer is, that it was not *his* to give *to them*, while they were in those dispositions of pride and ambition. So that the distinction made, is not betwixt the Father and his eternal Son, as if the Father could give what the Son could not, but betwixt persons worthy, and not worthy of such a favour. It is true the word *you*, is now wanting in the Greek manuscripts and must have been wanting in some of them in the fourth, or at least the fifth century, since we find them not in St. John Chrysostom. St. Augustine also in one place omits it, but sometimes lays great stress upon it; Christ's meaning being no more, than that heaven was not his *to give them*; that is, *to the proud*, &c. St. Ambrose reads it; and what is still of greater weight, St. Jerome hath it in the text of the New Testament, which he corrected from the best Greek manuscripts. (Witham) --- In your present state there is no exception of persons with God; for, whosoever is worthy of heaven, shall receive it as the reward of his merits. Therefore Christ answers them, it is not mine to bestow the kingdom of heaven upon you, because you are not yet deserving, on account of your pride in seeking to have yourselves preferred before my other apostles. But be ye humble, and heaven is prepared for you, as well as for all others, who are properly disposed. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- Greatness in the next life will be proportioned to humility in this.

**Ver. 24.** *The ten ... were moved with indignation against the two brothers,* who had petitioned for the first and chief places. (Witham) --- The disciples understood from our Lord's answer, that the request came in the first instance from the two disciples; but as they saw them much honoured by Christ, they did not dare openly to accuse them. (St. John Chrysostom) --- The other ten apostles were as much wrong in their anger and jealousy as the former two were in their untimely petition. In his answer to both, we cannot sufficiently admire the wonderful meekness of our blessed Saviour's character. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 25.** *Princes of the Gentiles lord it over them:* tyrannize over those that are under them, by arbitrary and violent proceedings. (Witham) --- Our Lord wishing to extinguish the indignation conceived against the two brothers, lays before them the difference of secular and ecclesiastical princes, shewing that precedency in the Church is neither to be sought for by him who is not possessed of it, nor too eagerly loved by him who has it; for secular princes are lords of their subjects, keeping them under subjection, and govern them in every particular according to their will; but ecclesiastical princes are honoured with precedency, that they may be servants of their inferiors, administer to them whatever they have received from Christ, neglect their own convenience for the good of their neighbour, and be willing even to die for the spiritual good of their subjects. It is neither just nor reasonable, therefore, to desire precedency in the Church, without these qualifications. No prudent man is willing to subject himself to such servitude and danger, as to take upon himself the obligation of having to give an account of the wickedness and perversity of others, unless fearless of the divine judgments, he abuse his ecclesiastical superiority. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 28.** *A redemption for many;* i.e. for all, as it is sometimes the style of the Scriptures. See St. Paul, 1 Timothy ii. 6. (Witham) --- Certain Puritans pretend from this part of holy Scripture, that all superiority is forbidden; but it is merely pride, ambition, and haughtiness, not superiority, that is here proscribed. Jesus Christ himself, as Son of man, was their and our Superior, Lord, and Master, notwithstanding his humility. (Bristow) --- For the divine appointment of both civil and ecclesiastical government, see Romans xiii. 2. and 1 Corinthians xii. 28. Hebrews chap. xiii. 7,

**Ver. 30.** *Two blind men.* St. Mark, (x. 46.) when he seems to relate the same passage, mentions but one, called *Bartimeus*; perhaps because he was the more famous of the two. (Witham) --- These were very opportunely presented to our Lord, that they might go up to Jerusalem with him, after they had received sight from his divine hands, and appear there as witnesses of the divinity of his mission. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxvi, in Matt.) --- We may here consider, if the blindness of the body be looked upon as a very great misfortune, how much greater must be the darkness of the soul. The former is only a privation of the light of day, the other is a privation of the light of grace and glory. The light of this world, though a great blessing, is enjoyed in common with the brute creation; it serves only to distinguish material objects. The light which Christ communicates to the soul, enables us to know God and his sacred truths, as revealed to his holy Catholic Church; it elevates us above all inferior creatures, it dissipates the spiritual darkness caused by sin and our unruly passions, and conducts us to the true light of eternal glory. Oh what unspeakable joy must then fill and overwhelm the elect, when in the light of God they see light itself, the bright countenance of their loving and beloved Father!!!

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[1] Ver. 23. *Non est meum dare vobis.* Now we read only in the Greek, *ouk estin emon dounai.* It is so also in St. John Chrysostom, in St. Cyril, (in Thesaurο, Assertionē xxvi, tom. v. p. 243) where he answers this objection of the Arians. Nor is *Greek: umin*, in the Greek text of St. Epiphanius (hær. lxi, p. 742) though it be put there in the Latin translation. St. Augustine has not *vobis*: (lib. i. de Trin. chap. xii, p. 765 G. tom. viii.) but in Psalm ciii, (tom. iv, p. 1157) he says, *Quid est non est meum dare vobis? non est meum dare superbis.* St. Ambrose (lib. v. de Fide, tom. iv. chap. iii, p. 147) *Non dixit non est meum dare, sed non est meum dare vobis*, hoc est, non sibi potestatem deesse asserens, sed me[m]tum creaturis. Besides the Fathers, who did not read *vobis* in the text, shew by their expositions, that they took the sense to be the same, and no ways favourable to the Arians. See St. Augustine lib. i. de Trin. p. 766. A. *non est meum dare, ac si diceretur, non est humanæ potestatis hoc dare, ut per illud intelligatur hoc dare, per quod Deus est æqualis Patri, &c.* See St. John Chrysostom hom. lxvi. St. Cyril in Thesaurο assert. xxvi. p. 243. St. Epiphanius hær. lxi, p. 742, &c.

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## MATTHEW 21

**Ver. 1.** *Bethphage*, was a village of the priests, and signifies the house of figs and dates, or the house of the fountain, or of the flatterer, situated on the declivity of Mount Olivet, about a mile to the east of Jerusalem, a sabbath-day's journey. As Bethphage was probably so called from the fig and date trees growing there, Mount Olivet was from the great number of olive-trees: *Greek: ton elaion.* The triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem from Bethania, was on the first day of the week, answering to our Sunday, the very day on which, by the appointment of the law, (Exodus xii. 3.) the lamb was brought hither, to be sacrificed at the Passover. To shew, moreover, that in himself all the figures of the old law were realized, he chose that very night for the institution of the Passover of the new law, the blessed eucharist, which was appointed for the immolation of the paschal lamb in the old law, and the very day for the redemption of the world, in which the people of God had formerly been redeemed from Egyptian bondage. ... When they were arrived to the mid-way between Bethania (which he had just quitted) and Bethphage, he sends two of his disciples. In Greek it is, *Kai elthon eis Bethphage*; i.e. *eporeuonto*, they were travelling to Bethphage, and were near the place, within sight of it, but had not reached it, as we learn from both St. Mark and St. Luke.

**Ver. 2.** *Go ye into the village*; in Latin, *Castellum*, but in Greek, *eis ten kōmen*, which is, before you, contra vos, as Virgil says, *Italiam contra.* (Æneid i.) Some authors think it was Bethphage. (Haydock) --- *An ass tied, [1] and a colt with her.* This colt, which never yet had been rid upon,



represented the people of the Gentiles, to whom God had not given a written law, as he had done to the Jews. Here was manifestly fulfilled the prophecy of Zachary. Chap. ix. It was now the first day of the week, in which Christ suffered; he was pleased to enter into Jerusalem in a kind of triumph, the people making acclamations to him, as to their king and Messias. (Witham) --- Both Jews and Gentiles, figured by the ass and the colt, are to be loosed and conducted by the hands of the apostles of Christ to their Redeemer. The Gentiles, represented by the colt, though heretofore unclean, no sooner receive Jesus resting upon them, than they are freed from every stain and rendered perfectly clean. The zeal of the Gentiles, is spoken of by St. Paul, Romans xi. 25. *Blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in. And so all Israel should be saved.* (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxvi.) --- As it is written, "*there shall come out of Sion, he that shall deliver, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is to them my covenant;*" when I shall take away their sins. This prophecy of Isaia (lix. 20.) St. Paul applies to the conversion of the Jews; (ibid. [Romans xi. 25]) and thus both Jew and Gentile are to take up our Saviour's yoke, which is certainly sweet, and his burden light.

**Ver. 3-4.** *The Lord hath need.* Not our Lord, or your Lord, but the Lord, viz. of all, both of the beasts and of their masters, and of every creature. Christ here discovers two of his own attributes, his omniscience and his supreme dominion. Now this was done not by accident, not through novelty or to avoid fatigue, but as the evangelist declares, to accomplish the prophecy of Isaia and of Zacharias.

**Ver. 5.** Some manuscripts read Isaia, others Zacharias: the text seems to be extracted from both, but particularly the latter, the sense of which is taken, though not verbatim, from the Septuagint version. See Isaia lxii. 2. and Zacharias ix. 9.

**Ver. 7.** *Sit thereon.* St. Jerome reprobates the opinion of those who suppose that Christ rode upon both the ass and the colt, though without sufficient reason. The Greek indeed, *epano auton*, upon them, may be referred either to the beasts or to Greek: *ta imatia*, the garments; but the very general sentiment is, that he first sat upon the ass for a short time, and then mounted the colt. It may be asked why Jesus, who through humility had during his whole life travelled on foot, and in no one previous instance is found to have allowed himself the convenience of riding, should on this occasion enter Jerusalem riding? One reason was, as mentioned in note on ver. 4, supra, to fulfil the prophecy of Zacharias, who had given this mark of the Messias. Hence St. John (Chrysostom, hom. lxvi.) challenges the Jews to shew him any other king of theirs, who had entered Jerusalem riding on an ass. Other reasons were, to give a faint specimen of his real kingly dignity before he suffered; to be publicly acknowledged for the Messias; to confirm the faith of his disciples; and to leave his enemies no excuse for their incredulity. On this, as on all other occasions, magnificence is admirably blended with humility, in our Saviour's actions. Even in this his triumph, we cannot help admiring his humility, in riding upon an ass. (Jansenius) --- The glorious reception he met with from the people, was perfectly voluntary on their parts, the genuine effusions of their hearts, and as such, infinitely superior to the vain and often forced parade bestowed upon earthly princes; and is commemorated in the blessing and distributing palms in the Catholic Church, on Palm-Sunday, all over the Christian world.

**Ver. 9.** *Hosanna*, [2] or *hosiannah*, was an acclamation of the Jews: when applied to God, means *save us, I beseech Thee*; when applied to a sovereign prince, means *vivat*, in Latin, or long live the king. (Bible de Vence) --- Hosanna, says St. Jerome, is the same as, *Save, I beseech thee.* (Psalm cxvii.) Some will have the word *Hosanna* directed to Christ himself, and the sense to be, *Save us, O thou Son of David*; others understand *Hosanna*, directed to *God*, as if the people said, *Save, O Lord, this our king*; by which the people wished peace, safety, and prosperity to Jesus their Messias. (Witham) --- It appears that the Holy Ghost, on this occasion secretly inspired their tongues, and through their means caused loud thanks to be offered to Jesus, for an approaching blessing, of which as yet they had no conception. --- These same words of acclamation are daily used in the preface of the mass, and represent the exultations of both priest and people, expecting, as it were, and rejoicing at his coming. (Bristow)

**Ver. 10.** He entered by the golden gate which looks towards the east, and which was not far distant from the temple, where the procession terminated. There Jesus, as high priest, made his solemn entry into his Father's house.

**Ver. 11.** *The Prophet, &c.* It was amidst these acclamations that Christ wept, and foretold the destruction of the city. (Luke xix. 42.) (Witham) --- It was not without great reason, that the whole city was so much disturbed with the triumphal entry of Jesus. Man was extolled as God, and God extolled in man. The elders, admiring his heavenly virtue, exclaimed, who is the king of glory! (Origen) --- This is Jesus, the prophet, (*Greek: outos estin Iesous o prophetes,*) the one promised by Moses, (Deuteronomy xvii. 15.) was the answer of the simple and candid people. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 12.** *And cast out all.* Since the Jews came to the temple from all parts of Judea, such as came from a distance did not bring with them their sacrifices, but purchased them at Jerusalem. The money-changers were persons who lent out money to the poor, that they might purchase the victims, &c. But as the law forbade usury, they received other fruits, grapes, &c. in return. These persons, beyond a doubt, beheld a more than human brightness darting from his eyes, otherwise they would not have suffered him to act thus. In the same manner, the servants of the high priest fell down when they came to apprehend Jesus, at these words, *I am he.* (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- *Into the temple.* Into that part of it called the court of the Gentiles, where pigeons were to be sold for sacrifices, where there were tables of money-changers, &c. St. Jerome here admires this as one of the greatest of Christ's miracles, that a poor man should be permitted to cast the *buyers* and *sellers* out of the temple, to overturn their stalls, their money-tables, &c. without any opposition. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *My house shall.* That man is a thief, and turns the temple of God into a den of thieves, who makes religion a cloak for his avarice. Of all the innumerable miracles which Jesus performed, none appear greater in my eyes than this: that one man, at that time so contemned [sic; condemned] and despised, who was afterwards nailed to the tree, should with his single power be able to expel from the temple that multitude of Scribes and Pharisees, who were so maliciously bent upon his destruction, and so greedy of gain. Something more than human appeared in his celestial countenance on this occasion, and the majesty of the divinity shewed itself in his looks and gestures. *Igneum quiddam, atque sidereum radiabat ex oculis ejus, et divinitatis majestas lucebat in facie.* (St. Jerome) --- Hence it is not to be wondered at, if in the utmost fear and consternation they fled away. (Menochius)

**Ver. 15.** *Hosanna.* St. Augustine (lib. de doct. christ. chap. xi.) thinks this word is an interjection of joy, without any particular meaning, denoting only affection, as *Rocha* is an expression of indignation. This opinion seems supported by the interpreters not having translated either of these words, but retained them in the Greek and in the Latin versions. It seems more than probable, according to St. Jerome, that the whole sentence is taken from Psalm cxvii. 25 and 26, in which the supposition, *hosanna* will signify *God save*; the word *me*, though in the verse of the Psalm just mentioned, is not in the Hebrew. It is a familiar acclamation among the Jews, which they sung every day on the feast of the tabernacles, carrying branches in their hands. (The feast of the tabernacles was figurative of Christ's divinity, resting under the tabernacle of our humanity.) The manner in which it was chanted, was not unlike our litanies. First some name or attribute of the Deity was sung, as "For thy own sake, O Lord of Lords," to which the people answered, "hosanna," or "save us," "by thy covenant," "save us," "thy holy temple," "Hosanna, save us." These litanies were very long, and are said at present by the Jews in their synagogues. Many things have undoubtedly been added in process of time, but they most probably were in use from the beginning. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 16.** *Have you never read: Out of the mouth, &c.* The words are Psalm viii. 3, which some apply to the praises the people gave to David, when he had conquered Goliath, but Christ applies them to the present circumstances. (Witham) --- It is here said, that from the mouth of children the Almighty, had perfected praise, as in Psalm viii. 3. in the Septuagint, to shew that their words did not proceed from their own minds, but that their tender tongues were employed by the power of

God to sound forth his praise. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxviii.) --- It is evident from this and various other texts, that we ought to read the Old Testament with an eye to Christ, who was the end of the law.

**Ver. 17.** *And having viewed all about;* (as we read in St. Mark xi. 11,) when the hour of evening was come, he went out of the city into Bethania, as usual, with the 12 apostles. Hence we may collect in how great poverty our Saviour lived, and how far he was from flattering the great ones of this world, since he could not find a friend to offer him his house for a night's repose, and to ease his fatigued members, but is obliged to go to Bethania, a small village, to the house of Martha and Mary. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 18.** *In the morning,* returning into the city, he was hungry. This hunger, though real and pressing, was mysterious, and affords an opportunity of giving instruction both to the Jews and to all his disciples. By the fig-tree, was represented the Jewish synagogue; the hunger of Christ was a figure of his extreme desire of finding it productive of good works, (and there is no time nor season when the servants of God can be excused from bringing forth good works) answerable to the pains of cultivation he had taken for more than three years. The leaves were their pompous shew of exterior service, the barren foliage of legal rites, void of the internal spirit and good works, the only valuable produce of the tree. By the withering of the tree subsequent to Christ's imprecation, the reprobation and utter barrenness of the synagogue are represented. St. Mark observes, (xi. 13,) that it was not the season for figs; nor are we to suppose that our Saviour went up to the tree expecting to find fruit; but if some of the evangelists mention this circumstance, they only relate the surmises of the disciples. Though he had before shewn his power by innumerable miracles, Christ still thought this necessary to excite the hearts of his disciples to greater confidence. He had often exercised his power to do good, but now for the first time shews himself able to punish. Thus he testifies to the apostles and to the Jews themselves, that he could with a word have made his crucifiers wither away, and therefore that he willingly bore the extremity of the sufferings he should in a few days have to undergo. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxviii.)

**Ver. 20.** *The disciples, &c.* This surprise of the disciples, at the sudden withering of the fig-tree, happened the following morning. See Mark xi. 20.

**Ver. 24-25.** *The baptism of John,* by which is also understood his doctrine and preaching, *was it from heaven or not?* (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *He will say to us: Why then did not you believe him?* When he divers times bore witness to you that I am your Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *A certain man had two sons, &c.* The ancient interpreters, by the first son generally understand the Gentiles, as also publicans and scandalous sinners; and by the second, the Jewish people. The Gentiles, &c. who at the first did not, would not worship and serve God; yet afterwards they, as also publicans, and many sinners, received the faith, and being converted, became faithful servants of God, and saints: the Jews, or the greatest part of them, who pretended to be God's servants, and his people, rejected the gospel and their Messiah; therefore this commination follows, *the publicans, &c. shall go before you into the kingdom of God.* (Witham) --- By these two sons are to be understood, says St. John Chrysostom, the Gentiles and the Jewish people; the latter our Redeemer wishes to make sensible of their own great ingratitude, and of the ready obedience of the cast-off Gentiles. For they having never heard the law, nor promised obedience have still shewn their submission by their works; whereas the Jews after promising to obey the voice of God, had neglected the performance. (Hom. lxviii.)

**Ver. 33.** *A certain master of a family, &c.* This *master* is God; the *vineyard*, the Jews; the *husbandmen*, the Jewish priests; the *servants*, God's prophets, sent from time to time: the *son*, called (Mark xii. 6,) *his only and most dear son*, is our Saviour Jesus Christ, whom they persecuted to death. (Witham) --- By this parable, our Saviour teaches the Jews that the

providence of God had wonderfully watched over them from the beginning, that nothing had been omitted to promote their salvation, and that notwithstanding his prophets had been put to most cruel deaths, still the Almighty was not turned away from them, but had at length sent down his only Son, who should suffer at their hands the inexpressible ignominies and tortures of his cross and passion. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxix.)

**Ver. 37.** *They will reverence, &c.* This is not said, as if God were ignorant what the Jews would do to his only begotten Son, since in this very place he declares that they would condemn him to death; but, to shew what they ought to have done, and what he had a right to expect from them. (Nicholas de Lyra.)

**Ver. 38.** *Heir.* From this text, it appears that the princes of the Jews knew Jesus to be the Messiah, and that it was only through envy and malice they were so blinded as not to acknowledge him for the Son of God. When, therefore, the apostle says, (1 Corinthians ii. 8,) *If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*; this, it is probable, must be understood of the common people, since we can hardly believe that the princes of the people were ignorant of it, as Christ had so repeatedly inculcated this truth, that he even says himself they had no excuse, and were only actuated by hatred against him and his Father. (St. John xv. 22.) (Tirinus) --- *Inheritance, &c.* It appears from St. John xi. that one of the motives why the Jews killed our Saviour was, lest if they let him live, all men should believe, and the Romans should come and destroy their nation. But the very means they took to secure their kingdom to themselves, hastened their downfall, and eventually caused their ruin; since in punishment of their crucifying Jesus Christ, their city and state were completely ruined under the Roman emperors Titus and Vespasian. (Nicholas de Lyra.)

**Ver. 41.** *He will bring those evil men to an evil end.* This answer was made by some of them. Yet St. Luke (xx. 16,) tells us, that others among them, (whom we may take to be the Scribes and Pharisees) cried out, *God forbid*; seeing well enough that this was a prediction of their future ruin. (Witham) --- If we compare this text with St. Luke, it will appear that it was from the midst of the people that this answer was given, which was confirmed by Jesus Christ, and at which the high priests were so indignant, because they saw clearly it must fall upon themselves. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 42.** *The head of the corner.* By these words, (Psalm cxvii,) which the Jews themselves expounded of their Messiah, Christ shewed them, that although they, who should have been the architects, had rejected him, yet he should be the chief *corner-stone* to unite the Jews and the Gentiles, converted into one Christian Church, militant on earth and triumphant in heaven. See Acts iv. 11. (Witham) --- St. Augustine remarks, that this parable was addressed not only to the opponents of Christ's authority, but likewise to the people.

**Ver. 43.** *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you.* By this dreadful conclusion he tells them in plain terms, that they shall be forsaken, and punished for their blindness and obstinacy. (Witham)

**Ver. 45.** *They understood that he spoke of them.* This parable, though immediately addressed to the Jews, contains an admirable instruction for Christians. For, what the Jews have suffered for their wickedness and ingratitude, has also been the fate of many Christian kingdoms, and the mournful lot of many once flourishing happy churches, whose candlesticks are removed, and light extinct. The same conduct God observes with regard to particular persons, in punishment of their repeatedly abusing his graces; he at last withdraws them, and leaves the culprit to himself, and to the miserable consequences of this merited privation of grace.

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[1] Ver. 2. A prophecy of the coming of the Messiah was here so manifestly accomplished in the person of Jesus, that I cannot but set down the words of the prophet Zachary, chap. ix. *Ecce Rex tuus veniet tibi justus & Salvator, ipse pauper, & ascendens super Asinam, & super pullum filium*

*Asinæ*. They are no less clear in the Hebrew, and other languages. See the Protestant translation in the prophet Zacharias.

[2] Ver. 9. Hosanna filio David. *Greek: ta uio David*. See Maldonat.

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## MATTHEW 22

**Ver. 1.** *Jesus answered, and spoke to them again in parables*, and concludes his discourse with again describing, 1st. the reprobation of the Jews; 2d. the calling of the Gentiles to the true faith; and 3d. the final judgment of both the one and the other. In this parable of the marriage feast, says St. John Chrysostom, our Saviour again declares to the Jews their reprobation, and the vocation of the Gentiles, their great ingratitude, and his tender solicitude for them. For he did not send them a single invitation only; he repeatedly invited them. *Say*, says he, *to the invited*; and afterwards, *call the invited*; thus evincing the greatness of their obstinacy, in resisting all the calls and pressing invitations of the Almighty. (Hom. lxx.) --- This parable is certainly not the same as that mentioned in St. Luke xiv. 16, as every one that will be at the pains to examine and compare all the circumstances of each, will easily discover, though they are very much alike. (Menochius)

**Ver. 2.** *Is like to a man being a king, &c.* This parable seems different from that of Luke xiv. 16. See St. Augustine, lib. ii. de Cons. Evang. chap. lxx. The main design in this parable, is to shew the Jews that they were all invited to believe in Christ; though so few of them believed. The *king* is God; *his son* is Jesus Christ; the *spouse* is the Church; the *marriage* is Christ's incarnation; the *feast*, the grace of God in this life, and his glory in the next. *His servants* were the prophets; and lastly his precursor, St. John the Baptist. --- *My fatlings*, which I have prepared, and made fat for the feast: but this is but an ornament of the parable. (Witham) --- The same takes place in the kingdom of heaven, as when a king makes a marriage feast for his son. Jesus Christ seems to have had two things in view in this parable: 1st. that many are called to the kingdom of heaven, i.e. his Church, and that few come, as he concludes, ver. 14, *many are called, &c*; 2d. that not all that come when called will be saved, i.e. will be reputed worthy of the celestial feast; because some have not on the wedding-garment, as he shews, ver. 11. (Menochius) --- Thus the conduct of God in the formation of his Church, and in the vocation of men to glory which himself has prepared for them in the kingdom of heaven, is like to that of a king, wishing to celebrate the marriage of his son. (Bible de Vence) --- Marriage is here mentioned, says St. John Chrysostom to shew there is nothing sorrowful in the kingdom of God, but all full of the greatest spiritual joy. St. John the Baptist likewise calls our Saviour the *spouse*; and St. Paul says, *I have espoused thee to one man*, 2 Corinthians xi. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.) See also Ephesians v. 25. and Apocalypse xxi. 2. and 9. *The nuptials* in this place do not signify the union of marriage, or incarnation of Jesus Christ, by which the Church is made his spouse; but the marriage feast, to which men are said to be invited. This is no other than the doctrines, the sacraments and graces, with which God feeds and nourishes our souls, united to him by faith in this life, and by eternal joy and glory in the next. (Jansenius) --- This union is begun here on earth by faith, is cemented by charity in all such as are united to Christ in the profession of the one true faith he came down to establish, and will be consummated and made perpetual hereafter by the eternal enjoyment of Christ in his heavenly kingdom.

**Ver. 3.** *His servants.* John the Baptist and Christ himself, who took the form of a servant, to call such as had been formerly invited to the nuptials that were to be celebrated in his time. The Jews were invited by Moses and the prophets, and were instructed to believe that the Messiah would celebrate the happy feast. On the predetermined day, they were again called by his servants, saying: *Do penance; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*: come to the feast, i.e. become members of his Church, by believing in Christ. (Jansenius) --- In the same manner, St. John Chrysostom says that the Jews had been invited by the voice of the prophets, and afterwards by the Baptist, who declared to all, that Christ should increase, but that he himself should decrease.

At length, they were invited by the Son in person, crying aloud to them: *come to me all you that labour, and are heavily laden, and I will refresh you.* (Matthew xi. 28.) And again: *if any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* (St. John vii. 37.) --- and not by his words only, but by his actions also did he call them; and after his resurrection, by the ministry of Peter and the rest of the apostles (hom. lxx.) he informed the invited Jews that the banquet was ready; because the Christian religion being now established, the way to eternal happiness was laid open to mankind.

**Ver. 5.** *One to his farm.* After they had put to death the Son of God, still did the Almighty invite them to the marriage-feast; but they with futile excuses declined and slighted the proffered favour, wholly taken up with their temporal concerns and sensual enjoyments, their oxen, lands and wives. From the punishment inflicted on these, we learn, that no consideration, how specious soever it may appear, can prove a legitimate excuse for neglecting our spiritual duties. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.) --- Such as refuse to be reconciled to the holy Catholic Church, allege vain pretexts and impediments; but all these originating in pride, indolence, or human respect, will not serve at the day of general retribution and strict scrutiny.

**Ver. 6.** *Put them to death.* Thus the Jews had many times treated the prophets. (Witham) --- These were by far the most impious and the most ungrateful; *tenuerunt Servos ejus*, as is related in the Acts, with regard to the death of James, and Stephen, and Paul. (Menochius)

**Ver. 7.** *Sending his armies.* Here our Redeemer predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, by the armies of Vespasian and Titus, sent against them by the Almighty, in punishment of their incredulity and impiety. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.) --- Thus the king destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city; for sooner or later God is observed to exert his vengeance on all such as despise his word, or persecute his ministers. See the miseries to which the Jews were reduced in Josephus, book the 6th, chap. ix, Hist. of the Jewish war; who declares, that in the last siege of Jerusalem 1,100,000 persons perished, and that the city was completely destroyed. Other interpreters suppose that the evil spirits are here meant, by whom God punishes man, according to Psalm lxxvii, ver. 49. (Menochius and Mandonatus).

**Ver. 8.** *Were not worthy.* The Almighty knew full well that they were not worthy; he still sent them these frequently repeated invitations, that they might be left without any excuse. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.) --- More is signified here than the bare letter conveys; they were not only less worthy of the nuptials, but by their very great obstinacy, ingratitude and impiety, quite unworthy. Not so the Gentiles. (Jansenius) --- Hence Christ says:

**Ver. 9.** *Go ye therefore into the highways.* The apostles first kept themselves within the precincts of Judea, but the Jews continually sought their destruction. Therefore St. Paul said to them, (Acts xiii. 46.) *to you it behoved us first to speak the word of God, but seeing you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles.* (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.)

**Ver. 10.** *Both bad and good.* Christ had before told the Jews that harlots and publicans should, in preference to them, inherit the kingdom of heaven, and that the first should be last, and the last first, which preference of the Gentiles, tormented the Jews more than even the destruction of their city. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx.) --- Good and bad, persons of every tribe, tongue, people, nation, sex and profession, without any exception of persons or conditions. Hence it is evident that the Church of God doth not consist of the elect only; and, that faith alone, without the habit of charity and good works, will not suffice to save us. (Bristow)

**Ver. 11.** *Wedding garment,* which Calvin erroneously understands of faith, for he came by faith to the nuptials. St. Augustine says it is the honour and glory of the spouse, which each one should seek, and not his own; and he shews this, in a sermon on the marriage feast, to be *charity*. This is the sentiment of the ancients, of St. Gregory, St. Ambrose, and others. What St. John Chrysostom expounds it, viz. an immaculate life, or a life shining with virtues, and free from the filth of sin, is nearly the same; for charity cannot exist without a good life, nor the purity of a good

life, without charity. In his 70th homily on St. Matthew, he says that the garment of life is our works; and this is here mentioned, that none might presume, (like Calvin and his followers) that faith alone was sufficient for salvation. When, therefore we are called by the grace of God, we are clothed with a white garment, to preserve which from every stain, from every grievous sin, depends upon the diligence (the watching and praying) of every individual. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It was the custom then, as it still is in every civilized nation, not to appear at a marriage feast, or at a dinner of ceremony, except in the very best attire. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 12.** *Not having a wedding garment.* By this one person, are represented all sinner void of the grace of God. (Witham) --- To enter with unclean garments, is to depart out of this life in the guilt of sin. For those are no less guilty of manifesting a contempt for the Deity, who presume to sit down in the filth of an unclean conscience, than those who neglected to answer the invitations of the Almighty. He is said to be silent, because having nothing to advance in his own defence, he remains self-condemned, and is hurried away to torments; the horrors of which words can never express. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx)

**Ver. 15.** This is the third conference which Jesus Christ had with the Jews. It relates to the civil conduct of mankind, as directed and influenced by religion.

**Ver. 16.** *The Herodians.* That is, some that belonged to Herod, and that joined with him in standing up for the necessity of paying tribute to Cæsar; that is, to the Roman emperor. Some are of opinion that there was a sect among the Jews called Herodians, from their maintaining that Herod was the Messiah. (Challoner) --- These soldiers had come to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, which was to take place in a very few days. The Pharisees sent their disciples with these soldiers, that immediately as the former ensnared him in his discourse, the latter might apprehend him. It is worthy of remark, that these blood-thirsty miscreants sought to ensnare him in his words, not able to discover a fault in any action of his whole life. (Nicholas de Lyra. and St. John Chrysostom) --- *Master, we know.* The Pharisees had instructed their disciples and the Herodians to speak in this seemingly friendly manner to our Saviour, that they might put him off his guard, and thereby ensnare him; thinking that Jesus, like other men, could be led away by flattery. Thus do all hypocrites act. They first praise those they want to destroy; and thus by their deceitful words, lead them aside from the true path, into all kinds of evils and miseries. Ita St. John Chrysostom, Tostatus, &c.

**Ver. 17.** *Is it lawful, reasonable and just, to give tribute to Cæsar?* It was at that time a question much agitated among the Jews, whether they, being the peculiar people of God, ought to be subject and pay taxes to Cæsar, or to any prince whatsoever, or be exempt from them. (Witham) --- Judas Galilæus, about the time of Christ's birth, stirred up the people to a revolt, which though suppressed by violent measures, and himself slain by the Romans, yet the doctrine he broached did not expire with him. Some even among the Pharisees were of opinion, that it was unlawful for the people of God to serve strangers and idolater, as we learn from Josephus. The question, therefore, proposed to our Saviour was insidious in the extreme, and not easy to be answered, without incurring the displeasure of one or the other of the parties. For, if he answered that it was lawful, he would expose himself to the hatred of the Jews, who were aggrieved with what generally thought an unjust extortion, and a mark of servitude injurious to God; if he denied the legality of this hated capitation-tax, he would incur the displeasure of the Herodians, and be denounced to Cæsar. This latter appears to have been their wish; as, in that case, it would have been very easy to persuade Pilate, that Christ and his disciples coming from Galilee, were favourer of that sect, who, from the name of their founder, Judas Galilæus, were called Galilæans; and some of whom, as we read in St. Luke (chap. xiii. 1,) Pilate put to death, *whose blood he mingled with their sacrifices.* Indeed so determined were the enemies of Christ to injure him with Pilate on this subject, that not withstanding his answer was plainly in favour of the tribute, yet they blushed not a few days after to accuse him to Pilate of teaching it to be unlawful to pay tribute; *we have found him, say they, forbidding tribute to be paid to Cæsar.* (Tirinus and Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 18.** *Ye hypocrites?* Our divine Saviour knowing their malice, and that it was their wish in proposing this question, to render him odious to the people, or a suspicious character to the prince, answers them in these severe words. ... Another motive was, to let them see that the secrets of their inmost heart were open to him, and thus induce them to be converted from their wickedness; for, certainly, if they perceived that he could read their hearts, they must thence concluded that he was something more than human. This severe reprehension, according to St. John Chrysostom, shews, that it is better for man that God should chastise him here in this life, than spare him here to chastise him hereafter. (Tostatus)

**Ver. 21.** *Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.* He neither directly decided the question, nor offended the Herodians. They admired his wisdom, were quite disappointed, and retired with confusion. (Witham) --- The reasoning of Christ appears to be this: As you are the subjects of Cæsar, which you plainly acknowledge by admitting his coin, upon which he inscribes himself lord of Asia, Syria, and Judæa, &c. it is but just you pay him the tribute due from subjects to their sovereign; nor have you any reason to object on the plea of religion, since he demands of you for the exigencies of the public service only temporal things, and such are in some respects already his own, by being stamped with his own image and superscription. But spiritual things, which belong to God alone, as your souls, stamped with his image, divine worship, religious homage, &c. God, not Cæsar, demands of you. "Give therefore to Cæsar what belongeth to Cæsar, and to God what belongeth to God." (Tirinus) --- What our Saviour here commands us to give to God, is nothing else but our heart and affections. Here our divine Lord likewise shews us, how we are to steer the middle course between the two extremes, into which some persons fall. Some say that all must be given to God, and nothing to Cæsar, i.e. all our time must be given to the care of our soul, and none to the care of the body; but Christ teaches that some must be given to the one, and part to the other. (Origen) --- Although Christ clearly establishes here the strict obligation of paying to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, yet he is afterwards accused, as we have mentioned above, (see note on ver. 17) as if he forbade tribute to be paid to Cæsar. In like manner, in spite of the most explicit declarations of the Catholic Church, respecting her loyalty and subjection to temporal powers, her enemies fail not to calumniate here doctrine as inimical to the state, and subversive of due subordination. But let our opponents attend to the following authority and public declaration of Pope Clement XIV. addressed to all Catholic bishops in the Christian world. "Be careful," says he, "that those whose instruction in the law of the gospel is committed to your charge, be made sensible from their very infancy of their sacred obligation of loyalty to their kings, of respect to their authority, and of submission to their laws, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake." --- But princes should not exact, and subjects should not affect to give them ecclesiastical jurisdiction. St. Athanasius quotes the following strong words from an epistle of the famous confessor Hosius, to Constantius, the Arian emperor: "Cease, I beseech thee, and remember that thou art mortal. Fear the day of judgment, and meddle not with ecclesiastical matters; neither do thou command us in this kind, but rather learn of us. To thee God hath committed the empire; to us he hath committed what belongs to the Church. And as he who, with a malicious eye, hath designs upon thine empire, opposeth the ordinance of God; so do thou also beware lest, by an improper interference in ecclesiastical matters, thou be made guilty of a great crime. For it is written, *Give to Cæsar*, &c. Therefore, neither is it lawful for us on earth to hold the empire, neither hast thou, O emperor, power over incense and sacred things." (St. Athanasius, ep. ad solit. vitam agentes.) --- And St. Ambrose to Valentinian, the emperor, (who by the ill counsel of his mother Justina, an Arian, required of St. Ambrose to have one church in Milan made over to the Arian heretics) saith: "We pay that which is Cæsar's to Cæsar, and that which is God's to God. Tribute is Cæsar's; it is not denied. The Church is God's; it cannot verily be yielded to Cæsar; because the temple of God cannot be Cæsar's right. Be it said, as all must allow to the honour of the emperor, for what is more honourable than that the emperor be said to be the son of the Church? A good emperor is within the Church, but not above the Church." (St. Ambrose, lib. v. epist. Orat. de Basil, trad.)

**Ver. 24.** *Raise up issue to his brother,* to be heirs of his name and of his effects, as we read in Ruth, chap. iv, ver. 10: *suscitare nomen defuncti, &c. to raise up the name of the deceased in his inheritance, lest his name be cut off from among his family, and his brethren, and his people.*



(Haydock)

**Ver. 29.** *You err.* The Sadducees erred in supposing that there would be no resurrection, or if there was, that the future state would be like the present. Unable to conceive any thing else, they thought themselves justified in concluding that the soul would not survive the body. Had they known the Scriptures, they would not have fallen into this error; since therein are found abundant testimonies of a resurrection, as Job xiv and xix, Isaias xxvi, Ezechiel xxxvii, Daniel xii. The power of God also, had they paid sufficient attention to that consideration, would have taught them the same truth. It cannot be difficult for that power, which created and formed all things from nothing, to raise the body again after it has been reduced to ashes: nor impossible to prepare in a future state, rewards and enjoyments superior to and widely different from any thing that is seen in our present stage of existence. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 30.** *As the angels.* Not in every respect, for the body shall be likewise raised with the soul, whilst the angels are pure spirits: but in this we shall be like unto angels, we shall be endowed with immortality, and impassibility; and our joys, like those of the angels, shall be wholly spiritual. (Jansenius) --- *If not to marry, nor to be married,* be like unto angels, the state of religious persons, and of priests, is justly styled by the Fathers an angelic life. (St. Cyprian, lib. ii. de discip. et hab. Virg. sub finem.) (Bristow)

**Ver. 32.** *He is not the God of the dead.* Jesus Christ here proves the resurrection of the body by the immortality of the soul; because in effect these two tenets are inseparable. The soul being immortal, ought necessarily to be one day reunited to the body, to receive therein the recompense or punishment which it has merited in this same body, when it was clothed with it. --- By this text St. Jerome refutes the heretic Vigilantius, and in him many of modern date, who to diminish the honour Catholics pay to the saints, call them designedly *dead men*. But the Almighty *is not the God of the dead*; of consequence these patriarchs, dead as they are in our eyes as to their bodies, are still alive in the eyes of God as to their souls, which he has created immortal, and which he will undoubtedly have the power of reuniting to their bodies. --- The Sadducees were a profane sect, who denied the resurrection of the body, and the existence of angels and spirits, and any future state in another world: (see Acts xxiii. 8.) nor did they receive any books but the five books of Moses. Christ therefore, from a passage Exodus iii. 15, shewed them that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, had still a being; because God, 200 years after the death of the last, said thus to Moses, *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. He did not say, (as St. John Chrysostom takes notice) *I was the God of Abraham*, &c. Therefore these souls had a being: for the Lord would not call himself the God of those who were not at all: no one calling himself lord or king of those who are no more. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *The Pharisees heard that he had silenced their adversaries, the Sadducees, &c. Some of them,* says St. Luke, (xx. 39.) applauded him, saying, *Master, thou hast said well.* (Witham) --- The Pharisees assembled themselves together, that they might confound him by their numbers, whom they could not by their arguments. Wherefore they said one to another: let one speak for all, and all speak by one, that if one be reduced to silence, he alone may appear to be refuted; and, if he is victorious, we may all appear conquerors. Hence it is said, *And one of them, a doctor of the law*, (St. John Chrysostom) *asked him, tempting him*, if he were really possessed of that wisdom and that knowledge which people so much admired in him. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 40.** *On these two, &c.* Whereby it is evident that all dependeth not upon *faith* only, though faith be the first, but much more upon *charity*, which is the love of God and of our neighbour, and which is the sum of all the law and the prophets; because he that hath this double charity, expressed here by these two principal commandments, fulfilleth all that is commanded in the law and the prophets. (Bristow)

**Ver. 45.** *If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?* It was allowed of a certain truth, that the Messiah was to be the son of David. Christ shews them by David's own words, that he was *the Lord* as well as the *son of David*: and this is what they could not answer to. (Witham) --- Jesus

Christ here inculcates to the Pharisees, that two natures must be admitted in the Messiah; in one of which, viz. in his human nature, he is the son of David, and as such inferior to him; and in the other, viz. in his divine nature, he is the son of God, and consequently superior to David; whence this latter, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, justly calls him Lord. (Tirinus) --- Jesus Christ does not wish them to think that the Messiah is not the son of David, but only wished to rectify their opinion concerning him. When therefore he asks how he is the son, he teaches them that he is not, after the manner they understand it, the mere *Son*, but what is much more, the *Lord* also, of David. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxii.)

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## MATTHEW 22

**Ver. 1.** *Then Jesus, &c.* Jesus thus spoke to the multitude a few days previous to his passion. It is here observable that our Saviour, after he had tried all possible remedies, after he had taught and confirmed his doctrines by innumerable miracles, after he had secretly by his parables reprehended them for their wickedness, but without effect, not publicly upbraids their vices. But before his reprehension of the Pharisees, he instructs the people, lest they should despise the authority of the priesthood. (Salmeron)

**Ver. 2.** *The Scribes.* They, who professed the greatest zeal for the law of Moses, and gloried in being the interpreters of it, sat upon the chair of Moses, succeeded to his authority of governing the people of God, of instructing them in his law, and of disclosing to them his will. Such, therefore, as did not depart from the letter of the law, were called Scribes. But such as professed something higher, and separated themselves from the crowd, as better than the ordinary class of men, were called *Pharisees*, which signifies, separated. (Origen) --- God preserveth the truth of the Christian religion in the apostolic See of Rome, which in the new law answers to the chair of Moses, notwithstanding the disedifying conduct of some few of its bishops. Yes, though a traitor, as vile as Judas himself, were a bishop thereof, it would not be prejudicial to the integrity of the faith of God's Church, or to the ready obedience and perfect submission of sincere good Christians, for whom our Lord has made this provision, when he says: *do that which they say, but do not as they do.* (St. Augustine, Ep. clxv.)

**Ver. 3.** *All therefore whatsoever they shall say.* St. Augustine, in his defence of the Apostolic See, thus argues, *contra lit. Petil.* "Why dost thou call the apostolic chair the chair of pestilence? If, for the men that sit therein, I ask: did our Lord Jesus Christ, on account of the Pharisees, reflect upon the chair, wherein they sat? Did he not commend that chair of Moses, and, preserving the honour of the chair, reprove them? For he sayeth: *they have sat on the chair of Moses. All therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do.* These points if you did well consider, you would not, for the men whom you defame, blaspheme the Apostolic See, wherewith you do not hold communion." (lib. ii. chap. 51) And again, chap. 61 Ibid. "Neither on account of the Pharisees, to whom you maliciously compare us, did our Lord command the chair of Moses to be forsaken; (in which chair he verily figured his own) for he warned the people to do what they say, and not what they do, and that *the holiness of the chair be in no case forsaken, nor the unity of the flock divided*, on account of the wicked lives of the pastors." --- Christ does not tell them to observe every thing, without exception, that the Pharisees should say to them; for, (as it was observed in a previous chapter) many superstitions and false ordinances had obtained amongst them, corrupting the Scriptures by their traditions; but only such as were not contrary to the law of Moses. We are taught to obey *bad* no less than *good* ministers, in those things that are not expressly contrary to the law of God. Hence appears how unfounded and unreasonable is the excuse so often adduced by persons in justification of their misdeeds, viz. that they saw their pastors do the same. Such must attend to the rule here given by Jesus Christ. What they say, do: but according to their works, do ye not. (Denis the Carthusian) --- The words, *all whatsoever*, shew that nothing must be excepted, but what the supreme law orders to be excepted. (Estius)

**Ver. 4.** *Heavy and insupportable burdens.* Some understand in general the ceremonies of the law of Moses; but Christ seems rather here to mean the vain customs, tradition, and additions, introduced by the Jewish doctors, and by their Scribes and Pharisees. (Witham) --- They thus greatly increase the burden of others, by multiplying their obligations; whilst they will not offer themselves the least violence in observing them, or alleviating the burden, by taking any share upon their own shoulders.

**Ver. 5.** *Phylacteries.*[1] These were pieces or scrolls of parchment, on which were written the ten commandments, or some sentences of the law, which the Jews were accustomed to fasten to their foreheads, or their arms, to put them in mind of their duty. Thus they interpreted those words. (Deuteronomy vi. 8.) *Thou shalt tie them as a sign on thy hand: and they shall be, and move before thy eyes.* Perhaps all the Jews, and even our Saviour himself, wore them; and that he only blames the hypocrisy and vanity of the Scribes and Pharisees, who affected to have them larger than others; and they did the like as to the fringes which the Jews wore on their garments. (Witham) --- That is, parchments, on which they wrote the ten commandments, and carried on their foreheads before their eyes: which the Pharisees affected to wear broader than other men: so to seem more zealous for the law. (Challoner) --- The word *Phylacterion*, which is found both in the Greek and Latin Vulgate, properly signifies a preservation. It was a piece of parchment which the Jews carried round their heads from one ear to the other, and round their arms like bracelets, and upon which were written certain words of the law. Since the origin of the sect of Pharisees, they began to attach to these bands of parchment chimerical virtues, such as preservatives of maladies, and preservations from the insults of devils; hence the name *phylacterion*. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 7.** *Rabbi.* A title like that of *master* or *doctor*. Judas gave it to our Saviour. (Matthew xxvi. 49.) And the disciples of St. John the Baptist call him so. (John iii. 26.) --- Christ blames their pride, and vanity in affecting such titles, rather than the titles themselves. (Witham) --- *Greek: Didaskalos*, properly a preceptor, as John iii. 10. *Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?* (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 8.** *One is your master,* or teacher, who is the Christ, and under him one vicar, the successor of St. Peter, with whom all Catholic teachers are one, because they all teach one and the same doctrine in every part of the Christian world; whereas in the multiplicity of modern sects, which are every day dividing and subdividing into fresh sects, no two leaders can be found teaching in all points exactly the same tenets; as each is not only allowed, but expected to follow his own private spirit, and to build his creed upon his own interpretation of Scripture. (Haydock)

**Ver. 9-10.** *Call none your father ... Neither be ye called masters, &c.* The meaning is, that our Father in heaven is incomparably more to be regarded, than any father upon earth: and no master is to be followed, who would lead us away from Christ. But this does not hinder but that we are by the law of God to have a due respect both for our parents and spiritual fathers, (1 Corinthians iv. 15,) and for our masters and teachers. (Challoner) --- This name was a title of dignity: the presidents of the assembly of twenty-three judges where so called; the second judge of the sanhedrim, &c. (Bible de Vence) --- Nothing is here forbidden but the contentious divisions, and self-assumed authority, of such as make themselves leaders and favourers of schisms and sects; as Donatus, Arius, Luther, Calvin, and innumerable other of very modern date. But by no means the title of father, attributed by the faith, piety, and confidence of good people, to their directors; for, St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that he is their only spiritual Father: *If you have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet not many Fathers.* (1 Corinthians iv. 15.)

**Ver. 13.** *You shut the kingdom of heaven.* This is here taken for eternal happiness, which can be obtained only by faith in Christ, since he calls himself the gate. (St. John chap. x) --- Now the Pharisees, by refusing to believe in him, and conspiring against him, deterred those, who would otherwise have believed in Christ, from professing his name and following his doctrines, and thus shut the gate of heaven against them. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- In all these reprehensions, it is to be

noted, for the honour of the priesthood, Jesus Christ never reprehendeth priests by that name. (S. Cyprian, ep. lxxv.)

**Ver. 14.** *You devour the houses of widows.* Here our blessed Saviour severely reprehends the hypocrisy and other vices of the Scribes and Pharisees, a little before his death, to make them enter into themselves, and to hinder them from seducing others. (Witham) --- The Pharisees, by every means in their power, endeavoured to persuade the widows of the poor to make vows or offerings for the temple, by which they themselves became rich, and thus they *devoured the houses of widows*. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- Whoever is a perpetrator of evil, deserves heavy chastisements; but the man who commits wickedness under the cloak of religion, is deserving of still more severe punishment. (Origen) --- The same is said of fasting, alms, prayers. (Matthew vi.) --- As above our Lord had inculcated eight beatitudes, so here he denounces eight woes or threats of impending judgment, to the Scribes and Pharisees, for their vile hypocrisy. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 15.** Because whilst a Gentile he sinned without a perfect knowledge of the evil, and was not then a two-fold child of hell; but after his conversion, seeing the vices of his masters, and perceiving that they acted in direct opposition to the doctrines they taught, he returns to the vomit, and renders himself a prevaricator, by adoring the idols he formerly left, and sells his soul doubly to the devil. (St. John Chrysostom) --- They that teach that it is sufficient to have faith only, do make such Christians as blindly follow them, as these Jews did their proselytes, children of hell far more than before. (St. Augustine, lib. de fide et oper. chap. xxvi.)

**Ver. 16.** *Wo to you blind guides.* Avarice seems to have been the chief motive of the Pharisees in teaching this doctrine, since they taught that those who swore by the temple were guilty of no sin, nor under any obligation at all; whereas they who swore by the gold of the temple, were bound to pay a certain sum of money to the priests, by which they themselves were enriched. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- *Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, &c.* To understand this obscure place, we may take notice, that a good part of what was offered on the altar, and given to the treasury of the temple, fell to the share of the Jewish priests; and therefore it was not their interest to have such promises or oaths dispensed with. This made them teach the people, that if any one had made a promissory oath or vow to give their money or goods *to the temple*, or *to the altar* itself, as it is said ver. 18, such oaths or promises were not obligatory, or might easily be dispensed with. But if any one had sworn or vowed to give any thing to the *treasury of the temple*, or join it to the *offerings to be made* on the altar, then such oaths and promises which turned to their profit were by all means to be kept. St. Jerome expounds it of oaths in common discourse; as if he taught the people, that when any one swore *by the temple*, or *by the altar*, it was not so considerable as to swear *by the gold in the temple*, or *by the offerings* there made: for in the latter cases, they were to make satisfaction according to the judgment of the Jewish priests. And to correct their covetous proceedings, Christ tells them that the temple and the altar were greater than the gold and the offerings. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Sanctifieth.* The altar is sanctified by our Lord's body thereon. Theophylactus, the close follower of St. John Chrysostom, writeth thus upon this text: "In the old law, Christ will not allow the gift to be greater than the altar; but with us the altar is sanctified by the gift: for the bread, by the divine grace is converted into our Lord's body, and therefore the altar is sanctified by it."

**Ver. 21.** *By him that dwelleth in it.* Here we see that swearing by creatures, as by the gospel and by the saints, is all referred to the honour of God, whose gospel it is, whose saints they are. (Bristow)

**Ver. 23.** *You ... who pay tithe, &c.* The tithes of these small things are not found in the law. Nor yet doth Christ blame them so much for this, as for neglecting more weighty matters; and tells them by a proverb, *that they strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel*. (Witham) --- The Pharisees pretended the greatest exactitude even in the smallest commands of the law, when the observance of them could impress the people with a favourable idea of their sanctity; whereas they omitted the more essential precepts of the law, when it did not procure them the praise of

men. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- St. Jerome interprets this passage of receiving tithes; the Vulgate has *decimare*. (St. Jerome) --- The Pharisees are blamed by our Lord for their avarice, in scrupulously exacting tithes of the most trifling things, whilst they lived in a constant neglect of their duty, both to God and their neighbour. (Idem. [St. Jerome])

**Ver. 25. *Woe to you.*** Jesus Christ here condemns, in forcible language, the principal vices of the Pharisees, viz. their hypocrisy, false devotion, boundless ambition, insatiable avarice, false zeal, and ignorance in deciding upon cases of conscience. St. Luke represents our Saviour as saying this to the Pharisees at dinner; (Chap. xi.) so that Christ must either have repeated these things at different times; or, St. Matthew according to custom, must have added them to other words of our Saviour, which, though spoken on another occasion, had some connection with the same subject. In vain do you, Pharisees, boast of your external sanctity. Do not imagine, that fornication, adultery, and other actions, are the only sins to be attended to; and that pride, avarice, anger, and other spiritual sins, are of no moment. He who made the body, made also the soul; and it is of equal consequence that both be kept clean and free from sin. (Nicholas de Lyra.) --- By the similitude of the cup, and of whitened sepulchres, as also that of building the sepulchres of the prophets, he shews that they did all their actions purposely to be seen by men, and that this was their only motive in all they did. (Idem. [Nicholas de Lyra.]) --- Like Ezekiel's bitter roll, we have here a dreadful list of woes, like as many thunderbolts, levelled against hypocrisy, avarice, ambition, and all bitter zeal. We should be careful not to suffer such rank weeds to grow up in our soil, to the ruin of all good.

**Ver. 26. *Thou blind Pharisee.*** The vices of the Scribes and Pharisees are not frequently to be found in Christians. The genuine characters of the pharisaical and hypocritical spirit, are: 1. to be punctiliously exact in trifles; 2. to be fond of distinction and esteem; 3. to be content with external piety; 4. to entertain a high opinion of ourselves, and to be impatient of reproof; 5. to be harsh to others, and ready to impose on them what we do not observe ourselves. Sins abundantly sufficient to rob us of every good, and to leave our house quite desolate! not less so that the temple and city of Jerusalem!

**Ver. 27. *Whitened sepulchres.*** The Jews, lest they should be defiled with touching the sepulchres, whitened them on the outside, in order to distinguish them. But this exterior whiteness, covering interior corruption, was a genuine picture of the pharisaical character. But these men, says St. Gregory, can have no excuse before the severe judge at the last day; for, whilst they shew to the view of mankind so beautiful an appearance of virtue, by their very hypocrisy they demonstrate that they are not ignorant how to live well. (Moral. xxvi.) --- Tell me, you hypocrite, what pleasure there is in wickedness? why do you not wish to be what you wish to appear? What it is beautiful to appear, is beyond a doubt more beautiful to be. Be therefore what you appear, or appear what you really are. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 28.** Jesus Christ so often and so boldly condemns the Pharisees, because he reads their hearts and intentions; but we, who can only judge of overt actions, who cannot dive into the secrets of the heart, must never presume to call men's exterior good actions hypocrisy; but judge of men according as we see and know. (Bristow)

**Ver. 29. *Build the sepulchres, &c.*** This is not blamed, as if it were in itself evil to build or adorn the monuments of the prophets; but the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is here taxed; who, whilst they pretended to honour the memory of the prophets, were persecuting even unto death the Lord of the prophets. (Challoner) --- Jesus Christ foresaw that they would shortly accomplish the wickedness of their fathers in shedding his blood, as their fathers did the blood of the prophets. (St. Hilary) --- And although they seemed to honour the prophets, and to abhor the murder of the just, it was merely that in their persecution of Jesus Christ he might appear to the people neither a prophet, nor just. (Menochius)

**Ver. 32.** Jesus Christ does not here persuade the Jews to continue on in their wicked ways, as if praising and sanctioning their conduct; but only predicts his own death, which they were about to

compass, and which crime would greatly exceed that of their fathers: as he was the greatest, and even the Lord of all the other prophets, whom their fathers had put to death. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 35.** *From the blood of Abel, &c.* Not that the Jews, to whom Christ spoke, should be punished for crimes which they themselves did not commit nor be more severely punished than they themselves deserved; but he speaks of the Jewish people which, by putting to death their Messias, should shortly fill up the number of their sins; so that God would destroy their whole nation, as if the blood of Abel, and of the prophets unjustly murdered came upon them at once. See Maldonatus. --- *Of Zacharias, the son of Barachias.* [2] Some think this was Zachary, numbered among the lesser prophets, whose father's name was Barachias; but we do not read of his being murdered in this manner. The more common opinion is, that here is meant Zachary, who, preaching to the people, (2 Paralipomenon xxiv. 20,) was stoned to death in the very place where Christ was now speaking. But there he is called the *son of Joiada*, and not of *Barachias*. Some conjecture his father might have had both names; and St. Jerome tells us, that in an ancient copy of St. Matthew, called the *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, he found this Zacharias, of whom our Saviour speaks, called the son of Joiada. (Witham) --- St. Jerome gives another reason why he might have been called the son of Barachias, and not the son of Joiada, and this is to commend the sanctity of the father; for *Barachias* is interpreted the blessed of the Lord. Others suppose that he was the 11th of the 12 prophets; but it is not mentioned that he was slain between the temple and the altar. Some surmise that it was the father of the Baptist, collecting from the apocryphal writings that he was killed for preaching the arrival of the Redeemer: but that he was the son of Joiada, otherwise called Barachias, is the common opinion. (St. Jerome) --- *That upon you may come, &c.* Not that they should suffer more than their own sins richly deserved; but that the justice of God should now fall upon them with such a final vengeance once for all, as might comprise all the different kinds of judgments and punishments, that had at any time before been inflicted for the shedding of just blood. (Challoner)

**Ver. 36.** *Amen, I say to you.* More severe punishments were inflicted on these Jews, on account of their more grievous and heinous transgressions; for nothing had been able to recall them from their wickedness. They had the example of their ancestors before their eyes, continually irritating the wrath of God; yet all they had suffered for their crimes, could not incite them to leave their sinful ways; but they proceeded further than their ancestors in impiety, and ought therefore to receive a more severe condemnation. Thus though Lamech had not killed a brother, but had neglected to be more prudent after the exemplary punishment of Cain, he still cried out: *Seven-fold punishment is taken of Cain, but of Lamech seventy times seven.* (Genesis iv.) (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxiii.)

**Ver. 37.** *And thou wouldst not.* Three truths may be gathered from these words of our Saviour: 1. They, who perish, perish by their own fault, because they refuse to listen to the voice of God calling them to salvation; 2. that man's will is free, and that it is an error in man to lay all his wickedness to the charge of God, or of blind chance; for God justly attributes the reprobation of man to his own perverse will, which often opposes that of God, and brings destruction on itself; 3. how necessary it is for man to subject his will to that of the Almighty, and ever to say with our Saviour: *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.* (Salmeron)

**Ver. 38.** *Behold, your house.* Their house shall be deprived of the protection of the God of heaven. He it was that had hitherto preserved them, and he also would inflict upon them those very severe judgments they so much dreaded. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv.)

**Ver. 39.** *Till you say, blessed is he that cometh.* Hereafter you shall own me for your Messias, and the world's Redeemer, at least at the day of judgment. (Witham) --- The time here foretold, when they should say: *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, is the day of general judgment. When our Saviour says, *henceforth*, we must understand it of all that time, which intervened between the time of his speaking and his passion. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv.) --- It may also be understood of the Jews, who are to be converted to the faith of Jesus Christ

towards the end of the world. (Menochius)

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[1] Ver. 5. Phylacteria. *Greek: phulakteria*. Conservatoria, or preservatoria. See St. Jerome on this place, p. 188, and St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxii. in Matt.

[2] Ver. 35. In Evangelio quo utuntur Nazareni, pro filio Barachiae, filium Joiadae reperimus Seriptum.

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## MATTHEW 24

**Ver. 1.** After the fatigues of preaching and teaching, Jesus towards evening left the temple, as it is in the Greek, *eporeueto apo tou ierou*, and went towards Mount Olivet, where he was accustomed to spend his nights, as we learn from St. Luke, chap. xxi. ver. penult. [i.e. ver. 37.] (Jansenius) --- *His disciples came to shew him the buildings*, not moved by curiosity, for thy had seen them frequently before, but by pity; because he had on a former occasion, and only just before in Jerusalem, threatened the destruction of the temple and city, hoping that the splendour and magnificence of so fine a structure, consecrated to God, might alter his determination, as St. Hilarius [St. Hilary] observes. But the anger of God, provoked by sins, is not to be appeased with stones and buildings. He therefore answered them: (Jansenius)

**Ver. 2.** *Do you see all these things?* Examine again and again all this magnificence, that the sentence of heaven may appear more striking. --- *A stone upon a stone*. We need not look on this as an hyperbole. The temple burnt by the Romans, and afterwards even ploughed up. See Gregory of Nazianzus, orat. ii. cont. Julianum; Theodoret, lib. iii Histor. chap. xx. &c. (Witham) --- Julian the apostate, wishing to falsify the predictions of Daniel and of Jesus Christ, attempted to rebuild the temple. For this purpose, he assembled the chief among the Jews, and asking them why they neglected the prescribed sacrifices, was answered, that they could not offer any where else but in the temple of Jerusalem. Upon this he ordered them to repair to Jerusalem, to rebuild their temple, and restore their ancient worship, promising them his concurrence in carrying on the work. This filled the Jews with inexpressible joy. Hence flocking to Jerusalem, they began with scorn and triumph to insult over the Christians. Contributions came in from all parts. The Jewish women stripped themselves of their most costly ornaments. The emperor opened his treasures to furnish every thing necessary for the building. The most able workmen were convened from all parts; persons of the greatest distinction were appointed to direct the work; and the emperor's friend, Alipius, was set over the whole, with orders to carry on the work without ceasing, and to spare no expense. All materials were laid in to an immense quantity. The Jews of both sexes bore a share in the labour; the women helping to dig the ground, and carry away the rubbish in their aprons and gowns. It is even said that the Jews appointed some pick-axes, spades, and baskets, to be made of silver, for the honour of the work. Till this time the foundations and some ruins of the walls had remained, as appears from St. Cyril, in his catechism xv. n. 15, and Eusebius, Dem. Evang. lib. viii. p. 406. These ruins the Jews first demolished with their own hands, thus concurring to the accomplishment of our Saviour's prediction. They next began to dig a new foundation, in which many thousands were employed. But what they had thrown up in the day, was, by repeated earthquakes, the night following cast back again into the trench. When Alipius the next day was earnestly pressing on the work, with the assistance of the governor of the province, there issued, says Ammianus Marcellinus, such horrible balls of fire out of the earth near the foundations, as to render the place inaccessible from time to time to the scorched workmen. And the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, Alipius, thought proper to abandon, though reluctantly, the enterprise. This great event happened in the beginning of the year 363, and with many very astonishing circumstances is recorded both by Jews and Christians. See the proofs and a much fuller account of this astonishing event, which all the ancient fathers describe as indubitable, in Alban

Butler's life of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, March 18th. Thus they so completely destroyed whatever remained of the ancient temple, that there was not left one stone upon another; nor were they permitted by heaven even to begin the new one. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 3.** *Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the world?*[1] We must take good notice with St. Jerome, that three questions are here joined together. 1. Concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; 2. of the coming of Christ; 3. of the end of the world. Christ's answers and predictions in this chapter, are to be expounded with a reference to the three questions. This hath not been considered by those interpreters; who expound every thing here spoken by Christ of the destruction of Jerusalem; nor by others, who will have all understood of his coming to judgment, and of the end of the world. (Witham) --- It is probable the apostles themselves did not understand that they were asking about two distinct events. Being filled with the idea of a temporal kingdom, they thought that Christ's second coming would take place soon; and that Jerusalem, once destroyed, the Messiah would begin his reign on earth.

**Ver. 4.** *And Jesus answering.* Various are the interpretations given here. Some will have it refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place, A.D. 70; and others, to the end of the world. That of St. John Chrysostom seems to be very conformable to the context, and is followed by many. He explains all, to the 23d verse exclusively, of what shall precede the destruction of Jerusalem; nor is there any circumstance which cannot easily be referred to that event, as will appear from a careful and attentive observation of the history of the Jews, and of the Church at that time, in the writings of Josephus and Eusebius. Even the preaching of the gospel to the whole world, which seems to favour the contrary explanation, is by the same father said to have taken place before the destruction of Jerusalem. St. Paul tells the Colossians, that even in his time the faith was spread all over the world. The abomination of desolation may be explained of the Roman soldiery, or, of the seditious zealots, who, by their murders and other atrocities, polluted the temple. See Josephus, b. 4. and 5. of the Jewish war. As deicide was a crime peculiar to the Jews and exceeded every other crime, their punishment was severe above measure. Had the Almighty punished them to the full of what they had deserved, not one of the Jews would have escaped. But as he formerly would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah, had there been found therein ten just men to avert the impending ruin; so shall these days of affliction be shortened for the sake of some who believe. The verses subsequent to the 22d, are explained by St. John Chrysostom of the second coming of Christ, previous to the general judgment. (Jansenius) --- Such as wish for a more particular explanation of every thing preceding the 23d verse, how it applies to the Jews, may consult the concordance of Jansenius, who thus concludes his observations: "Hitherto we have explained all things of the destruction of Jerusalem, which prophecies, though they principally regarded the times of the apostles, may be of use to us in two ways. 1. It will confirm our faith, when we see clearly fulfilled whatever was distinctly foretold of this people; and may serve to increase our fears, when we reflect, that what is immediately added concerning the day of judgment, shall be fulfilled with the same rigorous exactitude and certainty. It is another effect of divine Providence for the increase of our faith, that this prophecy, which was to take place with regard to Jerusalem, is not mentioned by St. John, who lived long enough to see it accomplished, but by the other evangelists, who died long before the event. 2. It should animate us in the practice of virtue, and gratitude to reflect, that whatever tribulations happen to the Church, or throughout the earth, all co-operate to the advantage of the elect. Such as will be good, have nothing to fear." (Jansenius)

**Ver. 5.** *For many will come.* One of these was Simon Magus, who in the Acts (chap. viii. ver. 10.) is mentioned as calling himself the power of God; hence the apostle St. John (1 epistle ii. 18,) says, *and as you have heard that Antichrist cometh, even now there are become many Antichrists.* By Antichrists I understand heretics, who, under the name of Christ, teach doctrines different from Christ; neither is there any reason for us to be surprised, if many be seduced, since our Lord declares that many will be seduced. (St. Jerome) ... This alone will be sufficient for us to know the false doctrines taught by Antichrist, when they assure us that they are Christ; for we do not read in any part that Christ said so of himself. The miracles he performed, the doctrines he



taught, and the virtues he on every occasion exhibited, were proofs sufficient to convince us that he was the Christ. There is need of the assistance of God to overcome the snares laid for us by hypocrisy. (Origen) --- Among these impostors were one Theodas, (Acts v. 36,) the impious Egyptian, (Acts xxi. 38,) Judas of Galilee, Menander, and several others who preceded the destruction of Jerusalem; but many more will precede the destruction of the world. This therefore is the *first sign*, the seduction of many souls from the true faith by heresies, and is common to both events. (Jansenius) --- See much more in Barradius, tom. iii. lib. 9, chap. 2, where he collects various illustrations from Josephus and profane authors. (Menochius)

**Ver. 6.** *Shall hear of wars.* Most authors understand this *second sign* of the Jewish wars which preceded the ruin of Jerusalem; others of the wars of Antichrist, previous to the end of the world. Both are very probable. The first is proved from history, and from the events; the latter, from what we learn from the Apocalypse, will certainly happen. (Menochius) --- These things must happen, as is said of scandals and heresies, not absolutely, but considering the malice of man, and the decree of God, by which he had determined to punish the Jews. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 7.** *And there shall be,* according to the proverb, *Greek: loimos meta limon*, plague after famine, both natural daughters of war, with intestine divisions, earthquakes, and other calamities; the *third sign*. ... As the bodies of men generally grow weak and faint previous to dissolution, so will it be with the earth before the destruction of the world; so that this inferior globe will be shaken with unusual convulsions, as if making its last effort for existence. The air filled with destructive vapours will turn to the ruin of men, and the earth exhausted of its natural fertility, will refuse its accustomed support to the sons of Adam. Hence will arise wars and famines, insurrections, rebellions, and mobs; some driven on by famine and want, others by ambition and avarice. But if the corrupted heart of man shall refuse to depart from its evil ways, these calamities shall be increased; for all these are only the beginnings of more dreadful sorrows. (Origen)

**Ver. 9.** *Then shall they deliver you up, &c.* The *fourth sign*, common to both these events, shall be the persecution raised against the Church, which will be two-fold; it will regard both body and soul. See Luke xxi. 12; Mark xiii. 9. All this happened to the apostles previously to the siege of Jerusalem, as well as to the martyrs in subsequent times. A similar persecution, attended probably with additional severity, will most probably be the lot of the faithful during the reign of Antichrist. The calamities, bloodshed, and utter ruin which took place at the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, are a figure of the still more dreadful calamities, bloodshed, and ruin to be expected towards the end of the world; and which should be frequently present to our minds. The late learned and venerable prelate Walmesley admonishes all parents to be ever ready to meet, with Christian resignation, the awful and approaching event; for the rest of the world, as we learn from revelation, will be taken by surprise, as the people at the deluge. Yes, this last may literally be styled a bloody trial; for the Church, which was purified with blood, began in blood, increased in blood, and will end in blood.

Sanguine munda est ecclesia, sanguine cœpit,  
Sanguine succrevit, sanguine finis erit.

The last chapter of the Apocalypse, which is the last communication of the divine will to man, is deserving our frequent and very attentive perusal. In it Jesus Christ, by his repeated warnings, wishes to awaken us to a sense of that day of general retribution, saying: *surely I come quickly: behold I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his work.* (Behold the merit of good works proceeding from faith and charity.) With what earnestness have the servants of God, in every age, prayed with St. John: (ibid.) *Come, Lord Jesus; come*, put a final end to the reign of sin and Satan; come, admit thy elect, who have been purified in the waters of the great persecution, and in the blood of the Lamb, to thy heavenly bosom; to that happy sanctuary and asylum, where no hunger or thirst, no scorching heat or the sun, no fiery temptation will any more reach or molest them; where the sigh and the groan will not be heard; where all tears will be wiped away from every eye, and where they will be inebriated at the torrent of immortal delights, and will see and enjoy the Lord Jesus, without any apprehension of offending him, for ever and ever. (Haydock)

**Ver. 11.** *And many false prophets shall rise, like those lying teachers mentioned by St. Peter, (2nd Epistle chap. ii. ver. 1) who shall bring in sects of perdition, (i.e. heresies destructive of salvation) bringing upon themselves swift destruction.*

**Ver. 12.** *And because iniquity hath (literally, shall) abounded, shall arrive at its height, the charity of many, carried away by the force of bad example, will grow cold; and scarcely, even among Christians, will a person be found willing to assist Christians, lest he may be known for a Christian. Of this we have an example, 2 Timothy iv. 16, At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge; but the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me. (Maldonatus)*

**Ver. 13.** *But he that shall persevere to the end, in the midst of this trying and afflicting scene, in faith and charity, (or as it is in the Greek; he that shall preserve his patience to the end, Greek: o upomeinas, proof against heresies, persecutions, hatreds, or scandals) shall be saved. To perseverance alone this promise is made; for, non quæruntur in Christianis initia sed finis. (Tertullian) A part of this prediction was, beyond all doubt, accomplished with regard to the faithful in the first persecutions raised by the Jews against the infant Christian Church; but the entire and literal completion of it is reserved for the latter times.*

**Ver. 14.** *This gospel ... shall be preached in the whole world, to serve as a testimony to all nations, of the solicitude of heaven in having the doctrine of salvation announced to them. This then is a fifth sign, and not till then shall the consummation come. --- And then shall the consummation come. The end of the world, says St. Jerome. The destruction of Jerusalem, says St. John Chrysostom and others. (Witham) --- If the final destruction of Jerusalem be here meant, the gospel had been preached throughout the major part of the then known world. See Romans x. and Colossians i. 6, 23. If the end of the world, there is the greatest probability that the true faith will have been announced to every part of the globe, before that period.*

**Ver. 15.** *The abomination of desolation was first partly fulfilled by divers profanations of the temple, as when the image of Cæsar was set up in the temple by Pilate, and Adrian's statue in the holy of holies, and when the sacrifices were taken away; but will be more completely fulfilled by Antichrist and his precursors, when they shall attempt to abolish the holy sacrifice of the mass. St. Hippolytus, in his treatise *de Anti-Christo*, mentioned by Eusebius, St. Jerome, and Photius, thus writeth: "The churches shall lament with great lamentations, because there shall neither be made oblations, nor incense, nor worship grateful to God. ... In those days the liturgy (or mass) shall be neglected, the psalmody shall cease, the reciting of Scripture shall not be heard." --- The prophet Daniel (xii. 11.) calculates the reign of Antichrist, *from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away*; which by able commentators, is understood of the sacrifice of the mass, which Antichrist will endeavour to suppress. --- *The abomination of desolation*, [2] or the abominable desolation. Instead of these words, we read in St. Luke, (xxi. 20.) *When you shall see Jerusalem surrounded by an army*. Christ said both the one and the other. But the words in St. Luke, seem rather to give us a sign of the ruin of Jerusalem, than of the end of the world. --- *Spoken of by Daniel, the prophet*. The sense is, when you shall see that very prophecy of Daniel literally fulfilled hereafter. What follows in the prophecy of Daniel, confirms this exposition; when the prophet adds, that the *desolation shall continue to the end*; that the Jews from that time, shall be *no more the people of God, for denying their Messias*; and that they shall *put the Christ to death*. But what then was this desolation, which by the following verse, was to be a sign to the Christians to *fly out of Judea*? Some expound it of the heathen Roman army, approaching and investing Jerusalem, called the *holy city*. Others understand the profanation of the temple, made by the Jews themselves, a little before the siege under Vespasian; when the civil dissensions, those called the *Zealots*, had possessed themselves of the temple, and placed their warlike engines upon the pinnacles; and a part, at least, of the temple was defiled with the dead bodies of those killed there. It was at that time that the Christians, according to Christ's admonition, left Jerusalem and Judea, and fled to Pella, beyond the Jordan. See Eusebius, lib. iii. Hist. chap. v. (Witham)*

**Ver. 16.** *Then let those.* It is well known that this prophecy was verified to the letter, in the destruction of Jerusalem. For, as the Roman army advanced, all the Christians who were in the province, forewarned by divine admonition, retired to a distance, and crossing the Jordan, took refuge in the city of Pella, situated in Trachonitis, and became subjects of king Agrippa, who was in amity with the Romans. (St. Remigius)

**Ver. 17.** *Not come down,* into the house. They had no occasion, as Mauduit and others seem to suppose, to throw themselves from the roof, for the Jews had usually stairs on the outside of their houses. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 20.** *In the winter:* an inconvenient season for flying away. --- *Or on the sabbath,* when it was lawful to travel only about a mile. (Witham) --- Pray to God that you may be enabled to escape those evils, and that there may be no impediment to your flight. (Estius, in different location)

**Ver. 22.** *No flesh:* a Hebraism for no person; denoting that no one would have escaped death, had the war continued. (Witham) --- All the Jews would have been destroyed by the Romans, or all the Christians by Antichrist. (Maldonatus) --- From this place, Jesus Christ foretells the coming of Antichrist, and forewarns Christians of latter ages, to guard all they can against seduction.

**Ver. 23.** *Lo, here is Christ.* These words are very aptly applied by Catholics to the conventicles of heretics; and would Christians attend to the injunctions of their divine Master, *Go ye not out:* --- *believe it not,* we should not see the miserable confusion occasioned in the Catholic Church, by unsteady Christians; who are guilty of schism, in forsaking the one true fold, and one shepherd, to follow their blind and unauthorized leaders. (Estius)

**Ver. 26.** *Behold he is in the desert.* This prediction of *false Christs*, may be understood before the destruction of Jerusalem, but chiefly before the end of the world. (Witham) --- As we have mentioned above, in note on verse 5.

**Ver. 28.** *Wheresoever the body,*[3] &c. This seems to have been a proverb or common saying among the Jews. Several of the ancient interpreters, by this *body*, understand Christ himself, who died for us; and they tell us, that at his second coming the angels and saints, like eagles, with incredible swiftness, will join him at the place of judgment. (Witham) --- When he shall come to judgment, all, as it were by a natural instinct, shall fly to meet him, and receive their judgment. St. Hilary understands this literally; that where his body shall hang upon the cross, there will he appear in judgment, i.e. near the valley of Josaphat; in which place the prophet Joel (chap. iii. ver. 2.) declares, that the general judgment shall take place. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 29.** *The sun shall be darkened,* &c. These seem to be the dreadful signs that shall forerun the day of judgment. --- *The stars shall fall,* not literally, but shall give no light. (Witham) --- According to St. Augustine, by the sun is meant Jesus Christ; by the moon, the Church, which will appear as involved in darkness.

**Ver. 30.** *The sign of the Son of man,* &c. The Fathers generally expound this of the cross of Christ, that shall be seen in the air. (Witham) --- This sign is the cross, much more resplendent than the sun itself. Therefore the sun hides its diminished head, whilst the cross appears in glory; because the great standard of the cross, excels in brightness all the refulgent rays that dart from the meridian sun. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxvii.) --- The Jews, looking upon him whom they had pierced, now coming in the clouds of heaven with power and exceedingly great glory, shall have great lamentations. Bitterly will they weep over their misery, in having despised and insulted *him* on a cross, who ought to have been the object of their veneration, adoration, and love. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxvii.)

**Ver. 34.** *This generation;* i.e. the nation of the Jews shall not cease to exist, until all these things shall be accomplished: thus we see the nation of the Jews still continue, and will certainly

continue to the end of the world. (Tirinus) --- Then the cross, which as been a scandal to the Jew, and a stumbling-block to the Gentile, shall appear in the heavens, for the consolation of the good Christian. Hoc signum crucis erit in cœlo, cum Dominus ad judicandum venerit. --- If it be to be understood of the destruction of Jerusalem, the sense may be, this race of men now living; if of the last day of judgment, this generation of the faithful, saith Theophylactus,[4] shall be continued: i.e. the Church of Christ, to the end of the world. (Witham) --- This race, I tell you in very truth, shall not pass away till all this be finally accomplished in the ruin of Jerusalem, the most express figure of the destruction and end of the world. (Bible de Vence) --- By *generation*, our Saviour does not mean the people that were in existence at that time, but the faithful of his Church; thus says the psalmist: *this is the generation of them that seek the Lord*. (Psalm xxiii, ver. 6.) (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxvii.)

**Ver. 35.** *Shall pass away:* because they shall be charged at the end of the world into a new heaven and new earth. (Challoner)

**Ver. 36.** *No man knoweth ... but the Father alone.* The words in St. Mark (xiii. 32.) are still harder: *neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father*. The Arians objected this place, to shew that Christ being ignorant of the day of judgment, could not be truly God. By the same words, *no one knoweth, but the Father alone*, (as they expound them) the Holy Ghost must be excluded from being the true God. In answer to this difficulty, when it is said, *but the Father alone*, it is certain that the eternal Son and the Holy Ghost could never be ignorant of the day of judgment: because, as they are one and the same God, so they must have one and the same nature, the same substance, wisdom, knowledge, and all absolute perfections. 2. It is also certain that Jesus Christ knew the day of judgment, and all things to come, by a knowledge which he could not but have, because of the union by which his human nature was united to the divine person and nature. See Colossians ii. 3. And so to attribute any ignorance to Christ, was the error of those heretics called *Agnoitai*. 3. But though Christ, as a man, knew the day of judgment, yet this knowledge was not due to him *as he was man*, or *because he was man*, but he only knew the day of judgment, because he was God as well as man. 4. It is the common answer of the fathers, that Christ here speaks to his disciples, only as he was the ambassador of his Father; and so he is only to know what he is to make known to men. He is said not to know, says St. Augustine[5], what he will not make others know, or what he will not reveal to them. (Witham) --- By this Jesus Christ wished to suppress the curiosity of his disciples. In the same manner after his resurrection, he answered the same question: *'Tis not for you to know the times and the moments, which the Father has placed in his own power*. This last clause is added, that the apostles might not be discouraged and think their divine Master esteemed them unworthy of knowing these things. Some Greek manuscripts add *nor even the Son*, as in Mark xiii. 32. The Son is ignorant of it, not according to his divinity, nor even according to his humanity hypostatically united to his divinity, but according to his humanity, considered as separate from his divinity. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 37-38.** *And as it was.* The same shall take place at the coming of the Son of man at the last day, as at the general deluge. For, as then they indulged their appetites, unmindful of the fate that was attending them, *Greek: gamountes kai ekgamizontes*, marrying and given in marriage, solely occupied with the concerns of this life, and indifferent to those of the next; so shall it be at the end of the world. They are not here accused of gross sins, but of a supine security of their salvation, as is evident from what follows. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 39.** *And they thought not of the deluge, though preached and predicted by Noe*, (which rendered their ignorance and incredulity inexcusable) till it came and swept them all away. So shall it be at the coming of the Son of man. St. Luke adds, (chap. xvii, ver. 28,) *likewise as it was in the days of Lot*; they shall be eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, i.e. totally immersed in worldly pursuits. Hence the apostle; *when they shall say peace*, viz. from past evils, *and security*, viz. from future, *then shall destruction come upon them on a sudden*. But some one may ask, how can there possibly be all this peace, all this security, when the evils mentioned above, famines, wars, plagues, earthquakes, and particularly the darkness of the sun,

&c. &c. are presages calculated to strike with panic and consternation minds the most thoughtless and giddy? I answer, that the wicked are chiefly designed here, who in the midst of the afflictions and alarms of the good, will still indulge in their pleasures and luxuries, like cruel soldiers, whilst the peaceable inhabitants are plundered. St. Jerome adds, that the world for some time before its final dissolution, will be freed from all those calamities. As to what is said (ver. 29,) of the darkness of the sun and moon, these are circumstances that refer to the very coming of the judge. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 40.** Then of two men, who shall think of nothing less than of going to appear before God, one shall be taken to be placed among the number of the elect, and the other shall be left condemned to eternal fire with the damned, on account of his crimes. (Bible de Vence) --- This example of the men in the field, and of the condition and disposition of men at the period of the deluge, strongly expresses how unexpectedly these evils will rush in upon mankind; and the subsequent account of the two women grinding in the mill, shews how little they were solicitous for their salvation. We are, moreover, taught by these examples, that some of all states and conditions will be saved, whether rich or poor, in ease or labour, or decorated with all the various degrees of worldly honour. The same is mentioned in Exodus, chap. xi, ver. 5. *From the first-born of Pharaoh, who sitteth on his throne, even to the first-born of the handmaid that is at the mill, ... every first-born shall die.* (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxviii.)

**Ver. 41.** *Two women.* Slaves of both sexes were employed in grinding corn. Of these, one shall be carried up to heaven by angels, the other shall be left a prey to devils, on account of her bad life. (Bible de Vence) --- In many ancient manuscripts, both Greek and Latin, what we read in St. Luke, (xvii. 34.) *of two men in the same bed, one shall be taken, and the other shall be left,* is here added.

**Ver. 42.** *Watch ye, therefore.* That men might not be attentive for a time only, but preserve a continual vigilance, the Almighty conceals from them the hour of dissolution: they ought therefore to be ever expecting it, and ever watchful. But to the eternal infamy of Christians be it said, much more diligence is used by the worldly wise for the preservation of their wealth, than by the former for the salvation of their immortal souls. Though they are fully aware that the Lord will come, and like a thief in the night, when they least expect him, they do not persevere watching, nor guard against irreparable misfortune of quitting the present life without previous preparation. Therefore will the day come to the destruction of such as are reposed in sleep. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxviii. on S. Matt.) --- Of what importance is it then that we should be found watching, and properly attentive to the one thing necessary, the salvation of our immortal souls. For what will it avail us, if we have gained the whole world, which we must then leave, and lose our immortal souls, which, owing to our supine neglect to these admonitions of Jesus Christ, must suffer in hell-flames for all eternity? (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 3. St. Jerome on this place, says, Interrogant tria: quo tempore Jerusalem destruenda sit: quo venturus Christus: quo consummatio sæculi futura sit.

[2] Ver. 15. Abominationem desolationis. *Greek: Bdelugma tes eremoseos.* The same words are in the Septuagint, Daniel ix. See St. Jerome on this place, and St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxvi. and lxxvii. in Matt.

[3] Ver. 28. Corpus; in most Greek copies, *ptoma*, cadaver. See again St. Jerome, and St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxvii, p. 492.

[4] Ver. 34. Generatio hæc. Theophylact, *e genea ton christianon.*

[5] Ver. 36. St. Augustine, lib. 83. QQ. quæst. 60. tom. 6, p. 33. Ed. Ben. dicitur nescire filius, quia facit nescire homines, i.e. non prodit eis, quod inutiliter scirent. See the same St. Augustine, lib. 1. de Trin. chap. xii. tom. 8, p. 764 and 765. and lib. de Gen. cont. Manich. chap. xxii. p. 659.

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## MATTHEW 25

**Ver. 1.** *Ten virgins.* By these are signified all mankind. By the *bridegroom*, Christ; by the *bride*, the Church; by *oil*, grace and charity. (Witham) --- The kingdom of heaven is not unfrequently compared to the Church militant; which, as it is composed of both just and wicked, reprobate and elect, is deservedly compared to five wise and five foolish virgins: the wise constantly aspiring after their blessed country; the foolish, with all their fasts and austerities, wishing to procure nothing more than the empty esteem of men. (St. Gregory) --- *Went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride*; in the Greek, it is simply, *before the bridegroom*. The custom among the Jews was, that the bridegroom should go to fetch his spouse, and conduct her with solemnity to his house. (Bible de Vence) --- This was the conclusive ceremony, and done in the night-time. The young women of the vicinity, in order to do her honour, went to meet her with lighted lamps. Modern travellers inform us, that this custom still obtains with the eastern nations, particularly the Persians. Hence the Latin phrase, *ducere uxorem*, to marry.

**Ver. 4.** *But the wise took oil.* Under this parable, we have the state of all Christians in their mortal pilgrimage justly delineated. The wise took oil in their lamps, the necessary qualifications of grace and charity, joined with divine faith, and an additional supply of oil in their vessels; i.e. they laid up in store for themselves a solid foundation of good works. St. Gregory teaches, that by the *lamps*, faith is meant; and by the *light*, good works. Hence he concludes that the bad, although they have lamps, i.e. faith, no less than the good, shall be excluded; because their lamps are out, i.e. their faith is dead, without charity and good works to enlighten them. (hom. xii.) --- St. Augustine also declares, that these lighted lamps are good works, viz. works of mercy and good conversation, which shine forth before men. (ep. 120. chap. xxxiii.) --- And, that this oil is a right inward intention, directing all our works to the greater glory of God, and not to the praise of ourselves in the sight of men. (Idem. *ibid.* [St. Augustine, ep. 120. chap. xxxiii.]) --- The foolish virgins had a little oil in their lamps at first, sufficient to shine before men, by some little external shew of piety, or certain works done through fear, profit, or human respects; but had made no provision of solid piety and charity, by means of which they might, like the prudent virgins, produce good works to salvation. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 5.** *And while the bridegroom* (Jesus Christ) *tarried*, i.e. delayed his coming, and thus protracted the time of repentance, *they all slumbered and slept*; viz. they all died. Hence St. Paul, *nolo vos ignorare de dormientibus*. But the reason why Jesus Christ says they slumbered is, because they were to rise again: and by the expression, *whilst the bridegroom tarried*, Christ wishes to shew us that a very short time will elapse between his first and second coming. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 6.** *There was a cry.* So shall we all have to rise again at the sound of the last trumpet, to meet our judge, either like the wise virgins, who having their oil ready, and their lamps trimmed and burning, soon prepare themselves to give in their accounts to their Lord; or, like the foolish, who having made no provision of the oil of good works, are compelled to seek it at the time they are to be judged. (St. Augustine) --- It is said he will come at midnight; i.e. when least expected.

**Ver. 8.** *For our lamps are gone out.* Thus too many trusting to their faith alone, and leading a tepid indifference life, are negligent in preparing themselves by good works for the coming of the bridegroom. But when they perceived themselves called away from this life, to go and meet their judge, they then begin to find their lamps extinguished, and to think of procuring for themselves the oil of good works, by bequeathing their effects to the poor. Though we ought not to despair of the salvation of these, still there is great room to fear; for, a death-bed repentance is seldom sincere, more seldom, or never perfect, and always uncertain. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 9.** *Go ye rather to them that sell.* The wise virgins do not there advise the foolish to go and buy, but upbraid them for the poor store of good works they have laid up. They had before only sought the praises of men in their good actions, and therefore are answered by the wise: "go now to those to whom you have given all your actions; go and see what their praises will avail, what peace of conscience they can give you: and, if they have praised you, and made you esteemed in the eyes of men, see if they can do the same before God." (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 10.** *And the door was shut.* After the final day of judgment, there will be no room for prayers and good works. (St. Jerome) --- For, after having received those within its walls, who have put on in some degree the nature of the angels, the gate to the city of bliss is closed for ever. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 13.** *Watch ye.* St. Augustine asks, how can we be always watching, it being necessary for each one to give himself sufficient time to sleep and rest from his many labours? He answers the question in these words: We may always keep watching to our hearts by faith, hope, charity, and all other good works. But when we awake, like the five wise virgins, we must arise and trim our lamps, by supplying them with the oil of good works. Then they will not go out, nor will the soothing oil of a good conscience be wanting to us. Then will the bridegroom come and introduce us to his house, where we shall never need sleep or rest; nor will our lamps ever be in danger of going out. Whilst we are in this life, we labour; and our lamps, blown about by the winds of innumerable temptations, are always in danger of being extinguished; but soon their flame shall become more brilliant, and the temptations we have suffered here shall not diminish, but increase its lustre. (St. Augustine, serm. xxiv.)

**Ver. 14.** But that the apostles and all men might learn how they ought to watch, and to prepare for the last day, he subjoins another instructive parable of the ten talents. It has a great affinity with that mentioned in St. Luke, xix. 11. But this last was spoken at a different time, place, and occasion. It differs also in some points. --- *For even as a man*, &c. This passage is to be understood of our divine Redeemer, who ascended to heaven encompassed by his human nature. The proper abode for the flesh is the earth; when, therefore, it is placed in the kingdom of God, it may be said to be gone into a far country. (St. Gregory) --- But when we speak of his divine nature, we cannot say that he is gone into a far country, but only when we speak of his humanity. (Origen)

**Ver. 15.** In the parable of the talents, the master is God, talents, graces, &c. (Witham) --- From this, it appears, we can do no good of ourselves, but only by means of God's grace, though he requires our co-operation; since the servants could only make use of the talents given them to gain others. (A talent is £187 10s.) It is also worthy of remark, that both he who received five and he who received only two talents, received an equal reward of entering into the joy of our Lord; which shews, that only an account will be taken according to what we have received, and that however mean and despicable our abilities may be, we still have an equal facility with the most learned of entering heaven. (Jansenius) --- The servant to whom this treasure was delivered, is allegorically explained of the faithful adorers of God, in the Jewish law, who departing from it, became followers of Christ, and therefore deserving of a double recompense. ... The servant to whom the two talents were delivered, is understood of the Gentiles, who were justified in the faith and confession of the Father and the Son, and confessed our Lord Jesus Christ, God and man, composed of body and soul; and as the people of the Jews doubled the five talents they received, so the Gentiles, by the duplication of their two talents, merited a double recompense also. ... But the servant who received only one talent, and hid it in the ground, represented such of the Jews as persisted in the observation of the old law, and thus kept their talent buried in the ground, for fear the Gentiles should be converted. (St. Hilary)

**Ver. 18.** *He that had received the one.* The man who hid this one talent, represents all those who, having received any good quality, whether mental or corporal, employ it only on earthly things. (St. Gregory) --- Origen is also of the same sentiment: if you see any one, says he, who

has received from God the gift of teaching and instructing others to salvation, yet will not exercise himself in this function, he buries his talent in the ground, like this unworthy servant, and must expect to receive the like reward.

**Ver. 19.** *After a long time.* This represents the time that is to intervene between our Saviour's ascension and his last coming. For, as he is the Master, who went into a far country, i.e. to heaven, after he had inculcated the relative duties of each man in his respective state of life; so shall he come at the last day, and reckon with all men, commending those who have employed their talents well, and punishing such as have made a bad use of them. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 20.** *I have gained other five.* Free-will, aided by the grace of God, doth evidently merit as we see here.

**Ver. 24.** *I know that thou art a hard man.* This is an insignificant part, that is, an ornament of the parable only; as also when it is said: *I should have received mine with usury.* ver. 27. (Witham) --- This seems to have been an adage levelled at avaricious men, who are never pleased but with what increases their hoards. Under this symbol is also depicted the excuse of many, who accuse God of being too severe and unbending, whose service is extremely hard, and who adopts, rejects, and reprobates whom he pleases; who deals out heavier burdens than the weak nature of man is made to support; who denies the grace of obedience, and thus wishes to reap where he has not sown. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 26.** *Thou evil and slothful servant,* for thus calumniating thy master; if I wish to reap where I have not sown, how ought you to fear my just indignation, if were I have sown I find nothing by your neglect to reap. Thus our Lord retorts the accusation upon the servant, as in Luke xix. 22. *Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant.*

**Ver. 29.** *To every one that hath, &c.* That is, who hath, so as to have made good use of, or to have improved, what was committed to his trust and management. See the notes Matthew xiii, ver. 12. (Witham) --- When those who are gifted with the grace of understanding for the benefit of others, refuse to make a proper use of the gift, that grace is of consequence withdrawn; whereas had they employed it with zeal and diligence, they would have received additional graces. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxix.) --- This, moreover, shews that God never requires of men more than he has enabled them to perform.

**Ver. 30.** *And the unprofitable servant.* Thus not only the rapacious, the unjust, and evil doers, but also all those who neglect to do good, are punished with the greatest severity. Let Christians listen to these words, and while time will permit them, embrace the means of salvation. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxix.) --- Let no one suffer his talent to lie uncultivated, and, as it were, hidden and buried in this unhappy earth of the world and the flesh, which engages all their thoughts and affections more than the honour and glory of God, or the eternal welfare of their own or their neighbour's souls. --- The foregoing parables manifestly tend to excite in us great watchfulness, under the just apprehension of the strict account which hereafter we must give of our respective talents. Jesus, therefore, naturally concludes these parables with a description of that awful day which is to succeed the final reckoning, and which will unalterably fix our abode either in eternal happiness, or in eternal misery. In this description we are to remark, 1. the preparations for this awful scene; 2. the sentence pronounced by the judge; 3. the execution of this sentence.

**Ver. 34.** *Shall the king say to them ... on his right hand.* By setting forth to all the world the good works of his faithful servants, the Sovereign Judge silences the murmurs of the reprobate, who might otherwise object that they had it not in their power to do good. In the same manner, the conduct of the wise virgins was the condemnation of the foolish ones; the diligence of the faithful servant, of the sloth and drunkenness of the idle one; the zeal of the servants who multiplied the talents entrusted to them, of his that hid his talent in the ground; and the fervour of the observers of the commandments, of the negligence and remissness of those who are ever transgressing them. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxx.) --- These works of mercy, says St. Augustine, prevail



towards life everlasting, and to the blotting out of former sins; in Psalm xlix.

**Ver. 35.** *For I was hungry, &c.* We may take notice, that the wicked at the day of judgment, are said to be condemned for having omitted to perform good works. (Witham) --- St. Augustine, in his 33d sermon, brings a beautiful reason why the kingdom of heaven is bestowed solely upon the works of mercy, and eternal damnation for the neglect of them; viz. because, however just a man may be, still he has failings to atone for, on account of which the kingdom of heaven might be justly denied him: but because he has shewn mercy to his neighbours, he deserves in like manner to have mercy shewn him. But the wicked, not having shewn mercy to their neighbours, nor redeemed their sins by alms-deeds, or the like, are thus delivered up to eternal damnation. (Jansenius, concord.) --- Jesus Christ only mentions one species of good works, though others may be equally meritorious; for the means of salvation are not precisely the same for all the saints; some are saved by poverty, others by solitude, and each by that virtue which he shall have practiced in the greatest degree of perfection.

**Ver. 36.** *And you visited me.* How easy are the things our Saviour requires at our hands! He will not say at the day of judgment: "I was in prison, and you delivered me; I was sick, and you healed me; but only this, you visited me, you came to me." (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxx.) --- This seems particularly addressed to Christians engaged in the cares of the world, whose salvation principally depends on the practice of works of mercy.

**Ver. 40.** *As long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren.* Can there be a more forcible motive to charity, than the assurance of revelation that the Son of God will accept all good offices done to the afflicted, as done to himself. This condescension of the part of Jesus Christ, will fill the elect with sentiments of profound admiration and astonishment. --- Then with fire in his eyes, and terror in his countenance, he shall say to the wicked: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. It was not originally created for rebellious man; for man was created subsequently to the fall and damnation of the rebel angels: and though he imitated their transgression, the sentence of everlasting burning was reversed by Jesus Christ ... By his blood man has been redeemed from eternal punishment. If many, notwithstanding, are yet condemned to never-ending flames, they are punished under the quality of the slaves of the devil: for as they have wilfully followed his rebellious example, they must expect with him to participate in his torments. (Consult. i. John iii. 8.)

**Ver. 41.** *Prepared for the devil.* When Christ invited the just to his heavenly kingdom, he calls it a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; a kingdom of inexpressible happiness, which from all eternity he designed for those who he knew would faithfully serve him. But, when he pronounces the sentence of the reprobate, he speaks in a widely different manner. He calls it an everlasting fire, prepared not for them, but for the devils and wicked spirits, their accomplices. They have chosen to cast themselves into it; they must therefore look upon themselves as the authors of all their miseries and sufferings. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxx.) --- The pain of loss is here expressed by *depart from me*, and the pain of sense by *eternal fire*. (Menochius and Maldonatus)

**Ver. 42.** *Gave me not.* Jesus Christ chargeth them not here with a want of faith, but with a want of good works. They certainly believed, but they attended not to good works; as if a dead faith, i.e. a faith not working by charity, could bring them to heaven. (St. Augustine, de fide oper. chap. xv. and ad Dulcit. q. 2. ad 4.) --- Jesus Christ suffers his members to want, in mercy to them, and to afford others an opportunity of shewing their love for him, and of redeeming their sins by alms-deeds, as was said to the king of the Chaldeans, *peccata tua eleemosynis redime*. (Daniel iv.)

**Ver. 46.** *Everlasting punishment.* The rewards and torments of a future life are declared by Jesus Christ, who is truth itself, to be eternal. Let no one be found to argue hence against the goodness and mercy of God, for punishing sins committed in time with punishments that are eternal. For 1. according to human laws, we see forgery and other crimes punished by death, which is in some measure an eternal exclusion from society. 2. The will of the sinner is such, that

he would sin eternally continuing if he could; it is an eternal God, a God of infinite majesty, who is offended. He essentially hates sin; and as, in hell there is no redemption, the sin eternally continuing, the hatred God bears to sin must eternally continue, and with it eternal punishment. The doctrine of those who pretend, with Origen, to question the eternity of the duration of hell's torments; who can say with him, *video infernum quasi senescentum*, must encourage vice and embolden the sinner; for if the conviction of eternal torments is not capable to restrain his malice, the doctrine of temporal punishment would be a much less restraint. The present world would not be habitable, were there nothing for the wicked to apprehend after this life. There are many questions often proposed with regard to the situation and nature of hell-fire, &c. &c. &c. but in all these and similar objects of curiosity, it is best to adhere to the sage reflection of St. Augustine: "When we dispute upon a point very obscure, without any clear and certain documents from the holy Scripture, the presumption of man should stop short, and lean not more to one than the other side." (lib. ii. de pecc. meritis et remiss. chap. xxxvi. ep. 190. ad Optat. chap. v. No. 16.) --- On a recapitulation of this long and most interesting discourse, we may observe, that in the first place, it treats of those wars and persecutions which are to happen in the latter ages of the world; that it next proceeds to describe the heresies and schisms among Christians; the general propagation of the gospel; the great apostacy at the time of the Antichrist; and lastly, the grand and closing scene of the day of judgment. Thus these grand and momentous events are intimately connected with each other, and all materially regard the Church of Christ.

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## MATTHEW 26

This second council of the Jews against Jesus, was held on the Wednesday, two days before the Passover; and because on this day Judas sold Christ, and the Jews decreed his death, that ancient custom, according to St. Augustine, originated of fasting on Wednesdays; (Ep. xxxvi. t. 3. p. 80,) and the general custom of abstaining from flesh on Fridays, because on that day Jesus suffered death for our redemption. --- In the notes on these two following chapters, I shall join all the chief circumstances related by the other evangelists that the reader may have a fuller and more exact view of the history of Christ's sufferings and death. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *You know that after two days shall be the Pasch;*[1] or the feast of the Pasch. The Protestants translate, *of the Passover*. The French all retain the same word in their language, *Paque*; as the author of the Latin Vulgate and all other Greek versions have done. It is indeed an evident mistake, (as St. Augustine observed) to take *Pascha* for a Greek word, as Mr. N... has done, who in his note on this place says, *Pascha*, in Greek, is a passion or suffering. It is certain that the word *Pascha*, or *Pasche*, is from a Hebrew derivation, signifying a *passing by* or *passing over*. Yet it must also be observed, that this same word *Pascha*, has different significations; sometimes it is put for the *Paschal Lamb*, that was sacrificed; as Luke xxii. 7, elsewhere for the *first day* of the *Paschal feast* and solemnity, which lasted seven days; as in this place, and Ezechiel xlv. 21. Again it is taken for the sabbath-day, that happened within the seven days of the solemnity. (John xix. 14.) And it is also used to signify all the sacrifices, that were made during the seven days' feast; as John xviii. 28. (Witham) --- *And the Son of man*. Jesus Christ informed his disciples of the bloody transactions, which were soon to be perpetrated at Jerusalem, lest they might be disheartened, when they saw their Master condemned to die on a cross. Christ was delivered up to death by his heavenly Father out of love for man; he is betrayed by Judas for base lucre, condemned by the priests out of envy, and persecuted by the common enemy of mankind, who feared that his empire and reign might be destroyed among men by the preaching of our Redeemer; not perceiving, that man would be freed from his empire more by his death, than by his preaching. (Origen)

**Ver. 3.** *Into the palace* or court of the high priest. Assemblies were held in the public places, at the gates, or in the courts of the nobles. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5.** *Not on the festival day.* Such a day seemed to them at first improper, at least to some of them; but this was overruled, when Judas informed them how he could and would put him into their hands on Thursday night. St. Jerome takes notice, that when they said, *Not on the festival*, it was not through a motive of religion that they made this objection, but only lest a tumult should happen in his favour among the people; (Witham) for they looked upon him as a great prophet. --- Behold how fearful these people are, not of offending God, nor of increasing the enormity of their most atrocious crime, by committing it on the solemnity of the Passover, but of offending men by raising a tumult. Still boiling over with rage, they no sooner found the Traitor, than yielding to the impulse of their blind fury, they gladly seized the opportunity offered, and immolating their victim in the middle of their solemnity. Though this their wickedness was the instrument of the divine dispensation, to bring about the greatest good, still they will not go without receiving condign punishment; which the perversity of their wills so richly deserved, for murdering innocence itself; and at a time when guilt was accustomed to meet with mercy and forgiveness. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxx.) --- We know that by a decree of divine Providence, what had been so long and so earnestly sought for by the Jewish princes, viz. an opportunity of murdering the innocent Lamb of God, was not granted to them, except on the very feast of the Pasch. For it was only fitting, that what had been for such a length of time figuratively promised, should be manifestly fulfilled; that the true Lamb should supersede the figurative one; and that by one grand sacrifice, the vast variety of offerings and holocausts should be done away. (St. Leo the great)

**Ver. 6.** *When Jesus was in Bethania, &c.* St. Augustine observes, that this pouring of the ointment on Jesus is not related by St. Matthew in due order of time. It was not done on this Wednesday, but as St. John expressly tells us, (xii. 1.) *six days before the Pasch, or Paschal feast*, began. This anointing was different from that done in the house of the Pharisee, and in Galilee, set down by St. Luke, Chap. vii. 37. (Witham) --- St. Matthew mentions the fact in this place, because it was in some measure the occasion of Judas's treason. (Bible de Vence) --- St. Ambrose seems to assert, that the Simon here mentioned was at that time a leper, in the following words: "Hence, it appears, that Christ did not flee the company of lepers; he kept company with the unclean, that he might purify them from their uncleanness." St. Jerome is of opinion that Simon was not then a leper, but had been cured of a leprosy by our Lord; and that he afterwards retained the name of leper, as St. Matthew, after he was called by our Saviour, continued to be called the Publican. The latter sentiment seem most probable, because the Jews were not permitted to associate with lepers. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 7.** *A woman.* This was Mary, the sister of Lazarus. (St. John xii. 3.) (Bible de Vence) --- It is not the use, but the abuse of things, which is blameworthy. That man is not to be blamed, who does not exceed the rules followed by good, honourable, and conscientious men, with whom he associates. What, therefore, in some is often reprehensible, in another is highly commendable. A good reputation is a sweet perfume, which a man merits for his worthy deeds; and whilst he follows the footsteps of Christ, he may justly be said to anoint our Redeemer's feet with a most precious ointment. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 8.** *Indignation.* It was chiefly Judas, who blamed aloud this profusion. (Bible de Vence) --- St. Matthew and St. Mark mention the disciples. But such of them as spoke, were persuaded to what they said either by Judas's words, or by their feeling and affection for the poor; but the only motive of Judas was avarice. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 10.** *Why do you trouble this woman?* By this, our Saviour teaches us, that we are not to expect the more perfect acts of virtue from persons still novices, or young in the service of God. He takes the part of the woman, and speaks in her behalf; that the tender bud of her faith might not be blasted, but that her virtues might be watered with tenderness, and thus assisted to produce greater fruit for the future. When, therefore, we behold any good action done, though some imperfection may creep in with it, still ought we to behold it with kindness, and assist it to bring forth more perfect acts for the time to come. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxi.)

**Ver. 11-12.** *Me you have not*, or will not have *always*, in this visible manner. --- *She ... hath done it for my burial.* St. Mark (xiv. 8.) says, *She hath prevented the time to anoint me*, which is done at burials, for my time of being buried will be in a few days. (Witham) --- *Me you have not always*; viz. in a visible manner, as when conversant here on earth: and as we have the poor, whom we may daily assist and relieve. (Challoner) --- Or, he is not always corporally present with us, except in the persons of the poor, whom our Saviour commands us to receive or assist; promising to reward us in the same manner, as if we had conferred the same charity on himself. This saying does not contradict what he afterwards said: *behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world*; (Chap. xxviii. 20.) because in the former, he only speaks of his corporal presence, but in the latter text, of his spiritual presence and constant assistance. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 13.** *That also which she had done.* The exploits of kings and emperors are no longer remembered. The actions of those who have built cities, raised fortresses, carried on wars, and erected trophies of their victories; who have subdued nations, dictated laws to thousands, and raised statues to their own honour, have passed into oblivion; and many of their names are long ago forgotten. But when a poor simple woman, in the house of a leper, in the presence of twelve men, pours out her ointment; her good work is rehearsed after the lapse of so many ages, in every place of the habitable globe. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxii.)

**Ver. 14.** *The chief priests* were then assembled; Judas, the disciple, who chiefly regretted the expense of the perfumes that had been used on his Lord and Master, at the feast of Bethania, and wished for an opportunity to make good the loss, when to the chief priests, saying:

**Ver. 15.** *What will you give me?* The impious wretch did not betray his divine Master out of fear, but out of avarice. Of all passions the love of sordid lucre is the most vile; and the avaricious soul does not fear to plunge herself into the bottom of hell, for a trifling gain. There is no vestige of honour or justice, or probity, remaining in the heart of that man who is possessed with the love of base lucre; whose god is his money. The perfidious Judas, inebriated with this passion, while he thirsts after gain, sells with the most foolish impiety his Lord and his Master. (St. Leo the great) --- He sells him for the paltry consideration of thirty pieces of silver, about £3 15. the price of a common slave. See Exodus xxi. 32. It is probable that even the obdurate heart of Judas would not have betrayed his Master to the Jews, had he not expected that Jesus would escape from their hands on this occasion, as he had done at Nazareth, and in the temple.

### **The Pascal Supper.**

**Ver. 17.** *The first day of the azymes*; unleavened bread. St. Mark (xiv. 12.) adds, *when they sacrificed the Pasch*: and St. Luke (xxii. 7.) says, *And the day of the unleavened bread came; on which it was necessary that the Pasch* (i.e. the Paschal lamb) *should be killed*. From hence it follows, that Christ sent his apostles that very day (the 14th day of the month of Nisan) on which, in the evening, or at night, *the Pasch* was to be eaten; and which was to be with unleavened bread. It is true, the 15th day of that month is called (Exodus xii. 1.) *the first day of unleavened bread*: but we must take notice, that the Jews began their feasts, or festivals, from sunset of the evening before; and consequently on the evening of the 14th day of the moon: at which time there was to be no leavened bread in any of their houses. This shews that Christ eat the *Pasch*, or *Paschal lamb*, after sunset. And when the Paschal supper was over, he consecrated the blessed Eucharist, in unleavened bread, as the Latin Church doth. There are two or three difficulties relating to this matter in St. John, of which in their proper places. (Witham) --- There were four passovers during Christ's public ministry. The 1st was after the marriage feast of Cana, in the 31st year of Jesus, and the 779th from the foundation of Rome. to derive *pascha* from the Greek, *paschein*, to suffer, is a mistake, as St. Augustine observes; tract. lv. in Joah. It is certainly taken from the Hebrew, and signifies a *passing by*, or *passing over*: 1st, because the children of Israel passed in haste on that night out of the land of Egypt; 2d, because the angel, who on that night killed all the first-born of the Egyptians, seeing the doors of the Israelites stained with the blood of the paschal lamb, passed by all theirs untouched; 3d, because that was

a figure of our Saviour passing out of this life to his eternal Father. Yet it must be observed that this same word, *pascha*, or passover, is used sometimes for the *paschal lamb*, that was sacrificed; (Luke xxii. 7.) elsewhere, for the first day of the paschal feast and solemnity, which lasted seven days; (Matthew xvi. 2; Ezechiel xlv. 21.) for the sabbath-day, which occurred within the seven days of the solemnity; (John xix. 14.) and also for all the sacrifices made during the seven days' fest. The Passover was the most solemn of the old law. When God ordered the Israelites to sprinkle the blood of the lamb upon their door-posts, it was solely with a view of signifying, that the blood of the true Lamb was to be the distinctive mark of as many as should be saved. Every thing was mysteriously and prophetic. A bone of the lamb was not to be broken; and they broke not the arms or legs of Jesus Christ, on the cross. The lamb was to be free from blemish; to express the perfect sanctity of Jesus Christ, the immaculate Lamb of God. The paschal lamb was to be sacrificed and eaten; because Christ was to suffer and die for us: and unless we eat his flesh, we shall have no life in us. The door-posts of the Israelites were to be sprinkled with blood, that the destroying angel might pass over them; for with the blood of Christ our souls are to be purified, that sin and death may not prevail against us. In every house was eaten a whole lamb; and Christ, at communion, is received whole and entire by every faithful soul. --- The manner in which it was to be eaten, shews the proper dispositions for Christians when they receive the blessed sacrament. The roasting by fire, expresses divine charity; the unleavened bread, sincerity, truth, and a good conscience; the bitter herbs, repentance and contrition for sin; the girded loins and shod feet, the restraint upon our passions and lusts, and a readiness to follow the rules of the gospel; the staff, our mortal pilgrimage, and that having no lasting dwelling here, we should make the best of our way to our true country, the heavenly Chanaan. --- On this day the passover was to be eaten, at least by a part of the people, according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke; i.e. according to some, by the Galileans; for, according to St. John, it appears that the priests, and the Jews properly so called, such as dwelt in Judea, did not immolate it till the next day. (John xiii. 1, xviii. 28, and xix. 14.) (Bible de Vence) --- but we have here again to remark, that the Jews began their day from sunset of the previous day.

**Ver. 18.** *To a certain man*, whom Sts. Mark and Luke call, *the good man of the house*, or *master of the house*. When St. Matthew therefore says, *a certain man*, he seems to do it for brevity's sake; as not one ever speaks to his servants thus, *go to a certain man*. The evangelist, therefore, after giving our Saviour's words, *go ye into a certain city*, he adds as from himself, *to a certain man*, to inform us that there was a particular man to whom Jesus sent his disciples. (St. Augustine) --- In Greek, *ton deina*; in Hebrew, *Pelona*; words that express a person whose name is either not known, or is wished to be kept secret. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 19.** *And they prepared* what was necessary, a lamb, wild lettuce, and unleavened bread. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 20.** *When it was evening*. [2] St. Luke says, *when the hour was come*, which was at the latter evening, after sunset. The time of killing and sacrificing the lamb was, according to the 12th of Exodus, to be *between the two evenings*; (see Mark xiv. 15.) so that we may reasonably suppose, that Christ sent some of his apostles on Thursday, in the afternoon, to perform what was to be done, as to the killing and sacrificing of the lamb, and then to bring it away: and he eat it with his disciples after sunset. --- *He sat down*, &c. Literally, *laid down*, in a leaning or lying position. Some pretend, from this circumstance, that he eat not the paschal lamb that year, because it was to be eaten, *standing*, according to the law. But they might stand at the paschal lamb, and eat the rest of the supper on couches; as it was then the custom. (Witham) --- We must not hence suppose that he transgressed the law. He first eat the Pasch according to the Mosaic rite, standing, and then *sat down* to supper. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxii.)

**Ver. 22.** *And they being very much troubled*. There were three motives for this great sorrow in the disciples: 1st, because they saw their innocent and dear Master was soon to be taken from them, and delivered up to a most cruel and ignominious death; 2d, because each of them was afraid lest, through human frailty, he might fall into so great a crime; for they all were convinced, that what he said must necessarily come to pass: and lastly, that there could be found one among

them so wretchedly perverse, as to deliver Jesus into the hands of his enemies. Hence afraid of themselves, and not daring to affix a suspicion on any individual, they began every one to say: Is it I, Lord, on whom so atrocious a crime is to fall? ... It is extremely probable that Christ made this prediction three times: 1st, at the commencement of supper; (Matthew xxvi. 21.) 2d, after washing the feet; (John xiii. 18.) 3d, after the institution of the blessed Eucharist. (Luke xxii. 21.) Thus Pope Benedict XIV. Sandinus, &c.

**Ver. 23.** *He that dippeth.* He that is associated to me, *that eateth bread with me, shall lift up his heel against me*, according to the prophecy of the psalmist, cited by St. John, xiii. 18. --- Jesus Christ does not here manifest the traitor; he only aggravates the enormity and malice of the crime.

**Ver. 25.** *Is it I, Rabbi?* After the other disciples had put their questions, and after our Saviour had finished speaking, Judas at length ventures to inquire of himself. With his usual hypocrisy, he wishes to cloke his wicked designs by asking a similar question with the rest. (Origen) --- It is remarkable that Judas did not ask, *is it I, Lord?* but, *is it I, Rabbi?* to which our Saviour replied, thou hast said it: which answer might have been spoken in so low a tone of voice, as not perfectly to be heard by all the company. (Rabanus) --- Hence it was that Peter beckoned to St. John, to learn more positively the person. Here St. John Chrysostom justly remarks the patience and reserve of our Lord, who by his great meekness and self-possession, under the extremes of ingratitude, injustice, and blasphemy, shews how we ought to bear with the malice of others, and forget all personal injuries.

### The Institution of the Holy Sacrament.

**Ver. 26.** *And whilst they were at supper.* Jesus Christ proceeds to the institution of the blessed Eucharist, that the truth or reality may succeed to the figure in one and the same banquet; and to impress more deeply upon our minds the remembrance of so singular a favour, his last and best gift to man. He would not institute it at the beginning of his ministry; he first prepares his disciples for the belief of it, by changing water into wine, and by the miraculous multiplication of the loaves. --- *Whilst they were*, &c. before they parted: for by St. Luke (xxii. 20.) and 1 Corinthians (xi. 25.) the blessed sacrament was not instituted till *after supper*. --- *Jesus took bread, and blessed it.* St. Luke and St. Paul say, *he gave thanks.* *This blessing and giving thanks*, was not the consecration itself, but went before it. See the Council of Trent, session xiii. canon i. (Witham) --- *This is my body.* He does not say, *this is the figure of my body* --- but, *this is my body.* (2d Council of Nice. Act. vi.) Neither does he say *in this*, or *with this is my body*, but absolutely *this is my body*; which plainly implies transubstantiation. (Challoner) --- Catholics maintain, after the express words of Scripture, and the universal tradition of the Church, that Christ in the blessed sacrament is *corporally* and *substantially* present; but not *carnally*; not in that gross, natural, and sensible manner, in which our separated brethren misrepresent the Catholic doctrine, as the Capharnaïtes did of old; (John vi. 61, 62.) who were scandalized with it. ... If Protestants, in opposition to the primitive Fathers, deny the connection of the sixth chapter of John with the institution, *it is from the fear of giving advantage to the doctrine of transubstantiation*, says Dr. Clever, Protestant bishop of Bangor. --- *This is my body.* By these words, and his divine power, Christ changed that which before was bread into his own body; not in that visible and bloody manner as the Capharnaïtes imagined. (John vi.) Yet so, that the elements of bread and wine were truly, really, and substantially changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood. Christ, whose divine power cannot be questioned, could not make use of plainer words than these set down by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul to the Corinthians: *this is my body; this is my blood*: and that the bread and wine, at the words of consecration are changed into the body and blood of Christ, has been the constant doctrine and belief of the Catholic Church, in all ages, both in the east and west, both in the Greek and Latin churches; as may be seen in our controvertists, and particularly in the author of the books of the *Perpetuity of the Faith*. The first and fundamental truths of the Christian faith, by which we profess to believe the mystery of the holy Trinity, i.e. *one God* and *three divine Persons*, and of the *incarnation*, i.e. that the true Son of God was made man, was born, suffered and died upon the cross for our salvation, are no less obscure and mysterious, no less above the reach of human capacity, than this of the real

presence: nor are they more clearly expressed in the sacred text. This change the Church has thought proper to express by the word, *transubstantiation*: and it is as frivolous to reject this word, and to ask where it is found in the holy Scriptures, as to demand where we read in the Scriptures, the words, *trinity, incarnation, consubstantial to the Father, &c.* --- Luther fairly owned that he wanted not an inclination to deny Christ's real presence in the sacrament, by which he should vex and contradict the Pope; but this, said he, is a truth that cannot be denied:[3] *The words of the gospel are too clear.* He and his followers hold, what is called *impanation, or consubstantiation*; i.e. that there is really present, both the substance of the bread and wine, and also the substance of Christ's body and blood. --- Zuinglius, the Sacramentarians, and Calvinists deny the real presence; and hold that the word *is, (est)* importeth no more, than it *signifieth*, or is a *figure* of Christ's body; as it hath been lately translated, *this represents my body*, in a late translation, or rather paraphrase, 1729. I shall only produce here the words and reasoning of Luther: which may deserve the attention of the later reformers. [4]"Who," saith Luther, (tom. vii. Edit. Wittemb. p. 391) "but the devil, hath granted such a license of wresting the words of the holy Scripture? Who ever read in the Scriptures, that *my body* is the same as *the sign of my body*? or, that *is* is the same as *it signifies*? What language in the world ever spoke so? It is only then the *devil*, that imposeth upon us by these fanatical men. ... Not one of the Fathers, though so numerous, ever spoke as the Sacramentarians: not one of them ever said, *It is only bread and wine*; or, *the body and blood of Christ is not there present.* Surely it is not *credible*, nor *possible*, since they often speak, and repeat their sentiments, that they should never (if they thought so) not so much as *once*, say, or let slip these words: *It is bread only*; or *the body of Christ is not there*, especially it being of great importance, that men should not be deceived. Certainly in so many Fathers, and in so many writings, the *negative* might at least be found *in one of them*, had they *thought the body and blood of Christ were* not really present: but they are all of them unanimous." Thus far Luther; who, in another place, in his usual manner of writing, hesitates not to call the Sacramentarians, men *possessed, prepossessed, and transpossessed by the devil*. [5] --- *My body.* In St. Luke is added, *which is given for you.* Granted these words, *which is given*, may bear this sense, which *shall be given*, or offered on the cross; yet as it was the true body which Christ gave to his apostles, at his last supper, though in a different manner. --- The holy Eucharist is not only a *sacrament*, but also a *sacrifice*, succeeding to all the sacrifices of the ancient law, which Christ commanded all the priests of the new law to offer up. Luther was forced to own, that divers Fathers, taught this doctrine; as Irenæus, Cyprian, Augustine: and in his answer to Henry VIII. of England: the king, says he, brings the testimonies of the Fathers, to prove the sacrifice of the mass, for my part, I care not, if *a thousand Augustines, a thousand Cyprians, a thousand Churches*, like that of *Henry*, stand against me. The Centurists of Magdeburg own the same to have been the doctrine of Cyprian, Tertullian, and also of Irenæus, in the end of the second age; and that St. Gregory of Nazianzen, in the fourth age, calls it an *unbloody sacrifice; incruenti sacrificii.* (Witham)

### **This is my body.**

To shew how these words have been interpreted by the primitive Church, we shall here subjoin some few extracts from the works of some of the most eminent writers of the first five centuries.

### **First Century.**

St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who was a disciple and contemporary with some of the apostles, and died a martyr, at Rome, in a very advanced age, An. 107, speaking of certain heretics of those times, says: "They abstain from the Eucharist and from oblations, because they do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins." See epis. genuin. ad Smyrnæos. --- He calls the Eucharist the medicine of immortality, the antidote against death, by which we always live in Christ. --- In another part he writes: "I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, and for drink, his blood." Again: "use one Eucharist; for the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ is one, and the cup is one in the unity of his blood. There is one altar, as there is one bishop with the college of the priesthood," &c.

## Second Century.

St. Justin, the philosopher, in an apology for the Christians, which he addressed to the emperor and senate of Rome, about the year 150, says of the blessed Eucharist: "No one is allowed to partake of this food, but he that believes our doctrines are true, and who has been baptized in the laver of regeneration for remission of sins, and lives up to what Christ has taught. For we take not these as common bread, and common drink, but in the same manner as Jesus Christ, our Saviour, being incarnate by the word of God, hath both flesh and blood for our salvation; so we are taught that this food, by which our flesh and blood are nourished, over which thanks have been given by the prayers in his own words, is the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus." Apology ii. in fin. he calls it, *Panem eucharistisatum* *Greek: ton arton eucharistethenta*, the bread blessed by giving thanks, as he blessed and miraculously multiplied the loaves, *Greek: eulogesen autous*.

## Third Century.

St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who suffered martyrdom in 258, says: "the bread which our Lord delivered to his disciples, was changed not in appearance, but in nature, being made flesh by the Almighty power of the divine word."

## Fourth Century.

St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, who was born in the commencement of the 4th century, and died in 386, explaining the mystery of the blessed Eucharist to the newly baptized, says: "Do not look upon the bread and wine as bare and common elements, for they are the body and blood of Christ; as our Lord assures us. Although thy senses suggest this to thee, let faith make thee firm and sure. Judge not of the thing by the taste, but be certain from faith that thou has been honoured with the gift of Christ's body and blood. When he has pronounced and said of the bread, *this is my body*, who will after this dare to doubt? And when he has assured, and said, *this is my blood*, who can ever hesitate, saying it is not his blood? He changed water into wine at Cana; and shall we not him worthy of our belief, when he changed wine into blood? Wherefore, let us receive them with an entire belief, as Christ's body and blood; for under the figure of bread, is given to thee his body, and under the figure of wine, his blood; that when thou hast received Christ's body and blood, thou be made one body and blood with him; for so we carry him about in us, his body and blood being distributed through our bodies." (St. Cyril, cathech.) --- St. Ambrose, one of the greatest doctors of the Latin Church, and bishop of Milan, who died in 396, proving that the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, is really possible to God, and really take place in the blessed Eucharist, uses these words: "Will not the words of Christ have power enough to change the species of the elements? Shall not the words of Christ, which could make out of nothing things which did not exist, be able to change that, which already exists, into what it was not? It is not a less exertion of power to give a new nature to things, than to change their natures. Let us propose examples from himself and assert the truth of this mystery from the incarnation. Was it according to the course of nature, that our Lord Jesus Christ should be born of the Virgin Mary? It is evident that it was contrary to the course of nature for a virgin to bring forth. Not this body, which we produce, was born of the virgin. Who dost thou seek for the order of nature in the body of Christ, when our Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. (St. Ambrose, lib. de initiandis, chap. ix)

## Fifth Century.

St. John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, who died in 407, does not speak less clearly on this subject. "He," (i.e. Jesus Christ,) says the holy doctor, hom. I. in Matt. "has given us himself to eat, and has set himself in the place of a victim sacrificed for us." And in hom. lxxxiii.: "How many now say they could wish to see his form, his garments, &c.; you wish to see his garments, but he gives you himself not only to be seen, but to be touched, to be eaten, to be received within you. Than what beam of the sun ought not that hand to be purer, which divides this flesh! That



mouth, which is filled with this spiritual fire! That tongue, which is purpled with this adorable blood! The angels beholding it tremble, and dare not look thereon through awe and fear, on account of the rays, which dart from that, wherewith we are nourished, with which we are mingled, being made one body, one flesh with Christ. What shepherd ever fed his sheep with his own limbs? Nay, many mothers turn over their children to mercenary nurses; whereas he feeds us with his own blood!" --- On another occasion, to inspire us with a dread of profaning the sacred body of Christ, he says: "When you see Him exposed before you, say to yourself: this body was pierced with nails; this body which was scourged, death did not destroy; this body was nailed to a cross, at which spectacle the sun withdrew his rays; this body the Magi venerated." --- "There is as much difference between the loaves of proposition and the body of Christ, as between a shadow and a body, between a picture and the reality." Thus St. Jerome upon the epistle to Titus, chap. i. See more authorities in the notes on St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiv, ver. 22, on the real presence, and also in the following verses and *alibi passim*.

**Ver. 27.** *Drink ye all of this.* This was spoken to the twelve apostles; who were the *all* then present; and *they all drank of it*, says Mark xiv. 23. But it no was follows from these words spoken to the apostles, that all the faithful are here commanded to drink of the chalice, any more than that all the faithful are commanded to consecrate, offer and administer this sacrament; because Christ upon this same occasion, and as I may say, with the same breath, bid the apostles do so, in these words, (St. Luke xxii. 19.) *Do this for a commemoration of me.* (Challoner) --- It is a point of discipline, which the Church for good reasons may allow, or disallow to the laity, without any injury done to the receiver, who according to the Catholic doctrine of the real presence, is made partaker of the same benefit under one kind only; *he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.* (John vi.) ... When our adversaries object to us, in opposition to the very clear and precise proofs we produce from the primitive writers of the doctrine of the *real presence*, that is called sometimes bread, a figure, a sign; we reply, that they can only mean that the outward forms of bread and wine, which remain after consecration, are a figure, a sign, a commemoration. They nowhere teach that the consecrated species are barely figures or signs, and nothing more. On the contrary, with St. Cyril above quoted, they say: "Let your soul rejoice in the Lord, being persuaded of it, as a thing most certain, that the bread, which appears to our eyes, is not bread, though our taste do judge it to be so, but the body of Christ: and that the wine which appears to our eyes, is not wine, but the blood of Christ." (Myst. catech. 4, p. 528: and with St. Gregory of Nyssa, born in 331, "the bread, which at the beginning was common bread, after it has been consecrated by the mysterious word, is called, and is become, the body of Christ." And with St. Paulinus, in the same age, "the flesh of Christ, with which I am nourished, is the same flesh as that fastened to the cross; and the blood, with which my heart is purified, is the same blood that was spilt upon the cross."

**Ver. 28.** *This is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins.* The Greek text in St. Luke shews that the words *shall be shed*, or *is shed*, cannot, in construction, be referred to the *blood of Christ* shed on the cross, but to the *cup*, at the institution of the holy sacrament. *This cup* (says Luke xxii. 20,) *is the New Testament in my blood; which cup[6] shall be shed, or is shed for you.* St. Paul also saith: *this cup is the New Testament in my blood.* And if any one will needs insist upon the words, as related by St. Matthew and St. Mark, the sense is still the same; viz. that this cup was not wine, but the blood of Christ, by which the New Testament was confirmed, or alliance betwixt God and man. --- *For many.* St. Luke and St. Paul, instead of *many*, say *for you*. Both are joined in the canon of the mass. Euthymius says, for many, is the same as for *all mankind*. This new alliance was made with all, and the former with the Jews only. (Witham) --- As the Old Testament was dedicated with blood in these words: *This is the blood of the Testament*, (Hebrews ix. 20,) so here is the institution of the New Testament, which God contracts with you, to communicate to you his grace and justice, by the merits of this blood, which shall be shed for you on the cross; and which is here mystically shed for many, for the remission of sins: for the Greek is in the present tense in all the three evangelists, and in St. Paul, 1 Corinthians xi, and the Latin Vulgate of St. Luke, xxii. 19. *Hoc est corpus meum quod pro vobis datur: Greek: didomenon, klomenon ekchuvomenon.*

**Ver. 29.** *I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine.* In St. Luke, (xxii. 15, 16,) Christ said to his disciples; *I earnestly desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer;* (or this *paschal sacrifice*) *for I say to you, that, from this time I will not eat thereof, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.* These expressions seem to import no more, than that it was the last time he would eat and drink with them in a mortal body. And if, as some expound it, Christ, by the *generation of the vine*, understood the consecrated cup of his blood, he might call it *wine*, or the *fruit of the vine*; because he gave them his blood under the appearance of wine; as St. Paul calls the body of Christ *bread*, because given under the appearance of bread. (1 Corinthians xi. 26.) (Witham) --- *Fruit of the vine.* These words, by the account of St. Luke, (xxii. 18,) were not spoken of the sacramental cup, but of the wine that was drunk with the paschal lamb. Though the Sacramental cup might also be called the *fruit of the vine*, because it was consecrated from wine, and retains the likeness, and all the accidents, or qualities, of wine. (Challoner) --- As St. Paul calleth the body of Christ *bread*, so the blood of Christ may still be called *wine*, for three reasons: 1. Because it was so before; as in Genesis xi. 23, Eve is called Adam's bone; in Exodus vii, Aaron's *rod devoured their rods*, whereas they were not now rods but serpents; and in John ii, He *tasted the water made wine*, whereas it was now wine not water. 2. Because the blessed Eucharist retaineth the forms of bread and wine, and things in Scripture are frequently called from their appearance; as Tobias v, the archangel Raphael, is called a young man; and Genesis xviii, three men appeared to Abraham; whereas they were three angels. 3. Because Jesus Christ in the blessed Sacrament is the true bread of life, refreshing us in soul and body to everlasting life. (Bristow) --- *Drink it new*, after a different manner most wonderful and hitherto unheard of, not having a passible body, but one clothed with immortality; and henceforth no longer in need of nourishment. Thus he brings to their minds the idea of his resurrection, to strengthen them under the ignominies of his passion, and eats and drinks with them, to give them a more certain proof of this grand mystery. (S. Chrysostom, hom lxxxiii.)

**Ver. 30.** *And when they had sung a hymn.* Christ, with his disciples, after supper, sang a hymn of thanksgiving. Here in order to follow those incomparable instructions, which we read in St. John, chap. xiv. xv. xvi. and xvii. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Scandalized in me, &c.* For as much as my being apprehended shall make you all run away and forsake me. (Challoner)

**Ver. 33.** *I will never be.* After our Saviour had assured them of the prediction of the prophet, that the flock should be dispersed, and had confirmed it himself, still Peter denied it; and the more Christ assured him of his weakness, the more, according to St. Luke, (chap. xxii.) did Peter affirm that he would not deny him. Whence this confidence in Peter? who when our Lord had said, that one of them would betray him, feared for himself, and though conscious of nothing, still prevailed on St. John to put the question to our Saviour. Freed now from that solicitude and anxiety, which has so much oppressed him concerning the treason of Judas, he began to trust to himself. Let us learn from this fall of the chief of the apostles, ever to assent with the greatest sincerity to the words of God. Let us believe him in every possible circumstance, though it may appear to our senses and understanding contradictory; for, the word of God can never be made void; but our senses may easily be deceived. When, therefore, he says, *this is my body*, let us without any the least hesitation immediately believe and contemplate the mystery with the eyes of our understanding. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxiii.)

**Ver. 34.** *Before the cock crow.[7]* St. Mark is more particular; *before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.* The sense seems to be, before the time that the cock crow the second time, towards the morning. (Witham)

### **Christ's prayer and agony in the garden. He is seized, and carried before Annas and Caiphas.**

**Ver. 36.** *Gethsemani.* St. John tells us it was a *garden*, whither Jesus was accustomed to go with his disciples, which Judas knew. St. Luke says, he went according to *his custom to the*

*mount of Olives*; i.e. where he used to spend part of the nights in prayer. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *He began to grow sorrowful.*[8] The Greek signifies to be *dispirited*. St. Mark, to *be in a consternation with fear*: to wit, when all he was to undergo was represented to him, as well as the ingratitude of sinners. (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** *My soul is sorrowful.* The cause of our Lord's grief was not the fear of suffering; since he took upon himself human nature, to suffer and to die for us; but the cause of his grief was the unhappy state of Judas, the scandal his disciples would take at this passion, the reprobation of the Jewish nation, and the destruction of the miserable Jerusalem. Our Lord also suffered himself to be thus dejected, to convince the world of the truth and reality of his human nature. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 39.** *Going a little further.* St. Luke says, about a stone's cast, *kneeling down*; or as here in Matthew, *prostrating himself*. He did both. --- *Father, if it is possible.* Which is the same, says St. Augustine, as if he said, *if thou wilt, let this cup of sufferings pass from me.* --- *Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* He that was God and man, had both a *divine* and a *human will*. He was pleased to let us know what he naturally feared, as man, and in the sensitive part of his soul; yet shews his human will had nothing contrary to his divine will, by presently adding, *but not my will, but thine be done.* Here, as related by St. Luke, followed his *bloody sweat*. (Luke xxii. 43.) (Witham) --- These words are a source of instruction for all Christians. These words inflame the breasts of confessors; the same also crown the fortitude of the martyrs. For, who could overcome the hatred of the world, the assaults of temptations, and the terrors of persecutors, unless Christ in all, and for all, had said to his eternal Father: *Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou willest.* Let all the children of the Church then understand well these words, that when calamities violently beat upon us, we may with resignation exclaim: *nevertheless, not as I will, but,* &c. (St. Leo the great)

**Ver. 41.** *Watch ye and pray, &c.* We watch by being intent on good works, and by being solicitous that no perverse doctrine seize our hearts. Thus we must first watch, and then pray. (Origen) --- *The spirit indeed is willing, &c.* This is addressed to the disciples; that they were not to trust too much to their own courage; for although their spirit was ready to undergo any temptation, their bodies were still so weak, that they would fail, unless strengthened by prayer. (St. Hilary)

**Ver. 44.** *He prayed the third time,* to teach us perseverance in our prayers. Of these particulars Christ might inform his disciples afterwards; or they were revealed to them. (Witham) --- Our Lord prayed three different times, to obtain of his heavenly Father pardon for our past sins, defence against our present evils, and security against our future misfortunes; and that we might learn to address ourselves in prayer to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (Rabanus)

**Ver. 45.** *Sleep on now.* These were words spoken, as it were, *ironically.* *The hour is come,* that I am to be betrayed. (Witham) --- It seems more probable that he then permitted them to sleep for some time, compassionating their weakness, and leaving them undisturbed. For, it is not very probable that after the agony he had just been in, he should address his disciples ironically; so that the words in the next verse, *Rise, let us go,* seem to have been spoken after he had permitted them to enjoy a short repose. (Jansenius) --- St. Augustine also supposes that after our Lord said, *sleep ye now,* he was silent for some time, and only then added, *it is enough, the hour is come.*

**Ver. 48.** Judas wished to give them a sign, because Jesus had before been apprehended, and had escaped from them on account of their ignorance of his person; which on this occasion he could also have done, if such had been his pleasure. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 49.** *Hail, Rabbi. And he kissed him.* This kind of salutation was ordinary with the Jews. St. Luke tells us, Christ called Judas *friend*; and added, *Is it with a kiss thou betrayest the Son of*

man? By what we read in St. John, these men that came with Judas, seem not to have known our Saviour: for when he asked then, *whom seek you?* they do not answer, thyself, but Jesus of Nazareth. There were struck with a blindness, which St. John Chrysostom looks upon as done miraculously. The second miracle was, that when Christ said, *I am he*, they *fell to the ground*, as thunder-struck. The third was, *let these go*, by which they had no power to seize any one of his disciples. The fourth was, the *healing* of Malchus' ear. (Witham)

**Ver. 51.** *Drew out his sword.* Peter did not comprehend the meaning of what Christ had said, Luke xxii. 36. *He that hath not a sword, let him buy one*, which was no more than an intimation of the approaching danger. Now Peter, or some of them, asked, and said: *Lord, shall we strike?* But he struck without staying for an answer. (Witham)

**Ver. 52.** *Shall perish by the sword.* This was not to condemn the use of the sword, when employed on a just cause, or by lawful authority. Euthymius looks upon it as a prophecy that the Jews should perish by the sword of the Romans. (Witham) --- Our divine Saviour would not permit this apostle to continue in his pious zeal for the safety of his Master. He says to him: *put up thy sword.* For he could not be unwilling to die for the redemption of man, who chose to be born for that end alone. Now, therefore, he gives power to his implacable enemies to treat him in the most cruel manner, not willing that the triumph of the cross should be in the least deferred; the dominion of the devil and man's captivity in the least prolonged. (St. Leo)

**Ver. 53.** *More than twelve legions of angels.* A legion was computed about 6,000. (Witham) --- These would amount to 72,000; but our Lord means no more than a great number.

**Ver. 55.** *In that same hour, &c.* The reason why the Jewish princes did not seize our Lord in the temple, was, because they feared the multitude; on which account Jesus retired, that he might give them an opportunity, both from the circumstances of place and time, to apprehend him: thus shewing us, that without his permission they could not so much as lay a finger upon him. The evangelist informs us in the following verse of the reason of this conduct; *that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.* (St. John Chrysostom) See Luke xxii. 53.

**Ver. 56.** *All leaving him, fled away.* Yet Peter and another soon followed after at a distance. St. Mark says (xiv. 51,) that a young man followed with nothing on *but a loin cloth*. Perhaps it was some one that upon the noise came hastily out of the neighbourhood; and when they caught hold on him, fled away *naked*. It is not known who he was. (Witham)

**Ver. 57.** *To Caiphas.* Our Saviour Christ was led in the night time, both to Annas and Caiphas: and first to Annas; (John xviii. 13,) perhaps because the house of Annas was in their way; or that they had a mind to gratify the old man with the sight of Jesus, now taken prisoner and bound with ropes. (Witham) --- After the chief priests had bribed Judas to betray Christ, they bring him to Caiphas, not as to this judge, but as to his enemy, to insult over him: and then they began to examine him concerning his doctrine and disciples, that they might find some heads of accusation from his answers: thus they shewed that they acted contrary to common justice, in apprehending a person before they had any thing to lay to his charge. (Jansenius) --- Josephus relates that Caiphas had purchased the high priesthood for that year; although Moses, at the command of God, had ordained that a regular succession be kept up, and the son should succeed the father in the high priesthood. It is no wonder then if an iniquitous judge passed an iniquitous sentence. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 58.** *Peter followed.* To wit, to the court of Caiphas, where a great many of the chief priests were met. --- *And another disciple.* Many think this disciple was St. John himself. (Witham)

**Ver. 60.** *False witnesses.* But how were these men false witnesses, who affirm what we read in the gospel? That man is a false witness, who construes what is said in a sense foreign to that of the speaker. Jesus Christ spoke of the temple of his body. Our divine Saviour had said, *Destroy this temple*; and they affirm that he had said, *I am able to destroy*. Had the Jews attended

sufficiently to our Saviour's words, they would easily have perceived of what Christ was speaking, from what he there says: *and in three days I will raise it up*. (St. Jerome) --- These words of Jesus Christ are only mentioned by St. John ii. 19, who marks on what occasion and in what sense there were spoken. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 61.** *This man said: I am able to destroy the temple of God.* These men that gave this evidence, are called *false witnesses*. They relate not the true words of Christ; which were not, *I can destroy*, but *destroy you this temple*, &c. 2. Christ spoke of the temple of his body, and they of the material temple. 3. It is not unlikely that they made other additions, as well as false constructions, omitted by the evangelists. (Witham)

**Ver. 63.** *I adjure thee by the living God.* They hoped this might make him own himself God; for which they were for stoning him. (John x. 31.) --- St. Luke tells us, (xxii. 66,) that this question was put to Jesus, *when it was day*. St. Augustine thinks it was put to him first in the night, and again the next morning. We must not forget that when Christ was examined by the high priest, one of the servants standing by gave our blessed Redeemer a box on the ear, or on the face. See John xviii. 22. (Witham) --- Our divine Saviour as God knew perfectly well, that whatever he said would be condemned; and therefore the more Jesus was silent to what was alleged against him, the more did the high priest try to extort an answer from him, that he might have some accusation against the Lord of glory. Hence he exclaimed in that violent manner: *I adjure thee*, or *I command thee by the living God*, *Greek: Exorkizo se kata tou Theou zontos*. The law for witnesses is to be found in Leviticus v. 1; where the witness is pronounced guilty who should suppress the truth, after he has heard the *Greek: phonen orkismou*. This is the true meaning of that law, so very ill understood by many. See also Menochius, who on these very words of Leviticus says: if any one shall be called upon to say what he knows of a point that another has confirmed by oath, he shall carry his iniquity, i.e. the punishment of his iniquity, which God will inflict. (Menochius) --- See 1 Kings xiv. 24. 27; Numbers v. 19; 1 Thessalonians v. 27. The confession or denial of a person thus interrogated was decisive. (Challoner)

**Ver. 64.** *Thou hast said it.* Or, as it is in St. Mark, *I am*. According to St. Luke, Christ in the morning, before he answered directly, said to them: *If I tell you, you will not believe me*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 65.** The same fury that made Caiphas rise from his seat, forced him also to rend his garments, saying: *he hath blasphemed*. It was customary with the Jews, whenever they heard any blasphemous doctrines uttered against the majesty of the Almighty, to rend their garments in abhorrence of what was uttered. (St. Jerome) --- This was forbidden the high priest; (Leviticus xxi. 10,) but the Pharisees allowed him to rend his clothes from the bottom, but not from the top to the breast.

**Ver. 66.** *He is guilty of death*; i.e. of blasphemy, and so deserves to be stoned to death. (Witham)

**Ver. 67.** *Then they spat in his face, and buffeted him*, &c. Here it was that the wicked council of the Sanhedrim broke up, in order to meet again the next morning. Our blessed Saviour in the mean time was abandoned; that is, had abandoned himself for our sake, to be abused, vilified, beaten and tormented by a crew of miscreants, by all the ways and means their enraged malice could devise or invent: which St. Luke passeth over in a few words, telling us, *that, blaspheming, they said many other things against him*. Let us, at least, compassionate our blessed Redeemer, and cry out with the angel in the Apocalypse: *thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive power and divinity, honour and glory for ever*. (Witham) --- Behold with what accuracy the evangelist mentions every, event he most ignominious circumstance, concealing nothing, ashamed of nothing, but esteeming it his glory that the Creator of heaven and earth should suffer so much for man's redemption. Let us continually meditate upon this; let us ever glory in this, and fix it irrevocably in our minds. (St. John Chrysostom) See Mark xiv. 65; Luke xxii. 64.

### Peter's Denial.

**Ver. 69.** *Peter sat without in the palace:* i.e. in the open court below, where the servants had lighted a fire. There came to him a certain servant-maid, the portress, says St. John, xviii. 17. But he denied, saying: *I know not what thou sayest.* In St. Luke, *I know him not:* in St. John, *I am not.* The sense is the same; and Peter might use all these expressions. (Witham)

**Ver. 71.** *As he went out of the gate another maid.* St. Mark says, he *went out before the court.* By the Greek, he seems to have gone out of the court into the porch. He went from the fire, but returned thither again: for by St. John, (xviii. 25,) this second denial was *at the fire.* St. Luke seems to say it was a man,[9] that spoke to him: and St. John, that they were *several that spoke to him:* it is likely both a girl and a man. (Witham)

**Ver. 73.** *And after a little while.* St. Luke says, *about an hour after:* this seems to have been about the time that the cocks crow the second time. --- *They that stood by came.* St. Luke says, *another man.* St. John says, *the cousin to him whose ear Peter cut off.* It is probable not he alone, but others with him. --- *Peter began to curse and swear.* It is in vain to pretend to excuse Peter, as if he meant that he knew not Jesus, as *man;* but knew him as *God.*[10] They (says St. Jerome) who are for excusing Peter in this manner, accuse Christ of a lie, who foretold that he should deny him. (Witham) --- See how one fall draws on another, and generally deeper: to a simple untruth is added perjury; and to this, horrible imprecations against himself. Lord, Jesus, preserve us! or, I also shall deny thee!

**Ver. 75.** *And Peter remembered the word of Jesus.* St. Augustine understands this rather of an interior illumination of grace: but it is likely our Saviour then might be where he saw Peter, and gave him a glance of his eye. --- *And going forth he wept bitterly:* even daily all his life-time, say the ancient historians of his life. (Witham) --- St. Clement, pope, in his *itinerary*, relates how St. Peter was ever after accustomed to watch in prayer, from the first crow of the cock till morning, pouring forth torrents of tears, and bitterly bewailing his heinous crime. (Denis the Carthusian) --- Let us compassionate our blessed Lord under his sufferings, and in opposition to the cruel malice of his enemies, let his followers cry out with the angel in the Apocalypse: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive power and divinity, honour and glory, for ever and ever.*

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[1] Ver. 2. *Pascha fiet.* Greek: *to pascha ginetai* fit. St. Jerome on this place, (p. 125.) *Pascha, quod Hebraice dicitur Phase: non a Passione, ut plerique arbitrantur, sed a transitu nominatur.* So also St. Augustine, tract 55. in Joan.

[2] Ver. 20. *Vespere facto.* See the two evenings, Matthew xiv. 15.

[3] Ver. 26. Luther. *Verum ego me captum video.* ... *Textus enim Evangelii nimium apertus est.*

[4] Ver. 26. See Luther, tom. 7. Ed. Witttemb. p. 391.

[5] Ver. 26. See Hospinianus, 2. part. Hist. Sacram. p. 187. He says the Sacramentarians have a heart, according to a French translation, *endiabole, perdiabole, transdiabole.*

[6] Ver. 28. Greek: *Touto to poterion, e kaine diatheke en to aimati mou to uper umon ekchunomenon,* and not Greek: *ekchunomeno;* so that it agrees with Greek: *poterion, &c.*

[7] Ver. 34. The time towards the morning, called Gallicinium.

[8] Ver. 37. Greek: *Lupeisthai kai ademonein.* In St. Mark, Greek: *ekthambeisthai.*

[9] Ver. 71. *Aluis,* Greek: *eteros,* says St. Luke. St. John says, Greek: *eipon auto.*

[10] Ver. 73. St. Jerome, in Matt. p. 133, *scio quosdam pii affectus erga Apostolum Petrum,*

locum hunc ita interpretatos, ut dicerent Petrum non Deum negasse, sed hominem ... Hoc quam frivolum sit, prudens Lector intelligit; qui sic defendunt Apostolum, ut Deum mendacii reum faciant.

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## MATTHEW 27

**Ver. 1.** *When the morning was come.* The evangelist is silent with regard to what was transacted during the night, and of the multiplied cruelties and base indignities offered to our divine Redeemer during the whole of the night; for, after he has informed us of Peter's denial, he immediately proceeds to tell us what happened at break of day. (St. Augustine) --- The chief priests, with the ancients and scribes, after they had wreaked their vengeance upon Jesus by the vilest treatment of his sacred person, took counsel how they might induce the governor to put him to death. In this Sanhedrim, or full council of seventy-two, they again put the question to hold a council. --- *Council.* Caiphas, in the morning, called a full council of the Sanhedrim. They again put the question to Jesus, and commanded him to tell them if he were *the Christ*, and *Son of God*? He owned he was. (Luke xxii. 70.) --- Upon this they led him away, and *delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor*: literally, *the president*. This they did, 1. because being a festival day, they apprehended a tumult among the people. 2. To make him die a more infamous death on the cross; otherwise they might perhaps have stoned him to death, as they afterwards did St. Stephen. 3. The power of death being taken from them, they durst not well exercise it, at least, without permission from the Roman governor. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** In the council Jesus was free; but now all the council rising up, as appears from St. Luke, and binding him, (*Greek: detantes auton*) as one certainly guilty of death, they conduct him to Pilate. All attend to repress by their authority the people, to engage Pilate to pronounce sooner the sentence, when he saw that he was condemned by the unanimous voice of the Sanhedrim, and to hinder any one from rising in his defence. There were the more anxious, 1. because about three years before, the power of life and death had been taken from them; 2. because they wished to throw the odium of the crime on another person; and lastly, because both Jew and Gentile were equally to benefit of Christ's death, so both Jew and Gentile were to concur in inflicting it; and as all were to have salvation offered them through his blood, so none were to be freed from the guilt of shedding it. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** *Then Judas, ... repenting himself.* A fruitless repentance, accompanied with a new sin of despair, says St. Leo. (Witham) --- Perceiving that Jesus was delivered up, and remembering what our divine Saviour had said concerning his resurrection, he repented of his atrocious wickedness. Perhaps Satan, who assisted and urged him on to betray his Master, deserted him, not that he had prevailed upon the unhappy miscreant to perpetrate what he had so passionately desired. But how could Judas see that Jesus was condemned? He certainly did not see it, but foreboded in his despairing mind what would be the event. But some are of opinion that this passage is referred to Judas himself, who then became sensible of his crime, and saw his condemnation impending over his head. (Origen) --- For the devil does not blind his agents in such a manner, as to leave them insensible of the crime they are about to commit, till it is perpetrated. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Although Judas conceived a horror at his crime, and confessed it, and made satisfaction to a certain degree by restoring the money, still many essential conditions were wanting to his repentance: 1. Faith in Christ, as God, as a redeemer, as the sole justifier from sin; 2. besides this, there was also wanting hopes of pardon, as in Cain, and a love of a much injured and much offended God. Hence his grief was unavailing, like that of the damned. If Judas, says an ancient Father, had had recourse to sincere repentance, and not to the halter, there was mercy in store even for the traitor. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** *Hanged himself*,<sup>[1]</sup> and did not die of the quinsy, (a tumid inflammation in the throat) as some of late expound it. It is true the Greek word may sometimes signify a *suffocation* with grief;

but it signifies also to be strangled with a rope, as Erasmus translated it. So it is in the ancient Syriac version; and the same Greek word is made use of in 2 Kings xvii, as to Achitophel's death. (Witham) --- to his first repentance succeeded fell despair, which the devil pursued to his eternal destruction. If the unhappy man had sought true repentance, and observed due moderation in it, (by avoiding both extremes, presumption and despair) he might have heard a forgiving Master speaking to him these consoling words: *I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may be converted and still live.* (Origen)

**Ver. 6.** *Corbona.* A place in the temple, where the people put in their gifts or offerings. (Challoner)

**Ver. 7.** *Burying-place.* this the Pharisees did, as a shew of their charity to strangers; but their intention, according to St. Jerome, was to disgrace Jesus; thus to keep alive in the minds of the people, that he was sold by one of his own disciples, and delivered up to a disgraceful death. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 8.** *Haceldama* is a Syriac word: it is not the Greek; and some conjecture, that it found its way hither from the first chapter of the Acts, ver. 19. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 9.** *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias.* Jeremias is not in all Latin copies, and the general reading of the Greek; whereas the passage is found in Zacharias xi. 12. Some judge it to have been in some writing of Jeremias, now lost; as St. Jerome says he found it in a writing of Jeremias, which was not canonical. Others conjecture, that Zacharias had also the name of Jeremias. Others, that St. Matthew neither put Jeremias nor Zacharias, but only *of the prophet*: and that the name of Jeremias had crept into the text. Jeremias is not in the Syriac; and St. Augustine says it was not in divers copies. --- *And they took the thirty pieces of silver*; each of which was called an *argenteus*. The evangelist cites not the words, but the sense of the prophet, who was ordered to cast the pieces into the house of the Lord, and to *cast them to the potter*: [2] which became true by the fact of Judas, who cast them into the temple: and with them was purchased *the potter's field*. *The price of him that was prized.* In the prophet we read, the *handsome price*, spoken ironically, as *the Lord did appoint me*; i.e. as he had decreed. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Jesus stood before the governor.* By comparing the four evangelists together Pilate condescended to come out to the priests, and asked them, what accusations they brought against this man? They replied first in general terms: (John xviii. 30.) *If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee.* Take him you, said Pilate, and judge him according to your law. They answered: It is not permitted us to put any one to death. After this they accused him of *raising tumults, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar*; (Luke xxiii. 2; a manifest falsehood; see Matthew xxii,) and that he said, he *is Christ, the king*. Upon this Pilate called him into the palace before him, and said: *Art thou the king of the Jews?* Jesus owned he was: but first asked Pilate, if he said this of himself, or by the suggestion of others; which was to insinuate, that this information of his being a king came from his malicious adversaries; and that Pilate, having been so long governor, could not but know that he had never set himself up for king, or pretended to any kingly power. However, Pilate replied somewhat peevishly: *Am I a Jew? Thy own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee up to me: what hast thou done?* Jesus then told Pilate, that *his kingdom was not of this world*. This abundantly satisfied Pilate: who needed not trouble his head about any spiritual kingdom, or such as was not of this world. Jesus speaking of *truth*, Pilate asked him after a slight manner, *what is truth?* but perhaps, without waiting for any answer, went presently out, and told the Jews, that he found *no cause nor crime in Jesus*. (Witham) --- The Judge of every living creature was arraigned by permission of his heavenly Father, before the petty judge of Judea, and suffers himself to be interrogated by him, though every question proposed was either put out of ridicule, or some equally base motive. (Origen) --- Our divine Saviour confessed himself to be a king; but that he might give no umbrage either to Jew or Gentile, he at the same time declared, that his kingdom was not of this world. (St. John Chrysostom)



**Ver. 14.** *The governor wondered exceedingly* at Jesus's patience and silence: and he saw very well that it was *envy* that excited the Jewish priests against him. (Matthew xxvii. 18.) But they went on charging him, that he *stirred up the people, even from Galilee to Jerusalem*. Pilate hearing that he was of Galilee, laid hold on this occasion, and sent him to Herod Antipas, who was tetrarch of Galilee; and being a Jew was come up to Jerusalem at this great feast. Herod was glad to see Jesus brought to him, hoping to see him do some miracle in his presence: but finding him silent, and that he did not satisfy his curiosity, *he contemned him*, and ordered him to be clothed in such a garment as might make him laughed at for a fool, or a mock king; and in this dress, sent him back through the streets to Pilate. (Witham) --- The president admires the constancy and courage of his soul; and though, perhaps, he saw it was necessary to declare him guilty of the accusation; yet, beholding the heavenly wisdom and gravity that appeared in his countenance and the heavenly composure in which he stood, he could not conceal his admiration at his conduct. So that it seemed to him most miraculous, that a man brought to the bar, and tried for a capital crime, should stand without fear at the approach of death, which men commonly so much dread. (Origen)

**Ver. 15.** *Upon the solemn day of the paschal feast, (which began the evening before) it was a custom for the governor to pardon and release to the people any one criminal whose life they should petition for: and to induce them to beg for Jesus, he put in the balance with him one Barabbas a famous malefactor, a seditious murderer, says St. Mark; a robber, or thief, says St. John.* (Witham) --- Pilate, wishing to release the innocent Jesus, that he might not give the Jews a possibility, as he thought, of refusing his offer, puts the murderer Barabbas in competition with the innocent Lamb of God. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 19.** *In a dream.* We must remark, that these kind of dreams were not unusual among the Gentiles, being sent by God for some just and necessary reason; as on this occasion, that there might be a public testimony from the Gentiles, of the justice and innocence of Christ. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 20.** *That they should ask Barabbas.* All, therefore, that resemble the Jews in either theory or practice, desire to have Barabbas loosed to them; all therefore, that seek after iniquity, ask for Barabbas, and put Jesus away. But all who walk in the paths of virtue, ask for Jesus, and destroy Barabbas. Pilate wishing on this occasion to shew the Jews the enormity of their crime, again puts the question, *which will you have of the two?* And again, *What shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?* But, they being enraged that Pilate should declare Jesus to be the Christ, all in the frantic fury exclaimed, *Let him be crucified.* (Origen)

**Ver. 21.** *Which ... of the two,* said Pilate to them, will you have released? St. Mark tells us, that at the instigation of the priests, the people petitioned for *Barabbas*. It was no small disappointment to Pilate. *What then, said he, shall I do with Jesus?* They all answer, *let him be crucified.* In St. Luke, *crucify him, crucify him. What evil hath he done?* replied Pilate; and this he repeated *thrice*, according to St. Luke, xxiii. 22. --- Here in order followed the cruel scourging of our blessed Saviour, which Pilate consented to, in hopes to move the people to compassion. This was executed with the utmost cruelty. For they assembled the whole band of soldiers, commonly about 600. And they made him one *wound from head to foot*. Then a *scarlet or purple* coat was thrown over his shoulders: and *plaiting or wreathing a crown of thorns*, i.e. twisting sharp thorns, with some resemblance of a crown, they violently pressed it down on his head; and struck him at their pleasure with a *reed, or cane*, which they had placed in his hand, instead of a sceptre; and kneeling in derision, said, *Hail, king of the Jews*. --- When the soldiers had treated Jesus in this barbarous manner, Pilate himself presented him in this condition to the people saying, *Behold the man*. He imagined their fury would not be changed into pity: but they still cried out, *Crucify him! crucify him!* Take him you, said Pilate, and crucify him; for I find no crime in him. The Jews then answered: *We have a law: and according to our law, he must die; because he hath made himself the Son of God*. At this Pilate was more afraid, lest perhaps he should be of the progeny of the gods, as the Romans fancied their heroes to be. He returned back to the palace and asked Jesus again: *whence art thou?* Jesus gave him no direct answer, yet told him, *he could have not power over him, unless it had been granted him from above*. Pilate was still

very desirous to set him at liberty, especially when his wife sent a message to him to have nothing to do with that just man, for that she had suffered much in a dream on his account. (Matthew xxvii. 19.) --- The Jews perceived Pilate's great inclination to set Jesus at liberty: they therefore tell him in plain terms, *that if he doth dismiss this man, he is no friend to Cæsar*: for every one, they say, *that pretends to be a king, contradicts Cæsar*. This moved Pilate more than any thing whatsoever, and prevailed with him both against justice and his own conscience, to condemn Jesus. He feared lest some private information might be presented against him to Tiberius Cæsar. He presently mounted the judgment-seat in a public place, and said to the Jews: *behold your king*. They cry out, *away with him, crucify him*. *Shall I crucify your king?* said Pilate. They reply: *we have no king but Cæsar*; thus renouncing their Messiah. At this Pilate yielded; and (ver. 24,) *washed his hand*, and said: *I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it*. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Taken water*. It was the custom of the ancients, when they wished to shew themselves innocent of any alleged crime, to take water and wash their hands in public. (St. Remigius) --- Because the element of water naturally signifies purity. See Virgil, *Æneid* xi. ver. 718.

*Me bello e tanto digressum, et cæde recenti  
Attractare nefas, donec me flumine vivo  
Abluero.*

**Ver. 25.** All the people answered: *his blood be upon us, and upon our children* which continues, saith St. Jerome, to this day. Then Pilate delivered to them Jesus *to be crucified*. (Witham) --- This blasphemous prayer continues to this day, and will continue a protracted curse upon the Jews, and upon their posterity. (Origen) --- Behold the insanity of the Jews! Their passion and pertinacious obstinacy will not suffer them to see and understand: they draw down curses upon themselves in these terrible imprecations: *his blood be upon us and upon our children*. Still the God of all mercies did not literally comply with their impious prayer. For, of these children he selected some for himself; amongst the rest even Paul, and many thousands who were converted at Jerusalem. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 26.** *And having scourged Jesus*. We must know that Pilate was a subject of the Roman empire; and by the Roman law it was ordained, that whoever was condemned to the cross, should previously suffer the punishment of scourging. (St. Jerome) --- He wished also by this apparent severity to soften the minds of the Jews, content their inveterate animosity, and this with hopes that they would in the end consent to the liberation of Jesus. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 27.** A Roman cohort properly consisted of 625 men; but they were not always complete, nor all equally strong. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 28.** *A scarlet cloak*. St. Mark and St. John call it *purple*. But these colours are frequently taken promiscuously by writers. Scarlet is a lighter, and crimson a deeper red colour. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 29.** The crowning of thorns had preceded the time, when Jesus was made over by Pilate to the Jews. As the Jews have no preterpluperfect tense, we may conjecture that those words, *circumdederunt, posuerunt*, are Hebraisms; for *circumdederant, posuerant*, they had covered him with a cloak; they had placed a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed or can in his hand. (Bible de Vence)

**Jesus carrieth his cross to Mount Calvary, where he is nailed to it. A great darkness.**

**Ver. 31.** *And led him away to crucify him*. It was the custom for men condemned to die by crucifixion to carry their cross, which Jesus did through the city; but going out, or being gone out of the city, and, as it is probable, fainting under the weight of it, (his strength as man being exhausted) they forced a man of Cyrene, named *Simon*, perhaps a Gentile, or Cyrene, in Lybia, to carry the cross after him. St. Luke says, *they laid the cross upon him to carry after Jesus*;

whether it were that they made Simon carry the whose cross, or whether he only bore it up behind, is not expressed. St. Luke tells us, *a great crowd followed*, and a number of women, who wept and lamented; to whom Christ said: *weep not over me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children*, on account of the punishments and miseries that will shortly happen. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *Cyrene* was the capital of a province in Africa, near Lybia. See Acts ii. 10. Some are of opinion that this Simon was a Jew; his name favours that sentiment, and there were many Jews in that province. (Bible de Vence) --- St. John says that Christ went out carrying his own cross, while the other three evangelists state that they forced Simon of Cyrene to carry it for him. Both are true: for seeing Christ unequal to the weight, they compelled the other to take it up for him; not a part only, as some painters represent, but the whole, to Mount Calvary, as Jesus Christ had carried the whole before. (St. Augustine) --- The evangelists would not have been so particular in this part, had they not wished to inculcate, that all who desire to follow Christ, must also take up their cross and follow him. (St. Jerome and Jansenius) --- The latter says, in his commentaries on the Gospels; as no one liked to carry the ignominious cross, the insolence of the soldiery compelled a stranger to carry it. By this we learn, that the cross is not taken up by many except with compulsion; but, when once taken up, they carry it with willingness. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 33.** *Golgotha*, i.e. *the place of Calvary*, [3] *of heads and skulls*: perhaps, says St. Jerome, from the skulls of persons executed, and buried there. Several ancient writers would have it so called, from Adam's skull, whom they guess to have been buried there. Some also say that a part of this mountain was called *Moria*, the place where Abraham was ready to have sacrificed his son Isaac. (Witham) --- Isaac, carrying the wood on his shoulders for the sacrifice, was a figure of Jesus Christ carrying his cross. The mountain was situated to the north-west of Jerusalem.

**Ver. 34.** *Wine ... mingled with gall*. [4] The Protestants from the ordinary Greek copies, translate *vinegar*; but the other Greek copies have *wine*, which St. Jerome and St. Hilary follow. And in St. Mark all copies, without exception, have *wine mixed with myrrh*: perhaps *myrrh*, from its bitterness, is here called *gall*. It is also observed that wine, with a mixture of myrrh, was often given to those that were to die a violent death, to comfort them, or stupefy them. Our Saviour tasted it, but would not drink it. He refused not to taste the bitterness, but would not take what might lessen his torments. (Witham) --- St. Mark says, *mingled with myrrh*; perhaps it was mixed with both, to render it as bitter as possible. (St. Augustine) --- What St. Mark relates, *he took it not*, is thus explained: the took it not, so as to drink it; which St. Matthew confirms, by saying: *and when he had tasted, he would not drink*; (St. Augustine,) so as to receive the support and comfort which a strengthening draft might afford.

**Ver. 35.** *The divided his garments*. This was accounted with the ancients the greatest infamy. It was never done with any but the most vile and worthless wretches; with men who possessed nothing more then their garments. This they did to our blessed Saviour; a punishment they did not think the two thieves deserving of. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 37.** *This is Jesus, the King of the Jews*. St. Mark has only, *this is the King of the Jews*; as also St. Luke. St. John, *Jesus, of Nazareth, King of the Jews*, which might be the whole inscription. It was the custom of the Romans to put such inscriptions with the cause of their being crucified. St. Luke and St. John tell us, it was written in *Hebrew, Greek, and Latin*. The Jews begged of Pilate that it might be changed, or only put; *He said, I am the King of the Jews*: but Pilate made them this short answer: *what I have written, I have written*. (Witham) --- This title was nailed over the head of our expiring Redeemer, by divine Providence; that the Jews might still be convinced, that with all their opposition, they must acknowledge him for their King, whom they had condemned to so cruel a death; and that so far from lessening his empire and regal power, they rather increased it. (St. Remigius)

**Ver. 38.** *Two robbers, or thieves, and Jesus in the midst*; as if he had been the greatest malefactor of the three. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** *They ... blasphemed, reviled, and insulted him with words and gestures.* (Witham)

**Ver. 40.** *If thou be the Son of God.* Behold these children of Satan, how they imitate the language of their father. That wicked fiend, tempting our divine Saviour, exclaimed, "if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down:" and these *his* children say, "if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross:" but, on the other hand, Jesus will not descend from the hard wood of the cross, because he is the Son of God; for, being God, he descended on earth, took upon himself human nature, to die thus for those who crucified him. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 42.** *If he be the king of Israel.* Pilate having written on the inscription set upon the cross, that Christ was the king of Israel, the Jews endeavoured to persuade him to remove or alter it; but Pilate gave them for answer, according to St. John, "*what I have written, I have written.*" The Jews, therefore, wishing to shew that he was not their king, said with insulting scorn, "*if he be the king of Israel, let him come down from the cross,*" (St. John Chrysostom) "*and we will believe him.*" Falsehood and deceit are stamped upon these words of the Jewish priests; for, whether is it more difficult to descend from his cross, being yet alive, or, being dead, to raise himself from the tomb? He rose again, and you did not believe had he descended from the cross, you would have been equally incredulous. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 43.** *If he will have him:* literally, *if he will him.* In the style of the Scriptures, *to will*, is to love, or be pleased with any one; and so it is applied, Psalm xxi. 9, from whence these words are taken. See also 1 Kings xviii. 22. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *And the same things the thieves also:* i.e. one of them, the other being converted, as we find Luke xxii. 39. (Witham) --- St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, and Ven. Bede say, that at first both of the thieves blasphemed; but one of them seeing the wonderful things that happened, viz. that the sun was darkened, the rocks split asunder, &c. was terrified and converted, he believed in Jesus, and atoned for his former evil language, by praying to him as to his God. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 45.** *From the sixth hour.* St. Mark says, it was *the third hour*, and they crucified him. St. John says, it was about *the sixth hour, when Jesus was condemned.* To reconcile these expressions, we may take notice, that the third greater hour lasted till the sixth hour; and so St. Mark calls it the third hour, because the third great hour (which contained three lesser hours) did not end till mid-day, when the sixth hour was beginning; so that the end of the third, and the beginning of the sixth, happened together. --- *Darkness*, [5] at mid-day, and at full moon. Some call it an eclipse of the sun. --- *Over all the earth, until the ninth hour.* It could be no miracle to be night in the opposite hemisphere; but whether it was in all those parts of the world where, of course, it should have been light, is doubted. Origen thinks this darkness was only in Palestine, and the neighbouring countries: for as to the words, *over the whole earth*, or *over the whole land*, we find one kingdom or empire, by a common way of speaking, called the *whole earth*, or the *whole world*. Here, in the history of Christ's passion, we should take notice of his seven last words, or sentences on the cross. 1. He prayed for his enemies, and those that put him to death, (Luke xxiii. 34.) *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* 2. His mercy called the good thief, *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43. 3. He recommended his beloved disciple to his mother, saying: *woman, behold thy son*; and his mother to the same disciple, with, *Behold thy mother*. (John xix. 26. and 27.) 4. Here (ver. 46) he cried out with a loud voice, *Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani*, i.e. *my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* These words, out of Psalm xxi. 1, were to express his violent sufferings. The Arians objected them against the divinity of Christ; to whom the Fathers answer, that he spoke these words in the person of sinners, from whose sake he suffered, as they shew by the following words of the same Psalm: *far from my salvation are the words of my sins*: which cannot be applied to Christ, he being incapable of sinning. Besides, these words may be expounded as a prayer, by which he desires of his Father, not to be abandoned any longer, but that his sufferings may now have an end. In fine, that these words were uttered with an entire confidence, and an assurance in the presence and assistance of God, appears by what he presently added, recommending his spirit

into the hands of his Father. The fifth sentence was, *I thirst*, to let us know the violent thirst of his exhausted body. St. John (xix. 28,) says it was that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (Psalm lxxviii. 22.) *And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*. The sixth sentence was, *It is consummated*; (John xix. 30) i.e. the work of man's redemption, and all the prophecies, and decrees of heaven, concerning me, the Saviour of the world, are now accomplished. The seventh and last sentence was, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*; and with these words, says St. Luke, (xxiii. 46.) pronounced with a loud voice, *he expired*. (Witham) --- The learned are divided on this passage: 1st, As to the cause of the obscuration of the sun; and, 2ndly, as to the extent of its darkness. Origen is inclined to think that the darkness was partial, and confined to Judea and the neighbouring countries, as the darkness of Egypt was only perceived in that country, and not in Gessen, where the children of Israel were. St. Jerome imagines that the obscurity was caused by the rays of the sun being suddenly withdrawn by divine power, as was the case in Egypt. These they give as conjectures only. But St. Dionysius, the Areopagite, speaks from his own observations, being, as he informs us in a letter to St. Polycarp, then at Heliopolis, a city of Egypt, for the purpose of astronomical observations. He noticed this miraculous eclipse. He saw the moon rise from the east, and placing itself directly under the sun, cause the above mentioned darkness. This made him cry out to his companion, in the greatest admiration. He observes in this eclipse, four things contrary to the ordinary course of nature: 1. The time, full moon, when there cannot be an eclipse of the sun; 2. the moon being under the sun at the sixth hour, returned to its place in the east for the evening; 3. the order in which the sun was obscured. In ordinary eclipses, the western limb of the sun is first obscured, on account of the motion of the moon in its orbit, being from west to east; whereas, in the present case, the moon having already passed the sun, and being removed from the sun the distance of a semicircle, returned from the east to the sun, and of course first eclipsed it on the eastern limb: 4. contrary to the manner of common eclipses, in which that part is first visible which was first obscured, that part of the sun first appeared which was last eclipsed, because the moon returned again to the east after the eclipse was full. To this may be added the observation of St. John Chrysostom and St. Jerome: that the duration of natural eclipses is very short, whilst this lasted the space of three whole hours. But this interposition of the moon, which suffers the greatest parallax, could not cause an universal eclipse; if, therefore, the text is to be understood literally of the whole earth, another cause must be supposed for this universal darkness. But it may be understood in a more limited sense, of the land of Judea. (Denis the Carthusian)

### **The miracles at Christ's death. His burial.**

**Ver. 47.** *This man calleth for Elias*. St. Jerome thinks these might be some of the Roman soldiers, who understood not Syriac, but who had heard of the prophet Elias. (Witham) --- But if we understand it of the Jews, who could not possibly be ignorant of this word, we must suppose it was merely a stratagem of theirs, who wishing still to shew the weakness of our Redeemer, said that he called Elias to his aid. (St. Jerome) --- The soldiers thinking that he called for Elias, wished to hinder any one offering vinegar, lest it should hasten his death, and prevent Elias from coming to assist him; which, from the darkness and other signs, they might think probable. (St. Augustine) --- Wine and vinegar, on account of their penetrating quality, were thought to hasten death. We read in Plutarch, that wine was given to Mark Anthony, when he had stabbed himself, that he might die the sooner. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 50.** *With a loud voice*. In this our Redeemer confirms what he had said to Pilate; *I have the power to lay down my life, and I have the power to take it up again*: for he cried with a loud voice, and at the very hour of the evening sacrifice, to shew that it was by the effect of his own will that he died. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxix.)

**Ver. 51.** *The veil of the temple was rent*. As there were in the temple two parts of the sanctuary, so there were two veils, or partition walls. The first sanctuary, called the *holy*, was separated by a veil from that part of the temple called *the court of the Israelites*. Into this outward sanctuary, called the *holy*, entered every day the priests that were in office. The second interior sanctuary, called *the holy of holies*, was also separated from the outward sanctuary by an other veil. And

into this holy of holies, no one was to enter except the high priest, and he but once a-year. Both these veils seem to have been rent at Christ's death: and by their being broken down, was signified first, that the ceremonies of the ancient law were to be abolished by the law of Christ; and also that heaven should be open to all. --- *The earth quaked.* How far this earthquake was extended, is uncertain. --- *The rocks were rent, and the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints ... arose.* St. Jerome takes notice, that these saints did not rise with their bodies till after Christ was risen; and so it follows, *that going out of the graves, after the resurrection, they came into the holy city,* (i.e. into Jerusalem) *and appeared to many.* (Witham) --- This event was a prophecy of the fatal destruction that was shortly to fall upon the temple; and also, that it should henceforth give place to things more noble and sublime. It likewise shews that greatness of Christ's power. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxix.)

**Ver. 54.** *Indeed this was the Son of God.* St. Mark says, that when they saw Jesus die in that manner, crying out with a *loud voice*, which could not be natural, and when they saw the other miracles, they were struck *with fear*. St. Luke says, (xxiii. 47.) that the *centurion glorified God, &c.* (Witham) --- It is said that this centurion, being afterwards confirmed in the faith, was honoured with the crown of martyrdom. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxix.)

**Ver. 55.** *Ministering unto him.* It was customary with the Jews, for the women of that country to minister unto their teachers both food and raiment; but because this was liable to abuse, and to cause scandal to the Gentiles, St. Paul dispensed with their assistance. These women ministered to our Lord, hoping that he would bestow heavenly food to them, who offered earthly food to him: not that the Creator of all things stood in need of assistance: but he wished to shew his disciples an example of poverty in himself, and charity in these women. But let us see what sort of women these were that followed our Lord, among whom were Mary Magdalene, sister of Martha and Lazarus; Mary, the mother of James the less and Joseph, sister of the blessed Virgin Mary, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee, otherwise called Salome, who were disciples of Jesus. (St. Jerome, and Menochius)

**Ver. 57.** *When it was evening, &c.* St. John tells us, (Chap. xix. 31.) that the day on which Jesus died, being the *day of preparation*, (literally, *the parasceve*) that is the Friday or eve of *the great sabbath*, to wit, of the sabbath-day, which happened in the week of the paschal solemnity, the Jews desired of Pilate that the bodies might not remain on the crosses on *the sabbath-day*, but that they might be taken away. Some soldiers were sent for this purpose, and broke the legs of the two others that were not quite dead; but perceiving that Jesus was dead, they broke not his legs, but one of them pierced and opened his side with a *lance* or *spear*; and with such a wound, as would have deprived him of life, had he not been already dead. The divine Providence permitted this, to make his death more certain and undoubted. --- *Joseph, a disciple in private*, now encouraged by the miracles which had happened, went *bodily* to Pilate, and begged *the body of Jesus*. St. Mark says, Pilate wondered, when he heard he was dead; and having been informed of the truth by the centurion, *he granted the body to Joseph*. Nicodemus also, who is called a *prince of the Jews*, (John xxx. 1.) came to bury our Saviour, bringing with him a *mixture of myrrh and aloes*, to embalm the body, as they did. (Witham) --- The evangelist does not call Joseph a rich man out of vanity, or to inform us that Jesus had persons of distinction among his followers, but to shew why Joseph in preference to any other went to beg the body; for being a nobleman, he could obtain easier access to the governor of Judea than any of the other disciples, who were chiefly poor illiterate fishermen. (St. Jerome) --- The town of Arimathea is placed on the maps about eighteen or twenty miles north-west of Jerusalem.

**Ver. 58.** The Roman laws forbade sepulture to be given to criminals, without an express permission from the judges. (Bible de Vence, and Menochius)

**Ver. 59.** *Wrapt it up.* Behold with admiration the courage and constancy of this disciple of Christ, who, through love for his crucified Saviour, willingly exposed himself not only to the enmity of his countrymen, but even to the danger of death, and daring in the presence of all to beg the body of Jesus, and to give it public interment. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxix.)

**Ver. 60.** And Joseph *laid it in his own new monument, ... hewed or cut out in a rock*, where no one had ever been laid: and *rolled a great stone* against the entrance, that no one might go in, or take away the body. But *Mary Magdalene*, and other women that had accompanied Jesus from Galilee, followed at a distance, to mark the place, having a design to come afterwards, and again embalm the body. (Witham) --- It was the custom of that country, to excavate a tomb from the hard rock, for all persons of great distinction. (Bible de Vence) --- From the unadorned tomb of a Man-God, we are taught to despise the grandeur of this perishable world, and fear the example of those who, even in their sepulchres, manifest to the world how grieved they were to leave their wealth, since they carried it with them to their tombs, ornamenting them with every costly decoration human ingenuity could devise. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 61.** *Sitting over-against.* Though St. Matthew makes mention of two women only, who were there, it is nevertheless certain from the other evangelists, that there were more, though these two are here particularized, because they perhaps shewed greater anxiety. They are said to be sitting, because they were afraid to join themselves with the two noblemen, Joseph, of Arimathea, and Nicodemus; and not able to leave their Lord, without knowing where he was placed, they sat down to see the end. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 62.** *The next day*, which followed that of the *perasceve*, or *preparation*, (that is, on the great sabbath-day) the *chief priests* came to Pilate, to beg him to set a guard at the monument. (Witham) --- *The day of the preparation.* The eve of the sabbath; so called, because on that day they *prepared* all things necessary; not being allowed so much as to dress their meat on the sabbath-day. (Challoner)

**Ver. 63.** *Sir, we have remembered, that that seducer*, this impostor, this cheat; so the called our blessed Redeemer; from whence, says St. Augustine, Christians may learn to be patient under the greatest injuries. --- *Said: ... after three days I will rise again.* This, therefore, must have been well known among the Jews. (Witham) --- The chief motive, which influenced the high priest on this occasion, was probably the apprehension lest this prediction of Christ's resurrection should be verified. The wonderful prodigies which took place at his death, and especially the opening of the graves, (though none arose it is believed till after Christ's resurrection, since Christ is called the first-born from the dead, 1 Colossians i. 18. and the first-fruits of them that sleep, 1 Corinthians xv. 20.) might naturally appear as preludes to what he had so often foretold. It is true they had no idea but of a temporal passing resurrection, like that of Lazarus, which they had seen: yet they judged that such an event might be attended with the most serious consequences. Hence, it is probable, that they gave them most express injunctions to put Jesus to death by all means, and to secure the body in the monument: for, it is certain, they formed a similar design against the life of Lazarus, whose resurrection occasioned many to believe in Jesus. (Haydock) --- They were not satisfied with taking his life; they must, moreover, deprived him of his good name. (Menochius) --- The chief priests could not yet be satisfied, after the horrid murder they had committed, unless they stirred up the minds of the people to a still greater height, by calumniating this innocent Lamb of God, and calling *him* an impostor, who was the most innocent of men, and spread abroad their poisonous doctrines in every sentence they uttered. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 65.** *You have a guard;* supposed to be a company of Roman soldiers, destined for the guard of the temple: (Bible de Vence) or, may take a guard; *go*, and make it secure; which they did, sealing the stone, and placing guards at the monument. Providence ordered this, to make Christ's resurrection more certain and evident. (Witham)

**Ver. 66.** *They departing.* See how beyond the possibility of contradiction these precautions prove the reality of Christ's resurrection, and how the inveterate enemies of Christ become unwilling witnesses of it; for, since the sepulchre was guarded, there was an impossibility of any deceit on the part of the disciples. Now, if the least deceit was utterly impracticable, then indeed Christ our Lord was infallibly risen; and to remove every, the least possibility of deceit, Pilate would not permit the soldiers alone to seal up the monument. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- The high

priests made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone at the entrance of the monument with the public seal, *Greek: sphragisantes ton lithon*, proof against all fraud, either of corrupt guards or of designing followers, as Darius did, (Daniel vi. 17.) that no violence might be offered him. All this diligence, on the part of the enemies of the Christian faith, was permitted by divine Providence, that our faith in Christ's resurrection might be more certain, his glory greater, and the minds of the people better disposed to believe. (Jansenius)

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[1] Ver. 5. Laqueo se suspendit, *Greek: apegxato*. See Mr. Leigh, Crit. Sacra, *Greek: apagchomai*, strangular, suffocor.

[2] Ver. 9. Zacharias xi. 13. projice illud ad staturium, decorum pretium. ... Et projecti illos in domun Domini ad statuarium; where the Hebrew word signifies, ad figulum.

[3] Ver. 33. Calvariæ locus. *Greek: kraniou topos*.

[4] Ver. 34. Vinum cum felle mixtum. The ordinary Greek copies have, *Greek: oxos meta choles*; but several copies have, *Greek: oinon*: and all of them in St. Mark, *Greek: esmurnismenon oinon*. Lamy says *Greek: oxos* is also used for made wines.

[5] Ver. 45. Tenebræ, a darkness. What is brought out of Phlegon, on the 4th year of 202d Olympiad, is no convincing proof that this was by an eclipse, but may be understood of a great and extraordinary darkness.

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## MATTHEW 28

**Ver. 1.**[1] *And in the end of the sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week.* According to the letter, *in the evening of the sabbath, which began to dawn on the first of the sabbath*; (or of the sabbaths in the common Greek copies.) This latter translation, which is that of the Rheims Testament, is certainly more according to the letter, and more obscure than it need to be. First, by translating, *on the first of the sabbath*, where sabbath is taken for a week, as in other places, Luke xviii. 12. Acts xx. 7. and 1 Corinthians xvi. 2. It may therefore here be literally translated, *on the first day of the week*. Secondly, By the *evening*, is here meant the *night*: for in the Scriptures, both the Latin and Greek word, which we find in this place, not only signifies that time which we commonly call the evening, but is also put for the whole night itself, and for the time from sunset to sunrise next morning. Thus it is taken in the first chapter of Genesis, where, in the computation of natural days of 24 hours, all the hours in which it was dark, are called *vespere*, in the Septuagint. And all the hours in which it was light, are called *mane*, *Greek: proi. et factum est vespere & mane dies unus*, i.e. *primus*. And from the fourth day, on which were created *sun* and *moon*, by *vespere* was understood all the time from the sun setting on such parts of the earth, to its rising to them again: and *mane* signified all the day, or the hours that the sun appeared to the like parts of the earth. Therefore, the literal and proper sense of the verse is: *in the night*, i.e. in the latter part of the night of the sabbath, or after the sabbath, *towards the morning of the first day of the week*. And that in this place is signified the latter part of the night, and not what is commonly called the evening, appears first by the following words, *when it began to dawn*, or to be light. Secondly, It appears by the other evangelists. St. Mark (xvi. 1.) says, *when the sabbath was past ... very early in the morning*. St. Luke says, (xxiv. 1.) *very early in the morning*. St. John (xx. 1.) says of Mary Magdalene, that *she came in the morning, when it was yet dark*. From all which it is plain, that Mary Magdalene, and the other pious women, came to the sepulchre at the end of the night after the sabbath-day, or when it began to be light, and about sunrise on the first day of the week, on our Sunday. --- There may indeed be some doubt whether the Latin word *vespere* be not an adverb, corresponding to the Greek *opse, sero*. And then it may be translated with Dr. Wells: *late in the night after the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards*



*the first day of the week.* But this makes no difference at all as to the sense. *And the other Mary, &c.* St. Mark says, *Mary, the mother of James and Salome.* St. Luke also names *Joanna*, who was wife to Chusa, Herod's steward. These women had rested the sabbath, and as soon as it was over, i.e. after sunset, they bought spices, and prepared them in the night, in order to embalm the body next morning. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Behold ... an angel.* The angel did not remove the stone to afford a passage to Christ when he arose; for Christ most certainly arose before the angel appeared; but he removed the stone to prepare the way for the women, and to shew the soldiers that Christ was arisen. He sat on the stone, that the women might know he had removed it; and, in the second place, that they might not be terrified at the appearance of the soldiers; for he exhorted them not to fear, but to come and see; and lastly, to prevent the soldiers from putting in another body, had they been so disposed. The holy women seem not to have known that there were guards placed near the sepulchre; otherwise they would not have been so solicitous who should roll away the stone for them, as how they should deceive the guards and break the seal. (Tirinus) --- *For an angel of the Lord.* This angel, who came to testify Christ's resurrection, removed the *great stone*; but Christ was risen before, who according to all the fathers, says Estius, rose, the sepulchre being yet shut. [2] --- St. Matthew and St. Mark name but one angel; St. Luke and St. John name *two*. It may be answered, that the women saw *one* at one time, and *two* at another: one upon the stone, out of the monument; (which also frightened the guards) afterwards this angel disappeared, and the women coming near, and looking into the vault, saw *two angels*, when he that was on the right side said, *why seek you him that is living, among the dead?* --- Another difference to be observed, is, that Sts. Matthew, Mark and John tell us, that the angel, or angels, *sat*; and St. Luke, that they *stood*: they might *sit* at one time, and *stand* at another. Besides that in the style of the Scriptures, *standing*, or *sitting*, many times imply no more than that they were present there. --- In the third place, we take notice that Mary Magdalene seems to have come running to St. Peter, and St. John, as soon as she saw the stone removed, with these words, *They have taken away the Lord ... and we know not where they have laid him*: John xx. 2, we do not there read that she said any thing of the angels. Or perhaps St. Peter and St. John ran away before they heard all that Magdalene had to say. In all these there is no contradiction; and the difficulties rise only from this, that each evangelist does not relate all the circumstances. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *The guards were struck, &c.* Fear and astonishment seized upon them, because they had not that charity for our Redeemer, of which he is so deserving; and they became petrified, like statues, at the thought that the crucified Jesus was arisen from the sepulchre. For these men guarded the sacred tomb, actuated more by passion and cruelty than by any sentiment of love and duty. (Rabanus)

**Ver. 5.** It is not yours to fear, who love Jesus Christ: let those rather fear, who through hatred have crucified Jesus. All such, if they do not repent of their wickedness, must have to undergo the greatest extremities of pain. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xc.) --- Those miscreants fear, because they have not charity, but *fear not you*; for I know you seek him that was crucified, who is risen, as he promised you. These affectionate women sought Jesus among the dead, who was then among the living. The recent storm of calamities had nearly overwhelmed their faith, and the weight of temptations had so enfeebled their understanding, that they came to seek the Lord of heaven as one dead among the dead. (St. Jerome) --- The angel blushes not to style Jesus the *crucified*; for this is now the height and perfection of all good. By these glad tidings he endeavoured to expel their fears, speaking with a smiling countenance, as the messenger of the most joyful news. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xc.)

**Ver. 6.** *He is risen, as he said.* This is to put them in mind of what they ought to have remembered, and believed. --- St. Luke is more particular; and tells us the angel said: *remember how he spoke to you, when he was yet in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.* (Witham) --- By this the angel give them to understand, that if they would not believe him upon his own testimony, they should at least on the testimony of their Redeemer's promises, who had frequently assured them that on

the third day he should rise again. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xc.)

**Ver. 7. Into Galilee.** It is not without reason that the angel informs the women that he will go before them into *Galilee*; for *Galilee* is interpreted a *transmigration*, or a passage. O happy women, who merited the glorious ministry of announcing to a sunk and distressed world the triumphant resurrection of our Redeemer. But thrice happy those souls, who in the day of judgment shall deserve to sing in everlasting canticles, the joy you now conceive in your breasts at the happy resurrection of Jesus. (Ven. Bede) --- Moreover, the disciples being Galileans, it was natural for them to return to Galilee, after the festival week of the Passover. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 9. Jesus met them.** According to St. Mark, Christ appeared first to Mary Magdalene; and the particulars are related by St. John. She at first did not know him, but took him *for the gardener*: then he called her by her name *Mary*, and she knew him: he said to her, *touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father*; i.e. according to the common exposition, I have not ascended, nor am yet going to ascend; thou mayest see me again before I ascend: this is not the last time. --- We also read here, (ver. 9,) that he appeared to some of the other women, as they were returning to Jerusalem from the sepulchre, and that they *laid hold on his feet, and adored him*; nor is it said that he hindered them. (Witham) --- They were then returning to carry the news to the disciples, when they laid hold of his feet. To touch the feet, was in the Scripture a species of veneration; (see Exodus iv. 25; 4 Kings iv. 27.) as among the Greeks, the touching of the knees. Thus Homer's *Illiad*, b. i.,

*Greek: Kai ra paroith autoio Kathezeto, Kai labe gounon.* (ver. 500.)  
And again, ver. 512, *Greek: os epsato gounon.*

**Ver. 10. There they shall see me.** Our Saviour, on the day of this resurrection, shewed himself alive five different times: 1. to Mary Magdalene; 2. to the women leaving the sepulchre; 3. to St. Peter; 4. to the two disciples going to Emmaus; 5. to the disciples assembled together, when the two returned from Emmaus. And after the day of his resurrection, before he ascended into heaven, he appeared other five times: 1. after eight days, when Thomas was present; 2. when the seven disciples were fishing on the sea of Tiberias; (St. John chap. xxi.) 3. to the eleven on Mount Thabor; 4. in Jerusalem, on the day of his ascension; and 5. on the same day on Mount Olivet, when he was taken from them. (Denis the Carthusian) --- The *seventh* apparition of Jesus, which was by the sea or lake of Tiberias, St. John calls the *third*, which may mean in any numerous assembly of his disciples; the first being on the day of his resurrection, and the second the Sunday following. This may also be referred to the number of days. He first appeared to different persons on the very day of his resurrection; secondly, eight days afterwards, and then a third time. (St. Augustine) --- The history of our Lord's different apparitions is not very clear, and it is necessary to have recourse to the first chapter of the Acts, and to the 15th chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. St. Augustine says, (lib. ii. de cons. Evang. chap. xxv,) that there are ten apparitions of our Lord recorded in the four evangelists, which he specifies; but Maldonatus, on the 28th chap. of St. Matthew enumerates 13 different apparitions.

**Ver. 11. Some of the guards came into the city.** It is probable they had retired a while to some place to consult what to say, and how to avoid being punished. The chief priests, after consulting upon the matter, ordered them to say, *that when they were asleep, the disciples came and stole away Jesus's body*. This report was spread about everywhere. St. Augustine laughs at them for their blindness and folly, in bringing men in for witnesses of a fact, which they themselves own was done whilst they were asleep. (Witham) --- The poet, Sedulius, also is no less severe on these faithless guards:

*Mentita est vox vana sibi; tamen ista figuram  
Res habet egregiam, Judæis constat ademptum,  
Quem nos devoto portamus pectore Christum.*

**Ver. 12. Gave a great sum of money.** These princes of the Jewish nation still persisting in their malice, refused to turn to their Creator by hearty repentance, and wished to persuade the world that Jesus was not risen, sacrificing that money to falsehood, which was given for the use of the

temple. For as they offered Judas 30 pieces of silver to betray his Master, so now they offer a great sum of money to suppress a truth so useful and so necessary for man. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 13.** It hence appears, that the chief priests themselves were fully convinced of the fact; for otherwise, they would not have bribed the soldiers to dissemble, but would have accused the soldiers before the president of a neglect of duty. (Tirinus) --- How was it possible for the timid and weak disciples, who dared not shew themselves in public, to come in defiance of an armed multitude to steal away the body! If these men dared not even to come forward in defence of their Master when alive, is it probable that these same men after his death would steal away his body? And could they, even allowing the possibility of conceiving the design, have removed the stone, before the guards were stationed? For it was on Saturday the priests petitioned for a guard. Why did they not also take the clothes, which St. Peter saw lying in the sepulchre? Would not a delay in taking off the clothes, and the napkin that bound his head, have appeared dangerous? Would it not have exposed their lives, particularly as the body had been anointed, and some time would be requisite to remove the linen, which would adhere to the body? The means they take to make the miracle uncertain, render it utterly undeniable. For in protesting that the disciples stole it away, they confessed that the body was no longer in the sepulchre. The fear and doubts of the disciples, joined to the idle story of the soldiers, is an evident demonstration, that the account of the body being stolen away, is a gross calumny. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xc.) --- But let us again see how beautifully Sedulius paints the same in verse.

----- *Fare improbe Custos,  
Responde scelerata cohors, si Christus, ut audes  
Dicere, concluso furtim prductus ab antro  
Sopitos latuit, cujus jacet intus amictus?  
Cujus ad exuvias sedet angelus? Anne beati  
Corporis ablator velocius esse putavit  
Solvere contextum, quam devecare ligatum?  
Cum mora sit furtis contraria. Cautius ergo  
Cum Domino potuere magis sua lintea tolli.*

**Ver. 16.** *The eleven disciples went into Galilee*, yet not till above eight days after. As to the order of Christ's apparitions, in the gospels: He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, and to other devout women; then to St. Peter; next to two disciples going to *Emmaus*; after that to the apostles that were all together, except only St. Thomas. These apparitions were all on the very day he rose from the dead. We find also (John xx,) that *eight days* after he appeared to all the eleven apostles, *Thomas* being then present, to whom he said, *put in thy finger hither*, &c. This is generally thought to have happened at Jerusalem. When the apostles and disciples were gone into Galilee, he shewed himself to seven of them, as they were fishing on the lake of Tiberias (John xxi. 4.) We read also in this chap. (ver. 16,) that he appeared to them *on a mountain in Galilee*: what mountain it was we know not. It may be of this apparition that St. Paul says, (1 Corinthians xv. 6,) *Then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once*. He also tells us he appeared to St. James. See ver. 7. But when or where this was, is not mentioned. In fine, Christ till his ascension frequently appeared to them, and *conversed* with them. He taught them *to understand the holy Scriptures*, and all that belonged to their ministry: he gave them *power to forgive sins*: He sent his apostles *as his heavenly Father had sent him*. He gave in particular to St. Peter *the charge over his whole flock*: He *promised to send down upon them the Holy Ghost*; and to *remain with them himself to the end of the world*, i.e. with his Church. (Witham) --- It is supposed that then and there took place what St. Paul mentions, that Jesus Christ shewed himself to more than 500 of the brethren together. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 17.** *They adored: but some doubted*. This, says Theophylactus, need not be understood of the apostles, but of others, who had not seen Christ after his resurrection. It may also be expounded of those disciples who had doubted at the first, and particularly of St. Thomas the apostle. (Witham) --- These doubted not of the resurrection or divinity of Christ, but whether the person that appeared to them was really their Master, Jesus Christ. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 18.** *All power is given to me.* The Arians object that the power which Christ had, is said to be *given him* by another. The Catholics answer, that Christ, as *man*, received this power *from God*. 2ndly. It may also be said, that the eternal Son, though he be equal, and be the same God with the Father, yet he *proceeds* and *receives* all from the Father. (Witham) --- See here the warrant and commission of the apostles and their successors, the bishops and pastors of Christ's Church. He received from his Father, *all power in heaven and in earth*: and in virtue of *this power* he sends them (even as his Father sent him, St. John xx. 21.) to *teach* and *disciple*, Greek: *matheteuein*, not one, but *all nations*, and instruct them in *all truths*: and that he may assist them effectually in the execution of this commission, he promises to be with them, (not for three or four hundred years only) but *all days, even to the consummation of the world*. How then could the Catholic Church go astray? having always with her pastors, as is here promised, Christ himself, who *is the way, the truth, and the life*. (St. John xiv. 6.) (Challoner) --- Some hence infer that Jesus Christ, according to his human nature, was sovereign Lord of the whole world; but more properly this may be taken of his spiritual power, such as regards the salvation of souls. For Jesus Christ says to Pilate, *my kingdom is not of this world*. This spiritual power, Jesus Christ communicated in part to his apostles and their successors in the ministry, as to his vicars: *As my Father hath sent me, so I send you. Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven*: behold here the power both in heaven and earth. (Estius)

**Ver. 19.** *Teach all nations.* In St. Mark we read, *going into the whole world, preach to every creature*, that is capable of it; not only to the Jews, but to *all nations* throughout the *whole world, baptizing them*, &c. The Anabaptists pretend to shew from this place, that not are to be baptized, unless they be first taught and instructed. This is true, as to persons who are already come to an age, in which they are capable of being instructed before their baptism. But according to the tradition and constant doctrine of the Catholic Church, received also by the pretended Reformed Churches, new born children are to be baptized before they are capable of instruction: nor can they enter into the kingdom of heaven without baptism. --- *In the name of the Father*, &c. We are made Christians *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: we profess to believe, and hope for our salvation, by believing, hoping, serving, and adoring the same three divine Persons, from whence the Fathers prove the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* to be *one God*, and equal in all perfections. (Witham) --- Had Christ only said, *Lo! I am with you* all days; it might, in that case, be limited to the natural lives of the apostles; but as He moreover adds, *even to the consummation of the world*, it must necessarily be extended to their successors in the ministry, till the end of time. (Estius) --- By these words *Go, teach*, he gives them the power of teaching not only what relates to faith, but also what is necessarily connected with piety and a holy conversation. For we see added a further explanation, *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*; which words, beyond all doubt, must be referred to the precepts of a holy life. How egregiously then must those men be deceived, who infer from the words *teach all nations*, that faith alone will suffice. What follows, *baptizing them*, shews another part of the pastoral functions, which consists in the administration of the sacraments. Hence also all heretics are refuted, who pretend to affirm that all ecclesiastical ministry consists in barely delivering the world. (Estius, in different location)

**Ver. 20.** *Behold I am with you all days, even to the end of the world*, embraces two points necessary for the Church; viz. *integrity of doctrine*, and *sanctity of life*; for, if either of these should be wanting to the Church, it might then be justly said, that she had been left and abandoned by Christ, her Spouse. (Estius) --- Jesus Christ will make good his promise: 1. by always dwelling in the hearts of the faithful; 2. by his sacramental presence in the holy Eucharist; 3. by his providential care, and constant protection to his holy Catholic Church. These last six lines of St. Matthew's gospel, says the bright luminary of France, Bossuet, most clearly demonstrate the infallibility and indefectibility of the one, holy, Catholic Church, which all are commanded to hear and obey.

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[1] Ver. 1. *Vespere autem Sabbati quæ lucescit in prima Sabbati.* Greek: *opse de sabbaton*, (one Greek copy, *sabbatou*) *te epiphoskouse eis mian sabbaton*, (in unam seu primam Sabbatorum.)

What must the Latin, *quæ*, and the Greek, *epiphoskouse*, agree with? We must understand in the Latin, *dies*; i.e. die quæ lucescit: and in the Greek, we must understand, *emera te epiphoskouse*. --- We may also observe, that in the Greek we read not *opsia*, but *opse*, the adverb, sero; so that in the Latin to correspond with the Greek, it should also be *vespere*, *late after the sabbath*. In fine, that *vespera* is used in Scripture for the night: see what is said in Genesis, on all the days of creation; and the annotations on Matthew xiv. 15. ---Paulus Burgensis, in his Additions, published with his Glossa on Gen. 1 p, Attendendum quod Hebræi per vespere intelligunt Noctem, quæ incipit a vespera, et terminatur in mane sequenti, &c.

[2] Ver. 2. Estius. Est omnium Patrum sententia Christum resurrexisse clauso sepulchro.

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## MARK

### THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

#### INTRODUCTION.

St. Mark, who wrote this Gospel, is called by St. Augustine, the abridger of St. Matthew; by St. Jerome, the disciple and interpreter of St. Peter; and according to Origen and St. Jerome, he is the same Mark whom St. Peter calls his son. Stilling, the Bollandist, (in the life of St. John Mark, T. vii. Sep. 27, p. 387, who was son of the sister of St. Barnabas) endeavours to prove that this was the same person as our evangelist; and this is the sentiment of St. Jerome, and some others: but the general opinion is that John, surnamed Mark, mentioned in Acts xii. was a different person. He was the disciple of St. Paul, and companion of St. Barnabas, and was with St. Paul, at Antioch, when our evangelist was with St. Peter at Rome, or at Alexandria, as Eusebius, St. Jerome, Baronius, and others observe. Tirinus is of opinion that the evangelist was not one of the seventy-two disciples, because as St. Peter calls him his son, he was converted by St. Peter after the death of Christ. St. Epiphanius, however, assures us he was one of the seventy-two, and forsook Christ after hearing his discourse on the Eucharist, (John vi.) but was converted by St. Peter after Christ's resurrection, hæc. 51, chap. v. p. 528. --- The learned are generally of opinion, that the original was written in Greek, and not in Latin; for, though it was written at the request of the Romans, the Greek language was commonly understood amongst them; and the style itself sufficiently shews this to have been the case: ---

-----Omnia Græce;

Cum sit turpe magis nostris nescire Latine.---*Juvenal, Satyr vi.*

The old manuscript in Latin, kept at Venice, and supposed by some to be the original, is shewn by Montfaucon and other antiquaries, to have been written in the sixth century, and contains the oldest copy extant of St. Jerome's version. --- St. Peter revised the work of St. Mark, approved of it, and authorized it to be read in the religious assemblies of the faithful; hence some, as we learn from Tertullian, attributed this gospel to St. Peter himself. St. Mark relates the same facts as St. Matthew, and often in the same words: but he adds several particular circumstances, and changes the order of the narration, in which he agrees with St. Luke and St. John. He narrates two histories not mentioned by St. Matthew; the widow's two mites, and Christ's appearing to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus; also some miraculous cures; (Mark i. 40; vii. 32; viii. 22, 26) and omits many things noticed by St. Matthew ... But nothing proves clearly, as Dom. Ceillier and others suppose, that he made use of St. Matthew's gospel. In his narrative he is concise, and he writes with a more pleasing simplicity and elegance.

It is certain that St. Mark was sent by St. Peter into Egypt, and was by him appointed bishop of Alexandria, (which, after Rome, was accounted the second city of the world) as Eusebius, St.

Epiphanius, St. Jerome, and others assure us. He remained here, governing that flourishing church with great prudence, zeal, and sanctity. He suffered martyrdom in the 14th year of the reign of Nero, in the year of Christ 68, and three years after the death of Sts. Peter and Paul, at Alexandria, on the 25th of April; having been seized the previous day, which was Sunday, at the altar, as he was offering to God the prayer of the *oblation*, or the mass.

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## MARK 1

**Ver. 1.** *The beginning of the Gospel.* The Greek word<sup>[1]</sup> and Latin derived from it, signifies the *good news*, or happy tidings about Christ's coming and doctrine. The word *gospel* is from the Saxon, *God's spell*, or *good spell*, i.e. *God's word*, or *good speech*. (Witham) --- Some are of opinion that the termination of the first verse should be pointed with a simple comma, thus connecting it with the sequel; and the Greek text seems to favour this sentiment. According to the punctuation of the Vulgate, the first verse is merely the inscription or title.

**Ver. 2.** *In Isaias, the prophet.* That in the ancient copies was read *Isaias*, and not *Malachias*, is confirmed by the Syriac version, and also by St. Irenæus, Origen, St. Jerome, &c. It is also proved from an objection of Porphyrius, who says, St. Mark mistook Isaias for Malachias. In the ordinary Greek copies at present, we read *in the prophets*, not naming either Isaias or Malachias. The words seem taken partly out of one, and partly out of the other. These words, *behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee*, are found Malachias iii. ver. 1. And the following words, *a voice of one crying in the desert: prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths*, are in Isaias, chap. xl, ver. 3. (Witham) --- In the beginning of his gospel, St. Mark alleges the authority of the prophets, that he might induce every one, both Jew and Gentile, to receive with willingness what he here relates, as the authority of the prophets so highly respected was very great. St. John [the Baptist] is here styled an angel, on account of his angelic life, and extraordinary sanctity; but what is meant by, *who shall prepare the way*, is, that St. John is to prepare the minds of the Jews, by his baptism and preaching, to receive their Messias. (Theophylactus) See in Matthew xi. 10.

**Ver. 3.** See Matthew iii. 3.

**Ver. 4.** *For the remission of sins.* Some commentators think from this that the baptism of John remitted sins, though he says in another place, *I baptize you with water*, but there has stood one amongst you, who will baptize you with water and the Holy Ghost, to shew that he did not baptize with the Holy Ghost, without which there is no remission of sin. This apparent difficulty will be easily reconciled, if we refer this expression to the word *penance*, and not *baptism*; so that by penance their sins were to be washed away, and there were baptized to shew their detestation of their former life. (Jansenius, Concord. Evang.)

**Ver. 6.** See Matthew iii. 4. --- *Wild honey.* Rabbanus thinks it was a kind of white and tender leaf, which, when rubbed in the hand, emitted a juice like honey. Suidas thinks it was a kind of dew, collected from leaves of trees, and was called manna. But St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, Euthymius, and St. Isidore, with greatest probability, think it was honey collected by wild bees, in the fissures of rocks or in the holes of decayed trees, which was insipid and unpleasant to the taste. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 7.** *One mightier than I.* The precursor [St. John the Baptist] does not yet openly declare our Lord to be the Son of God, but only one mightier than himself. The Jews were not prepared to receive his coming; he therefore wisely led them by degrees to the knowledge of what divine Providence had designed them; he yet secretly assures them that he is the Son of God. I have baptized you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. Not it is evident that none but God can bestow upon man the grace of the Holy Ghost. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 9.** See notes on our Saviour's baptism, Matthew iii. --- That Christ was baptized by immersion, is clear from the text; for he who ascended out of the water must first have descended into it. And this method was of general use in the Church for 1300 years, as appears from the acts of councils and ancient rituals. It is imagined by some, that in the very spot of the river Jordan, where the ark stood whilst the Israelites passed over, our Lord (the ark of the covenant of grace) was baptized by St. John.

**Ver. 10. Spirit.** The epithet Holy is not found in most of the Greek manuscripts but it is in John i, 32. and 33.

**Ver. 11.** The Greek printed copies, and some manuscripts read with St. Matthew (iii. 17.) *in whom*, Greek: *en o*, thus St. John Chrysostom, Euthymius, and Theophylactus. Some few, however, have Greek: *en soi, in thee*, with the Syriac and Latin text. (Pastorini) --- All the Fathers cite these verses for a proof of the Trinity: the testimony of the Father speaking, of the Son receiving the testimony, of the Holy Ghost descending in the shape of a dove. (Pastorini in Matt. iii. 17)

**Ver. 12. Into the desert.** For the description of this desert, &c. read Maundrel's Travels, or extracts therefrom in Rutter's Evangelical Harmony. Vol. i. p. 169.

**Ver. 13.** The Greek does not express the forty nights, but we find it in St. Matthew iv. 2.

**Ver. 15.** As if he were to say: To this day the Mosaic law has been in full force, but henceforth the evangelical law shall be preached; which law is not undeservedly compared to the kingdom of God. (Theophylactus) --- Repent, therefore, says our Saviour, and believe the gospel; for if you believe not, you shall not understand; repent, therefore, and believe. What advantage is it to believe with good works? the merit of good works will not bring us to faith, but faith is the beginning of good works. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 16.** We must observe that what St. Luke mentions, relative to the vocation of the apostles, is antecedent in point of time to what is here related by St. Mark; since it is known that these disciples on some occasions returned to their fishing, until Jesus called them to be his constant attendants. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 24.** The Greek text has here the same as in Luke iv. 34, *Let us alone*. (Bible de Vence) --- *I know who thou art*. It is a common opinion, that the devil did not know for certain that Jesus was the true Son of God. Yet St. Mark's words, both in this and ver. 34, seem to signify he did know it. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** Christ would not suffer the devils to be produced as witnesses of his divinity; the author of truth could not bear the father of lies to bear testimony of him. Hence Jesus threatened him, in order to teach us never to believe or put our trust in demons, whatever they may foretell. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 26. Tearing him:** not that the devil tore the poor man's limbs or body; for St. Luke (iv. 35.) expressly tells us, that *the devil hurt him not*. It means no more, than that he shook him with violent agitations. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** It is observed by St. Justin, (Apol. i. 54.) that the discourses of Jesus were short and concise. St. John Chrysostom (in hom. xlviii. in Matt.) says, that Christ here accommodated his preaching to his hearers, and to his subject. The ancients differ as to the length of time employed by Christ in the ministry of the word. It is most probable that he spent about three years in announcing to the world his heavenly doctrines. In the first year of his preaching, he seems not to have met with any great opposition; and on this account it may have been called, by the prophet Isaias, the *acceptable year*. (Sandinus) --- *What is this new doctrine?* In the Greek, *This*

*new manner of instructing.* See below, xiv. 2, and xii. 38.

**Ver. 30.** It appears from St. Mark and St. Luke, that the cure of Peter's mother-in-law and the other sick, here mentioned, happened after the preceding narrative, and probably on the same day. But St. Matthew does not observe this order; for having related that Jesus, after the sermon on the mount, entered Capharnaum, and healed the centurion's servant, he hence takes occasion to mention this and the other miracles, which he had omitted, and which Jesus had wrought at his first coming to Capharnaum. (Rutter)

**Ver. 34.** The devils knew that it was Christ, who had been promised for so many ages before; for they saw him perform the wonders which the prophets had foretold of him; yet they were not perfectly acquainted with his divine nature, or otherwise they never would have persecuted to death and crucified the Lord of glory. (St. Augustine) --- But Christ would not permit them to declare that they knew him. (Bible de Vence) --- See Luke iv. 41.

**Ver. 44.** It was not the intention of Christ, that he should not tell any body; had that been his wish, he would easily have realized it: he spoke thus purposely, to shew us that we ought not to seek the empty praises of men. He bade him also offer the sacrifices prescribed, because the law remained in full force till the passion of Christ, in which was offered a perfect sacrifice, that did away with all the legal sacrifices. (Nicholas of Lyra)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Greek: Euaggelion*, Evangelium, bonum nuncium.

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## MARK 2

**Ver. 2.** Some Greek and Latin copies have, *after eight days*.

**Ver. 4.** Such diligence ought to be used to bring sinners to Christ, by means of the sacraments, as was used to procure for this man, through Christ, the health of his body. (Bristow)

**Ver. 5.** *When Jesus saw their faith.* Our Lord is moved to shew mercy to sinners, by the faith and desires, and prayers of others; for this man was not more helpless in his limbs, than in his soul. From this example, we are taught that in sickness the sacraments and helps of the Church, which are the medicines of the soul, should be called for in the first instance; for Christ first healed the sick man's soul, before he removed his bodily infirmity. We also learn that many diseases originate in sin, and that we are to remove the effect by removing the cause.

**Ver. 10.** *The Son of man.* Jesus Christ here proveth that himself as man, and not as God only, hath power to forgive sins; by this, that he was able to do miracles, and make the sick man suddenly rise; so the apostles and their successors, though they be not God, may in like manner have authority from God to remit sins, not as God, but as God's ministers, and acting in his name, and vested with his delegated authority. --- *On earth.* This power which the Son of man hath to remit sins on earth, was never taken from him, but is perpetuated in his sacraments and ministers, by whom he still remitteth sins in the Church, and not in heaven only. Relative to sin, there is one court of conscience on earth, and another in heaven, and the judgment of heaven followeth and approveth this on earth; as is plain by the words of our Saviour, to Peter first, and then to all the apostles: *Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.* See Matthew xvi. 19. and xviii. 18. Whereupon St. Jerome sayeth: that priests having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, judge in some manner before the day of judgment. (Ep. v. ad Heliod; and St. John Chrysostom, more at large, lib. iii. de Sacerd.)



**Ver. 12.** This paralytic is not the same as that mentioned in St. John; for that distressed man had no one to assist him, whereas this person had four; the former was by the side of the Probatica, but the latter in a house at Capharnaum. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 14.** To follow Christ, is to imitate him; wherefore this apostle, that he might be able to follow Christ, the model of poverty, not so much by his bodily steps, as by the inward affections of his soul, forsook all; he not only forsook his present goods, but despised all danger, which he incurred by leaving his business abruptly, and without rendering any account of it to his employers or governors. (Ven. Bede) --- The person to whom Christ addresses the words, *follow me*, was Matthew: see Matthew ix. 9.

**Ver. 17.** The Greek printed copies, and some manuscripts add *to penance*, as we read in Luke v. 33.

**Ver. 18.** See Matthew ix. 14, and Luke v. 33.

**Ver. 20.** Jesus Christ here foretelleth that fasting shall be used in his Church, no less than in the old law, or in the time of John the Baptist. See Matthew ix. 15. --- When first we begin to be converted to God, the spiritual consolations which God infuses into our souls, cause in us an overflowing of spiritual delights, so that we then feast, and are in the midst of delight; but when the Bridegroom shall be taken away, when these spiritual consolations cease, then we fast, and find the commandments difficult. It is then we must prepare ourselves for tribulation. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 25.** *When he had need.* In necessity many things are done without sin, which in other circumstances it would be unlawful to do. (Bristow)

**Ver. 26.** *Under Abiathar.* The priest from whom David had these *loaves*, is called *Achimelech*, 1 Kings xxi. The most probable answer to this difficulty is, that the priest had both these names of *Achimelech* and of *Abiathar*, as also his father had before him. For he that (1 Kings xxii.) is called *Abiathar, the son of Achimelech*, is called 2 Kings viii. 17, *Achimelech, the son of Abiathar*. See also 1 Paralipomenon xviii. 16. (Witham) --- Others say that Abiathar, son of Achimelech, was present, and sanctioned the deed of his father, thus making it his own. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 28.** The maker of the law may abrogate or dispense with it when and where, for just cause, it seemeth good to him: thus the Church can dispense with, change, or abrogate, for just reasons, the disciplines of the Church founded upon Church authority. This we prove also from the action of David, (ver. 26, above) which the Scripture notices without blaming it, because the observance of the law, prescribed for the utility of man, must yield to the necessities of man.

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### MARK 3

**Ver. 1.** *He entered again into the synagogue*, viz. of Capharnaum. The man was there either, of course, on account of the sabbath, or to be cured by Jesus Christ.

**Ver. 4.** A difficulty here arises, how to reconcile St. Mark with St. Matthew. St. Mark puts the words into the mouth of Jesus Christ: *Is it lawful?* When St. Matthew says, that they interrogated him: *Is it lawful?* To cut the knot of this apparent difficulty, we must understand that they first put the question to our Lord, whether it was lawful to heal on the sabbath-day or not: and that Jesus understanding their thoughts, that they wished to have some grounds of accusation against him, placed the sick man in the midst of them, and said what St. Mark here relates of him: *Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-day, or to do evil?* (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 8.** What is to be understood by Idumea, see Rutter's Evangelical Harmony, Vol. i. p. 286.

**Ver. 11-12.** The unclean spirits being obliged by the Divine Power, not only to come and worship, but also to declare his majesty, exclaimed: *Thou art the Son of God*. How astonishing then is the blindness of the Arians, who even after his resurrection denied him to be the Son of God, whom the devils confessed as such when clothed with human nature. But it is certain that not only the devils, but the infirm that were healed, and the apostles themselves were forbidden, as well as the unclean spirits, to proclaim his divinity; lest the passion and death of Christ might be on that account deferred. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 13.** He spent here the whole night in prayer, not that he who had all things to bestow, stood in need of prayer, or had any thing to ask; but to teach us that we must undertake nothing without previously recommending the affair to heaven, in humble and fervent prayer.

**Ver. 14.** The number twelve is mystical, as appeareth by choosing Mathias to full up the place of Judas: they are the twelve foundations, under Christ, of the heavenly Jerusalem. (Apocalypse xxi.)

**Ver. 15.** He gave his apostles the power of curing maladies both of soul and body, and of expelling devils, that they might prove the truth of their doctrines by the authority of miracles. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** The evangelist here gives the names of the twelve. First, Simon, to whom he gave the name of Peter, in Greek, *Petron*, which signifies a rock; thus shewing that upon him his Church should be founded, as on a rock, never to be overturned. (Tirinus) --- Polus, in his Synopsis Criticorum on this verse says that some Greek copies have, *Proton Simona*, First, Simon, which he believes to be the genuine reading: "nec dubito quin hæc sit germana lectio."

**Ver. 17.** And he called James, &c. The words, *he called*, are no addition, as they only express the literal sense: they are included in what is said, ver. 13, that *he called to him whom he would*. --- *Boanerges*, the sons of thunder, or thunderers, is only to express their great zeal. (Witham) --- He gave also the two sons of Zebedee the name of Boanerges, (Greek: *Boanerges*) from the Syriac, *Benairegesch*; or the Hebrew, *Bene*, sons, *regesch*, thunder, noise or tumult. In conformity to their name, we find these two apostles asking Jesus, (Luke ix. 54.) *wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, to consume them?* They spread the fame of the gospel through the whole world. So great was the zeal of St. James, that he incurred the resentment of king Agrippa, and was the first of the apostles to seal the doctrines of Jesus Christ with his blood. St. John also fulfilled the import of his name, as appears from his gospel, epistles, apocalypse, and the sufferings he underwent at Rome for the faith. Sts. Peter, James, and John, were the only apostles to whom our Saviour gave particular names, a mark, perhaps, of his special affection for them. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 21.** And when his friends had heard of it;[1] literally, *his own*. We cannot here understand his apostles, for they were in the house with him; but either some of his kindred and friends, or some that were of the same country and town of Nazareth, though perhaps enemies to him. --- *For they said*. It is not certain who said this, whether his friends or his adversaries. --- *He is become mad*. [2] By the Greek, *he is not himself*. Christ might be called a *madman* by the Scribes and Pharisees, when he blamed their vices and when he preached with such extraordinary zeal. Or, as the Greek implies, he was thought to be transported out of his wits, and, as the Protestant translation hath it, *was beside himself*. If there were his friends that said this of him, they did not think so, but only pretended it, that they might get him safe out of the hands of his adversaries. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** From St. Matthew xii. 22. et dein. we learn that it was on the occasion of the delivery of a possessed person, this blasphemy was uttered.

**Ver. 24.** *Kingdom against kingdom*. As this is true in all kingdoms and states where civil

dissensions obtaineth, so it is especially verified in heresies and heretics which have always divisions among themselves, as a punishment for their abandoning the Church, the pillar and ground of truth, the only centre of peace and unity.

**Ver. 29.** See St. Matthew xii. 32. --- *Of an everlasting sin*; i.e. of eternal punishment. (Witham) --- What is here called *everlasting offence*, is (as St. Matthew expresseth it) that which shall neither be remitted in this life, nor in the life to come; which words would not be true, says St. Augustine, if some sins were not forgiven in the world to come. Now, as no *mortal sin* can be forgiven after death, there must necessarily be smaller transgressions, which we call *venial*; though many of our separated brethren will needs have all sins to be mortal; which is very far from a comfortable tenet.

**Ver. 32.** The brethren of our Lord were not the children of the blessed Virgin: nor were they the sons of St. Joseph by a former wife, as some pretend; but in the Scripture language, and in this place, we understand by brethren the relatives of Mary and Joseph. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 33.** Our Lord does not refuse to go out through any, the least, inattention to his mother; he wishes hereby, to teach us the preference we should give to the business of our heavenly Father, before that of our earthly parents. Neither does he consider his brethren as beneath his attention, but prefers spiritual before temporal duties; and shews us, that a religious union of hearts and feelings is far more lasting, and better rooted than any other ties of affinity or friendship whatsoever. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 34.** The Pharisees were afraid lest the greatness of Christ's miracles, and the excellence of his doctrines, should put an end to their credit and authority among the people. Hence their calumnies against him.

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[1] Ver. 21. Sui, *Greek: oi par autou*.

[2] Ver. 21. In furorem versus est, *Greek: exeste*; the word *Greek: existasthai*, is *extra se esse*, from which cometh the word *ecstasy*. See 2 Corinthians v. 13, where St. Paul useth the same Greek word.

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## MARK 4

**Ver. 1.** If we examine St. Matthew on this point, we shall discover that this discourse was made on the same day as the preceding discourse; for St. Matthew informs us, that having finished this exhortation, he the same day went and taught by the sea. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 10.** *When he was alone*: in Greek *Ote egeneto Katamonas*; i.e. when he was retired and alone, either in the house, out of the city, or at a distance from the multitude. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 11.** Such as are out of the Church, though they both hear and read, they cannot understand. (Ven. Bede, in Chap. iv, Mark.)

**Ver. 12.** *That seeing they may see*, &c. In punishment of their wilfully *shutting their eyes*, (Matthew xiii. 15.) God justly withdrew those lights and graces which otherwise he would have given them, for their effectual conversion. (Challoner) --- these speeches here and elsewhere, we are not to understand as if the spoke in parables to this end that the hearers might not understand, lest they should be converted; but we must learn the true sense from the corresponding texts in Matthew xiii, and Acts xxviii, where our Saviour and St. Paul render it thus: *with their ears they have been dull of hearing, and their eyes they have shut. lest, perhaps, they*

*may see, and understand, and be converted, and I heal them.* Whereby it is evident, that the speaking in parables was not the cause, (for many besides the apostles heard and understood) but themselves, who would not hear and understand, and be converted: and thus they were the real cause of they own wilful and obstinate infidelity. And therefore also he spoke in parables, because they were not worthy to understand, as the others were to whom he expounded them. (Bristow)

**Ver. 22.** All my parables, doctrines, and actions, which appear now to you so full of mystery, shall not always be so: in due time they shall all be publicly expounded by you, my apostles, and by your successors. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 23.** And let him learn that he is not to bury in unjust silence the instructions or examples I give him; but must exercise them for the light and direction of others. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 24.** Pay attention then to what you hear this day, that you may retain it, and communicate it to others, you brethren; for as you measure to others, so shall it be meted unto you; yes, more shall be given to you, who receive the word of God, if you be attentive to preserve it yourselves, and to communicate it to your brethren. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 25.** They who do not profit by the knowledge of the word of God, shall in punishment of their neglect, lose the advantage which they may seem to have, since it will turn in the end to their greater condemnation: and moreover, by trusting to their own judgment, they interpret the word in a perverse sense, and thus also lose what they seem to have. (Nicholas of Lyra) --- Let those who talk so much about Scripture, and interpret it according to their own private spirit or fancy, see lest this also attach to them. (Haydock)

**Ver. 26.** So it is with him who announces the gospel of the kingdom of God, as with the sower. For whether he sleep or rise, the seed will grow up while he knoweth not; and the well prepared soil will, by the blessing of God, be productive: so the word of God sown abroad in the heart of man, will increase and fructify independently of all the preacher's solicitude, till he who has received it, being arrived at the measure of the age and fulness of Christ, shall be withdrawn by God from this world, and be called to himself. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 29.** *When the fruit is brought forth:* literally, *when the fruit*<sup>[1]</sup> *hath produced.* By the *fruit* is here meant the seed; i.e. when the seed by degrees hath produced the blade, then the *ear*, and lastly the *corn*, which is become ripe. (Witham) --- This is a secondary sense of the text, *when the fruit hath come to maturity*, and by no means a forced interpretation.

**Ver. 33.** This seems to contradict what was said [in] ver. 12, that *seeing they may not see*, &c.; but we must observe, that parables have more explanations than one, some more easy, whilst others are more difficult to be understood. In parables, the multitude understood the more literal interpretation, whilst Christ explains the more abstruse and hidden sense to his apostles. Hence there is no contradiction in these texts. (Nicholas of Lyra)

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[1] Ver. 29. Cum produxerit fructus. In the Greek, fructus is in the nominative case; *Greek: otan de parado o karpos*, &c.

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## MARK 5

**Ver. 2.** Ven. Bede gives a beautiful explanation of this miracle. He says that it represents the Gentiles, who were converted to the faith by the apostles. The legion represents the innumerable vices to which they were subject, neither restrained by the laws of God nor man, but breaking

through every restraint, and wallowing in all kinds of uncleanness. (Ven. Bede) --- The three evangelists agree in the expulsion of the legion of devils, except that St. Matthew makes mention of two demoniacs, and Sts. Mark and Luke only of one. The difficulty is thus solved by St. Augustine. St. Mark and St. Luke only mention one, as being more generally known, and particularly frightful in the neighbourhood. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 7.** *I adjure thee by God.* The same is, I earnestly beg of thee *not to torment me*, by sending me into hell, and confining me in the *abyss*, there to be more tormented than I am at present. See St. Luke viii. 31. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *My name is Legion.* Spirits have no names, only with respect to our language. These devils say their name is *Legion*, because they *are many*. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** Jesus Christ permitted the devil to destroy these swine, that from their destruction, the men of that country might take the alarm, and be converted. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 17.** Astonished at the miracle that had been performed, and displeased with the loss of their herds, they refused the Saviour of the world entrance into their country. (Theophylactus) --- It is observed that all Christ's miracles, except this, and the blasted fig-tree, were of the beneficent kind. We cannot but pity the wretched blindness of the Gerasens, in driving Jesus from their coasts. As a just judgment of God, their city was the first that fell into the hands of the Romans, in the fatal war under Vespasian.

**Ver. 18.** *That he might be with him;* i.e. as one of his disciples. St. Ambrose says Christ did not grant his request, lest they might think that he sought to be glorified by men, in having always in his company a man out of whom he had cast so many devils. Christ himself seems to give us another reason, that the man might go, and publish in his own country the miracles done by Jesus. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *And he admitted him not:* By Christ's conduct on this occasion, he teaches his disciples that they ought sometimes to make known their own good works, when either the glory of God or the edification of their neighbour were likely to be advanced by such a manifestation: otherwise they ought to conceal them, out of a spirit of humility. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 20.** *Decapolis*, a territory on the eastern borders of the sea of Tiberias, and is so called, from ten principal towns that compose it. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 23.** St. Matthew says: *my daughter is even now dead.* The sense in both is exactly the same. St. Matthew attended rather to the thoughts of Jarius, than to his words; for, as he left her dying, he could not reasonably hope to find her still in the same state; and, as he expected she was already dead, when he spoke this to Jesus, St. Matthew relates what the man thought at that instant, not what he said. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 28.** *Touch his garment.* Almighty God is pleased to give occasionally to the relics and clothes of his pious and faithful servants, a degree of virtue. See Acts v, and xix, where the very shadow of St. Peter, and the handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched the body of St. Paul, and were brought to the sick, cured their diseases, and banished the wicked spirits. See St. John Chrysostom, T. 5. contra Gent. in vit. Babylœ. St. Basil saith: "he that toucheth the bone of a martyr, receiveth in some degree holiness of the grace or virtue that is therein. (St. Basil in Psalm cxv.)

**Ver. 30.** *Virtue that hath proceeded from him.* Virtue to heal this woman's malady proceeded from Christ, though she touched but his coat: so when the saints by their relics and garments perform miracles, the grace and force thereof cometh from our Saviour; they being but the means of instruments of the same. (Bristow)

**Ver. 35.** Ruler of the synagogue. His house is understood.

**Ver. 36.** *Only believe.* Dissenters grossly abuse this and other similar texts of Scripture, to prove that faith alone will suffice for justification; whereas God only declares, that he requires a faith in his almighty power for the performance of miracles, and that without this necessary predisposition, he will not do any miracles. See ver. 5, of the following chapter.

**Ver. 41.** Only three resurrections from the dead are mentioned as performed by our Saviour: one just dead; one carried out to be buried; and Lazarus, already in his tomb. These represent the different states of sinners dead in sin, some more desperate than others. To such as have been for years in sin, and have none to intercede for them, we must apply the words of Christ, *suffer the dead to bury the dead.* (Ven. Bede, and St. Augustine, de verb. Dom. serm. 44.)

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## MARK 6

**Ver. 1.** After the miracles that Christ had performed, though he was not ignorant how much they despised him, yet that there might be no excuse for their disbelief, he condescended to return to them. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 3.** St. Matthew relates that they asked: *Is not this the son of the carpenter?* It is not improbable that both questions were asked; it was certainly very natural to take him for a carpenter, who was the son of one. (St. Augustine) --- *They were scandalized* at his lowly birth and humble parentage. Hence Jesus Christ take occasion to expose the malice and envy of the Jews, in refusing him, and to shew that the Gentiles would more esteem him. See Luke iv. 25, and John i.

[**Ver. 5.** *And he could not[1] do any miracle there.*]

**Ver. 13.** It was usual for the Jews to prescribe oil as a proper thing to anoint the sick; but its virtue in the present instance, when used by the apostles, was not natural but supernatural, and was derived from him who sent them; because this unction always produced a certain and constant cure in those who were anointed. This miraculous gift of healing the sick with oil, which Christ conferred on his apostles, was a prelude or gradual preparation to the dignity to which he raised this unction, when he established it a perpetual rite in his holy Church. (Rutter) --- *With oil, &c.* This anointing the sick, was at least a figure of the sacrament, which Christ was pleased to institute for the spiritual relief of persons in danger of death: and which is fully expressed by St. James, in his Catholic Epistle. Chap vi. The Council of Trent says this sacrament *was instituted in St. Mark, and published in the Epistle of St. James.* (Council of Trent, session xiv. canon 1.) (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** The Herod here mentioned was the son of Herod, from whom St. Joseph fled with Jesus and Mary into Egypt. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlix. in Matt.) --- How great was the envy of the Jews, is easily to be conceived from this passage. They can believe that John is risen from the dead, and appeared in public again, although no one gave testimony that this was the case: but that Jesus, so much favoured by God, who worked so many and so great miracles, should be risen again is incredible, although attested by angels, by apostles, by men, women, and persons of every denomination. They still assert that the body of Jesus was stolen. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 20.** *Herod,[2] &c.* The sense both of the Latin and Greek text seems to be, that Herod entertained and shewed a particular respect and value for John the Baptist: yet some expound it, that he had a watchful eye over him, and sought only for an occasion to take him off. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** It is customary, in Scripture, to give the generally prevailing sentiment at the time; thus

Joseph is called by the blessed Virgin , the father of Jesus; so now Herod is said to be stricken with sadness, because he appeared to be so to the company at table, though within his own breast, he secretly rejoiced that he had an opportunity of destroying an importuning monitor, with an exterior shew of piety and honour. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 29.** Church history informs us, that the Christians were accustomed to frequent this tomb with great piety and respect, til the reign of Julian the apostate, at which time the pagans, through hatred for Christianity, broke open his tomb, and dispersed his bones; but immediately after, thinking it better to burn them, they endeavoured to collect them again. But some religious of a neighbouring convent, joining themselves to the pagans, under pretence of collecting the bones to burn, secreted the greater part of them, and sent them to Philip, at Jerusalem, who sent them to Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria; and in the reign of Theodosius, the temple of Serapis was converted into a Christian church, and dedicated to the honour of St. John the Baptist, where his relics were deposited. (Gloss. Ordina.)

**Ver. 37.** *For two hundred pence.* See Matthew xviii. 28. The apostles seem to speak these words ironically, to signify that they had not so much money as could procure a mouthful for each of them. (Witham)

**Ver. 45.** The apostles were in a desert place belonging to Bethsaida, which probably was divided from it by some bay or creek, that ran into the land; and Christ only ordered them to pass over this to the city, where he might afterwards have joined them, when he had sent away the people. But in their passage a great storm arose, and they were driven by an adverse wind to the open sea, towards Capharnaum; or, probably, when they found the wind so violent, afraid of shipwreck if they neared the shore, they rowed out to sea. This reconciles the seeming discrepance of St. Mark and St. John, when notwithstanding the directions Christ had given his disciples to go before him to Bethsaida, we find them going to Capharnaum. (Rutter)

**Ver. 48.** Thus the divine mercy often seems to desert the faithful in the height of tribulation, but God only acts thus, that he may try their patience, and reward them more abundantly. (Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 52.** *They understood not concerning the loaves;*[3] i.e. they did not reflect how great a miracle that was which Christ had lately wrought, otherwise they would not have been so much surprised at his walking upon the sea. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 5. *Non posse* in Scripture, is divers times the same as *nolle*. So Genesis xxxvii, it is said of Joseph's brothers, they could not, (*non poterant*) i.e. would not, speak to him peaceably. See John xii. 39, &c.

[2] Ver. 20. *Custodiebat eum*, *Greek: suneterei auton*. The Protestant translation, observed him.

[3] Ver. 52. *Non intellexerunt de panibus*, *Greek: ou gar sunekan epi tois artois*.

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## MARK 7

**Ver. 2.** *With common hands.* It may be translated, *with defiled hands*; as also ver. 15; but the circumstances plainly shew the sense. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Often washing*, &c.[1] Some would have the Greek to signify *unless they wash up to the elbows*, but I think without sufficient grounds. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Washed*: literally, *baptized*. By *beds* are not understood night beds, but couches to eat upon, as it was then the custom. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** See the annotations Matthew xv. 9, 11. It is groundless to pretend from this text, that the precepts and traditions of the Church are not binding and obligatory, for Christ himself has commanded all to hear his Church, and obey their lawful pastors. These indeed may be called the precepts of men, but they are precepts of men invested with power and authority from God, and of whom Christ himself said, (Luke x. 16.) *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.*

**Ver. 9.** *Well do you.* Christ here speaks by the figure called *irony*. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Asked him the parable.* Asked him to explain its meaning.

**Ver. 24.** If he desired to conceal himself, and could not, his will it seems was under control; but this is impossible. His will must always take place. On this occasion, therefore, he wished himself to be sought for by these Gentiles, but not to be made known by his own apostles. Wherefore it came to pass, that not the persons who were his followers, but the Gentiles who entered the house in which he was, published his fame abroad. (St. Augustine) --- Jesus Christ commanded his disciples not to publish that he was come into that country; not that he intended to cease from healing the infirm, and curing diseases, when he saw the faith of the inhabitants deserved it; for he informed the Gentile woman of his coming, and made it known to as many others as he thought worth; but that he might teach us, by his example, to decline the applause of men. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 25.** This part, in which St. Mark says that Christ was in the house, when the woman came to petition in behalf of her daughter, seems to differ from the narration of St. Matthew, who says that the disciples besought Christ to dismiss her, because she cried after them; by which he signifies, that she followed them as they were on the road. These apparent differences may thus easily be reconciled. The woman came to our Lord when he was in the house, and he, according to St. Matthew, not answering her a word, went out during the silence: the woman followed after, and by her perseverance obtained her request. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 32.** *Dumb*.<sup>[2]</sup> The Greek signifies one that speaks little, or with difficulty. (Witham) --- *The besought him.* In the Greek it is, they *beseech* him, which agrees so well with *they bring*, that we have every reason to believe that this was the original reading.

**Ver. 34.** *Ephphetha*, a Syriac word. Jesus Christ, in the cure of this man, uses many and various actions; but as of their own nature there are no ways equal to such a cure, they shew: first, that the cure was miraculous; and secondly, the virtue, which his divinity communicated to his sacred body. (Bible de Vence) --- We must not suppose that our Saviour here groaned on account of any difficulty he experienced in working this miracle, but only from commiseration for the man, whom he was about to heal; as likewise to shew, how very difficult it the cure of those who are spiritually deaf and dumb by sin. He was affected in a similar manner when he raised Lazarus to life, to shew with what difficulty a man, dead and buried in sin by evil habits, can arise from that miserable state. (Denis the Carthusian)

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[1] Ver. 3. Crebo, *Greek: ean me pugme*. Mr. Bois, prebend of Ely, defends the Latin version, and says *Greek: pugme* comes from *Greek: pukna* and *Greek: puknos*. But Theophylactus would have it to signify, up to the elbows; *Greek: achri tou agkonos*.

[2] Ver. 32. Mutum, dumb; *Greek, mogilalon*, qui parum loquitur.

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## MARK 8

**Ver. 8.** After the multitude had eaten and were filled, they did not take the remains; but these the disciples collected, as in the former miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. By this circumstance we are taught to be content with what is sufficient, and to seek no unnecessary supplies. We may likewise learn from this stupendous miracle the providence of God and his goodness, who sends us not away fasting, but wishes all to be nourished and enriched with his grace. (Theophylactus) --- Thus does our Lord verify in his works what he has promised in his instructions; that if we will seek in the first instance the kingdom of God and his justice, that all necessary things shall be added unto us. By the gathering up of the fragments that remained, he not only made the miracle more striking to the multitude and to the apostles, but has also left us a practical lesson, how, in the midst of plenty, which proceeds from the munificence of heaven, we must suffer no waste. (Haydock)

**Ver. 9.** St. Matthew (xv. 38.) adds, without counting either the women or the children.

**Ver. 10.** *Dalmanutha*. St. Matthew (xv. 39.) has, *to the borders* of Magedan; in Greek, *Magdala*, or *Magedan*. These were two towns beyond the sea of Galilee, situated near each other; it is of little consequence which of these names the Evangelists mention; perhaps our Saviour visited both. (Tirinus) --- The major part of commentators, if we can believe the Bible of Vence, take Magedan, or Magdala, to be the town of that name situated to the east of the lake of Tiberias, in the vicinity of Gerasa, and *Dalmanutha* to be the name of that part of the country in which these two towns were situated. (Bible de Vence) --- Polus in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, (vol. iv. p. 410.) gives three explanations for the discrepancy of the names in Sts. Matthew and Mark: 1. *Idem locus erat binominis*, the same place might have two names. 2. *Propiqua erant loca*, the places were near. 3. *Alterum erat regio, alterum vicus*, the one was the name of the territory, the other of the town or village; and concludes with asserting from Jewish authorities, that it was the same territory in which the two villages *Magedan* and *Dalmanutha* were situated; so that it might be known by either name, as we find the territory of Gadara and of Gergesæ is one and the same. (Polus)

**Ver. 11.** Jesus Christ did not consent to the petition they made him, because there will be another time for signs and wonders, viz. his second coming, when the powers of heaven shall be moved, and the moon refuse her light. This his first coming is not to terrify man, but to instruct and store his mind with lessons of humility, and every other virtue. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 12.** Jesus Christ fetches a deep sigh on account of their obduracy, and says; why do these ask for a miracle to confirm their belief, when they resist the authority of so many miracles, which are daily performed under their eyes? (Bible de Vence) --- *A sign shall not be given*. But by a Hebrew form of speech, *if* divers times is put for a negative. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Of the leaven of Herod*. In St. Matthew chap. xvi. ver. 6, we read *of the leaven* of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*: we may conclude that Christ named all of them. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** It may be asked, why our Lord led the man from the multitude before he cured him? --- It may be answered, that he did it not to seem to perform his prodigies through vain glory; and thence to teach us to shun the empty praises of men: 2dly, to facilitate recollection, and to give himself to prayer, before he cured the blind man; and lastly, he went out of the city because the inhabitants of Bethsaida had already rendered themselves unworthy of the miracles of Christ. For among them our Saviour had wrought many miracles, yet they would not believe. (St. Matthew xi. 21.) (Tirinus) (Theophylactus) --- Dionysius says, that Jesus led him from the multitude to shew that if a sinner, figured by the blind man, wishes to be converted from his evil ways, he must first leave all immediate occasions and inducements to sin. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 24.** *Man*[1] *as trees walking*. In the Latin text, *walking* may agree either with *men*, or with

trees, but the Greek shews that *walking* must be referred to *men*. Perhaps Christ restored sight in this manner to the man by degrees, to make him more sensible of the benefit; or to teach us how difficult is a sinner's conversion; of which this was a figure. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** Our Saviour made use of exterior signs in the performance of his miracles to command attention, and to signify the inward effects of the favours grants: these the Catholic Church, after the example of her Founder and Model, also uses in the celebration of her sacraments, and for the same purposes. Nor ought any supercilious and superficial reasoner to undervalue and condemn the corporal and external application of holy things, under the hollow plea, that we are exclusively to attend to the spirit and faith.

**Ver. 28.** *As one of the prophets.* In the Greek it is, *one of the prophets.*

**Ver. 31.** After our Redeemer had heard the confession of his first apostle, who spoke in the name of all, as the head, he opens out to them the grand mystery of his passion.

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[1] Ver. 24. Video homines velut arbores ambulantes, *Greek: Blepo taus anthropous os dendra peripatountas.*

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## MARK 9

**Ver. 4.** The law and the prophets were signified by Moses and Elias; both bear testimony to the divinity of Jesus Christ's mission, which was effectually to close the old, and open the new dispensation. By the apparitions of these two illustrious personages, we learn also that sometimes, though not often, there is, by the permission of heaven, a certain intercourse between the living and the dead. (Bristow)

**Ver. 5.** Peter had forgotten that the glorious kingdom of Christ was not of this world, but in heaven only; that himself and the other apostles, clothed as they were with their mortality, could not participate in immortal joys; and that the mansions in the house of the Father are not raised with human hands. He again shewed that he knew not what he said, by wishing to make three tabernacles, one for the law, one for the prophets, and one for the gospel, since these three cannot be separated from each other. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 9.** *Risen from the dead.* The disciples believed the resurrection of the dead, but they knew not what Christ meant by *his rising from the dead*. Their thoughts were filled with the idea of a glorious kingdom in this world, in which they should enjoy great dignities and offices under the Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** The Jews here confound the two comings of Jesus Christ. The Baptist, in the spirit of Elias, will precede the first, and Elias in person, the second coming of Christ.

**Ver. 14.** The multitude were so solicitous to see Christ that they saluted him when yet a great way off. Some imagine that the countenance of our Saviour, being rendered more beautiful by his transfiguration, attracted the attention and admiration of the people. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 20.** Let those blush who pretend to affirm, that all men come into this world clear of original sin, and perfectly innocent like Adam when first created. For why should this child be tormented by a cruel devil, if he had not been under the guilt of original sin, as it is clear, beyond dispute, that he could not be guilty of any actual transgression? (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 22.** The answer of our Lord is adapted to the petition of the child's father. He had said: *If*

*thou canst do any thing, have mercy on us: and Christ answered: If thou canst believe, &c. Thus when the leper said: If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, he answered: I will, be thou made clean. (Ven Bede) --- [1]All things are possible to him that believeth. The sense is not, as if he that believeth could do all things; but that any thing might be done by the divine power and goodness, in favour of him that had a firm and lively faith. (Witham)*

**Ver. 23.** If the man believed, as he said, why does he add, *help my unbelief?* It may be answered: because faith is manifold; there is a faith of beginners, and a faith of the perfect. The incipient faith this man already possessed, and he besought our Saviour to help him to the higher degrees of this virtue. No one becomes great and perfect all at once, but must first set off with small beginnings, and thus gradually ascend to the height of perfection. Thus the man, who, by the inspiration of grace has received imperfect faith, may be said at the same time to believe, and still to be incredulous. (Ven. Bede) --- Here we are taught that our faith is weak, and has need of support and increase from God's assistance. When tears accompany our faith, they obtain for us the grant of our petitions. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 26.** This person, whom the apostles had forbidden to work miracles in the name of Christ, believed indeed in Christ, but did not follow him, on account of the great poverty of the apostles: he was not perfect, nor had he left all things to follow Christ. The apostles therefore concluded, that such a one was not worthy to work miracles in the name of their divine Master. But for this indiscretion, Christ rebukes them, saying, *do not*, &c. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 31.** They could not comprehend what he said; and this not so much through the dulness and stupidity of their understandings, as through their personal affection to him; and because knowing him to be God, they could not conceive how a God could die. (Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 37.** *Who followeth not us*, in that special manner, as Christ's apostles did. (Witham)

**Ver. 40.** Here we may find that no one, however poor, can be excused from good works; since there is no one who is not able to give at least a cup of cold water; and we are assured that he will not lose his reward. (Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 43.** *Where the worm dieth not.* These words are taken out of Isaias lxvi. 24; and are to be expounded of the punishments, and fruitless repentance of the wicked in the next world. (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** [2]*For every one shall be salted with fire.* The sense seems to be, that every wicked unrepenting sinner (of whom it was before said, *that their worm dieth not*) shall be severely and continually punished, though not consumed by the fire of hell. --- *And every victim shall be salted with salt;* that is, even good men shall be cleansed and purified by trials and sufferings in this world, as some victims were to be salted by the law. (Leviticus ii. 13.) (Witham)

**Ver. 49.** *Become unsavoury;* i.e. if he, who has once received the faith, should apostatize from it, what is there that can possibly convert him from his wicked ways? since even the salt, with which he was salted, is become unsavoury, i.e. the doctrines he formerly received are no longer of any use. (Nicholas of Lyra)

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[1] Ver. 22. Omnia possibilia sunt credenti, *Greek: dunata to pisteuont.*

[2] Ver. 48. Omnis enim igne salietur, et omnis victima sale salietur, *Greek: pas gar puri alisthesetai, kai pasa thusia ali alisthesetai.*

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**Ver. 4.** Moses permitted the injured husband to send away his wife, declaring that he had repudiated her. See Deuteronomy xxiv. 1.

**Ver. 5.** Because of the hardness of their hearts, and to prevent the excesses they would otherwise have committed with regard to their wives. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 6.** But from the beginning of the world it was not thus; for then God only formed one man and one woman, that they might be exclusively and invariably attached to each other.

**Ver. 7.** Hence it is written, (Genesis ii. 24, and Matthew xix. 5.) *A man shall leave father and mother, and adhere to his wife.*

**Ver. 14.** Unless we are possessed of the innocence and purity of little children, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. By the kingdom of heaven, we may here understand the truths of the gospel; for as a child never contradicts its teachers, nor opposes to them vain reasonings and empty words, but faithfully and readily receives their instructions, and with fear obeys them; so must we implicitly obey, and without any, the least, opposition, receive the word of the Lord. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 18.** *None is good.* Of himself, entirely and essentially, but God *alone*: men may be good also, but only by a participation of God's goodness. (Challoner)

**Ver. 20.** We must recollect, that to the faithful observers of the Mosaic law, not only present goods were given, but the happiness of a future life promised. Hence our Lord with reason inquired, *whether he had kept the commandments.* The innocent life of this young man is deserving of our imitation. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 21.** *Loved him.* We need understand no more by this, than that Christ gave him some marks of his tenderness for him, and for all men by his kind instructions, and invitations to a good and perfect life. (Witham) --- It is worthy of inquiry, how that could happen which the evangelist here mentions, how Jesus could love this young man; when, as it is here related, he did not follow the admonitions given him by Jesus Christ. The reason is, Christ loved him for his past behaviour, and his strict observance of the old law. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas, *Catena Aurea*)

**Ver. 28.** Although St. Peter had left but few things, he still calls them his all. For small things have power of attaching us to them, and of exciting our passions; therefore he that forsakes his small possessions, shall be a partaker of the blessings of Jesus Christ. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 32.** Christ goes before, to shew his eagerness to suffer the ignominies and torments of his approaching passion, for our salvation. (Theophylactus) --- But the disciples being already forewarned of what their Master was to suffer from the high priest and Scribes, went along the road to Jerusalem, with silent fear and trepidation, either lest they should be put to death with him, or lest he, whose life and doctrines they enjoyed, should fall into the hands of his enemies. But our kind Redeemer, foreseeing that the minds of his disciples were disturbed, comforts them with the assurance of his resurrection. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 35.** St. Matthew (xx. 20.) says it was their mother, Salome, but probably at their solicitation, or at least with their connivance and consent.

**Ver. 42.** *Who seem to rule over the Gentiles, &c.* See Matthew xx. 25, and Luke xxii. 25. (Witham)

**Ver. 43.** In vain then do men either seek for immoderate power, or sigh after human greatness; for, not power, but humility, is the sure and only path to the summit of perfection. He then proves

to them by his own example, that if they would not believe his words, they might at least learn by his example. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 46.** Bartimæus is a Syriac word, and signifies, son of Timæus.

**Ver. 51.** Let us endeavour sedulously to imitate the good example of this blind man, who did not ask for honours, riches, or other worldly advantages, but only that he might receive his sight; that he might behold the light with the blessed angels, to which faith alone can conduct us. (Ven. Bede) --- In this worse than Cimmerian darkness, how few are found, who pray as they ought for this all-necessary light of faith!!!

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## MARK 11

**Ver. 1.** This place, doubtless, had its name from the great number of olive-trees that grow upon it. It lay a little out of Jerusalem, on the east side, about five furlongs from the city, according to Josephus; but he must be understood of the nearest part of it, since St. Luke makes the distance to be a sabbath-day's journey, i.e. eight furlongs, or a mile; unless we suppose he meant the summit of the hill, from which our Saviour ascended. (Acts i. 12.) Mr. Maundrell says: I and my companions going out of Jerusalem, at St. Stephen's gate and crossing the valley of Josaphat, began immediately to ascend the mountain; and being about two-thirds of the way up, we came to certain grottos, cut with intricate windings and caverns, under ground, which were called, *the sepulchres of the prophets*; that a little higher up, were twelve arched vaults under ground, standing side by side, and built in memory of the apostles, who are said to have compiled their creed in this spot. Sixty paces higher, we came to the place where Christ is said to have uttered his prophecy, concerning the final destruction of Jerusalem; and a little on the right hand, to another, where he is said to have dictated (a second time) the *Lord's prayer* to his disciples. A little higher, is a cave of a saint called Pelagia; a little lower, a pillar denoting the place where an angel gave the blessed Virgin three day's warning of her death; and, at the top of all, we saw the place of our blessed Lord's ascension. See Maundrell's Journey to Jerusalem. --- In the Greek, being between Bethphage and Bethania. Bethania, which they had just left, was about one mile and a half from Jerusalem: Bethphage was between the two. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** This order of Jesus Christ shews his omniscience and supreme dominion. By the former, he informs his two disciples that in Bethphage they would find a colt tied; and by the latter, he assures them that the master, on learning that the Lord hath need of the colt, will immediately let him go. (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** The martyrs strewed garments in the way by putting off the garments of the flesh, and thus preparing a way by their blood for the servants of God. Many strewed their garments in the way, by subduing their bodies in fasting and abstinence, and thus affording good example to those that follow them. Those cut down branches from the trees, who in their instructions take their seeds from the discourses of the Fathers, and, by an unassuming and humble delivery, spread them in the way of God. (Ven. Bede) --- Let us strew the way of life, and cut branches from the trees, by imitating the example of the saints. For the saints are the trees, from which we cut down branches, when we imitate their virtues. (Theophylactus) --- The just shall flourish like the palm-tree, (Psalm xci.) confirmed in their roots, and extensive in their fruit and flowers, being the sweet odour of Christ. (2 Corinthians ii. 15.)

**Ver. 9.** They that went before, were the prophets; and they that come after, are the apostles. (St. Jerome) --- All these voluntary offerings were grateful to our divine Saviour; so are the like offerings made to him in the blessed sacrament. (Bristow)

**Ver. 10.** They call the kingdom of Christ the kingdom of David, because Christ was descended of

the family of David. David is likewise interpreted, *strong of hand*; but who is strong of hand but the Lord, whose hand has wrought so many and such miracles? (Theophylactus) --- How great is the similarity of this sentence with that delivered by the angel Gabriel, when he addressed the blessed Virgin Mary: "the Lord God will give to Him the seat of David, his father." (Ven. Bede) --- "*In the highest*." By this is meant, that the just shall be built upon the ruins of the angels; and, that the inhabitants of the earth shall obtain salvation. (St. Jerome) --- The literal meaning is: blessed be the kingdom of our father, David, which he sees arrive in the person of his Son: *Hosanna*, glory and salvation to this Son so long expected, so ardently desired: peace and salvation, and glory be given to Him, by the great Lord and God, who dwelleth in the highest heaven. (St. Matthew xxi. 9; St. Luke xix. 38.)

**Ver. 11.** In going into the temple, immediately on entering the city, he shews what religion recommends to us, viz. to enter first into a place of worship, if there is one, where we visit. (Ven. Bede) --- Looking into the hearts of all, he could not, amongst those who contradicted the truth, find where to recline his head; therefore, he withdraws to his faithful servants, and takes up his abode with the children of obedience. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 13.** *He came, if perhaps, &c.* Christ knew there was no fruit upon it, and that it was *not the season, or a season for figs*. See Matthew xxi. 19, what instruction he designed to give his disciples by what he said and did to the fig-tree. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ here curses the barren tree, on account of his disciples, who were present; for as he every where gave instances of his most beneficent will, it was proper he should also give them proofs of his justice and severity. Hence his principal motive for cursing the fig-tree was, not on account of any hunger he then experienced; for it is not probable that Christ should experience so great hunger, and at so early an hour, as these words seem to indicate. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 16.** The vessels here spoken of as not allowed to be carried through the temple, were not any belonging to the temple, but only such as were brought by those who were buying and selling. Origen asserts, that our Saviour's driving so many thousands out of the temple, poor and humble as he appeared, was a more astonishing miracle than even his giving sight to the blind. So divine an effulgency flashed from his eyes and whole countenance, as affected every beholder with astonishment and awful terror. (Origen in Dionysius) --- If Christ could not bear to see his Father's house profaned, even with those things which in another place were not unbecoming, how indignant must he be to see the temple of God defiled with blasphemous and heretical doctrines, and with that levity and inattention observed in thoughtless giddy Christians, who thus scandalize and pervert his devoted children. (Haydock)

**Ver. 17.** Not to the Jews only, but to all nations; not in Jerusalem only, but in every city of the known world. It is no longer a temple of bulls, goats, and rams, but a temple of prayer. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 18.** What effect this strong reproof of our Saviour had upon the Jewish priests, and other ministers of the temple, is related by the evangelist in the subsequent words: *they sought how they might destroy him*. Still they were obliged to protract their iniquitous designs for a short time, as the multitude were in admiration of his doctrines. (Gloss.) --- It was on a Tuesday that Jesus Christ discussed various subjects in the temple, his mission, the duties we owe to society, the resurrection of the body, &c. &c.

**Ver. 23.** Ecclesiastical history informs us, that St. Gregory of Neo-Cæsarea, surnamed Thaumaturgus (whose feast is kept Nov. 17.) performed this miracle, removing by his prayers a mountain that obstructed the building of a church. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 26.** Faith alone will not suffice for the remission of sins; we must moreover pardon every neighbour, and from our heart.

**Ver. 28.** "It was a reasonable demand," says Dr. Barrow, "which was made to our Saviour: *tell us*

*by what authority thou doest these things, and who hath given thee this authority.* The reasonableness of it our Lord did often avow, declaring, that if by his doctrine and works he had not vouched the divinity of his authority, it had been no sin to disbelieve or reject him." (John v. 31, 36; x. 25, 27; and xv. 22, 24.) Dr. Barrow on Supremacy, p. 49. --- This principle, which supposes in pastors the necessity of a lawful mission, was formerly, and may still be, triumphantly urged against Luther, Calvin, Tindal [Tyndale], Cranmer, and all the first pretended Reformers of the Catholic Church. For whence, said the Catholics, did these innovators derive their mission? Who sent them to preach? Who gave them authority to reform and alter the whole state of God's Church? Let them shew their commission for this purpose, either *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. Unless they can do this, we have nothing to do with usurpers and intruders. ... If it be pretended that they had *extraordinary* mission, immediately derived from God, why did they not shew their credentials, stamped with the broad seal of heaven; that it, why did they not by clear and evident miracles, such as Christ and his apostles wrought, attest their being thus extraordinarily commissioned for the extraordinary work of the Reformation? Without such proofs as these, no pretensions to an extraordinary mission, in opposition to the ordinary Church authority, can be admitted. Otherwise every fanatic or enthusiast, following his own caprice, may pretend to a call from heaven; and, upon this foolish plea, preach up his own dreams for the pure word of God, in contempt of all authority, whether of Church or State. If it be said that the missions of the first reformers were *ordinary*, and derived to them by the ministry of men, it behoves them to point out what men these were from whom they received this ordinary power. Were they Catholics or Protestants? Not Protestants, for they cannot name any such who commissioned them to preach; not Catholics, because the religion which Luther and his reforming brethren endeavoured to propagate, was a new religion, directly opposite to that of Catholics, and therefore could not be taught, in virtue of any commission from Catholics. *And how can they preach unless they be sent?* (Romans x. 15.) If it be urged that Luther had received his orders in the Catholic Church, it is easily answered that this could not authorize him to commence preacher and teacher of another religion, any more than the order which Mr. Whiston and Mr. Wesley might receive in the Protestant church of England could authorize them to teach a doctrine anathematized by that Church. (Rutter)

**Ver. 33.** *Neither do I tell you, &c.* I do not tell you what I know, because you refuse to own what you know. We should observe, there are here two reasons for concealing the truth from inquirers: 1st, when he that inquireth after the truth is incapable of understanding it; 2d, when on account of some contempt of the truth, or some other evil indisposition, the person is not deserving of having the truth laid open to him. (Ven. Bede)

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## MARK 12

**Ver. 1.** Under these figurative modes of speech, or parables, Jesus Christ began to trace out for their reflection a true portraiture of their ingratitude, and of the divine vengeance. By this *man* we are to understand God the Father, whose vineyard was the house of Israel, which he guarded by angels; the place dug for the wine-vat is the law; the tower, the temple; and Moses, the prophets and the priests, whom the Jews afflicted and persecuted are the husbandmen or servants. (St. Jerome) --- This same parable was employed by Isaiahs, (v. 1.) where speaking of Christ, he says: *My beloved had a vineyard, and he fenced it in.* (Tirinus) --- *He went into a far country*, not by change of place, for he is every where, but by leaving the workmen the power of free-will, either to work or not to work; in the same manner as a man in a far country cannot oversee his husbandmen at home, but leaves them to themselves. (Ven. Bede) -- This parable is thus morally explained: Jesus planted a Church with his own blood, surrounded it with evangelical doctrine, as with a hedge; dug a place for the wine-vat, by the abundance of spiritual graces which he has prepared for his Church; built a tower, by appointing his angels to guard each individual Christian, who are the husbandmen to whom he has let it out. (Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 2.** The first servant whom the Almighty sent was Moses; but *they sent him away empty*; for, says the Psalmist, they provoked him to anger in the camp. (Psalm cv.) The second servant sent was David, whom *they used reproachfully*, saying: *What have we to do with David?* (3 Kings xii. 16.) The third was the school of the prophets; and which of the prophets did they not kill? (Matthew xxiii.) (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 7.** From this it appears, that the chief priests and lawyers were not ignorant that Christ was the Messias promised in the law and the prophets, but their knowledge was afterwards blinded by their envy: for otherwise, had they known him to be true God, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory, says St. Paul. For a further explanation, see St. Matthew xxi. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 8.** They cast the heir, Jesus Christ, out of the vineyard, by leading him out of Jerusalem to be crucified. (Theophylactus) --- They had before cast him out by calling him a Samaritan and demoniac; (St. John, Chap. viii.) and again by refusing to receive him, and turning him over to the Gentiles. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 9.** The vineyard is given to others; as it is said, they shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 10.** By this question, Christ shows that they were about to fulfil this prophecy, by casting him off, planning his death, and delivering him up to the Gentiles, by which he became the corner-stone, joining the two people of the Jews and Gentiles together, and forming out of them the one city and one temple of the faithful. (Ven. Bede) --- The Church is the corner, joining together Jews and Gentiles; the head of it is Christ. By the Lord hath this been done in our days, and it is wonderful in our eyes, seeing the prodigies which God has performed through him whom men reject as an impostor. (Theophylactus and Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 12.** The chief priests thus shew, that what our Saviour had just said was true, by thus seeking to lay their hands on him. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 14.** The disciples of the Pharisees said this in order to induce our Saviour to answer them, "that they were not to pay tribute to Cæsar, being the people of God; an answer they confidently anticipated, and which the Herodians hearing, might immediately apprehend him, and thus remove the odium from themselves to Herod. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 15.** *Knowing their hypocrisy.*[1] The Latin word commonly signifies, *cunning*, but the Greek is here meant their *dissimulation*, or *hypocrisy*. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** Although Christ clearly establishes here the strict obligation of paying to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, to the confusion of his very enemies, we shall still find them bringing forward against him the charge of disloyalty, as if he forbade tribute to be paid to Cæsar. (Luke xxiii. 2.) After the example of her divine Model, the Catholic Church has uniformly taught with St. Paul, the necessity of obeying the powers in being; and this not for fear of their wrath, but for conscience sake. Render to Cæsar the money on which his image is stamped, but render yourselves cheerfully to God; *for the light of thy countenance, O Lord, is stamped upon us*, (Psalm iv.) and not the image of Cæsar. (St. Jerome) --- With reason were they astonished at the wisdom of this answer, which eluded all their artifices, and taught them at the same time what they owed to their prince, and what they owed to God: and whoever hopes for the favour of heaven, must conscientiously observe this double duty to God and to the magistrate.

**Ver. 26.** The doctrine of the resurrection from the dead is clearly given in the book of Moses, where mention is made of the burning bush, from the midst of which God appeared to Moses: have you not read, I say, what God there said to him? As God is the God of the living, you must be in an egregious error in imagining, that such as die in the eyes of the world not to return thither any more, die in the same manner in the eyes of God, to live no more. (Bible de Vence)



**Ver. 29.** Literally the Lord our God is the only Lord: and this is the sense of the text in Deuteronomy vi. 4. The word in the original text, rendered by the term *Lord*, is the grand name JEHOVA, which signifies properly God, considered as the supreme Being, or the author of all existence.

**Ver. 33.** Venerable Bede gathers from this answer of the Scribes, that it had been long disputed among the Scribes and Pharisees, which was the greatest commandment in the law; some preferring the acts of faith and love, because many of the fathers, before the law was instituted, were pleasing to God on account of their faith and piety, and not on account of their sacrifices; yet none were agreeable to God who had not faith and charity. This Scribe seems to have been of the opinion of those who preferred the love of God. (Ven. Bede) --- The excellence of charity teacheth us that faith only is not sufficient. (Bristow)

**Ver. 34.** Being now refuted in their discourse, they no longer interrogate him, but deliver him up to the Roman power. Thus envy may be vanquished, but with great difficulty silenced. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 35.** According to St. Matthew it was principally to the Pharisees that Christ proposed this question. See Matthew 22, 41.

**Ver. 37.** This interrogation of Jesus instructs us how to refute the adversaries of truth; for if any assert that Christ was but a simple and holy man, a mere descendant of the race of David, we will ask them, after the example of Jesus: If Christ be man only, and the Son of David, how does David, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, call him Lord? The Jews were not blamed for calling him the Son of David, but for denying him to be the Son of God. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 43.** God accepts alms, if they are corresponding to each one's abilities; and the more able a man is, the more must he bestow in charities. The widow's mite was very acceptable to God, and very meritorious to herself; because though small the offering considered in itself, it was great considering her extreme indigence.

**Ver. 44.** *But she, of her want*, [2] or indigence, out of what she wanted to subsist by, as appeareth by the Greek. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 15. *Versutiam. Greek: ten upokrisin.*

[2] Ver. 44. *De penuria sua, Greek: ek tes ustereseos.* See the same Greek word, 1 Corinthians xvi. 17; 2 Corinthians ix. 12, and Chap. xi. 9. &c.

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## MARK 13

**Ver. 2.** As Christ had frequently denounced the destruction of the temple, his disciples, surprised that so beautiful an edifice should be reduced to nothing, wish on that account to shew him the grandeur and magnificence of it; upon which Christ exclaimed: *There shall not remain a stone upon a stone.* (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 4.** *When shall these things be?* The miseries that took place previously to the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, were a figure of the extreme calamity that will happen before the last day, in the reign of Antichrist: hence Jesus Christ speaketh indifferently of both. (Bristow)

**Ver. 6.** At the destruction of Jerusalem there appeared many impostors, many who professed

themselves to be the Christ, and assured the populace that their delivery was at hand. And in the Church many heresiarchs started up, and many came in the name of Christ; the first of these was Simon Magus, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, whom the people of Samaria received as the power and virtue of God. But it is remarkable from the time of our Saviour's passion, when they preferred the robber Barabbas to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, they had no peace or quiet in the city, but constant tumult and dissension succeeded, to the very time of its destruction. (Ven. Bede) --- So shall many seducers come towards the end of the world, who shall make themselves authors of sects, and shall gain many disciples: as followeth in plain words, ver. 22. of this chapter. (Bristow)

**Ver. 9.** *In the synagogues*, or assemblies. The word is here taken for assemblies of judges, and of justice. --- *For a testimony to them*; i.e. that you may bear witness of me and my doctrine, and also against them. (Witham) --- Some solicitude perhaps had seized upon the minds of the disciples, when they were informed by their divine Master, that they should stand accused before kings, and princes of the earth, for fear they should not be able, for want of human learning, to make a proper defence. Our Saviour therefore says: be not thoughtful beforehand; for when we are brought to the bar in defence of our holy faith, it is only necessary for us, under such circumstances, to make an offer of our will; Christ himself will speak for us: and in our answers will be infused the grace of the Holy Ghost: *for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost.* (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 14.** Ven. Bede here gives a beautiful illustration of this passage in a spiritual sense. When, says he, we see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, that is, when we behold heresies and crimes reigning where we ought to see truth and virtue flourish, then let those who are in Judea, such a shave kept the true faith unpolluted, flee to the mountains; that is, rise to the height of perfection; and let those who are on the house-top, those who crucifying the works of the flesh, live according to the spirit, not descend any more to their former way of living according to the flesh. (Ven. Bede) --- If all heresies tend to the abomination of desolation, that more particularly does which taketh away with other sacrament, and the external worship of God, the very sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; which being taken away, as St. Cyprian remarketh, no religion can remain. (St. Cyprian, on the supper of our Lord. Num. ii.)

**Ver. 19.** Jospheus, the Jewish historian, relates the calamities that befell unhappy Jerusalem, about thirty-seven years after the death of Jesus Christ, which verified to the very letter the prediction: *there shall be such tribulations as were not from the beginning.* (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 20.** This may be explained in a more general sense of the persecution of Antichrist, which will be dreadful beyond description, and executed in every part of the world. The time however allowed to him and his wicked agents to tread under foot the holy city, (Apocalypse xi. 2.) i.e. the Church of Christ, will not extend beyond forty-two months, or three years and a half. This space of time Christ has set apart to purify his Church, and try his servants; and therefore he allows them to fall under the power of this merciless tyrant; and it was given unto him, says St. John, speaking of this event, to make war with the saints, and overcome them. (Apocalypse xiii. 7.) We are admonished of the same by the prophet Daniel: (vii. 21.) I beheld, says he, and lo that horn (Antichrist) made war against the saints, and prevailed against them; and he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall crush the saints of the Most High ... and they shall be delivered into his hand until a time, and times, and half a time, (Daniel vii. 25.) i.e. a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a half, the same with St. John. (Pastorini, p. 327 and 8.) --- St. Augustine, speaking of this dreadful period, says: this persecution will be the last; it will happen towards the approach of the last judgment, and will fall upon the Church in every part of the world; that is, the whole city of Christ will be persecuted by the whole city of the devil, as far as both are extended upon earth. (De civit. lib. xx. chap. xi.) But our Saviour will put a stop to these calamities on account of his elect, unwilling that they should be tempted above their strength; for he will descend himself from heaven, and, as St. Paul tells us, will kill the wicked man, Antichrist, with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming.

**Ver. 24.** In the day of judgment the luminaries of heaven shall be darkened, not by the privation of their light, but by the approach of the true light of the world, i.e. the great Judge. And what cause for wonder can there be, that man should be terrified at the thoughts of the last day, when the angelic powers shall tremble; or, how will these mortal habitations of ours stand the shock, when the very pillars of heaven shall be moved? what will the tender osier suffer, when the lofty cedars of Paradise bend their head! (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 32.** But how can the Son be ignorant of that last day? Were this the case, we must thence conclude that his nature was imperfect: since he was under the *necessity* of a second coming, and yet was ignorant when that time should be. But we must remember, that the meaning of this sentence is not, that Christ was really ignorant of this circumstance, but only that it was not then a convenient time to disclose the secret. (St. Augustine) --- Not as if Christ were ignorant himself, as certain Eutychian heretics, called *Agnoitæ*, held; but because he knew it not as our teacher, to teach it others, as being not expedient. (St. Ambrose, de fide, lib. v. chap. viii.) --- The Son of God is ignorant of this day, not according to his *divinity*, which sees and knows all things; but according to his *humanity*, which does not know it of itself, of its own light, but by revelation which is made to it by the divinity, which is intimately united to it. *In natura quidem divinitatis novit*, says St. Gregory, *non ex natura humanitatis*. See St. Matthew xxiv. 36.

**Ver. 33.** Some will perhaps think, that it would have been much better, if the Almighty had not left the hour of death uncertain; as that case, they would not have been so solicitous with regard to its arrival. But St. Augustine, St. Gregory, and other saints assure us, on the contrary, that it is a very great mercy of God to keep us in this ignorance, that we may always be prepared for it. For, if we knew the precise period, this assurance would give occasion of living more unguardedly, and of sinning more freely. If, with this uncertainty of the hour of our death, we live notwithstanding, so very remissly; what should we do, were we assured that we were not to die for some years? Sts. Gregory, Augustine, and Bonaventure say, that God chose to leave us in this uncertainty, purposely to prevent all attachment to temporal things; that, seeing every hour, nay every moment, we may lose them, we may not be tied to them, but aspire to those we shall always possess, when once we have obtained them. Fool, says the Son of God to the rich covetous man, (Luke xii. 20.) this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and what then will become of all these riches thou hast amassed. (St. Bonaventure)

**Ver. 35.** *At even, at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning.* These are generally referred to the different ages of man's life; infancy, youth, manhood, and old age. we are exhorted to be always in readiness, for we know not at what hour the Judge will come. (Nicholas of Lyra) --- We are taught to watch, because we are charged with the care of our soul, which is the temple or house of God, and which is to be his temple for all eternity. (Bible de Vence)

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## MARK 14

**Ver. 1.** Though the evangelists generally use the words *pasch* and *azymes* promiscuously, yet St. Mark distinguishes them, being really different. The *pasch* is used for the 14th day of the moon of the first month. But the 15th day, on which they departed out of Egypt, was the feast of the *azymes*, or the unleavened bread; which continued seven days, till the 21st day of the moon inclusively. (Ven. Bede) --- *Pasch* is also used for the sabbath day within the seven days of the solemnity; (John xix. 14.) and also for all the sacrifices made during the seven days of the feast.

**Ver. 2.** They were not so much afraid of the sedition itself, as of the people delivering Christ out of their hands. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 3.** *Of precious[1] spikenard.* This was a perfume extracted and distilled from the leaves, tops, or stalks, of the plant or herb called *nard*. It was the custom of the eastern people to pour

such precious perfumes on their own heads, or on the heads of their guests whom they had a mind to honour. (Witham) --- this happened six days previous to the pasch. The woman here mentioned was Mary, sister of Lazarus. (John xii. 3.)

**Ver. 4.** It was chiefly Judas Iscariot that murmured here. St. John only mentions him; perhaps some others had been excited to complain, by the traitor. This is certain, that if any concurred in murmuring with Judas, they afterwards repented, on hearing the answer given immediately by our Saviour. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 7.** Christ here answers the apostles, by informing them that he should not always be with them, but would shortly leave them, as to his corporal presence, though spiritually will remain with them, and their successors, to the end of time. (Matthew xxviii.) --- *Behold I am, &c.* He will not always be with them, so as to want their services. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 10.** Many of the present day shudder at the thought of the horrid and inexpressible crime of Judas, in betraying his Master, his Lord, and his God, and yet do not take care to avoid the like wickedness themselves; for, as often as for a little gain they neglect the duties of faith and charity, they become traitors to God, who is charity and faith. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 12.** *Whither wilt thou, &c.* By these words the disciples teach us to direct our every step according to the will of God; therefore does their Lord tell them, with whom he would eat the pasch, to go two of them into the city. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 14.** *Were is my refectory:[2] where I may eat the pasch, or the paschal supper* of the lamb sacrificed? Literally, in the Latin, *where is my eating, or my refectio?* but it is generally agreed that here is meant a place to eat in. (Witham)

### **This is my Body.**

**Ver. 22.** This which I now give, and which you now receive; for the bread is not the figure of Christ, but is changed into the true body of Christ; and he himself says, *The bread, which I will give you, is my flesh.* (St. John vi.) But the flesh of Christ is not seen, on account of our infirmity; for if we were allowed to see with our eyes the flesh and blood of Jesus, we should not dare to approach the blessed sacrament. Our Lord therefore condescending to our weakness, preserves the outward species of bread and wine, but changes the bread and wine into the reality of flesh and blood. (Theophylactus) --- St. John Chrysostom, in his thirtieth sermon on the treason of Judas, says: "Christ is also now present to adorn our table, (altar) the same that was present to adorn that table. For it is not man that causes the elements to become the body and blood of Christ, but the very Christ, the same that was crucified for us: *Greek: oude gar anthropos estin o[?] koion ta prokeimena ginesthai soma kai aim christou all autos o staurotheis uper emon christos.* The priest stand his vicegerent, and pronounces the words, but the power and grace is of God. He says, this is my body, and the word changes the elements: and as the sentence 'increase and multiply, and fill the earth, was spoken once, but still imparts fecundity to human nature throughout all time: so these words (of consecration) once spoken, constitute an absolute, perfect sacrifice upon every altar of the Church from that day to this, yea even to the time when Christ shall come again at the last day." *Greek: Schema pleron esteken o iereus, ta remata phtheggomenos ekeina e de dunamis, kai e charis tou theou esti. touto mou esti to soma, phesi touto to rema metarruthmizei ta prokeimena. Kai kathaper e phone ekeine e legousa "auxanesthe, kai plethunesthe, kai plerosate ten gen," errethe men apax, dia pantos de tou[?] chronou ginetai ergo endunamoussa ten phusin ten emeteran pros paidopoiian. outo kai e phone aute apax lechtheisa, kath ekasten trapesan en tais ekklesiass, ex ekeinou mechri semeron, kai mechri tes autou parousias, ten thusian apertismenen epgasetai.* (St. John Chrysostom, Sermon xxx, on the treachery of Judas.)

These words are so plain, that it is difficult to imagine others more explicit. Their force and import will however appear in a still stronger light, if we consider the formal promise Christ had made to

his apostles, as related by St. John, that he would give them his flesh to eat, that same flesh he was to deliver up for the life of the world. He on that occasion confirmed with remarkable emphasis of expression the reality of this manducation, assuring them *that his flesh was meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed*; and when some of the disciples were shocked at such a proposal, he still insisted that unless they eat his flesh, they should have no life in them. The possibility of it he evinced from his divine power, to be exemplified in his miraculous ascension; the necessity of it he established, by permitting those to abandon him who refused to believe it; and the belief of it he enforced on the minds of his disciples, from the consideration that he, their teacher, was the Son of God, and the author of their eternal salvation. The apostles were deeply impressed with these thoughts, previously to the institution of the holy Eucharist; consequently when they beheld Jesus Christ, just before his death, taking bread into his sacred hands; when after blessing it with solemnity, they heard him say, *Take, eat; this is my body, which shall be given for you*; they must necessarily have concluded, that it was truly his body, which he now gave them to eat, according to his former promise. And though their reason or senses might have started difficulties, yet all these were obviated by their belief of his being God, and consequently able to effect whatever he pleased, and to make good whatever he said. --- Moreover, if we consult tradition, we shall find that the Greek, as well as the Latin Church, has uniformly declared in favour of the literal sense of Christ's words, as may be seen at large in all Catholic controvertists. The learned author of the *Perpetuite de la Foi*, and his continuator, Renaudot, in the two additional quarto volumes, have invincibly demonstrated, that the belief of all the Oriental Christians perfectly coincides with that of the Catholic Church, respecting the real presence. Dr. Philip Nicolai, though a Protestant, candidly acknowledges, in his first book of the *Kingdom of Christ*, p. 22, "that not only the churches of the Greek, but also the Russians, the Georgians, the Armenians, the Judæans, and the Ethiopians, as many of them as believe in Christ, hold the true and real presence of the body and blood of our Lord." This general agreement amongst the many Churches of the Christian world, affords the strongest evidence against Secker and others, who pretend that the doctrine of the real presence is a mere innovation; which was not started till 700 years after Christ's death. For, how will their supposition accord with the belief of the Nestorians and Euthychians, who were separated from the Church of Rome long before that period, and who were found to agree exactly with Catholics concerning this important tenet? --- See *this point* clearly given in Rutter's *Evangelical Harmony*.

### **This is my Blood.**

**Ver. 24.** *Which shall be shed.* With words so explicit, with the unanimous agreement of the Eastern and Western Churches, how can any Dissenters bring themselves to believe that there is nothing more designed, or given, than a memorial of Christ's passion and death? Catholics, who believe in the real presence, do certainly renew in themselves the remembrance of our Saviour's death and passion, with more lively sentiments of devotion than they who believe it to be mere bread and wine. The outward forms of bread and wine, which remain in the Eucharist, are chiefly designed to signify or represent to us three things; viz. 1. The *passion of Christ*, of which they are the *remembrance*; 2. *the body and blood of Christ*, really, though sacramentally present, of which they are the *veil*; and 3. *everlasting life*, of which they are the *pledge*. --- N. B. In speaking of the real presence in the Eucharist, Catholics hold that Christ is *corporally* and *substantially* present, but not *carnally*; i.e. not in that gross, natural, and sensible manner, in which our separated brethren so frequently misrepresent our doctrine.

**Ver. 25.** This vine represents the Synagogue, according to Isaías. The vine, or vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel. Of this vine Christ drank for some time; and though many of the branches were become useless, there were yet many that still brought forth fruit. But Christ now going to his passion, declares that it would be no longer acceptable to him, since the figures were not to pass into reality. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 26.** Jesus Christ is seized upon Mount Olivet, whence he ascended into heaven; that we might know that the place on earth where we watch and pray, where we suffer chains without resistance, is the place whence we are to ascend into heaven. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 27.** Christ permitted his disciples to fall, that they might learn not to trust in themselves. To strengthen his prediction, he adduces the testimony of Zacharias the prophet, (xiii. 7.) *I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be dispersed.* (Theophylactus) ... This text is expressed in other words, being there spoken in the person of the prophet: *Strike the pastor, and the sheep shall be dispersed.* (Ven. Bede) --- By these words, the prophet prays for the passion of the Lord. The Almighty Father answers his prayer: *I will strike the shepherd.* The Son is sent by the Father, and is stricken by becoming incarnate and suffering death. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 37.** You who were ready to die for me, cannot watch with me! We are here taught a great duty of a Christian life, and that is, to beg of God, *that he would give us strength to observe and follow the motions and inspirations of his Holy Spirit, and never to resist the calls of heaven.*

**Ver. 45.** Our Lord received the kiss of the traitor, that he might not appear to avoid being delivered up; and at the same time he fulfilled that of the Psalmist, *with those who hated peace, I was peaceful.* (Psalm cxix. 7.)

**Ver. 46.** Here is Joseph betrayed and sold by his brethren, and pierced in his soul with a sword. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 47.** This was Peter, as we learn from St. John xviii. 10. He is here actuated with his usual ardent zeal, calling to mind the example of Phinees, who by executing justice on the wicked, merited the reward of justice, and a continual priesthood. (Ven. Bede) --- St. Mark conceals his master's name, lest he should seem to be publishing the ardour of his zeal for Christ. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 51.** This probably was the owner, or the son of the owner of the garden, who hearing the tumult came to see what was the cause. It must have been a young man from the Greek word *neaniskos*. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 55.** Though the law prescribed there should be only one high priest, yet at this time there were many, being appointed yearly by the Roman governor; and those are here called chief priests who had once been invested with the dignity of high priest, but were at that time out of office. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 56.** *Their evidence did not agree.* Others translate, their testimonies were not *sufficient*; that is, so as to amount to a crime that made him guilty of death. The Greek, as well as the Latin text, may be taken in either sense. The high priest, vexed at this, stood up, and asked him questions, hoping to make him appear guilty by his own confession. (Witham) --- This latter sense is given to the same expression, ver. 59. *infra*.

**Ver. 57.** Thus has iniquity lied to itself, (Psalm xxvi.) as formerly in the case of the wife of Putiphar against Joseph, (Genesis xxix.) and the elders against Susanna. (Daniel) (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 61.** Our Redeemer was silent, because he knew they would not attend to his words; therefore does he say in St. Luke, *If I shall tell you, you will not believe me.* (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 63.** Caiphas, in order to excite their hatred against what was said, rent his garments, and thus deprived himself of the priestly dignity, by transgressing the precept; which, speaking of the high priest says: *He shall not uncover his head, and his garments he shall not rend.* (Leviticus xxi. 10.) (St. Leo the Great) --- By the high priest rending his garments he shews, that the Jewish priesthood, on account of their crimes, was now dissolved; whereas the tunic of Christ, by which the one true Catholic Church is prefigured, was seamless, and not to be divided. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 71.** In this one apostle, Peter, the first and chief in the order of apostles, in whom the Church was figured, both sorts were to be signified, viz. the strong and the weak, because the Church is

not without both. (St. Augustine, Sermon. xiii. de verb. Do.) --- Again, our Saviour would shew by the example of the chief apostle, that no man ought to presume of himself, when even St. Peter was not secure and immoveable. (St. Augustine, tract. lxvi. in Evan. Joan. and St. Leo, sermon. ix. de Pass. Do.)

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[1] Ver. 3. Unguenti nardi spicati pretiosi, *Greek: murou nardou pistikes polutelous*. Both here in St. Mark, and also in St. John, Chap. xii. 3. we read *Greek: pistikes*, which by the Greek ages with *nard*, and not with *ointment*. The interpreters are much divided about the signification of the word *Greek: pistikes*: some late writers would needs have *Greek: pistides* to come from *Greek: pio* or *pino*, and to signify *liquid*, but this does not seem well grounded. Others, with St. Augustine, would have *Greek: pistikes* to be taken from the name of some country or place from whence this precious nard was brought. The most common opinion seems that of St. Hierom [St. Jerome], with whom agree Theophylactus, and Euthymius, that *Greek: pistika*, derived from *Greek: pistis*, signifies *true* and *genuine nard*, and so of the greatest price and value.

[2] Ver. 14. Ubi est refectio mea, ubi pascha manducem? *Greek: Pou esti to kataluma, opou pascha ... phago*.

[3] Ver. 56. Convenientia testimonia non erant. *Greek: isai ai marturiai ouk esan*. The word *Greek: isai* may either signify that they did not agree together, or that they were not sufficient to get him condemned, which latter is the opinion of Erasmus, who translates, non erant idonea.

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## MARK 15

**Ver. 1.** It was customary with the Jews to bind and deliver over to the Roman governors those whom they had condemned in their own councils; but we must not suppose that this was the first time they bound Jesus; for St. John informs us, when first they apprehended him, they put manacles upon him. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 2.** It may be remarked upon this answer of our Lord, that he was not unwilling to answer the questions put to him by the governor, who condemned him contrary to his inclination, though he would not condescend to return an answer to the questions of the high priests, as they were not worthy of the favour. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 6.** This practice of releasing to the people any prisoner they might think proper, was instituted in order to captivate the will of the people; which was most commonly done on the festival day, when the Jews were assembled from the different provinces to Jerusalem. But that the blindness and malice of this people might be more apparent, the evangelist here describes the atrocious wickedness of the man they preferred to the Son of God. (Gloss.)

**Ver. 10.** Since envy put to death the Author of life, Jesus Christ, how watchful should all Christians be against every degree of that sin. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xl. in Matt.)

**Ver. 21.** St. Jerome thinks Alexander and Rufus were disciples of Christ, and on this account the name of their father is here expressed (St. Jerome in Dionysius)

**Ver. 23.** St. Matthew says mixed with gall; for gall is here used for bitterness, and wine that has myrrh in it is a very strong bitter; although, perhaps, both gall and myrrh might have been ingredients to increase the bitterness. (St. Augustine) --- Or, in the confusion that was occasioned, some might have offered him one thing, some another; one person giving vinegar and gall, another wine mixed with myrrh. (Theophylactus) --- Wine mingled with myrrh may perhaps be used for vinegar. (St. Jerome) --- This was given to criminals, to lessen their torments.

Our Lord was pleased to taste the bitterness, but he would not permit the relief which the admittance of the same into his stomach might have afforded. Thus so were the scriptures fulfilled: *they gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.* (Psalm lxviii.) (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 25.** St. Mark is the only evangelist who says it was the third hour. St. John says it was the sixth. But these may easily be reconciled by supposing that he was crucified towards the end of the third hour, that is, about eleven of the clock, or half-past eleven, which being near the sixth hour, or twelve, the evangelist might say it was the sixth hour. (Nicholas of Lyra) --- *The third hour.* The ancient account divided the day into four parts, which were named from the hour from which they began: the first, third, sixth, and ninth hour. Our Lord was crucified a little before noon; before the *third hour* had quite expired; but when the *sixth hour* was near at hand. (Challoner)

**Ver. 26.** It was written on a board, or rather on parchment fixed to a board, (as Leipsius informs us) expressing the cause why he was crucified, viz. because he was the *King of the Jews*. And, indeed, Pilate himself was fully persuaded that he was the Messiah promised to the Jews: and though he knew him to be innocent, he connived the more at his death through fear lest he might attempt something against the Roman empire, if he were permitted to continue. At the same time, by putting up his cause, he wished to revenge himself of the Jews, for their importunity and obstinacy in compelling him, partly against his will, to condemn him to death. For what could be more ignominious to the Jews than to see their king crucified at their own request, and for no other reason than because he was their king, and they did not wish him to reign over them. Thus did they receive the king for whose coming they had so long sighed, and from whom they had expected delivery from the Roman yoke, and the subjugation of the whole world to their own power. (Sirinus)[perhaps (Tirinus) is meant here.]

**Ver. 28.** This text of Isaias regards the Messiah according to the very letter. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 32.** Afterwards they saw Him arising out of the sepulchre whom they thought unable to descend from the cross. Where, O Jew, is thy infidelity? I ask you yourselves. You shall be your own judges. How much more astonishing is it to be able, when dead, to rise again, than, when living, to descend from the cross? You desired a small exertion of power, and a much greater is here performed: but still your infidelity would not be cured. All have turned out of the way, all have become useless. (St. Jerome) --- If the Scribes and Pharisees did not believe in Christ when he rose from the dead, neither would they have believed in him had he left the cross. Though the scripture had foretold in many places that he was to suffer, Psalm xxi, *They have dug my hands and feet;* and Psalm xcv, *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced; He shall reign from the tree:* (and which St. Justin assures us the Jews had erased from the psalm) yet were can the Jews point out that it was foretold he should descend from the cross? (Tirinus)

**Ver. 39.** The centurion considered the crying out of our Saviour as an effect not of human, but divine power, since it generally happens that people at the moment the soul quits the body are reduced to so debilitated a state, that they are scarce able to utter the least word. Although Jesus was truly the natural, not the adoptive, Son of God, it is nevertheless probable that the centurion, being a Gentile, did not speak in this manner as if he knew Jesus to be the natural Son of God. He did not know that the Son of God was really true God, equal to the Father, but called him Son of God, as if adopted, on account of his extraordinary sanctity; or, perhaps, he might have called him the Son of God, in order to oppose the Jews, who called our Saviour a blasphemer, because he made himself the Son of God. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 42.** Ven. Bede thinks the word *parasceve* is derived from the Greek *paraskeue*, signifying a preparation. It was the day before the sabbath, on which the Jews were accustomed to prepare two meals, one for the parasceve, and another for the sabbath; the Jews not being allowed to dress any meat on the latter day, on account of its great solemnity. The Jews learnt this word of the Greeks, who lived among them in Jerusalem. (Ven. Bede)



**Ver. 43.** *A noble Decurion.* The Decurions among the Romans were first called so as having ten men under them, as the centurions were over a hundred. But some of the *Decurions* were also *Counsellors* in towns, as is here signified by the Greek word *Bouleutes*. (Witham)

**Ver. 46.** According to the description of those that have seen it, it is a kind of small chamber, the height of which, from top to bottom, is eight feet and an inch, its length six feet and one inch, and its breadth fifteen feet ten inches. Its entrance, or vestibule, which looks towards the east, is but four feet high, and two feet four inches wide. The place within, where our Lord's body was laid, takes up a whole side of the cave. The stone which was laid to secure the door of the sepulchre is still remaining, and according to Mr. Maundrell, is two yards and a quarter long, one broad, and one thick: but the particular parts of it are not visible, being all incrustated over with white marble, except in five or six little places, where it is left bare to receive the kisses and other devotions of pilgrims. (Mark Luke's Voyage to Asia Minor, Vol. II. p. 12. and Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.)

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## MARK 16

**Ver. 1.** Saturday evening, after the sun was set, for the sabbath began and ended with the setting sun.

**Ver. 2.** St. Marks says very early, the sun being now risen, whereas St. John tells us that it was yet dark. But when St. Mark says the sun was risen, he means that it began, by its approach to the horizon, to enlighten the heavens, at which time there is still darkness remaining, (according to St. John) which decreases as light approaches the earth. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 5.** St. Matthew says the angel was sitting on the stone, whilst St. Mark says that they saw him sitting on the right side of the sepulchre. This must not surprise us; for the angel which first appeared sitting upon the stone, might have been afterwards seen by him sitting on the right side of the sepulchre. (Theophylactus) --- Perhaps the angel mentioned by St. Matthew is different from the one mentioned by St. Mark. Or it may be understood, that the women entering the monument, which may mean the enclosure of it, saw the angel sitting on the stone, which was placed on the right side of the sepulchre. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 9.** This appearance of our Saviour is more fully related by St. John. Our Lord arose early from the monument in which he had been placed late in the evening, thus fulfilling the words of the psalmist: *In the evening weeping shall have place, and in the morning gladness.* (Psalm xxix.) (Ven. Bede) --- *Rising early.* It appears from this that our Saviour arose early, about sunrise, as was the sentiment of St. Augustine; though St. Gregory seems to think that he arose at midnight, in the same manner as Samson, who was a figure of Christ, arose in the middle of the night and carried away the gates of Gaza. If we follow this opinion, we must understand the word *early* as referring to the verb *appeared*, not to the participle *rising*, and then the sentence will be: *he rising, (having arisen) appeared early the first day of the week.* The first interpretation, however, of St. Augustine seems more agreeable to the text: *he rising early the first day of the week, appeared, &c.*

**Ver. 12.** He had appeared to Magdalene in the form of a gardener, and to two disciples in the form of a traveller.

**Ver. 14.** *At length, &c.* in the Latin text, taken according to the letter, is *lastly*, or *last of all*: but if we examine and compare the four gospels, this was not the last time that Christ appeared to his disciples after his resurrection. We can only then understand it of the *last* time mentioned by this evangelist. --- *To the eleven.* If this apparition (as it was the common opinion of St. Augustine)

was made when St. Thomas was not with them, they were only then ten, without St. Thomas and Judas. The evangelist here calls them *eleven*, because the apostolical college (Judas being dead) consisted of no more than *eleven*. And this way of speaking may be justified by diverse examples: one instance may suffice. A meeting of the Jewish *sanhedrim* might be called the *Council of the Seventy-two*, though it many times happened that all the seventy-two were not there present. (Witham) --- Some think that this was the last apparition of Jesus Christ, after which he quitted the earth, and ascended into heaven. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** Let those weep and lament who have not yet seen him, and in a short time they shall receive consolation. Blessed are they that weep, for they shall be comforted, St. Matthew v. (St. Jerome) --- Perhaps some one will say within himself, I have already believed, I shall be saved: he says true, if his faith be supported by good works; for that only is true faith, which does not contradict in works what is believed in words. (St. Gregory)

**Ver. 19.** By these words it is not to be understood that Jesus is to be confined to that particular posture of body, or that the Father has any hands, or any human shape; for God is a pure, incorporeal, and all-perfect Spirit. The image of God, as he is in himself, comes not within the reach of our mortal senses. When the Scripture, therefore, speaks of God, it uses such imagery of language as is adapted to our senses, that it may thereby convey to us some imperfect knowledge of those sublime mysteries, which are ineffable in themselves, and incomprehensible to our understanding. Thus we are informed that Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, to signify that, as man, our Lord is raised to the height of glory, and to that supreme beatitude, than which there is nothing higher, and nothing greater in the whole bliss of heaven; and that he moreover holds the same sovereign dominion with the Father over all creatures; because, as God, he is equal to the Father in power, in wisdom, and in all perfection. See Pouget, p. 256. ed. in fol. --- *On the right hand of God.* Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, was not man only, but truly God, the same God with his eternal Father: and hereby is signified that the *person*, who took upon him human nature, and became man, is equal in dignity with the Father: he, who, as man, ascended into heaven. [2] When St. Jerome says that most Greek copies wanted this chapter, he speaks not of chapters according to our present division, but only of the last 12 verses, which formerly made what was called a *little chapter*: yet these twelve verses must have been omitted in those manuscripts by some negligent transcribers. Now they are found in all, both Latin and Greek copies. They are found in the Canons of Eusebius on the Gospels; in St. Jerome in several places; in St. Ambrose, lib. iii, in Luc. tom. iii, p. 292. Ed. Paris, an. 1582; in St. Augustine, lib. iii, de consensu Evang. chap. xxv, tom. 3, part 2, p. 142, &c. (Witham) --- St. Gregory of Nyssa, (orat. 2. de Resurr.) says, that the best copies of St. Mark's gospel finished with the 8th verse, *a trembling and fear had seized them*: Greek: *En tois akribesterois to Kata Markon Euangelion mekri tou ephobounto gar, echei to telos.* It is the very generally received sentiment of the learned, that the last 12 verses were given by St. Mark; and the most probable reason yet offered for the omission of them in various copies is, that the transcribers followed a mutilated copy, where the last page was wanting. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 20.** Let us here take notice, that, as the apostles confirmed their words by the signs that followed, so also in us must our words be confirmed by works. "Grant, O Jesus! that the discourse we deliver, concerning virtue, may be confirmed by works and actions; that thus, by thy co-operation, we may become perfect in word and work; for to Thee is due the glory of our discourses and actions." (Theophylactus)

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[1] Ver. 14. Novissime, Greek: *usteron*, posterius.

[2] Ver. 19. St. Hieron.[St. Jerome,] Ep. ad Hebidiā, q. 3, tom. 4, part 1, p. 172: omnibus Græcis Libris pene hoc capitulum non habentibus.

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## LUKE

### THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

#### INTRODUCTION

St. Luke was a physician, a native of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, and well skilled in the Greek language, as his writings sufficiently evince. In some ancient manuscripts, he is called Lucius, and Lucanus. Some conjecture that he was at first a Gentile and a pagan, and was converted by the preaching of St. Paul, at Antioch; others, that he was originally a Jew, and one of the seventy-two disciples. Sts. Hippolitus and Epiphanius say, that hearing from our Lord these words, *he that eateth not my flesh, and drinketh not my blood, is not worthy of me*, he withdrew, and quitted our Saviour, but returned to the faith at the preaching of St. Paul. But to leave what is uncertain, St. Luke was the disciple, travelling companion, and fellow-labourer of St. Paul. Of him St. Paul is supposed to speak: (2 Corinthians viii. 18.) *We have sent also with him (Titus) the brother, whose praise is in the gospel, through all churches*: and again, *Luke, the most dear physician, saluteth you*: (Colossians iv.) and, *only Luke is with me*. (2 Timothy iv.) Some are of opinion that as often as St. Paul, in his Epistles, says *according to my gospel*, he speaks of the Gospel of St. Luke. This evangelist did not learn his gospel from St. Paul only, (who had never been with our Lord in the flesh) but from the other apostles also, as himself informs us in the beginning of his gospel, when he says, *according as they have delivered them unto us; who, from the beginning, were eye-witnesses, (Greek: autoptai) and ministers of the word*. His gospel, therefore, he wrote as he heard it; but the *Acts of the Apostles*, from his own observations; and both, as some believe, about the same time in which his history of the Acts finishes, towards the year of Christ 63. But the received opinion now is, that St. Luke wrote his gospel in Achaia, in the year 53, ten years previously to his writing of the *Acts*, purposely to counteract the fabulous relations concerning Jesus Christ, which several persons had endeavoured to palm upon the world. It does not appear, as Calmet observes, that he had ever read the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. ... He chiefly insists in his gospel, upon what relates to Christ's priestly office; hence the ancients gave, of the four symbolical representations, mentioned in Ezechiel, that of the ox, or calf, to St. Luke, as an emblem of sacrifices. He lived 84 years in the state of celibacy, was crucified at Elœa, in Peloponnesus, near Achaia, and was buried in the church of the apostles, at Constantinople, to which city his remains were translated, together with those of St. Andrew and St. Timothy, in the year 357, by order of the emperor Constantius. When this church was repaired, by an order of Justinian, the masons found three wooden chests, in which the bodies of these saints were interred. Baronius mentions, that the head of St. Luke was brought by St. Gregory from Constantinople to Rome, in the year of Christ 586. St. Luke writes purer Greek than any of the other hagiographers; yet many Syriac words, and turns of expressions, occur in both his gospel and Acts of the Apostles; some also that imitate the genius of the Latin tongue. He cites Scripture according to the Septuagint, and not after the Hebrew text. St. Paul, in his Epistles, generally quotes the gospel in a manner the most conformable to St. Luke, as may be seen in the following instances; 1 Corinthians xi. 23. and 24. chap. xv. 5. The Marcionites would only receive the gospel of St. Luke, and from this they retrenched the first two chapters, with regard the birth of Jesus Christ, and only admitted ten of St. Paul's Epistles, as Tertullian and St. Epiphanius have remarked. Marcion embraced the errors of Cerdon: to these he added others, the offspring of his own brain. He began to disseminate his novel opinions at Rome, about the year of Christ 144. He could not bring himself to believe how a spirit, such as the human soul, could be shut up in a body, be subject to ignorance, to weakness, to pain; nor in what manner, or for what end, the great and good Lord, the Creator of spirits, could have thus degraded them. Revelation, which teaches us the fall of the first man, did not appear to the Marcionites, to solve the difficulty, since the first man was composed of a spiritual soul and a terrestrial body; they, moreover, imagined that an all-good, an all-powerful God, ought to have prevented the fall of man. No wonder then, that they refused to adopt the first two chapters of St. Luke, which contain

the miraculous births of Jesus and his precursor [John the Baptist]; as also sundry texts of the very scanty portions of holy Scriptures which their party chose to retain. But what does this shew? that *tradition*, in the first instance, must be admitted, to inform us what is authentic scripture; and, secondly, an *infallible Church-authority*, to inform us what is the genuine interpretation of the genuine text. Without the assistance of apostolical tradition and Church-authority, could any Seeker (even with the assistance of Brown's *Self-interpreting Bible*, in 2 vols. 4to.) rest secure, that he properly understood the disputed points of holy writ; that his, and no other interpretation, was the genuine sense of these mysterious words, when he was informed that by far the greater part of learned societies, and learned individuals, gave a widely different interpretation to the same texts. This freedom of expounding Scripture, by unassisted reason and private spirit, was the first germ of the daily increasing spread of sects and heresies; this is the nucleus, which, after enveloping itself like the comet, in much nebulous obscurity, terminates in a fiery tail, of portentous magnitude, the ruinous effects of which can only be prevented by a speedy return to first principles, *apostolical tradition, and Church-authority*.

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## LUKE 1

**Ver. 1.** *That have been accomplished.* [1] In the Protestant translation, *of things most surely believed*. They have followed Beza, and Erasmus: but other learned critics have shewn that the same Greek word often signifies to fulfil; and it is clearly proved by St. John Chrysostom.

**Ver. 3.** *Having diligently obtained.* Here we see, that although the Holy Ghost regulated the pen of the holy writers, that they might not err; they still employed human means to search and find out the truth of things they mentioned. Even so do general councils, and the president thereof, the holy pontiff, discuss and examine all causes by human means, although they have the promise from Jesus Christ of the aid, assistance, and direction of his holy Spirit; (St. John xvi. 13.) as is manifest from the very first council of the apostles, held at Jerusalem. (Acts xv. 7. and 28.) --- *Most excellent Theophilus.* This word, *Theophilus*, by its etymology, signifies a *lover of God*: but here we may rather understand some particular person, by the title given him of *most excellent*, or *best*: which, at that time, was given to persons in dignity; as to Felix, Acts xxiii. 26. and to Festus, Acts xxvi. 25. (Witham) --- *Greek: Kratiste*, may signify most powerful from *Greek: Kratos*, strength, or *Greek: Kratein*, to conquer; or, as most generally given, from *Greek: Kreiton*. --- *Greek: Theophilos*, may be interpreted either a lover of God, or one beloved of God. Whoever, therefore, loves God, and desires to be beloved by Him, should consider this gospel as penned for himself, and should preserve it as a pledge deposited in his hands. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 5.** The Almighty appointed Moses that there should be but one high priest at a time, to whom, at his decease, a successor should be chosen. This rule obtained until the time of David, by whom, by the inspiration of God, many were appointed at once. (1 Paralipomenon chap. xxiv.) According to this regulation, Zachary (Zacharias) is said to perform the office of priest, according to the order of his course. (Ven. Bede) --- Zacharias seems here to be described as high priest, who once year entered alone in the inward sanctuary with the blood of the victims, which he offered for himself and the sins of the people. (St. Ambrose) --- He was not chosen by a fresh lot to offer up incense, but by a previous lot, according to which the family of Abia succeeded to the office of high priest. The people waited without, according to Leviticus xvi. 112.; whilst the high priest carried the incense into the holy of holies, on the 10th day of the 7th month. (Ven. Bede) --- *Of the course of Abia.* [2] What we read in the Greek for *course*, is commonly put for the employment of *one day*, but here for the functions of a *whole week*. For by appointment of David, (1 Paralipomenon xxiv,) the descendants from Aaron were divided into 24 families; of which the eighth was Abia, from whom descended this Zacharias, who at this time was in the week of his priestly functions. (Witham) --- It is worthy of remark, that there were three Herods. The first was the one here spoken of, (surnamed Ascalonite, from his palace in the city of Ascalon, in Palestine) the same who murdered the Innocents. The second was the son of the first, (surnamed Antipas)

who derided Christ at the time of his passion, the same who beheaded the Baptist. The third was Herod Agrippa, who beheaded St. James, imprisoned St. Peter, and who afterwards, for his great pride, stricken by an angel, and devoured by worms. Our Saviour was born in the reign of the first Herod, by whom the prophecy of Jacob, related in the book of Genesis (chap. xlix,) was fulfilled: *The septre shall not be taken*, &c. Herod was an Idumæan, and made king of the Jews by the Romans. The Jews, after they entered the land of promise, were first governed by judges, until Saul: then by kings, until the Babylonian captivity; after that by high priests, until the time of Hyrcanus, whom Herod having killed, succeeded. From that period to the present day, they have been governed by strangers. (Ven. Bede, and Denis the Carthusian) --- Elizabeth was of the race of Aaron, by her father; but her mother was probably of the race of David, from whom the blessed Virgin, cousin of Elizabeth, descended. See below, ver. 36.

**Ver. 6.** *Both just, ... walking ... without blame.*[3] Not that in the sight of God they were exempt even from all lesser failings, which are called *venial* faults; but only from such sins as might make them forfeit the grace and favour of God. (Witham) --- Three things are here to be noticed: 1. that good men do keep all God's commandments, which some moderns declare to be impossible; 2. that men are justified not by imputation only of Christ's justice, nor by faith alone, but by walking in the commandments; 3. that keeping and doing the commandments, is properly our justification through Jesus Christ. The Greek word *dikaïomata*, is properly rendered by Catholics, *justifications* or commandments, because the keeping of them through Jesus Christ, is justification. But our separated brethren purposely avoid this word against the justification of the Catholics, as one of their leaders in innovation blushes not to advance. Hence Beza, in his annotations on the New Testament, ann. 1556, uses the word *constituta*, which his scholars render into English by *ordinances*. (Bristow)

**Ver. 9.** *It was his lot.* The priests drew lots for the different functions to be performed in the same week; and now it fell by lot to Zacharias, to burn or offer up incense, morning and evening, in that part of the temple called the *holy*, where was the altar of incense: Zacharias was in this part of the tabernacle. (Witham) --- See Exodus xxx. 6, 8.

**Ver. 10.** *And all the ... people were praying without:* i.e. in that part of the temple called the *court of the Israelites*. For the Jews themselves were not permitted to enter into the first part of the tabernacle, called the *holy*, much less into the second part of it, called the *holy of holies*; the people then prayed, and performed their private devotions, in that division of the temple called the court of the Israelites, and were there waiting for the coming out of the priest Zacharias. (Witham) --- We here see that the priest's functions profited the people, though they neither heard nor saw the priest, but only joined in intention with him; and so may the prayers of the priest in the Catholic Church, though offered up in an unknown tongue.

**Ver. 12.** The cause of this fear, was the general sentiment that obtained with the Jews, that they would die immediately on seeing an angel. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 13.** *Thy prayer is heard.* We cannot suppose, as St. Augustine observes, (lib. ii. QQ. Evang. chap i., tom. 3, part 2, p. 249. Ed. Ben.) that he was praying to have children, when his wife was so advanced in years; *that* he did not think possible; but he was praying for the people, and for the coming of the Messias. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. ii. de incomprehensibili, tom. 1, p. 454. Nov. Ed. Ben. (Witham) --- Zacharias so far despaired of having any offspring that he did not believe the angel, when he made him the promise. When therefore the angel says, *thy prayer is heard*, we must understand it of the prayer he offered in behalf of the people, to whom salvation and remission of sins were to be brought by Christ. The angel, moreover, told him of the birth of his son, who was to be the precursor of Christ. (St. Augustine) --- The son that is to be born of thee, will shew that thy prayer is heard, when he cries out, *behold the Lamb of God*. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It is always a mark of singular merit, whenever the Almighty either appoints or changes the name of a man. (Ven. Bede) --- The name of *John* is derived from the Hebrew word, *Jachanan*, which frequently occurs in the Old Testament, as 1 Paralipomenon iii. 15. and vi. 9. and xii. 12. &c. and signifies, *blessed with grace or divine favour*; see also in Isaiah xxx. 18, 19.

**Ver. 14.** This was fulfilled not only at his birth, but ever after by the Catholic Church, celebrating his nativity. (Haydock)

**Ver. 15.** After the angel had assured him of the joy this son should bring to many, he acquaints him of the excellency of his virtue. *He shall be great before the Lord.* He did not extend the boundaries of empire; he did not obtain the triumphs of war, and force captive and degraded kings to pay him homage: but, what is much greater, preaching in a desert, he renounced the pleasures of the world, and with the great fortitude repressed and subdued the concupiscence of the flesh. Therefore it is said, *he shall drink no wine, nor strong drink.* (St. Ambrose) --- *And shall drink no wine, nor strong drink:*[4] literally, *sicera*, by which is signified any liquor that is apt to make a man drunk, according to St. Jerome. (Witham) --- This prohibition of the angel was a part of the consecration of the Nazarites. See Numbers vi. 3. The word *sicera* properly signifies wine of the palm-tree; and next to wine of the grape, there was no more common liquor, none more intoxicating. (Bible de Vence) --- *And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb;* from which words some conjecture, that St. John the Baptist, though conceived in original sin, yet might have been freed from the guilt of it before he came into the world. Of this see St. Augustine, Ep. lvii. now Ep. clxxxvii. ad Dardanum. t. ii, p. 685. Ed. Ben. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Turn the hearts of the fathers, &c.* The angel applies these words (Malachias iv. 6.) to St. John the Baptist; telling his father, that he shall convert *many of the children of Israel*, &c. by bringing them to the knowledge of Christ. Secondly, that *he shall go before him*, or be his precursor and forerunner. --- *In the spirit and power of Elias;* i.e. St. John shall be the forerunner of Christ's first coming to redeem mankind, as Elias shall be the forerunner of Christ's second coming to judge the world. Thirdly, that St. John, by converting the Jews, shall also *turn the hearts of the fathers to the children*, &c. The meaning of which obscure words seems to be, that whereas Moses, Abraham, and the prophets, (whose souls were in a place of rest) knew by a revelation from God, that their children, the Jews, lived in sin and disobedience to the laws of God; and on this account were offended and displeased at them: now when they shall know that they have been converted by the preaching of St. John, they shall rejoice, and be reconciled to their children, the Jews: for as our Saviour tells us, (Luke xv. 7.) *there is joy in heaven upon any one sinner that doth penance.* The angel, to explain the foregoing words, adds, *and the incredulous to the wisdom and prudence of the just;* i.e. St. John's preaching shall make them truly wise and just. (Witham) --- With reason is he said to precede Christ, who was his forerunner both in his birth and in his death. In the spirit of prophecy, and in the power of abstinence, and patience, and zeal, they resembled each other; Elias was in the desert, St. John was in the desert also. The one sought not the favour of king Achab, the other despised the favour of Herod. The one divided the Jordan, the other changed it into a laver of salvation. The one is to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ's second coming, as the other was of his first. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 18.** *Whereby shall I know this?* Zacharias could not question the Divine Power, but he doubted of what the angel told him. (Witham) --- It was customary with the Jews, when they heard that any wonderful event was to take place, to inquire whether the Almighty had manifested his will by any supernatural sign. Zacharias puts this question to the angel, not through any doubt concerning the omnipotence of God, but because what was promised could not be compassed in the natural order of things: for, *I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years.* (Dionysius)

**Ver. 19.** The name *Gabriel* signifies, the strength of God; or, God is my strength. The angels are sometimes styled by proper names, in order to shew their respective duties; thus, no angel could better be appointed to declare the precursor, as also the Messiah himself, than he who was styled *the power of God:* since he came to declare the coming of one who was to destroy the power of the devil, and overthrow his kingdom. (Nicholas of Lyra) See Tobit xii. 15; Apocalypse i. 4. and viii. 2.

**Ver. 20.** On account of the many signs the angel had given, that what he said was true, the unbelief of Zacharias seemed inexcusable; for the angel appeared in a holy place, in the temple,

and during divine service: he, moreover, foretold what related to the redemption of all the people, and to the glory of God; from all which circumstances, Zacharias ought to have concluded, that it was a good angel, and that what he said would eventually come to pass. (Nicholas of Lyra) --- *Shalt be dumb, &c.* He seems to have been both dumb and deaf by the Greek text, and by what we may learn from ver. 62; where we find, that those who were present did not speak, but rather made *signs to him.* (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *After the days of his office were accomplished;* i.e. the weekly ministry; for during that time, the priests lodged in buildings joining to the temple, separated from their wives. (Witham) --- When it fell to the lot of any of the priests to offer incense, they not only separated from their wives, but left their house; wherefore it is said, *as soon as the day, &c.* As it was ordained that the priesthood should continue in the family of Aaron, it was necessary they should have wives. But, as we do not now so much seek after priests of the same family, as those who are virtuous, it has been decreed, that priests should observe perpetual continency, that they may be able to assist at all times at the altar. (Ven. Bede) --- For the law of perpetual celibacy of the clergy, See St. Jerome, lib. i. chap. ix. 19. advers Jovin. et. ep. 50; also St. Ambrose, in 1 Tim iii.

**Ver. 27.** The word Miriam, or Mary, is expounded by St. Jerome from different etymologies, to signify in Hebrew, *star of the sea*, and in Chaldaic, *lady*. Both interpretations admirably well agree with her, who is the glorious Queen of heaven, our patroness and star, to direct us in the stormy ocean of this world. --- "O you," cries out St. Bernard, "who find yourselves tossed to and fro in this tempestuous life, turn not your eyes away from the brightness of this star, if you would not be overwhelmed in these storms. If the winds of temptations arise; if you fall among the rocks of tribulation; look up to the star, call upon Mary. If you are agitated, and hard driven with the surges of pride, ambition, detraction, jealousy, or envy; look up to the star, call upon Mary. If anger, covetousness, or lust, beat furiously on the vessel of your soul; look up to the star, call upon Mary. If you are beginning to founder, and are just sinking into the gulf of melancholy and despair; think on Mary. In dangers, in distresses, in perplexities, think on Mary, call on Mary. Let her name be never absent from your mouth; from your mouth let it constantly descend into your heart; and, that you may obtain the suffrage of her prayers; both in life and death, never depart from the example of her pious conversation." (St. Bernard, hom. ii. super Missus est.)

**Ver. 28.** *Hail, full of grace:*[5] by the greatest share of divine graces granted to any creature. This translation, approved by the ancient Fathers, agrees with the ancient Syriac and Arabic versions. There was no need therefore to change it into *gracious*, with Erasmus; into *freely beloved*, with Beza; into *highly favoured*, with the Protestant translators. For if seven deacons (Acts vi. 3.) are said to be *full of the Holy Ghost*, as it is again said of St. Stephen, (Acts vii. 55.) and also of the same St. Stephen, (Acts vi. ver. 8.) that he *was full of grace*, (as the learned Dr. Wells translates it in his amendments made to the Protestant translation) why should any one be offended at this salutation given to the blessed mother of God; who would not have been raised to this highest dignity, had not her soul been first prepared for it by the greatest share of divine graces? --- *The Lord is with thee*, by his interior graces; and now, at this moment, is about to confer upon thee the highest of all dignities, by making thee truly the mother of God. (Witham) --- The Catholic Church makes frequent use of these words which were brought by the archangel from heaven, as well to honour Jesus Christ and his virgin Mother, as because they were the first glad tidings of Christ's incarnation, and man's salvation; and are the very abridgment and sum of the whole gospel. In the Greek Church, they are used daily in the Mass [the Divine Liturgy]. See the Liturgy of St. James, and that of St. John Chrysostom.

**Ver. 29.** *When she had heard.* In the Greek text, when she had seen; as if she also saw the angel, as St. Ambrose observed. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** It may perhaps in the first instance of reflection, appear shocking to our ideas, that a God should dwell in a human body; but does not the sun emit its rays into all kinds of places, without any detriment of its purity? How much more would the Sun of justice, assuming a most pure body, formed of the purest blood of the spotless Virgin, not only remain free from every the

least stain himself, but even impart additional sanctity to his virgin Mother. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 32.** *He ... shall be called;* i.e. according to the style of the Scriptures, he shall truly be the Son of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** Those are here called of the house of Jacob, who out of the multitude of the Jews believed in Christ. This is conformable to that text of St. Paul: *All are not Israelites that are of Israel, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed.* (Romans ix. 6, 8.) (St. John Chrysostom, hom. vii. on S. Matt.) --- *And of his kingdom there shall be no end:* which clearly shews it was not to be a temporal, but a spiritual and an eternal kingdom. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *How shall this be done?* She only asks about the manner. --- *Because I know not man.* [6] This answer, as St. Augustine takes notice, would have been to no purpose, had she not made a vow to God to live always a virgin. (Witham) --- Listen to the words of this pure Virgin. The angel tells her she shall conceive; but she insists upon her virginity, holding her purity in higher estimation than the promised dignity. (St. Gregory of Nyssa.) --- She did not doubt the truth of what the angel said, (as Calvin impiously maintained) but she wished it might not happen to the prejudice of her vowed virginity. (St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, Ven. Bede, Theophylactus, &c. &c.)

**Ver. 35.** *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, &c.* By the divine power thou shalt bring forth, and yet remain always a pure virgin. --- *And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called* (shall be) *the Son of God.* The second person of the ever blessed Trinity, being united to our human nature, remaining unchangeably the same God, and being born of the Virgin Mary; it must needs be true to say that God was born, that God suffered and died for us; and consequently that the blessed Virgin Mary was truly the mother of God, or of him that is truly God; though not the mother of the Godhead: as the Catholic Church declared in the council of Ephesus, (431) against the heretic Nestorius. (Witham) --- Seek not for natural order in things that transcend nature. You ask, *how shall this be done, since you know not man?* This, your ignorance of man, is the very reason why this will take place within you. For had you not been pure, you never would have been deemed worthy of so great a mystery. Not because marriage is bad, but because virginity is far more excellent. The common Lord of all ought in his birth to have something common with all mankind, and still something different. He was conceived and born in the womb like the rest of mankind, but he differed from them in being born of a virgin. (St. John Chrysostom, xlix. in Genes.)

**Ver. 36.** We find that Aaron, who was of the tribe of Levi, took a wife of the tribe of Juda, viz. Elizabeth, the sister of Naasson. In the successors of David we find that Joiada, the chief priest, took a wife of the family of David, viz. the daughter of Joram; from which it appears that both the royal and sacerdotal tribes were united, and that Mary and Elizabeth were relatives. It was certainly proper that Christ should be born of both these tribes, because he was in himself both king and priest. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 38.** *Behold the handmaid.* With all modesty and humility of heart and mind, the blessed Virgin consented to the divine will: and from that moment in her was conceived the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. (Witham) --- Thus ought the virgin, who brought forth meekness and humility itself, to shew forth an example of the most profound humility. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 39.** This city is generally supposed to be Hebron, a sacerdotal town, (Josue xxi. 11.) situated in the mountains, to the south of Juda, and about 120 miles from Nazareth. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 41.** *The infant leaped in her womb.* [7] According to the general opinion of the interpreters, this motion of the child at the time was not natural: and some think that God gave to St. John [the Baptist], even in his mother's womb, a passing knowledge of the presence of his Redeemer. See St. Augustine in the above cited letter to Dardanus. (Witham)

**Ver. 42.** In the same words she is pronounced blessed by Elizabeth, and by the angel Gabriel,



both inspired by the Holy Ghost, and this not only to the praise of Jesus, but for his sake, to the praise of Mary, calling her blessed, and her fruit blessed; and thus, as Ven. Bede asserts, holding her up to the veneration of both men and angels.

**Ver. 43.** *The mother of my Lord.* A proof that Christ was truly God, and the blessed Virgin Mary truly the mother of God. (Witham) --- Elizabeth was a just and blessed woman; yet the excellency of the mother of God does so far surpass that of Elizabeth, and of every other woman, as the great luminary outshines the smaller stars. (St. Jerome præf. in Sophon.)

**Ver. 47.** *In God my Saviour,* as appears by the Greek text,[8] though literally in Latin, *in God my salvation.* (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** *The humility of his handmaid*,[9] i.e. the humble, low, and abject condition; as perhaps might be translated both in this and in ver. 52. For the blessed Virgin does not here commend and praise her own virtue of humility; as divers interpreters observe. See St. Francis de Sales, in his introduction to a devout life, part 3, chap. vi. (Witham) --- As death entered into the world by the pride of our first parents, so was it proper that the path to life should be opened by the humility of Mary. (Ven. Bede) --- Not Elizabeth only, but all nations of believers are to call her blessed. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 51.** The wise men of the Gentiles, the Pharisees and Scribes, were powerful; but these the Almighty cast down, and exalted those, *who humbled themselves under his powerful hand.* (1 Peter v.) The Jews were proud in their strength, but their incredulity brought on them their humiliation; whilst the low and mean among the Gentiles, have by faith ascended to the summit of perfection. (St. Cyril of Alexandria in St. Thomas Aquinas' catena aurea.) (Witham)

**Ver. 53.** The Jews were rich in the possession of the law, and the doctrines of the prophets; but, as they would not humbly unite themselves to the incarnate word [Jesus Christ], they were sent away empty, without faith, without knowledge, deprived of all hopes of temporal goods, excluded from the terrestrial Jerusalem, and also from that which is in heaven. But the Gentiles, oppressed with hunger and thirst, by adhering to their Lord, were filled with all spiritual gifts. (St. Basil in Ps. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 63.** As then in circumcision, so now in baptism, names are given. And as we see here, and is all the Old Testament, great respect was had of names, so must we be aware of profane and secular names, and rather, according to the *catechism of the council of Trent*, take names of saints and holy persons, which may put us in mind of their virtues. (De Bap. in fine.)

**Ver. 69.** As Christ was born of the race of David, he is here called the horn of salvation in the house of David. As Isaias says, *a vineyard is planted in the horn*, chap. v. --- *A powerful salvation*. [10] According to the letter both of the Latin and Greek text, *a horn of salvation*. But as it is generally agreed, that by *horn*, in the phraseology of the Scriptures, is understood strength and *power*, and that *horn* sounds awkwardly in English, and other languages, I hope it may be literally enough translated, *a powerful salvation*. (Witham)

**Ver. 71.** *That he would save us, &c.* Literally, *salvation from our enemies*. The construction and sense is, that God, as he had declared by his prophets, would grant us salvation, or would save us. (Witham) --- This is not to be understood of temporal, but of spiritual enemies. For the Lord Jesus, strong in battle, came to destroy all our enemies, and thus to deliver us from their snares and temptations. (Origen, hom. xvi.) --- *He is that King of Glory, the Lord strong and powerful, the Lord powerful in battle.* (Psalm xxiii.)

**Ver. 72.** *To remember his holy covenant*, i.e. of his promise, or of the covenant made with Abraham, that he would bless all nations in his seed. (Witham) --- At the coming of Christ, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were made partakers of his mercy. For, we cannot suppose that they who saw his day, and were glad, should not participate in the fruit of his coming; since St. Paul

says: *he maketh peace through the blood of the cross, both to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven.* (Colossians i. 20.) (Origen, hom. x.)

**Ver. 73-74.** According to *the oath which he swore*.<sup>[11]</sup> The words *according to*, are no addition to the letter of the text: they only barely express what is here signified; to wit, that God swore to Abraham, that he would *grant us*, or make it come to pass, that *being delivered from our enemies*, sin and the devil, *we should* be in a condition *to serve him without fear, in holiness, &c.* (Witham)

**Ver. 75.** It is possible, we here see, to have true justice, not only in the sight of man, or by the imputation of God, but in his sight; and the coming of Christ was to give men such justice.

**Ver. 77.** Jesus is our salvation, and St. John [the Baptist] was sent to give to the people the knowledge of this salvation: he bore testimony of Christ; (Theophylactus) by whom alone remission of sins can be obtained.

**Ver. 78.** The *rising* light,<sup>[12]</sup> or the rising sun, *hath visited us* from on high. The Rheims translation hath the *Orient*, the Protestant, the *day-spring*. Both seem more obscure than they need be. The Latin, as well as the Greek, hath a noun substantive, by which Christ himself is signified. Yet the same word, in both languages, is sometimes taken for a *rising light*, and sometimes for a *bud*, or branch; in which latter sense it is expounded by St. Jerome. (Comment in Zachar. p. 1737, tom. 3, Ed. Ben.) But in this place it is rather taken for a light that riseth, by the following words, *to enlighten them that sit in darkness, &c.* (Witham) --- *The Orient*. It is one of the titles of the Messias, the true light of the world, and the sun of justice. (Challoner) --- By this he shews that God has forgiven us our sins, not through our merits, but through his own most tender mercy; (Theophylactus) and that we are to solicit this forgiveness through the bowels of his most tender mercy.

**Ver. 79.** The Gentiles were in darkness, and given to the adoration of idols, till the light arose and dispelled the darkness, spreading on all sides the splendour of truth. (St. Basil on Isai.) --- With reason it is said in this place, *who sit in darkness*; for we did not walk in darkness, but sat down, as if destitute of all hopes of being delivered. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xiv. on S. Matt.) --- Then our steps are directed in the paths of peace, when in our every action we act conformably to the grace of the Almighty. (St. Gregory, hom. xxxii.)

**Ver. 80.** St. John remained in the desert till the 30th year of his age. The reason why he concealed himself so long was because he feared the cruelty of Herod; for, though he was not under his jurisdiction, not being on the confines of Bethlehem, yet on account of the remarkable events that took place at his birth, by which he was declared the precursor of the Messias, he had reason to dread the cruelty of the jealous and suspicious Herod. Peter of Alexandria, Nicephorus, Baronius, and others, say, that when he was yet in his mother's arms, he was conveyed into the desert, and there concealed in the caves and fissures of the rocks, where people concealed themselves on the approach of their enemies. Cedrinus adds, that 40 days after their flight, the mother of St. John died; after which, an angel is said to have undertaken the care of the Baptist; but most probably this office was performed by some attendant on St. Elizabeth. (Tirinus) --- The Baptist remained in the desert till he began his public ministry, which by a law of the Jews could not be much before he had attained his 30th years. He is styled by antiquity the first hermit. See St. Jerome in Vita Pauli.

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[1] Ver. 1. Completæ sunt. Greek: *peplerophoremēnon*. I know the pretended differences betwixt Greek: *plerophoreisthai*, and *plerousthai*. But divers learned critics, after St. John Chrysostom take notice, that they are many times taken for the same. So 2 Timothy iv. 5. Ministerium tuum imple. Greek: *plerophoreson*, *toutesti*, says St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *plerosou*. log. th. p. 371. Ed. Savil. and on the 17th ver. of the same chapter, ut per me impletur, Greek: *plerophorethe*, *toutesti*, *plerothe*. (Ibid. p. 376.)

- [2] Ver. 5. De vice Abia, *Greek: ex ephemerias*.
- [3] Ver. 6. Sine querela, *Greek: amemptoi*, irreprehensibiles.
- [4] Ver. 15. Siceram, *Greek: sikera*, from the Hebrew *shecar*, or *shacar*, ebrius fuit.
- [5] Ver. 28. Gratia plena. See Lucas Burgensis on this place.
- [6] Ver. 34. *Quia virum non cognosco*. St. Augustine, quod profecto non diceret, nisi Deo Virginem se ante vovisset. (De Virginitate, chap. iv, tom. 6, p. 343. Ed. Ben.)
- [7] Ver. 41. Exultavit, *Greek: eskirtese*. Which signifies to leap, or skip like lambs, &c.
- [8] Ver. 47. Salutari meo, *Greek: soteri mou*, Salvatori meo.
- [9] Ver. 48. Humilitatem, *Greek: tapeinosin*, not *tapeinophrosunen*. By which latter word is signified the virtue of humility of mind and heart. But humilis, and humilitas, in Latin, even in Cicero, is put to signify vilem et abjectam conditionem: and so also *Greek: tapeinos*, and *tapeinosis* in Greek, as in the 70 [the Septuagint] 1 King i. 11. the Latin Vulgate for *Greek: tapeinesin*, has afflictionem famulæ tuæ. And this is the sense in this and the 52d verse; as it is confirmed by the antithesis, or opposition, betwixt those of a *high*, and of a low state or condition.
- [10] Ver. 69. Cornu salutis, *Greek: keras soterias*. Abscissum est cornu Moab. (Jeremias xlviii. 25.) Cornu David. (Psalm lxxiv. 5.) See also Psalm cxxxi. 17, &c.
- [11] Ver. 73. Jusjurandum quod juravit, *Greek: orkon on* in the accusative case, for *Greek: kat orkon*, secundum juramentum. Ibid. daturum se nobis, i.e. se effecturum, &c. *Greek: tou dounai emin*, &c.
- [12] Ver. 78. Oriens. *Greek: e anatole*. Vulgo ortus Solis. See Mr. Legh Crit. Sacra on *Greek: anatello*, orior, germino, S. Hierom [St. Jerome] on Jeremias chap. xxiii. ver. 5. tom. 3, p. 634. suscitabo David germen justum, sive orientem justum. And on Zacharias vi. 12, p. 1737. Ecce vir, oriens nomen ejus, where he expounds it by *Greek: anatole*, *anaphue*, and *Blastema*.

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## LUKE 2

**Ver. 1.** By the *whole world*, is understood the Roman empire. (Witham) --- This decree was promulgated in the 752d year of Rome, in the 3970th year of the world, and the 42d year of the reign of Augustus, when there was universal peace, and the temple of Janus remained shut for 12 years. (Jansenius, concord. Evan.) --- It was the custom among the Jews to be numbered according to their tribes and families. Hence arose the necessity of the journey of the Holy Family to Nazareth [to Bethlehem?]. This enrolment probably included the number, as well as the property of each family, that the taxes might be proportioned. (Jansenius, concord. Evan.)

**Ver. 2.** By *Cyrinus*, or Publius Supp. Quirinus. (Witham) --- This was the first census made by Quirinus, governor of Syria: nine years after the birth of Christ, this same Quirinus was charged to make a second, when Judea was reduced to a Roman province, by the deposition and exile of Archelaus.

**Ver. 3.** *Into his own city*, i.e. the city of every one's family. Now Joseph and Mary, being both of the *family of David*, were obliged to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, where by Providence, according to the predictions of the prophets, the Messiah was to be born. (Witham) --- This

decree took place by a special providence of the Almighty, that every one might be compelled to go to his own country; and that thereby the Saviour of Israel might more easily escape the snares of the treacherous Herod. (Ven. Bede) --- This circumstance, moreover, was a public testimony, to be kept in the archives of the country, of the birth and descent of the Messias. Augustus only meant to enumerate his subjects, but among them was numbered his God.

**Ver. 4.** The evangelist here mentions the city of David, to remind us how exactly that was fulfilled, which God had promised to David, that an everlasting king should be born of him: and the reason why the inspired writer was content to mention the relationship between Joseph and David, omitting that of the Blessed Virgin and the royal prophet, was, because in the law it was commanded that persons of the same family should intermarry; hence it is added in the subsequent verse, *with Mary, his espoused wife*. (St. Irenæus, hæc. lib. iii. chap. 11.)

**Ver. 7.** *In a manger* within a stable, or place where beasts were sheltered. And it is the common opinion that an ox and an ass were there at that time. See Baronius, Tillemont, &c. (Witham) --- O wonderful mystery! O astonishing condescension of a God-man! From his birth he takes upon himself poverty. Had such been his pleasure, Christ might, at his birth, have shaken the heavens by his power, and terrified all nature by his majesty. But these were not the attendants of his coming; for he came not to destroy, but to save; not to display riches, but to teach us a contempt of human grandeur. He therefore condescended not only to become man, but even *the vilest of men*. (Metaphrastes)

**Ver. 11.** Because the light of life is risen to us, dwelling in the region of the shadow of death. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 12.** On the eastern side of the town of Bethlehem, say St. Justin, St. Jerome, &c. there was a cave cut in the side of a rock, in which was a manger used by the people of those environs; so that these shepherds easily understood the angel, who told them they should find him laid in a manger. Sts. Jerome, Gregory of Nazianzus, Cyril, say that they found the child between an ox and an ass, according to the version of the Septuagint. Habacuc iii. 2.: *You shall find him laid between two beasts*. In the place where this crib was, St. Helen built a magnificent church in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary. Ven. Bede says that she built another in honour of the tree shepherds; whence St. Bernard concludes, that there were only three shepherds that came to adore the divine infant in the manger. (Tirinus) --- It might be necessary to give them notice of this humble appearance of the Messias, to encourage them to go and pay him their homage. (Barradius)

**Ver. 14.** *And on earth, peace to men of good will*. [1] I had translated, *peace to men of his good will*, looking upon the sense to be, that a peace and reconciliation were offered, and given to men from the good will and mercy of God. The ordinary Greek copies altogether favour this exposition. And Bellarmine (lib. ii, de Verb. D. chap. 11.) is so convinced of this sense, that he brings it for an instance of one of those places, in which the true sense of the Latin is to be found by the Greek text; which is many times true: but Bellarmine might not take notice, that several of the best Greek manuscripts are conformable to the Latin Vulgate, and have *peace to men of good will*; as it is also expounded by divers of the ancient Fathers, that peace is offered to men of good will, to those who by the grace of God are disposed to believe and obey the Gospel-doctrine. And upon this, having advised with others, I did not think fit to change the former Rheimish translation. (Witham) --- The reason why the will is designated in preference to any other power of the soul, is, because the will moves the rest; consequently the goodness or badness of an action depends chiefly on the will. By this also the angels wished to shew, that the peace which Christ came to bring into the world, was the internal peace of our souls, of which the external peace that subsisted under Augustus, was a figure. (Nicholas of Lyra) --- Peace is made on earth, since human nature, before an enemy of God, is now reconciled and united to him by his incarnation. (Theophylactus) --- In this hymn of the angels there is a remarkable difference observable in some of the Greek and Latin copies. The latter have it according to this text, *men of good will*; the former, *good will among men, or to men*. Greek: *Eudokia*, signifies the gratuitous

benevolence of God towards man. So that this sentence seems divided into three parts: glory to God, peace on earth, and good will to men. (Jansenius, conc. Evang.) --- The birth of Christ giveth not peace of mind, or salvation, but to such as are of good will, because he worketh not our good against our wills, but with the concurrence of our will. (St. Augustine, quæst. ad Simplic. lib. 1. q. 2. t. 4.)

**Ver. 15.** The word which always was, let us see how it is made for us; that which we could not see, when it was the word, let us see because it is made flesh. (Ven. Bede) --- See how particularly the Scripture weighs the meaning of every word. The shepherds hastened to see the word, for when the flesh of the Lord is seen, the word is seen, which is the Son. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 17.** They saw this with the eyes of their body, but with their internal eyes they discovered other wonders, viz. that he, who lay there in such great poverty, was their Messiah, their great King, and the Son of God. (Barradius)

**Ver. 19.** Mary kept all these things, and compared what was accomplished in her, concerning the Lord, with what had been written of him by the prophets. (Ven. Bede) --- She considered in her heart the arguments of faith. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 21.** *Should be circumcised*; which might be done not only in the temple, or in a synagogue, but in any house. (Witham) --- Many reasons may be alleged why our Saviour submitted to the painful and humbling knife of circumcision: 1. to manifest to the whole world the reality of his human nature, and the difference between his divinity and humanity; 2. to shew he approved of circumcision, which he had instituted; 3. to prove that he was of the seed of Abraham; 4. to teach us humility and obedience, by observing the law to which he was not bound; 5. that by receiving the burthen of the law, he might free those that were under the law, (Galatians iii.); and lastly, that the Jews might have no excuse for rejecting him, because he was uncircumcised. (St. Epiphanius and Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 22.** *Of her purification.* The blessed Virgin mother stood not in need of this ceremony, to which she submitted herself, as her Son did to that of *circumcision*. (Witham) --- Whence St. Lawrence Justinian in his sermon on the purification, very well observes: grace raised the Virgin above the law; humility subjected her to it. Jesus Christ, in subjecting himself to the law of Moses, has left us an example to princes and magistrates, to obey their own laws; for then they may expect them to be observed by others, when themselves shew respect to them. (Barradius.)

**Ver. 23.** *Every male opening the womb.*[2] This translation is more conformable to the doctrine of the Fathers, that Christ was born without opening the womb; which Ven. Bede calls the doctrine of the Catholic Church. (Witham) --- See Exodus xiii. 2. and Numbers viii. 16.

**Ver. 24.** This was the offering of the poorer classes.

**Ver. 25.** *A man ... named Simeon*, whom some conjecture to have been one of the Jewish priests. --- *Waiting for the consolation of Israel*, for the happy coming of the Messiah. --- *And the Holy Ghost was in him*, by the spirit of grace and of prophecy. (Witham) --- The consolation here expected by Holy Simeon, was the coming of the Messiah, and the consequent redemption of mankind from sin and the devil; not a redemption only, as some carnal Jews thought, from the power of temporal enemies. These supposed the Messiah was to come in order to raise them in power above all nations, to whom before his coming they had been subject. (St. Gregory of Nyssa in Dionysius) --- Many have pretended that Simeon was a priest; the best and oldest interpreters say he was a laic. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 26.** *And he had received an answer, ... that he should not see death*; i.e. die. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *And he came by the spirit*, or moved by the holy Spirit. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *Thy salvation*; i.e. the Saviour, whom thou hast sent. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Before the face of all people*; not of Israel only, but also as a *light* to be revealed to the Gentiles, the spiritual children of Abraham: to whom also the promises were made. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** In the Greek, *Joseph and the mother of Jesus*. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 34.** *Is set for the ruin*. Christ came for the redemption and salvation of all men: but Simeon prophesies what would happen in consequence of the wilful blindness and obstinacy of *many*. (Witham) --- Not that God sent his Son for the fall of any man; but that many, by their own perverseness, in wilfully refusing to receive and obey him, would take occasion of falling. (Challoner) --- *And for a sign which shall be contradicted*, to signify that Christ, and his doctrine, should be as it were a *mark*, or *butt*, against whom the Jews should discharge the arrows and darts of their malice. (Witham) --- Hence St. Paul, (2 Corinthians ii. 16.) *We are to one the odour of death unto death, but to the other the odour of life unto life*.

**Ver. 35.** *And thy own soul a sword shall pierce*. These words, which figuratively express the grief of the blessed Virgin mother, when present at the death of her Son, are to be taken by way of a parenthesis. --- *That out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed*, and these are to be joined with what went before; to wit, that child shall be a *sign of contradiction*, *set unto the fall and resurrection of many*, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed and disclosed; when some shall believe, and others remain in their obstinacy. (Witham) --- Ven. Bede, and many others, understand this of the sharp sorrow, which wounded the soul of the blessed Virgin Mary, at the time of Christ's passion. (Barradius) --- Carthusianus [Denis the Carthusian?] and Jansenius explain this passage as follows: Behold, this child is placed for a sign that shall be contradicted, which as a sword of most poignant grief will pierce thy soul, O Virgin! But Christ shall be contradicted, that the thoughts of the Jews may be revealed from many hearts, and it may appear who among them are good, and who are wicked and hypocrites. (Barradius)

**Ver. 36.** *Anna, a prophetess*. She was another witness that Jesus was the Messiah, venerable for age, and more for her piety. --- *And had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity*; i.e. had been seven years a wife: and from the death of her husband, had remained always a widow: now 84 years of age: who *departed not from the temple*, but was constantly there at the times of prayer, with *fastings and prayers, serving God day and night*. (Witham)

**Ver. 40.** *The child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom*, and (ver. 52) *increased in wisdom and age*. The Arians from this, pretend to prove that Christ was not truly God, who cannot advance or increase in wisdom. The true meaning is, that Jesus, as he advanced in age as man, gave greater marks of his divine wisdom, and discovered himself full of knowledge, wisdom, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 41.** How can we account for what is related in this verse, that his parents went up every year to Jerusalem, during the childhood of Jesus, when, as we are taught in other parts, his parents did not dare to fix their abode in Jerusalem, for fear of Archelaus: but this, says St. Augustine, will not be very difficult to answer; for, it might be easier for them to ascend up to Jerusalem on these particular occasions, without being noticed in so numerous a crowd, and privately return; though it might not be prudent for them to fix their habitation there, lest they might be too much noticed: and, as no one has yet informed us how long Archelaus continued to reign, what St. Luke relates might have taken place after the death of that prince. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 44.** It may be asked how the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph could possibly have come so far without missing him; but we must take notice, that when the people went up to the temple from remote parts of Judea, the men went in one company, and the women in a separate company, whilst the children went in either company indifferently: so that St. Joseph imagined that he was with Mary, his mother, whilst she imagined he was with St. Joseph. (Nicholas of Lyra)

**Ver. 49.** *I must be about the things that are my Father's?* By these words he shewed, that not St. Joseph, but only God, was his father. (Witham)

**Ver. 50.** *They understood not, &c.* That is, knew not when, or by what means, Christ designed to make himself known to the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 51.** *Was subject to them.* Astonishing humility! which the Son of God was pleased to teach by his example, as also obedience to parents. (Witham) --- The evangelist relates nothing of our Saviour from the age of twelve till the age of thirty, except that he was subject to St. Joseph and the blessed Virgin. The divine Spirit shewing by this, that nothing is so great and amiable in Christians, as ready obedience to the directions of their superiors. (Barradius) --- All children are hereby taught what subjection and obedience is due from them to their parents.

**Ver. 52.** Not that he was wiser at any future period of his life, that he was at the moment of his conception, but this is said, because he chose to manifest increasing signs of wisdom as he increased in years. --- In the same manner also he increased in grace, by displaying, as he advanced in age, the gifts of grace with which he was endowed; and by this excited men to the praise of God, from the consideration of favours God had bestowed upon him; and thus he conduced to the honour of God, and the salvation of men. (St. Gregory) --- The sun, always equally brilliant in itself, is said to increase in splendour, till it has reached its meridian brilliancy.

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[1] Ver. 14. Pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. The Greek copies, *eirene, en anthropois eudokia*, hominibus bona voluntas; but the author of the Latin Vulgate must have read, *Greek: anthropois eudokias*, which reading is found in some ancient Greek manuscripts in the Alexandrian, that called of Cambridge, and others. The common reading of the Fathers is, bonæ voluntatis, and not bona voluntas; but then some expounded it thus: pas sit hominibus, qui habent bonam voluntatem, scilecet per Dei gratiam. Others thus: sit pax bonæ voluntatis divinæ hominibus; which sense and construction Lucas Brugensis prefers. And what confirms this exposition is, that *Greek: eudokia*, and *Greek: eudokein*, are commonly applied when the will of God is signified; yet sometimes also, *Greek: eudokia* signifies the good will of men; as Philippians i. 15; Romans x. 1. &c.

[2] Ver. 23. Omne masculinum adaperiens vulvam, *Greek: pan arsen dianoigon metran*, on which words Ven. Bede says: quod ait Lucas, adaperiens vulvam, consuetæ nativitatis more loquitur ... sed juxta fidem Catholicam exiit clauso Virginis utero, &c.

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### LUKE 3

**Ver. 1.** *Pilate being governor of Judea*, literally, *procurator*; i.e. with a subordination to the president of Syria. (Witham) --- This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the great, mentioned in Chap. i, ver. 5.

**Ver. 2.** *Under the high priests, Annas and Caiphas.* There was properly but one high priest at a time; and Caiphas had this office and title all the ten years that Pilate governed Judea. See Josephus, lib. xviii. Antiq. chap. iii. --- In these short notes I shall not pretend to examine the chronological difficulties, as to Christ's birth, death, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** To all who read, it is plain, that St. John [the Baptist] not only preached baptism, but likewise conferred it upon many; yet, he could not give baptism to the remission of sins. (St. Gregory, hom. xx.) --- When the victim was not yet immolated, how could they obtain remission of sins? How could St. Luke say, *preaching the baptism of penance, for the remission of sins*? The ignorant Jews not considering the greatness of their transgressions, St. John came exhorting

them to acknowledge their sins, and do penance for them; that being converted, and truly contrite, they might seek after their Redeemer, and thus obtain remission of their offences. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. x. in Matt.) --- From these words originated an opinion, that the baptism of John remitted sins. Thus Prudentius, in his hymn on St. John:

Hortatur ille primus, et Doctor novæ  
Fuit salutis, nam sancto in flumine  
Veterum pictas lavit errorum notas.

The fallacy of this sentiment, now universally exploded, may be detected from two passages of Scripture: 1. Where John himself declares that he does not baptize with the Holy Ghost; and secondly, in the Acts, (Chap. xix) where St. Paul orders those who had only been baptized by John, and had not heard of the Holy Ghost, to be rebaptized. We must then conclude, that St. John's baptism was only a ceremony or initiation, by which they enrolled themselves as his disciples, to do penance, as a preparation for the remission of sins by means of the second baptism, viz. of Jesus Christ. (Jansenius, Evan. Conc.)

**Ver. 5.** *Every valley, &c.* If these words, in one sense, were a prediction of the deliverance of the Israelites from their captivity, (Isaias xl. 3.) and an admonition to level the roads for those that were to return, they also signified the redemption of mankind from the slavery of sin; and that all obstacles, which retard this benefit, should be removed, and also that the proud should be depressed, and the humble receive graces. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** This text is given according to the Septuagint.

**Ver. 7.** This saint of the desert, seeing all the inhabitants of Palestine surrounding and admiring him, was not elated with the honour, but openly and severely rebuked them. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xi. on S. Matt) --- According to St. Matthew, the Baptist addressed these words principally to the Pharisees and Sadducees, there and then present.

**Ver. 8.** It is one thing to bring forth fruits of penance, and another to bring forth *worthy fruits*. We should know that the man who has committed nothing unlawful, may have a right to use the lawful things of the world, and can perform works of piety, without forsaking innocent enjoyments, unless he pleases. But, if he has fallen into great crimes, let him abstain from what is lawful, as much as he has transgressed, by yielding to guilt. Nor is equal penance required of him who has sinned little, and of him who has fallen into many crimes. And let those, whose consciences convict them, labour to lay up a treasure of good works, proportioned to the injury they have done themselves by their sins. (St. Gregory, hom. xx. in Evang.) --- It is not sufficient for penitents to forsake their sins, they must also bring forth worthy fruits, according to that of the psalmist, *decline from evil, and do good*. (Psalm xxxvi.) As it is not enough to extract the dart; and external application is also necessary. He says not *fruit*, but *fruits*, to shew the abundance of good works we ought to perform. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. x. on S. Matt.) --- He does not mean to say that they did not descend from Abraham, but that their descending from Abraham would avail them nothing, unless they kept up the succession of his virtues. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xi. and xii. on S. Matt.) --- What can those be thought but stones, who have given themselves to the adoration of stones; to which, says the psalmist, they are assimilated, who place their trust in them? By this the Baptist prophesies, that faith shall be infused into the stony hearts of the Gentiles, who by faith shall become the children of Abraham. (St. Ambrose) --- Consider, says St. John Chrysostom, how St. John draws them from boasting of their pedigree, and trusting to their descent from Abraham, to place their hope of salvation in the practice of penance and a holy life. (hom. xi.) --- A lesson this for Catholics, not to expect to find mercy at the last day, for being members of the true religion, unless they live up to the maxims which it prescribes. *If I should have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.* (1 Corinthians xiii. 2.)

**Ver. 9.** By this example is meant that anger of God, which the Jews raised against themselves by their impiety towards their Messias. The axe is laid to the root of the tree, for the branches are already lopt off; but the tree was not rooted up, *for a remnant of Israel shall be saved.* (St. Cyril,



lib. 3. on Isai. xl.)

**Ver. 11.** *He that hath two coats, &c.* St. John exhorts them to works of charity towards the poor, by giving what is superfluous. (Witham) --- Here we are taught that whatever we have more than our own wants require, must be bestowed on those who are in need; for the love of that God, of whom we have received all. (St. Basil, in Avar.) --- Charity to the poor is frequently recommended in Scripture, as a powerful method of redeeming sin, and reconciling us to divine mercy. This was Daniel's advice to king Nabuchodonosor: "May my counsel please thee, O king, and do thou redeem thy sins with alms and mercy to the poor." (Daniel iv.) Hence St. John Chrysostom says: "The poor are physicians, and their hands are an ointment for your wounds." (hom. xiv. in ep. 1. ad Tim.) --- See the unbounded love of God; he offers us his mercy, provided we will relieve our indigent brethren! (Haydock)

**Ver. 12.** The Baptist exhorts worldlings to abstain from every species of fraud, that by first restraining all desires of the goods of others, they may at length come to communicate some of their own to their neighbours. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 13.** *Do nothing more.* You who are military men, exact no more of the people than what is allowed and appointed you. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** The Baptist knew that such as engage in war, are not murderers, but ministers of the law; not avengers of injuries, but defenders of the public weal. Had he thought otherwise, he would have said: "cast away your arms, abandon the service, never strike, maim, or destroy any one:" these are not the things which are blameable in the military, but their cruelty, their revenge, their implacable dispositions, and lust of power. (St. Augustine, lib. 22. cont. Faust.)

**Ver. 15.** Many reasons might have induced the people to think that John was the Christ: 1. The wonders that took place at his birth and conception, his mother being very old, and without any prospect of offspring: 2. the excellence of his preaching, his mortified life, and the novelty of his baptism; and thirdly, the report which then generally prevailed among the Jews, that the Messiah was already come; on account of the coming of the magi, and the murder of the infants by Herod: both which circumstances were probably fresh in their memory; and several perhaps, who witnessed them, were still living. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 16.** See Matthew iii. 11. That baptism cannot be valid, in which the name of the Holy Ghost *only* is invoked. For, the tradition concerning life-giving grace, must be preserved entire. To add or to omit any thing, may exclude from life everlasting. For, as we believe, so also are we baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (St. Basil, lib. de Spirit. Sanc. chap. xxii.) --- *Fire.* This is a metaphor, to signify the Holy Ghost and his gifts, particularly the fire of divine love to the expiation of sins, and is very common in Scripture. Sometimes also he is represented by water, as in St. John iv. 10, et dein. and vii. 38.-9; Isaias xliv. &c. &c. Hence, in the hymn to the Holy Ghost, the Church uses both figures.

Thou who art call'd the Paraclete,  
Best gift of God above,  
The living Spring, the living Fire,  
Sweet unction and love.

**Ver. 17.** By the barn-floor is here prefigured the Church of Christ, in which many are called, but few are chosen. This *perfect* cleansing of the floor, as it is in the Greek, is performed both here when the wicked, on account of their open crimes, are excluded from the communion of the faithful by the Church; or, on account of their hidden sins, are after death by infinite justice chastised; but most especially at the end of the world, when the Son of man shall send his angels to gather from his kingdom all scandals. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 19.** See in St. Mark vi. 17. *The wife of his brother* (Philip.) The Greek adds the name, and he is also named in St. Mark; but he is a different person from the tetrarch, mentioned in chap. iii.

ver. 1. (Bible de Vence) --- It was not at this time that John [the Baptist] was cast into prison; but, as St. John [the evangelist] relates, after our Saviour had begun to work miracles, and after his baptism. St. Luke anticipates this event, in order to describe more strongly the malice of Herod; who, whilst he saw multitudes flocking to hear the words of John, his own soldiers believing, and all the people receiving baptism, still could despise the Baptist, could imprison him, and put him to death. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 21.** The motive of his baptism, as he himself informs us, was, that he himself might fulfil all justice. What is here meant by justice, but that obligation of doing first ourselves what we wish others to do? --- Let not one then refuse the laver of grace, since Christ did not refuse the laver of penance. (St. Ambrose) --- Although all our sins are forgiven in baptism, still the frailty of the flesh is not yet perfectly strengthened. For, after passing the red sea, we rejoice at the destruction of the Egyptians, but still we must fight with assurance of the grace of Christ, against the enemies we shall undoubtedly meet with in the desert of this world, till at length we arrive at our true country. (Ven. Bede) --- It is said *the heavens were opened*, because they had been hitherto shut. The sheepfolds of heaven and earth are now untied under the one Shepherd of the sheep: heaven is opened, and man, though formed of the earth, is admitted to the company of angels. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 22.** The reason why the Holy Ghost shewed himself in the shape of a dove, was because he could not be seen in the substance of his divinity. But why a dove? To express that simplicity acquired in the sacrament of baptism. *Be ye simple as doves*; to signify that peace bestowed by baptism, and prefigured by the olive branch which the dove carried back to the ark, a true figure of the Church, and which was the only security from the destructive deluge. (St. Ambrose) --- You will object: Christ, though he was God, would not be baptized till the age of 30, and do you order baptism to be received sooner? When you say, *though he was God*, you solve the difficulty. For, he stood not in need of being purified at all; of course, there could be no danger in deferring his baptism. But you will have much to answer for, if, being born in corruption, you pass out of this world without the garment of incorruption. (Gregory of Nazianzus, orat. 40.)

### Remarks on the two Genealogies of Jesus Christ.

To make some attempt at an elucidation of the present very difficult subject of inquiry, we must carry in our minds, 1. That in the Scripture language the word *begat*, applies to the remote, as well as the immediate, descendant of the ancestor; so that if Marcus were the son, Titus the grandson, and Caius the great-grandson of Sempronius, it might, in the language of Scripture, be said, that Sempronius begat Caius. This accounts for the omission of several descents in St. Matthew. 2. The word *begat*, applies not only to the natural offspring, but to the offspring assigned to the ancestor by law. 3. If a man married the daughter of an only child of another, he became in the view of the Hebrew law the son of that person, and thus was a son assigned to him by law. The two last positions shew in what sense Aorobabel was the son both of Neri and Salathiel, and Joseph the son both of Jacob and of Heli, or Joachim. --- "St. Matthew, in descending from Abraham to Joseph, the spouse of the blessed Virgin, speaks of a son *properly* so called, and by way of *generation*, Abraham begot Isaac, &c. But St. Luke in ascending from Jesus to God himself, speaks of a son properly or improperly so called. On this account he make use of an indeterminate expression, in saying, *the son of Joseph, who was of Heli*. That St. Luke does not always speak of a son properly called, and by way of generation, appears from the first and last he names; for Jesus was only the putative son of Joseph, because Joseph was the spouse of Mary, the mother of Christ; and Adam was only the son of God by *creation*. This being observed, we must acknowledge in the genealogy in St. Luke, two sons improperly so called, that is, two sons-in-law, instead of sons. As among the Hebrews, the women entered not into the genealogy, when a house finished by a daughter, instead of naming the daughter in the genealogy, they named the son-in-law, who had for father-in-law the father of his wife. The two sons-in-law mentioned in St. Luke are Joseph, the son-in-law of Heli, and Salathiel, the son-in-law of Neri. This remarks clears up the difficulty. Joseph, the son of Jacob, in St. Matthew, was the son-in-law of Heli, in St. Luke; and Salathiel, the son of Jechonias, in St. Matthew, was the

son-in-law of Neri, in St. Luke. Mary was the daughter of Heli, Eliacim, or Joacim, or Joachim. Joseph, the son of Jacob, and Mary, the daughter of Heli, had a common origin; both descending from Zorobabel, Joseph by Abiud the eldest, and Mary by Resa, the younger brother. Joseph descended from the royal branch of David, of which Solomon was the chief; and Mary from the other branch, of which Nathan was the chief. by Salathiel, the father of Zorobabel, and son of Jechonias, Joseph and Mary descended from Solomon, the son and heir of David. And by the wife of Salathiel, the mother of Zorobabel, and daughter of Neri, of which Neri Salathiel was the son-in-law, Joseph and Mary descended from Nathan, the other son of David, so that Joseph and Mary re-united in themselves all the blood of David. St. Matthew carries up the genealogy of Jesus to Abraham; this was the promise of the Messias, made to the Jews; St. Luke carries it up to Adam, the promise of the Messias, made to all men."

Whatever the difficulties attending the genealogies may be, it is evident that they arise from our imperfect knowledge of the laws, usages, and idiom of the Jews, from our ignorance of the true method of reconciling the seeming inconsistencies, or from some corruptions that in process of time may possibly have crept into the text. The silence of the enemies of the gospel, both the heathen and Jewish, during *even* the first century, is itself a sufficient proof, that neither inconsistency nor corruption could be then alleged against this part of the evangelical history. If the lineal descent of Jesus from David were not indisputable, he could not possess the character essential to the Messias, nor any right to the Jewish throne. We may confidently then assert, that his regular lineal descent from David could not be disproved, since it was not even disputed at a time when alone it could have been done so successfully; and by those persons who were so deeply interested in falsifying the first Christian authorities.

**Ver. 36.** *Who was of Cainan.* Notwithstanding the veneration due to the Latin Vulgate, which is to be esteemed authentic, Corn. a Lapide calls it a chronological problem, whether the word Cainan be the true reading, or whether it hath slipt into the text. It is true Cainan is found in the Septuagint Genesis x. 24., Genesis xi. 44., and 1 Paralipomenon i. 18; though, in this last place, a Lapide says, it is wanting in one edition of the Septuagint by Sixtus V.; at least it is not read in all those places, neither in the Hebrew, nor Latin Vulgate. Some say that here in St. Luke's text, is found Cainan, because his citations are conformable to the Septuagint. Others conjecture that Cainan and Sale were only different names of one and the same person, so that the sense may be, *who was of Sale*, who is also Cainan. *Qui fuit Sale, qui & Cainan.* (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** What could be more beautiful, than that this holy race should begin from the Son of God, and be continued up to the Son of God; that the creature might go before in figure, and the Son of God might follow after in reality; that he who was made after the image of God, might first appear, that the true image of his eternal Father may descend from his glory. Thus did St. Luke mean to refer the origin of Christ to God, of whom he was the true and eternal Son. To shew this still more evidently, the evangelist had before introduced the Almighty speaking from heaven: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (St. Ambrose)

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## LUKE 4

**Ver. 2.** In collating the present narrative with that of St. Matthew it appears the Jesus Christ was not tempted till the expiration of forty days. (Bible de Vence) --- Many reasons may be assigned why Christ permitted himself to be tempted. 1st. To merit for man the grace of overcoming temptations. 2d. To encourage us under temptations. 3d. To teach us not to be cast down with temptations, however grievous they may be, since even Jesus Christ submitted to them. 4thly. To point out to us the manner in which we ought to behave in time of temptation. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 3.** The tempter here appears to endeavour to discover by stratagem whether Christ was the Son of God. He does not say, *if thou be the Son of God*, "pray" that these stones be made bread,

which he might have said to any man; but "command," effect by thine own authority, that this come to pass. If Christ had done this, the tempter would have instantly concluded, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, since only God could effect such a miracle. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 10.** We have the devil here again citing Scripture, (Psalm xc. ver. 11.) (Read what is given on this subject in note on ver. 6, chap. iv. of St. Matthew's gospel) which shews how very dangerous a thing it is to put the Scripture, in the first instance, indiscriminately into every, even the most illiterate person's hands, without any previous disposition of the mind and heart, by study and prayer. How much more satisfactory must it be to be guided by the Church of God, which Christ has promised to secure against all error, and which he commands all to obey! How much more rational to begin with distributing elementary catechisms, approved by the Catholic Church as conformable to the word of God, and then only opening to them the sacred mystic book, when their minds and hearts are better prepared to avail themselves of the inestimable treasure, and of justly appreciating and exploring the golden lore. If humility be a virtue that renders us most pleasing God, it is a virtue particularly necessary for the proper understanding of Holy Writ. This will teach us to submit (whenever the Scripture is either silent or obscure in points of faith) our own private and unassisted judgment to the judgment and comments of the Church. This was the sentiment of a great philosopher of this nation, who, when charged with scepticism and a love of novelty by his contemporaries, replied: "However fanciful I may be esteemed in matters of philosophy, in religious concerns I like to go the beaten road. Where the Scripture is silent, the Church is my text. Where that speaks, it is but the comment; and I never refer any thing to the arbitration of my own judgment, but in the silence of them both."

**Ver. 13.** *For a time*, viz. until his Passion, in which he again most grievously tempted him, by the hands of impious persecutors, whom he could not overcome with sensuality, covetousness, or vanity. The devil now deals with men in the same manner. He tempts them, and, being overcome, leaves them for a time, to prompt them to rest in a fatal security; that indulging indolence, they may at some future period be attacked, with greater certainty of success, when unprepared. Knowing, therefore, the trick and design of our infernal enemy, how much does it behove us to be on our guard; and having overcome in one temptation, prepare ourselves for another; never resting in the presumptuous thought, that we are sufficiently strong in virtue to resist the enemy, without fresh preparation. (Dionysius) --- This history of the various temptations to which our Saviour subjects himself, as related by St. Luke, is exactly the same as that given by St. Matthew with this only difference, that the order in which the temptations took place is not the same in both evangelists: but it does not matter what order is observed, where all the circumstances are related. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 17.** *As he unfolded the book:* and again, (ver. 20) *when he had folded the book.* Books at that time were not like our now-a-days, but were skins or parchments, rolled or folded up. (Witham) --- Some are of opinion that the Jews of Nazareth, having heard of the miracles and fame of Jesus, and that he was accustomed to teach in the synagogues, though he had never been instructed in any learning, when he rose to speak, purposely gave him the book of Isaias, which was esteemed the most difficult to be explained, in order to try his learning; though it is probable that it was done by the all-directing interposition of Divine Providence. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 18.** By the poor are to be understood the Gentiles; who might truly be called poor, since they possessed neither the knowledge of the true God, nor of the law, nor of the prophets. (Origen) --- Isaias in this place speaks of himself, as a figure of the Messiah. The captivity of Babylon, which is the literal object of this prophecy, was a figure of the then state of mankind; the return from this captivity announced by the prophet, and effected by Cyrus, represented the redemption of man, effected by Jesus Christ. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 19.** *To set at liberty them that are bruised*, or oppressed. These words are not in the prophet; but are added by St. Luke, to explain the others. --- *To preach the acceptable year*, as it were the jubilee year, when slaves used to be set at liberty. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** To observe and admire a person that had never learned letters, and who stood up amongst them an experienced teacher. (Menochius) See John vii. 15. and Maldonatus.

**Ver. 21.** By this Christ wished to shew that he was the Messias foretold by the prophet Isaïas, whom they so anxiously expected: he declares himself to be the person pointed out by the prophet. There seems also to be a secret reprehension in these words of Christ; as if he were to say: Why are you so desirous to behold the Messias, whom, when he is before your eyes, you will not receive? Why do you seek him in the prophets, when you neither understand the prophets, nor perceive the truth of their predictions, when they are fulfilled before you eyes? (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 23.** I see you will object to me this similitude, (*Greek: parabolēn*) or trite saying, applied to such as attended to the concerns of others, and neglected their own. (Menochius)

**Ver. 30.** *Passing through the midst of them, went his way.* Perhaps by making himself on a sudden invisible, or by striking them with blindness, or by changing their minds, and hearts, as he pleased. (Witham) --- All commentators observe on these words, that the evangelist wished to shew that Christ worked a miracle on this occasion, and by it proved his divinity. This is the opinion of Sts. Euthymius, Ambrose, and Thomas Aquinas. St. Ambrose says, we must observe that Christ did not suffer from necessity, but because he wished it. He was not taken by the Jews, but delivered up himself; at his own pleasure he is seized, and at his own pleasure he escapes; when he wills it, he is condemned; and when he wills it, he is freed. The most common opinion is, that he rendered himself invisible on this occasion; though others imagine that he changed their wills, or withheld their hands. (Maldonatus) --- When we observe the outrageous treatment Jesus Christ met with from the hands of the people of Nazareth, we are not surprised that he should shut up the fountain of his beneficence against them for their incredulity, and return to Capharnaum. (Haydock)

**Ver. 31.** Although Christ was well acquainted with the obduracy of the Jews, nevertheless, like a good physician, he condescends to pay them another visit, and try what a fresh medicine might effect in this their last stage, as it were, of existence. He publicly preaches therefore in the synagogue, according as Isaïas had declared of him, and struck amazement into every heart. The Jews themselves considered him as something very extraordinary; as one of the prophets, or ancient saints. But Christ, that they might conceive a higher opinion of his persons, does not make use of the expressions they did, but speaks as Lord and Master of the law. (St. Cyril)

**Ver. 38.** It is evident that St. Peter was married; but after his call to the apostleship, he left his wife, as St. Jerome writes, in ep. xliii. Chap. ii. ad Julianum, and lib. i. adv. Jovin. See Matthew xix. 29.

**Ver. 40.** The evangelist mentions this circumstance, because these distressed people did not dare to bring their sick before that time, either through fear of the Pharisees, or of violating the sabbath. (Origen)

**Ver. 41.** It appears, that when the devil expresses himself thus, it is less through conviction than artifice. He suspected the fact; and to certify the same, he said to him in the desert, *if you be the Son of God*, change these stones into bread. In the same manner by saying here, *you are the Son of God*, he wished to give him an occasion of explaining himself on the subject. (Bible de Vence) --- But Jesus Christ would not accept of the testimony of evil spirits, lest he might be suspected of some intelligence with them, to cause himself to be acknowledged the Son of God. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 43.** From the apparent good dispositions of these people, we might be induced to think, that if Christ had yielded to their solicitations, and remained with them, he could have drawn all to himself; yet he did not choose to do this, but has left us an example worthy of our imitation, in seeking out the perishing and strayed sheep; for by the salvation of one soul, our many sins will

be remitted. (St. John Chrysostom, in cat. Græc. Pat. hom. in Matt.)

**Ver. 44.** Our divine Redeemer frequented the Jewish synagogue, to shew he was no seducer. If he had inhabited wilds and deserts, it might have been objected to him, that he concealed himself, like an impostor, from the sight of men. (St. John Chrysostom, in cat. Græc. Pat. hom. in Matt.)

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## LUKE 5

**Ver. 1.** What St. Luke here gives till ver. 10, is mentioned purposely to shew on what occasion, and by what miracle, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, were called. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 2.** *Washing their nets.* See St. Matthew iv. 18. and St. Mark i. 16, where it is said, that Christ saw them when they were *casting their nets*; i.e. some of them were *casting*, others *washing*, or *mending*, their nets. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** Why is it mentioned that there were two ships; that one of them was Simon Peter's, that Christ went into that one, and sat down in it, and sitting he taught out of that ship? No doubt, answer many of the ancient commentators, to shew that the Church was figured by the bark of Peter, and that in it is the chair of Christ, a permanent authority, prefigured by Christ's sitting down, and the true word of God.

**Ver. 4.** *Greek: Epanagage eis to bathos.* Put back from whence you have just now returned. Where you failed without Christ, with Christ you will prove successful. Now is the proper time, when you act in my presence, and according to my orders; before it was not, when you followed your own, and not my will. (Maldonatus) --- St. Augustine interprets the text, *Launch out into the deep*, as spoken of distant nations, to whom the gospel was afterwards delivered: *tolle signum in gentes, ad eas, quæ prope, et ad eas quæ longe.* (Isaias v. 26. and xi. 12.)

**Ver. 5.** Though these words of St. Peter seem to express his little hope of success, as he had been toiling (*Greek: kopiasantes*) the whole night, the most favourable time for fishing, yet they were intended by St. Peter to shew his great confidence, that notwithstanding his bad success, he was willing to obey; he relied on his words, and let go his net in the same place where before he had been disappointed; and the event proved that the obedience and confidence of Peter were not in vain. (Maldonatus, &c.)

**Ver. 6.** When Christ commanded Peter to let go the net, as great a quantity of fishes were taken as this Lord of the land and sea wished. For the voice of the Lord is the voice of power, at the command of which, in the beginning of the world, light and every created thing sprang into existence. This it was that so much astonished Peter. (St. Gregory of Nazianzus, chap. xxxi.) --- The net is broken, but the fishes are not lost, because the Lord preserves his servants among the scandals (schisms and heresies) of his enemies. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 7.** The other ship was probably at such a distance from them, that they could not be heard, had they called out to them; and this also is another proof of the greatness of the miracle, that though the other ship was fishing in the same place, though a little removed, they could catch nothing. (Maldonatus) --- This also shews that Peter was to call in other co-labourers, and that all were to come into Peter's ship. (St. Ambrose, in Luc.)

**Ver. 8.** Such was the excess of St. Peter's humility, that he judged himself unworthy the presence of Christ, and by this rendered himself more worthy. So the centurion, for a similar act of self-abasement, merited to hear from Truth itself, that he was preferred to all Israel. Euthymius is however of opinion, that St. Peter desired Christ to leave him through fear, lest some evil should

befall him, because he was not worthy of his presence. In the same manner as the widow of Sarepta thought her son had died, because she was not worthy of the presence of Elias. (3 Kings xvii. 18.) (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 10.** Jesus Christ answers the thought of St. Peter, that instead of any loss or evil coming to him, he should, on the contrary, receive a great reward, by being appointed a fisher of men; and, as he had taken so many fishes by the divine assistance, so he should take in his net innumerable souls, not so much by his own industry, as by the divine grace and assistance. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 11.** We may suppose that these four apostles, like Andrew, followed Jesus Christ at the first call, but without attaching themselves to him; and that now they attached themselves to him, never to leave him more.

**Ver. 12.** By falling on his face, he shewed his humility and modesty, that all men might learn to be ashamed of the stains of their lives; but this, his bashfulness, did not prevent him from confessing his misery; he exposed his wound, he solicits a cure: *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* He did not doubt the goodness of the Lord, but in consideration of his own unworthiness, he durst not presume. That confession is full of religion and faith, which places its trust in the will of God. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 13.** The law forbade lepers to be touched; but he, who is the Lord of the law, dispenses with it. He touches the leper, not because he could not cleanse him without it, but in order to shew that he was not subject to the law, nor to fear of any infection. At the touch of Christ leprosy is dispelled, which before communicated contagion to all that touched it. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 14.** Because men in sickness generally turn their thoughts towards God, but when they recover, forget him, the leper is commanded to think of God, and return him thanks. Therefore is he sent to the priest, to make his offering, (Leviticus xiv. 4.) that, committing himself to the examination of the priest, he might be accounted among the clean. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi. in Matt.) --- By this our Saviour would testify to the priest, that this man was healed not by the ordination of the law, but by the power of grace, which is above the law. He likewise shews that he did not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law. (St. Ambrose) --- Jesus Christ seems here to approve of the legal sacrifices, which the Church does not receive; and this he did, because he had not yet established that most holy of all holy sacrifices, the sacrifice of his own body. The figurative sacrifices were not to be abrogated, before that, which they prefigured, was established by the preaching of the apostles, and the faith of Christian believers. (St. Augustine, quest. ii. b. 3. de quæst. evang.) --- By this leper is represented the whole human race, which was covered with a spiritual leprosy, and languishing in the corruption of sin; for *all have sinned, and need the glory of God*; (Romans iii.) therefore he stretched forth his hand, i.e. he clothed himself with our human nature, that we might be cleansed from our former errors, and might offer in return for this favour our bodies, a living sacrifice to God. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 16.** Christ did not stand in need of this retirement, since, being God, he was free from every stain, and likewise present in every place. But, by this his conduct, he wished to teach us the time most proper, both for our active employments, and for the more sublime duties of prayer and contemplation. (St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. xxviii.) --- *Greek: en upochoron*, he withdrew after his great prodigies, to avoid the praise of the multitude, and to pray assiduously, and with fresh instance, for the salvation of man.

**Ver. 17.** But the fame of Jesus had spread far and wide. It was for this reason that it is here said, the Pharisees and doctors of the law came out of every town in Galilee, &c. not indeed through any intention of becoming his disciples, but through a spirit of envy; as they now saw every one leaving them, and following our Saviour. Perhaps also to calumniate him, as we often find them to have done, when they beheld him making converts from them. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 19.** Let us learn from this example, how diligent we should be in procuring spiritual health, both for ourselves and for our friends. (Haydock)

**Ver. 20.** Great is the Lord, who pardons men on account of the merits of others. If you are diffident of the pardon of your grievous sins, have recourse to the Church. She will pray for you; and the Almighty, at her intercession, will grant you that pardon he might have denied to your prayers. (St. Ambrose, lib. v. in Luc.)

**Ver. 21.** How great is the madness of this unbelieving people, who confessing that God alone can forgive sins, will not believe God when he grants pardon. (St. Ambrose) --- They indeed spoke the truth, for none can forgive sins but God only, who forgives our offences by the ministry of others, to whom he has committed this power, both in baptism and penance. But Christ, by forgiving sins as God, i.e. with his own power, clearly proves to all his divinity. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 24.** *The Son of man ... on earth.* By which act, says St. Cyril, it is clear that the Son of man hath power on earth to remit sins; which he said both for himself and us. For he, as God-man, the Lord of the law, forgiveth sins; and we also have obtained by him that wonderful grace when he said to his disciples: *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.* (John xx. 23.) And how should he not be able to remit sins, who gave others the power to do the same? (Bristow)

**Ver. 26.** At the sight of the exertion of divine power, the Jews would rather fear than believe; for had they believed they would never have feared, but rather loved; for perfect love excludes fear. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 28.** The profane Julian charge St. Matthew with levity, in leaving all and following a stranger at one word. But hereby is seen the marvellous efficacy of Christ's word and internal working, which in a moment can alter the heart of man, and cause him to despise what before was most near and dear to him. And this was done not only whilst Christ was living on earth, but daily in his Church. Thus St. Anthony, St. Francis, and others, hearing this word in the Church, forsook all and followed Jesus. (St. Jerome, in Matt. ix.; St. Athanasius, in vita. St. Anthony; St. Augustine, Confess. lib. viii. chap. 11.; St. Bonaventure, in vit. St. Francis.)

**Ver. 29.** *And Levi made him a great feast,* to testify his gratitude to Jesus for the favour he had done him. It appears that both St. Mark and St. Luke affect, through consideration for St. Matthew, to designate him here by his less known name of *Levi*; whereas he designates himself, through humility, in this same circumstance, by his more known appellation of *Matthew*. (See Matthew ix. 9.) (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 31.** Jesus Christ gives them here to understand, that they were of the number of those who languished under a severe indisposition, and that he was come to act as their Physician. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxi. in Matt.)

**Ver. 33.** St. Matthew says, it was St. John the Baptist's disciples themselves that objected this to Christ. Most probably both they and the Pharisees endeavoured all they could to press this objection. (St. Augustine, de cons. Evang. lib. ii. chap. 27) --- Why do you not fast, as is customary with all that wish to regulate their lives according to the law? The reason why the saints fasted was, that they might, by afflicting their bodies, subdue their passions. Jesus Christ, therefore, had no need of fasting, being God, and of course free from every, the least, disorderly motion of concupiscence. Neither did his attendants stand in need of fasting, for being enriched with his grace, they were strengthened in virtue, without the help of fasting. When, therefore, Christ fasted forty days, he fasted to set an example to carnal men. (St. Cyril) --- As long as the Spouse is with us, we are in joy, we cannot fast, we cannot mourn. But when he has been driven away by sin, then we must both fast and weep. (Ven. Bede)

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## LUKE 6

**Ver. 1.** As this chapter is almost verbally like to the 5th, 7th, and 12th of St. Matthew, and the 3d of St. Mark, the reader is referred to these for further explanation. --- *on the second-first sabbath.* An obscure passage, on which St. Jerome says to Nepotianus,[1] that he consulted his master, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, but in vain. St. John Chrysostom, Hom. xl. in Matt., takes it for a *double feast*, or a *double rest*: by which we may either understand a sabbath, and another feast concurring on the same day; or a sabbath and a feast immediately succeeding to each other. Theophylactus says the same; and that then the latter day, on which they were to rest, was called the *second-first*. Others say that when the Jews kept their solemn paschal feast for seven days, the *last day* was called the *second-first*, because it was kept with equal solemnity as the first day had been. See Maldonatus. Later interpreters have found out other expositions, of which the most plausible seems to be, that by *the second-first sabbath* may be understood the *feast of Pentecost* (which also happened when corn was ripe in Palestine). To understand this we must take notice, that the Jews had three great and solemn feasts: 1. That of the Pasch, or the great paschal feast, with the seven days of *unleavened bread*; the 2d. was the great *feast of Pentecost*; and the 3d. was the *feast*, called of *tabernacles*. It is supposed then that the *paschal feast* was called the *first-first sabbath*, that *Pentecost* was called the *second-first sabbath*, and that of *tabernacles* the *third-first*, or great *sabbath*. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** The Scribes and Pharisees boasted much, as do many modern teachers, of their great knowledge of Scriptures, but our Saviour often sheweth their profound ignorance. (Bristow)

**Ver. 13.** These twelve Christ chose as individual companions and domestics. To these he committed the charge of founding and governing his Church. He sent them as legates, or ambassadors, (for this is the import of the word *apostle*) to all the world. Hence their power was more universal than that of bishops, which is confined to their own dioceses or districts. The jurisdiction of the apostles was not limited to place. (Tirinus) --- This power which Jesus Christ delegated to his apostles, and which was for the benefit and regulation of the universal Church in all future ages, the apostles, in their turn, delegated to their successors in the ministry, with such regulations and limitations as have been judged in the Holy Ghost necessary for the proper government of the spiritual kingdom of God upon earth. And it is the height of presumption to question any ordinations that come to us with the authority of the Catholic Church: for, "whatever the Church says, is true; whatever she permits is lawful; whatever she forbids, is evil; whatever she ordains, is holy; whatever she institutes, is good." (St. Augustine) --- How futile then is the objection of Calvin, who pretends that an apostle, being nothing but a legate, can make no laws, nor prescribe or teach any thing not expressed in his *mandatum*! (Calvin, Inst. lib. iv. chap. 8)

**Ver. 16.** *Judas*, surnamed Thaddeus in St. Matthew x. 3. and in St. Mark iii. 18. At the head of his epistle he styles himself *Judas*, brother of James. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 17.** To a more extended and even part of the mountain, as we learn from comparing this text with St. Matthew v. 1. as it was from the mountain that Jesus Christ addressed to the people the following discourse. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 20.** St. Matthew (v. 3. 10.) mentions eight beatitudes, St. Luke only four; but St. Luke only gives an abridgment in this place of the discourse, which St. Matthew gives more at length. We are also to remark, that in these four the whole eight are comprised, and that both evangelists place poverty in the first place, because it is the first in rank, and, as it were, the parent of the other virtues; for he who hath forsaken earthly possessions, deserves heavenly ones. Neither can any man reasonably expect eternal life, who is not willing to forsake all in affection, and in effect also, if called upon for the love of Jesus Christ. (St. Ambrose) --- Not that every one under great poverty is happy, but that the man who prefers the poverty of Christ to the riches of the world, ought certainly to be esteemed such. Many indeed are poor in worldly substance, but are avaricious in affection; to such as these poverty is no advantage. Nothing that is against the will,

merits reward; therefore all virtue is known by the will. Blessed, therefore, are the poor, who bear poverty for the sake of Christ: he himself hath already trodden the path before us, and taught us by his example that it leads to honour and enjoyment. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 24.** Jesus Christ having declared how meritorious poverty of spirit was to eternal life, proceeds to denounce heavy chastisements upon the rich and proud. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Although in great riches there are great inducements to sin, yet there are not wanting even in that state great incitements to virtue; neither is this woe aimed against those who abound in affluence; but against "those who abuse that affluence which Providence has bestowed upon them: *Non enim census, sed affectus, in crimine est.*" (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 25.** As before he promised blessings to those that hunger, that weep, that are outcasts for Christ's sake; so here, and in the next verse, he denounces curses to such as are filled, that laugh, and are praised; i.e. to such, as so far seek their beatitude in present enjoyment, as to become indifferent with regard to the good things of the next world. (Haydock)

**Ver. 26.** *Woe to you, when men shall bless you.* The ministers of the gospel must not value themselves, when they are applauded by men; for so did the *fore-fathers* of the Jews, formerly commend the false prophets, when they flattered the people, and spoke things that were pleasing to them. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** Jesus Christ does not order us never to refuse a petition: but the meaning of his words is, that we are to give what is just and reasonable, what will be neither injurious to yourself nor your family; for what is unjustly asked, may be justly denied. (St. Augustine, lib. x. chap. 40. de serm. Dom. in Monte.) --- But in this, the sin we commit is often far from trivial; particularly, when to the refusal of a just request, we add also reprehensions and complaints. For why, say we, does he not labour? why has he reduced himself to penury, through his own indolence? --- But, tell me, do you live upon the fruits of your own industry? On the supposition that you do, is it not that you may have some plea to reprehend another for the morsel of bread he begs at your hands? You give him no charitable relief, give him then no contumelious words: if you have no compassion for him yourself, do not prevent others from shewing him commiseration. Abraham, in the number of guests he received, had the honour of receiving under his roof even angels. Let us not, therefore, be strict and unfavourable judges in regard of our suffering and distressed neighbours, lest perhaps we ourselves come to be more severely judged. (St. John Chrysostom collected from hom. xxi. in ep. ad. Rom. --- Hom. xi. in ep. ad. Heb. and hom. ii. de Lazaro.)

**Ver. 35.** *Hoping for nothing*, but merely impelled by a desire of doing good. They who only give when sure of having a greater return, do not give, but traffic with their generosity; in which there is no charity. (Haydock)

**Ver. 37.** What can be imagined more kind, what more merciful, than this conduct of our Sovereign Lord, that the sentence of the judge should be left in the hands of the person to judged? (Jansenius, Comment. in sanct. Evang.)

**Ver. 38.** Here all solicitude of diffidence, all delay of avarice, is cut off; for what truth promises to repay, humility may safe expend. (St. Leo, Serm. vi.)

**Ver. 48.** That man buildeth safely who hath both faith and good works; whereas the man that trusteth to his faith alone, to his reading or knowledge of Scripture, and doth not work and live accordingly, buildeth on sand. (Bristow)

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[1] Ver. 1. In Sabbato secundo-primo *Greek: en sabbato deuteroproto*. See St. John Chrysostom, Hom. xl. in Matt. in the Latin edition, in the *Greek of Savil Greek: om lth* p. 262, tom. ii. *Greek: otan e argia e, kai tou sabbatou tou kuriou, kai eteras eortes diadechomenes*. See St. Hieron.[St. Jerome,] ad Nepotianum. tom. iv, part 2, p. 262. Ed. Ben.

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## LUKE 7

**Ver. 1.** It was not immediately after he had spoken the preceding words that Christ entered Capharnaum, for in the interim he healed the man afflicted with the leprosy, according as St. Matthew related it in its proper place. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 2.** This history, though different in some circumstances from that related by St. Matthew, chap. viii., is most likely a relation of the same event, and the apparent discrepancies may be easily reconciled. St. Matthew says it was the centurion's boy; St. Luke calls him his servant: but in these terms there is no necessary contradiction. And whereas the former says the centurion went himself to Christ, St. Luke mentions that he sent the ancients, or senators, of the Jews. Here, as in other places, we may suppose, that the former evangelist, for the sake of brevity, attributes to the centurion what was done in his name and with his authority; and through the whole narrative he represents our Saviour answering the centurion as if personally present. (Jansenius, concord. Evan.)

**Ver. 3.** When St. Luke says that the centurion begs of our Lord to come to him, he must not be supposed to contradict St. Matthew, who says, that the centurion objected he was not worthy to receive him under his roof. St. Luke seems here to relate the words of the Jews, who most probably would stop the centurion as he was going to Christ, and promise to intercede with our Lord for him. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvii. in Matt.) --- Some pretend that the centurion, after having sent to Jesus, went himself; but there is no necessity for such a supposition. We see in another case, that the petition of the sons of Zebedee, made by them to Jesus Christ, according to St. Mark (x. 35.) was made to him by the mouth of their mother, according to St. Matthew xx. 20. And this the old adage also teaches: *qui facit per alium, facit per se*; what a man does by another, he does by himself.

**Ver. 6.** Jesus Christ went with them, not because he could not cure him, when absent, but that he might set forth the centurion's humility for our imitation. He would not go to the child of the ruler of the synagogue, lest he might appear to be induced by the consideration of his consequence and riches; but he went to the centurion's servant, that he might appear to despise his humble condition. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 9.** Our Lord does not speak of the patriarchs, but of the Israelites of his own time, with whose faith he compares and prefers that of the centurion, because they had the assistance of the law and of the prophets; but this man, without any such instruction, willingly believed. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 11.** *Naim* is a city of Galilee, about two miles from Mount Thabor. It was by divine dispensation, that so very great a multitude was present on this occasion, in order to witness this stupendous miracle. (Ven. Bede) --- The burying-places of the Jews were out of the precincts of the city, as well for the preservation of health as decency. Thus Joseph of Arimathea, had his sepulchre in the rock of Mount Calvary, which was out of the city. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 12.** The evangelist seems to relate this miracle, as if it had happened by mere accident; though, beyond a doubt, divine Providence disposed all things to increase the splendour of the miracle. Jesus Christ would not raise this young man to life before he was carried out to be buried, that he might meet him near the gates of the city, where the assembly of the people took place. Besides this, there were present both the multitude that followed Jesus, and the multitude that followed the corpse, to the end that all these might be eye-witnesses to the miracle, and many might praise God, as Ven. Bede remarks. It was very proper that Christ should work this miracle just as he was entering the city, that he might preach the gospel with better success, from

the opinion they must form of him, after beholding so great a miracle, and so great a favour bestowed upon them. (Maldonatus) --- In a few words, the evangelist paints to life the affliction of this distressed widow parent: a mother and a widow, without the least hopes of children, deprived of him who was her only support, the life of her habitation, the source of all her maternal tenderness and satisfaction, now in the prime of health, the only branch of her succession, and the staff of her old age. (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *de hominis opificio*.)

**Ver. 14.** Here Christ shews that he raised the dead by his own power, and at his own command: *I say to thee, arise*. This shews that it is the voice of God that speaks; for the dead can hear the voice of him alone, according to St. John. *Amen, I say to you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they who hear shall live*. (St. John v. 25.) (Maldonatus) --- Our Saviour is not like Elias, weeping for the son of the widow of Sarepta; nor Eliseus, who applied his own body to the body of the dead child; nor Peter, who prayed for Tabitha: but he it is that calls the things that are not, as those that are; who speaks to the dead as to the living. (Titus Bostrensis)

**Ver. 16.** *And there came a fear on them all*; i.e. a certain reverential awe and trepidation seized them, and an uncommon degree of astonishment at the divinity which appeared to them. (Menochius) --- *And they glorified God*: (Greek: *edoxazan*) they gave praise and glory to God for thus visiting his people, by sending them the Saviour he had promised them. (Polus, *synop. crit.*)

**Ver. 20.** *The men*; (Greek: *oi andres*) viz. the two disciples sent by John the Baptist, who delivered their master's message; but, before Jesus Christ undertook to reply to their question, he performed on the spot various kinds of miracles.

**Ver. 22.** Then addressing himself to these disciples of John the Baptist, he ordered them to go and relate to their master all they had seen and heard; and to tell him, that he declared all those to be happy, who, strong in faith, should not take occasion to doubt of his divine power, (the proofs of which they had so recently seen) from the weakness of his flesh, which he had taken upon himself for the love of man. --- Jesus Christ alludes to the known and full testimonies that had been given of him by the prophets. *The Lord giveth food to the hungry, the Lord looseth them that are in fetters, the Lord enlighteneth the blind, he lifteth up them that are cast down, ... and he who does these things, shall reign for ever thy God, O Sion, from generation to generation*. (Psalm cxlv.) (St. Ambrose) --- The words of the prophet Isaias are not less descriptive of the promised Messiah: *God himself will come, and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. The lame man shall leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free*. (Isaias xxxv. 4, 5, 6.) (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 26.** Because the Scripture styles him an angel; or, because he is the immediate precursor of him who all the prophets announced at a distance.

**Ver. 29.** *Justified God*; i.e. feared and worshipped God, as just, merciful, &c. (Witham) --- There are only two different sets of men, who glorified God for the baptism of John, and these seemed the most remote from works of piety; viz. the ignorant multitude, who scarcely knew the law; and the publicans, who were in general the most avaricious of mortals, and were looked upon as public sinners. If the preaching of the Baptist had such an effect upon these men; what kind of hearts must not the Scribes had had, who, with all the advantage of the knowledge of the law, still refused to believe? This verifies the saying of our Lord, in St. Matthew chap. xxi. 31: *Amen, I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before you*. (Maldonatus) --- God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them to little ones; (St. Luke, x. 21.) for so it had seemed good in his sight (Luke, x. 21.)

**Ver. 32.** *Speaking one to another*: (Greek: *prosphonousin allelois*) they seem to have been alternate choirs of youths, answering each other in the above words. (Menochius)

**Ver. 36.** *A woman in the city, who was a sinner*. Some say she had only been of a vain airy

carriage; on that loved to be admired from her beauty and wit; but the common exposition and more conformable to the text, is, that she had been of a lewd, debauched life and conversation. (Witham) --- Mary Magdalene.

**Ver. 38.** Jesus Christ was then at table, after the manner of the Orientals, reclined at length on a couch, a little raised from the ground, having his face turned towards the table, and his feet extended. He had quitted his sandals, according to the custom of the country, before he had laid himself on the couch. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 39.** The Pharisee was egregiously deceived. 1. In thinking that Christ was ignorant of the character of the woman, when he not only clearly saw the past bad conduct of the woman, but the present unjust thoughts of the Pharisee; 2. in his erroneous inference that Christ could not be a prophet; for all things are not necessarily revealed by God to his prophets; 3. by judging of Christ, after his own and the other Pharisees' treatment of sinners; who, elated with pride, and thinking themselves just, kept all public sinners at a respectful distance; whereas not those who are well, but such as are sick, need the physician. (Menochius)

**Ver. 42.** Which will live him most? as we read in the Protestant version, and in the Greek, *agapesei*. But Christ, seeming to require love as a previous disposition to the remission of sins, as appears from ver. 47 below, the Catholic Church has adopted the version of St. Augustine, hom. xxiii. in the present tense: *quis ergo plus eum diligit?* (Jansenius, Comment. in Evang.)

**Ver. 43.** In proportion to our sins, should be our grief, says St. Cyprian: *ut poenitentia non sit minor crimine.* (lib. de lapsis.)

**Ver. 47.** *Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much.* In the Scripture, an effect sometimes seems attributed to one only cause, when there are divers other concurring dispositions; the sins of this woman, in this verse, are said to be forgiven, because *she loved much*; but (ver. 50,) Christ tells her, *thy faith hath saved thee*. In a true conversion are joined faith, hope, love, sorrow, and other pious dispositions. (Witham)

**Ver. 50.** This is one of those places upon which modern sectaries lay so much stress, in order to prove that faith alone can save us. But if they will attentively consider the different parts of this history, they will easily discover that fallacy of their argument. Because Christ spoke these words: *thy faith*, &c. he had said to Magdalene: *many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much*. Therefore she was justified not so much through her faith, as her charity: still she had faith, or she would not have come to Jesus, to be delivered from her sins. It was therefore her faith, working by charity, that justified her: and this is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, she had not that faith, which modern sectaries affirm to be necessary for their justification, viz. a belief that they are already justified, and that their sins are forgiven: this faith the woman here mentioned had not before Christ spoke those words to her; for it was to obtain the remission of her sins, that she performed so many offices of charity, washing his feet with her tears, &c. But is may be asked, why then does Christ attribute her salvation to her faith? The answer is easy, and has often been given, viz. that faith is the beginning of salvation; for it was her faith that brought her to Christ: for had not the woman believed in him, she never would have come to him to obtain the remission of her sins. (Maldonatus)

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## LUKE 8

**Ver. 2.** Mention is made in the gospels, of a woman who was a sinner, (Luke vii.) of Mary of Bethania, the sister of Lazarus, (John xi. and xii; Mark xiv; Matthew xxvi.) and of Mary Magdalene, who followed Jesus from Galilee, and ministered to him. Many think all this to belong to one and the same person: others think these were three distinct persons. See the arguments

on both sides in Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints, July 22d; and also more at large in the dissertations upon the three Marys, at the conclusion of the harmony in the Bible de Vence.

**Ver. 3.** *The wife of Chusa, Herod's steward.* Literally, his *procurator*, as in the Rheims translation. The Greek signifies one that provides for another, or manages his concerns. The same word is used, Matthew xx. 8. and Galatians iv. 2. (Witham) --- the Greek word is *epitropou*. It was the custom of the Jews, says St. Jerome, that pious women should minister of their substance, meat, drink, and clothing, to their teachers going about with them. But as this might have given cause of scandal among the Gentiles, St. Paul mentions that he allowed it not. (1 Corinthians ix. 5. 12.) They thus ministered to our Lord and his apostles of their worldly substance, from whom they received spiritual riches.

**Ver. 8.** *Ears to hear, let him hear, &c.* i.e. he that is willing to hear the word of God, and diligently comply with what is therein commanded, let him be attentive to the words of Christ. For the sight, hearing, and other senses, were not given to man to be used only as beasts use them, but likewise that they might profit his soul to eternal life. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 9.** After the multitude had left our divine Saviour, his disciples wishing thoroughly to understand the meaning of his instructions, came to him, and desired he would give them an explanation of the parable. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 14.** The sense of the Greek text is: they produce no fruit that arrives at maturity. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** Our Lord calls himself the lighted candle, placed in the middle of the world. Christ was by nature God, and by dispensation man: and thus, not unlike a torch placed in the middle of a house, does our Lord, seated in the soul of man, illumine all around him. But by the candlestick, is understood the Church, which he illuminates by the refulgent rays of his divine word. (St. Maximus.) --- By these expressions, Jesus induces his audience to be very diligent, and quite alive in the momentous affair of salvation; informing them that they are placed in the public view of the whole world. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv. in Matt.)

**Ver. 18.** He here exhorts his audience to attend to what he was about to deliver, and to apply themselves with all their attention to the divine word; for he who has a desire of hearing the word, shall also receive the grace and power of understanding it. But the man who has no desire of hearing it, though from his learning he might expect to understand it, shall not understand it, because he does not willingly attend to the divine admonitions; hence it is said, *Whosoever hath, to him also shall be given.* (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 20.** These brethren were not the sons of the blessed Virgin Mary, mother of God, as Helvidius wickedly taught; nor yet the sons of Joseph, by another wife; for, as St. Jerome writeth, not only Mary, but Joseph also, observed virginity. (Contra Helvidium, chap. ix. et ibidem, chap. viii.) --- In the scriptural idiom, cousins are called brethren. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21.** There is no tie of affinity and friendship so proper, and so becoming man, as that made by faith in Christ, and strengthened by charity. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 22.** *And they launched forth:* literally, *they went up.* The sense is, being gone abroad, they set forward, or launched forth, as in the Protestant translation. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *And they were filled;* i.e. the little ship was filled with water. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** In this Christ evidently shews two distinct natures; his human nature, denoted by his sleep; and his divine nature by stilling the tempest at sea. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 25.** After Christ had appeased the storm at sea, the disciples, all astonishment at the

miracle, began to whisper to each other, saying, *Who is this?* not that the disciples were ignorant of whom they were speaking, but they wondered at his mighty works, and at the glory of his divine power. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 26.** Here St. Matthew relates the history of the two demoniacs, whilst St. Mark and St. Luke speak only of one; but the man mentioned in these two evangelists, was a man of some consideration and consequence, for whose cure the country was deeply interested. (St. Augustine, de concord. evang.)

**Ver. 28.** This is not a voluntary confession, which merits a reward, but a forced acknowledgment, extorted against their wills. Like fugitive servants, who, when they meet their masters, think of nothing but of deprecating punishment. The devils think our Lord is come down upon earth to judge them. (St. Jerome) --- The torment from which this devil desires to be freed, is the pain and affliction he would suffer by being forced to yield to the power of Christ, in leaving the man; not the general torment of hell, to which he knew he was unchangeably and irrevocably condemned. He was also tormented with the fear, lest he should be now consigned to those eternal pains before his time, as it is expressed in St. Matthew. For, though the evil spirits are unavoidably condemned, and already suffer the chief torments of hell, yet the rigorous fulfilment of all is deferred to the day of judgment. (Jansenius, conc. Evang.)

**Ver. 30.** He did not put the question through ignorance of his name, but that his answer might shew forth the divine power in a more glorious manner; as also for our instruction, that knowing the great number of our invisible enemies, we might work out our salvation with fear and trembling, placing all our confidence in God. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 32.** If, says St. Athanasius, the infernal spirits have no power over such impure beasts as swine, with much greater reason then are they deprived of power over man, who is made after God's own image, and redeemed by the blood of his son, Christ Jesus. We should therefore fear only God, and despise the devil. (In vit. St. Anthony)

**Ver. 33.** This event shews what was before asserted, that many devils had possession of the man. The obstinacy of the Sadducees, who denied the existence of evil spirits, was thus likewise refuted; as well as the cavils of certain moderns, who pretend that these effects which appeared in the demoniacs, were not produced by the power of the devil, but were the consequences of some violent natural malady. (Jansenius, conc. Evang.)

**Ver. 41.** See this explained in Matthew ix. and Mark v.

**Ver. 43.** *All her substance;* (Greek: *olon ton bion*) i.e. all that she had to live upon.

**Ver. 45.** All denied that they had *designedly* touched him, though, on account of the pressure of the crowd, many *unwillingly* touched him. (Menochius' Commentaria.)

**Ver. 48.** Greek: *Para tou archisunagogou*, which some interpret, from the house of the ruler. (Menochius) --- In vain do you trouble him. (Menochius)

**Ver. 55.** This returning of the souls again, to reanimate the bodies of those whom Christ and his apostles raised from death, (and especially Lazarus, who had been dead four days) doth evidently prove the immortality of the soul. From this place we may also conclusively infer against our adversaries, who say, that every one goeth straight to heaven or hell, that it is not probable that they were called from the one or the other; and therefore from some third place.

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**Ver. 1.** *Over all devils;* so that none should be able to resist them. For all were not equally easy to be expelled, as we shall see in this same chapter, in the person of a possessed child, whom the apostles could not heal, because they did not use prayer and fasting against it; and because their faith was not sufficiently strong and ardent. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *And depart*[1] *not from thence.* In the ordinary Greek copies we find, and *depart from thence.* The sense appears, by the other evangelists, (Matthew x. 11. and Mark vi. 10.) that Christ gave this admonition to his disciples, not to change their lodging from house to house; but while they staid in a town, to remain in the same house. And though the negative be here omitted in the Greek, interpreters bring it to the same, by telling us that the sense is, *stay here,* and *depart from thence;* i.e. stay in that house, so that leaving the town, you may depart from the same house. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Risen from the dead.* Herod was perplexed and in suspense about the report, that it was John [the Baptist] that was risen from the dead. ... From this it appears, that some of the Jews, and Herod himself, believed in some kind of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls. Josephus says, (Antiq. lib. xviii, chap. 2.) that the Pharisees believed the soul to be immortal; and after death, to depart to some subterraneous places, where they received the recompense of good, or evil, according to their actions. There the souls of the wicked remain for ever, without the power of departing thence. The souls of the good sometimes returned, and entered other bodies. Herod probably thought that the soul of John the Baptist was united to that of Christ, in the same body, and was thence enabled to perform new and more extraordinary functions. Such were the reveries of some of the Rabbins; who, as St. Jerome remarks, abused the passages of the gospel we are now explaining, in support of this Pythagorean doctrine. Most of the Jews believed the true doctrine of the resurrection, viz. that of the body; which must one day be renewed to life by the same soul which now animates it: and this is the doctrine of faith and of the Church, which she teaches you from both the Old and New Testament, instead of that transmigration of souls, which has no foundation or appearance of truth. It is probable that this error was widely diffused among the Jews, in our Saviour's time. It was a doctrine suited to the taste of the Orientals. Some think they can see traces of it in the history of Elias. That prophet being taken away, and the Jews seeing Eliseus perform the same miracles, said, that the spirit of Elias had rested on him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *As he was alone praying:* i.e. remote from the people, though his disciples are said to *have been with him.* (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Kingdom of God.* This is generally understood of the transfiguration, in which Christ shewed to the three disciples an essay of his glory. (Calmet)

**Ver. 28.** *Mountain, &c.* --- Since Christ has ascended the mountain, both to pray and to be transfigured, all of us who hope for the fruit of his resurrection, and long to see the king in his glory, must dwell in heaven by our thoughts, and apply our minds to continual prayer. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 30.** *And behold two men.* Moses and Elias, by ministering to our Lord in his glory, shewed him to be the Lord of both the Old and New Testament. The disciples also, upon seeing the glory of their fellow-creatures, would be filled with admiration at the condescension of their divine Master; and considering the delights of future happiness, be stirred up to a holy emulation of those who had laboured before them, and be fortified in their ensuing conflicts; for nothing so much lightens the present labour, as the consideration of the future recompense. (St. Cyril)

**Ver. 31.** *They spoke of his decease,*[2] *or his departure out of this world.* St. Peter useth the same Greek word for his death. (2 Peter i. 15.) (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *It is good for us.* It is not good, O Peter, for Christ to remain always. Should he have remained there, the promise he had made thee would never have been fulfilled. Thou wouldst



never have obtained the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the reign of death would not have been destroyed. Seek not for joys before the time, as Adam sought to be made like God. The time will come, when thou shalt for eternity behold him, and reign with him who is life and light. (Damasus, Orat. de Transfigur. Domini.) --- *Three tabernacles*. The Lord does appoint thee the builder, not of tabernacles, but of his whole Church. Thy disciples, thy sheep, have fulfilled thy desire, by erecting tabernacles for Christ and his faithful servants. These words of St. Peter, *let us make*, &c. were not spoken of himself, but by the prophetic inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Therefore it is added, he knew not what he said. (Damasus, Orat. de Transfigur. Domini.) --- St. Peter knew not what he said, because by proposing to make three tabernacles for these three personages, he improperly ranked together, the servants and their Lord, the creature and the Creator. (Titus Bostrensis)

**Ver. 35.** *And a voice*, &c. This is the voice of the Father from the cloud, as if he should say, "I call him not one of my sons, but my true and natural Son, to the resemblance of whom all others are adopted. (St. Cyril) --- Not Elias, not Moses, but he whom you see alone, is my beloved Son. (St. Ambrose) --- Therefore, it is added: and when the voice was heard, Jesus was alone, lest any one should imagine these words, *This is my beloved Son*, were addressed to Moses or Elias." (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 45.** *They understood not this word*. They understood well enough what was meant by being delivered into the hands of his enemies, and being put to death; but they could not comprehend how Jesus Christ, whom they knew to be the Messias, and the Son of God, and whom they believed to be immortal, and eternal, could suffer death, or affronts and outrages from men. These ideas seemed incompatible; they perceived in them some mystery, which they could not penetrate. (Calmet)

**Ver. 46.** *And there entered a thought*, &c. It is improbable that all the disciples had fallen into this fault: but the evangelist, that he might not point out any in particular as guilty of it, says indiscriminately, that this thought had entered among them. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 49.** *We forbade him*. St. John having the most love for his Lord, and being particularly beloved by him, thought all were to be excluded from these gifts, who were not obedient to his divine Master. (St. Augustine) --- But we must remember, that not the minister is the author of these miracles, but the grace which is in him, who performs these wonders by virtue of the power of Christ. (St. Cyril) --- How wonderful is the power of Christ, who by his grace works miracles in the persons of the unworthy, and those that are not disciples; as men are sanctified by the priest, though the priest should not be in the state of grace! (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 50.** *Forbid him not*. Our Lord is not moved by this event, to teach us that perfect virtue entertains no thoughts of revenge, and that anger cannot be found where the fulness of charity reigns. The weak must not be driven away, but assisted. Let the breast of the religious man be ever unmoved by passion, and the mind of the generous undisturbed by desires of revenge. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 51.** *The days of his assumption*, i.e. of his ascension into heaven. See the same Greek word in Mark xvi. 19. and Acts i. 11. --- *He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem*, or literally, *he fixed[3] his countenance to go up to Jerusalem*. --- And (ver. 53.) *because his face was of one going to Jerusalem*. These expressions come from the style of the Hebrews. See 4 Kings xii. 17; Jeremias xlii. 15; Ezechiel iv. 3. The sense is, that the Samaritans perceived that he and his company were going up to adore in Jerusalem, at which they were displeased, having an antipathy against the Jews and their temple. (Witham) --- It is not here said, as some interpreters have believed, that his journey to Jerusalem was the last of his life, in which he was crucified. It appears from the context, that there were still many months before the death of Christ, and that this journey was probably for the feast of Pentecost. But that year was the last of the life of Jesus Christ and he already knew the dispositions of the Jews, and what was to befall him shortly. These words, *he set his face*, are often used in Scripture for obstinacy and hardness in evil.

(Proverbs vii. 13. 12. 29; Jeremias xlii. 15. &c.) But we may likewise take them to signify a strong resolution, and intrepid and inflexible firmness, to perform what you have resolved. Jesus Christ shewed by his air, by his conduct and discourse, that notwithstanding the malice of his enemies, he was determined to go to Jerusalem. (Calmet)

**Ver. 52.** *Messengers, &c.* St. Jerome believes that Christ sent true angels before him to announce his coming. The Greek word *aggelos*, generally signifies an angel; but it likewise means a messenger. Most interpreters believe he sent James and John, to prepare what was necessary for provisions and lodging. This precaution was necessary, as he was always followed by great crowds. The history, from verse 51 to the end of the chapter, is mentioned by none of the evangelists, except St. Luke. (Calmet)

**Ver. 54.** *Wilt thou that we command fire, &c.* In the Greek is added as Elias *did*. These words might be first in the margin, and thence by transcribers taken into the text. The two apostles, called the *sons of thunder*, knew their Master was greater than Elias; and therefore they are for calling for fire from heaven, as he had done. (Witham) --- It was probably this trait in the life of James and John, which gained them the name of *boanerges*, the sons of thunder. Their too great zeal for the glory of Jesus Christ, and the spirit of revenge, of which they were not yet healed, caused them to make this petition; which seemed in some manner justified by the example of Elias, 4th book of Kings, chap. i. 10. Many editions have the addition of these words, as *Elias did*. (Calmet)

**Ver. 55.** *You know not of what spirit you are, i.e. that my Spirit, which you ought to follow, is the Spirit of mercy, mildness, and patience.* (Witham)

**Ver. 56.** *But to save souls.* It might be translated, to save *men's lives*;<sup>[4]</sup> but it seems better here to stick to the letter, especially since in most Greek copies we read, the *souls of men*. (Witham)

**Ver. 57.** *Follow thee, &c.* Although the Sovereign Lord of all is most munificent, yet he does not lavish his gifts on all without distinction, but bestows them on the worthy only. When, therefore, this man offered to follow Christ, he answers him by telling him, that all who follow him, must daily take up their cross, and renounce the conveniences of this life. Thus he mentions what was reprehensible in his person. There appears likewise great presumption in his conduct, as he did not petition to be admitted, as other Jews did, but seems to claim the honour of the apostleship; an honour which none must assume, but such as are called by God. (Hebrews v.) (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 60.** *Bury their dead, &c.* Though this was an act of religion, yet it was not permitted him; that we may learn to prefer always the concerns of God to all human considerations. (St. Ambrose) --- However necessary this might appear, however easy, however short the time which it would take up, might be, it is not permitted him. Not the least delay can be allowed, although a thousand impediments stand in the way; for spiritual things must be preferred to things even the most necessary. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxviii. on S. Matt.)

**Ver. 62.** *Putting his hand to the plough.* A proverb and metaphor, to signify that nothing must hinder a man from God's service. (Witham) --- Christ seems here to allude to the call of Eliseus by Elias. The former was at the plough, and the latter called him. Immediately Eliseus quits his plough, runs with Elias's permission to bid adieu to his father and mother, sacrifices two of his oxen, roasts them with the wood of the plough, and joins the company of the prophets. Jesus Christ wishes that all who follow him, should in like manner think of nothing else. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 4. *Et ind ne exeatis*, but in the ordinary Greek copies, without *ne*, Greek: *kai ekeithen exerchesthe*.

[2] Ver. 31. *Excessum*, Greek: *exodon*. Mr. Bois, the canon of Ely, shews it a proper word for

death. So 2 Peter i. 15. post obitum meum, *Greek: meta ten emen exodon.*

[3] Ver. 51. Faciem suam firmavit, ut iret in Jerusalem, *Greek: to prosopon autou esterixe tou poreuesthai.* --- Facies ejus erat euntis in Jerusalem, *Greek: to prosopon autou en poreuomenon.*

[4] Ver. 56. Animas in most Greek copies, *Greek: psuchas anthropon.*

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## LUKE 10

**Ver. 1.** *Other seventy-two.* Most Greek copies, and the Syriac version, have seventy, as in the Protestant translation. Yet there seems no doubt but the true number was seventy-two. For seventy-two may be called seventy; but had they been only seventy, they could never have been called seventy-two. This was also the exact number of the judges chosen to assist Moses; (Exodus xxiv. 1.) though called seventy, (Numbers xi. 16.) as it is evident, because there were six chosen out of every one of the twelve tribes. In like manner the exact number of the interpreters called the Septuagint must have been seventy-two; and also the just number of the Sanhedrim. --- *Two and two*, that one might be a help and comfort to the other; as also a witness of the carriage and behaviour of his companion. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** As Moses formerly chose twelve elders as princes and fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel, and afterwards gave to each of these elders six others, to assist them in the arduous work of governing the people, so our divine Saviour chose twelve apostles to govern his Church. He likewise afterwards gave six disciples to each apostle, which makes 72, to serve as priests, and assist in governing the Church. (Tirinus) --- *Salute no man*, i.e. go forwards promptly, and do not stay to amuse yourselves with vain compliments and useless civilities towards those whom you meet. This was a proverb. Eliseus said the same to Giezi, when he sent him to restore life to the child of the widow of Sunamis. If any man meet you, salute him not; think of nothing but of executing the orders I give you. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *And thou, Capharnaum, &c.* Capharnaum is situated on the western coast of the sea of Tiberias. Christ having left Nazareth, made the former city the usual place of his abode. There was no city in which he had preached so much, or wrought so many miracles. On this account, he said it was exalted to the heavens; but for its incredulity he threatens it shall be cast down even unto hell. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *I saw Satan as lightning, &c.* Many expound it in this manner: I, who am from eternity, saw Satan with all the rebellious angels, as glorious as they were, fall from heaven; fear then, and tremble, though you have received such favours from God. Others take it in this sense, that Christ, by his incarnation, hath seen the power of the devils lessened and confounded, according to what he also said, (John xii. 31.) *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* (Witham) --- What connexion have these words with what goes before? Some understand them thus: the reign of the devil is near at an end; this prince of darkness is going to be overturned; he will fall from the air, where he reigns, with the same precipitation as lightning, which cuts the clouds and presently disappears. It is almost the same things he says in other places. "The prince of this world is already judged; behold now is the judgment of this world; behold now the prince of this world shall be cast forth! When I sent you to preach the gospel to the poor, I saw Satan fall; I saw his empire overturned. The last effort which this empire of darkness shall make is the death of our Saviour, as he himself says: This is your hour, and the power of darkness. Since his resurrection he has bound the dragon in the abyss for a thousand years; he has shut up the entrance, and sealed it with his seal." (Apocalypse xii. 9. and xx. 2.) Others think that Jesus speaks here of the fall of Lucifer, at the beginning of the creation. Wishing to give his disciples a lesson in humility, on account of the vain complacency which he saw they took in the miracles they wrought, he says to them: Beware of pride, that precipitated the first angel from heaven: I

have seen him in the glory with which he was surrounded, and I have seen him hurried into the abyss. Fear, lest the same should happen to you. The former explanation appears to us more simple and literal. (Calmet)

**Ver. 19.** *Given you power, &c.* By these words our Saviour seems to insinuate, that the venom of serpents, and the other noxious qualities of some animals, proceed from the malice of the devil. These are the arms and the instruments he makes us of to kill us, being the prince of death and a murderer from the beginning, as the Scripture styles him. The Jews attributed sickness, poisons, and every thing of the same kind to evil spirits.

**Ver. 21.** *He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost.* In almost all Greek copies, we read in *spirit*, without *holy*. And it is expounded of Christ's own spirit. (Witham) --- *I give thanks, &c.* In this verse we see plainly refuted the heretical Marcion, and his follower Manicheus, who asserted that God was not the creator of the earth, or of any thing existing on the earth. St. Epiphanius says, that in a gospel written by Marcion, the words *Father* and *earth* were entirely omitted. Who does not here deplore the blindness of heretics, who, in order to spread their errors, do not hesitate thus to corrupt the original Scripture received by the whole Christian world!!! (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 25.** *Eternal life?* The law of Moses does not expressly promise eternal life to the observers of it, but confines its promises to temporal blessings during this life. Still we always find that the Jews hoped in another life after this. This opinion is clearly observable in the books of Scripture, written both before and after the captivity, and in Josephus and Philo. (Calmet)

**Ver. 29.** *Neighbour?* It appears this was a celebrated controversy among the doctors of the law; some probably affirming, that the Jews only were so; while others maintained that their friends alone were their neighbours. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 30.** *A certain man, &c.* This some would have to be a history: others rather judge it spoken by way of parable, to teach us to perform offices of charity towards all men without exception. (Witham) --- Were we to adhere to the mere words of this parable, it would seem to follow, that only those who do us good were to be esteemed our neighbours; for the context seems to intimate, that the Levite and the priest were not neighbours to the man who fell among the robbers, because they did not assist him. But according to the opinion of most fathers, the intent of this parable is the shew, that every person who has need of our assistance is our neighbour. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 31.** Our Saviour here shews the Jewish priests how preposterous was their behaviour, who, though scrupulously exact in performing all external acts of religion, entirely neglected piety, mercy, and other more essential duties. The Jews despised the Samaritans as wicked and irreligious men; but our Saviour here tells them that they were less exact in works of charity towards their neighbours than the very Samaritans. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 34.** This is the allegorical meaning of the parable: The man that *fell among robbers*, represents *Adam* and his posterity; *Jerusalem*, the state of peace and innocence, which man leaves by going down to *Jericho*, which means to moon, the state of trouble and sin: the *robbers* represent the devil, who *stripped* him of his supernatural gifts, and *wounded* him in his natural faculties: the *priest and Levite* represent the old law: the *Samaritan*, Christ; and the *beast*, his humanity. The *inn* means the Church; *wine*, the blood of Christ; *oil*, his mercy; whilst the host signifies St. Peter and his successors, the bishops and priests of the Church. (Origen, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and others)

**Ver. 40.** Calvin here ridicules the professors of evangelical poverty, because they gather from this place that there are two states of life, viz. the active and the contemplative, figured by Martha and Mary. But what will he answer, when he is informed, that this is the opinion not merely of monks, but even of a St. Augustine, (Serm. xxvii. De verbis Domini,) of a St. Jerome, (Com. 3 cap. of Jeremiah,) of a St. Gregory, and many others? Not that they were ignorant that there was

another more natural explanation; but they were of opinion that nothing could be found more proper for the illustration of these different states of life. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 42.** *One thing is necessary.* Some think that Christ's meaning was, that Martha was preparing many dishes, when one was sufficient. But others, that this *one thing necessary*, was to learn, and comply with the will of God; which Mary was employed about. (Witham)

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## LUKE 11

**Ver. 2.** *Father, hallowed be thy name, &c.* See Matthew vi. In the ordinary Greek copies here are all the seven petitions, as in St. Matthew: and so they are in the Protestant Testament. Yet St. Augustine in his Enchiridion, (chap. i. tom. 6, p. 240,) says there were read seven petitions in St. Matthew and only five in St. Luke. We may also take notice, that though in the Greek copies here in St. Luke are all seven petitions of the Lord's prayer, yet the doxology, *for thine is the kingdom, &c.* is omitted in all Greek copies, and by the Protestants; which is a new argument and proof, that the said doxology is an addition from the Greek liturgy. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** In the Greek it is called *epiousion*; i.e. supersubstantial. This is not the bread that goeth into the body, but the bread of eternal life, that supports the life of the soul. It is here called *daily bread*. Receive then daily, what will daily profit you; and continue so to live, that you may be daily in proper dispositions for receiving it. All who are under sin, have received a wound, and must seek for a cure. The cure is this heavenly and most venerable sacrament. (St. Augustine, Sermon ii. de verbo Dei.)

**Ver. 4.** Christ does not teach us to pray for afflictions of the body, but always enjoins us to pray, that we may not enter into temptation. When, therefore, temptation attacks us, we must beg of God grace to withstand it, that the promise in St. Matthew (chap. x.) may be fulfilled in us, *he who perseveres to the end shall be saved.* (Ven. Bede in Reg. Brev. 221)

**Ver. 5.** This parable is not found in any one of the evangelists, except St. Luke. Our Saviour having taught his disciples the aforesaid form of prayer, now shews them the utility and efficacy of prayer in general. He wishes to inculcate the necessity of perseverance in prayer. A friend comes to borrow of another friend at an unseasonable hour; his request is refused; he insists, and obtains, by his perseverance, what he could not have gained without it. Thus also the Almighty wishes to be importuned; he wishes us to pray with zeal and perseverance. this is the model we ought to follow. (Calmet) --- God would not exhort us so earnestly to pray, unless he was ready to grant our petitions. Let us blush at our sloth: he is more ready to give than we are to receive. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 8.** After our Saviour had given his apostles this form of prayer, knowing that men would recite it with remissness and negligence, and then on account of not being heard, would desist, he teaches here to avoid this pusillanimity in prayer; perseverance in our petitions being the most advantageous. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 9.** Our petitions are frequently not immediately granted, that our earnestness and assiduity may be increased; that we may learn to esteem the gifts of God, and preserve them with care, for whatever we procure with labour, we preserve with care, lest by losing it we lose our labour also. (St. Basil in Con. Mon.)

**Ver. 10.** How comes it to pass then, that many pray, and receive not? To this we answer, that if they approach in a proper manner, and observe the necessary conditions of the petition, they will undoubtedly receive what they ask for; but if, on the contrary, they deviate from this rule, and ask not, as they ought, they will not receive; because as St. James says, *you ask, and receive not,*

*because you ask amiss.* (Chap. i.) By asking for things that are prejudicial to your well-being; or, if for spiritual blessings, you do not receive them, on account of your evil motives. (Origen in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 14.** This possessed person is said in St. Matthew to have been also blind. Upon him, therefore, were wrought three wonders: the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the possessed was delivered; which daily takes place in the persons of such as are converted to the number of true believers: the devil is expelled, and they both receive the light of faith beaming upon their eyes, and having the strings of their silent organs loosed to sound forth the praises of God. (Ven. Bede) --- *And the multitude*, &c. The multitude, though devoid of learning, were constant admirers of the actions of our Lord, whilst the Scribes and Pharisees either denied them, or by a sinister interpretation, ascribed them to the power of the unclean spirit. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 17.** *And house upon house shall fall.* He speaks of a house or family divided, which thereby shall fall to ruin. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Your judges.* They will condemn you of injustice, envy, and hatred against me, and blasphemy against God; because when they performed any exorcisms, though they appear but little more than human in their actions, yet you ascribe them to the virtue of God; but when I perform any miracle, though there always appear most evident signs of the power and virtue of God, you ascribe all to the hand and machinations of the devil. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 24.** *Man*, &c. By this one man is meant the whole Jewish people, out of whom the unclean spirit had been driven by the law. (St. Ambrose) --- For as long as they were in Egypt, they lived after the manner of the Egyptians, and were the habitation of the unclean spirit; but it was expelled from them, when they slew the paschal lamb in figure of Christ, and escaped destruction by sprinkling themselves with its blood. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- But the evil spirit returned to his former habitation, the Jews, because he saw them devoid of virtue, barren, and open for his reception. And their latter state is worse than their former; for more wicked demons possessed the breasts of the Jews than before. Then they raged against the prophets only; but now they persecute the Lord himself of the prophets: therefore have they suffered much greater extremities from Vespasian and Titus, than from Egypt and Babylon; for besides being deprived of the merciful protection of Providence, which before watched over them, they are destitute of all grace, and delivered up to a more poignant misery, and a more cruel tyranny of the devil. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlv. on S. Matt.)

**Ver. 26.** *The last state*, &c. But these words are also addressed to us Christians, who may often, and with reason, fear lest the vice we think extinguished in us, again return and seize on our slothful and careless souls, finding them cleansed indeed from the filth of sin by the grace of baptism, but destitute of every ornamental and protective virtue. It brings with it seven other evil spirits, by which we must understand every vicious inclination. (Ven. Bede) --- The latter state of these souls is worse than the former; because having been delivered from all former sins, and adorned with grace, if they again return to their iniquities a much more grievous punishment will be due for every subsequent crime. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlv. on S. Matt.)

**Ver. 28.** *Greek: Menounge*, imo vero, yes indeed. Our Saviour does not here wish to deny what the woman had said, but rather to confirm it: indeed how could he deny, as Calvin impiously maintained, that his mother was blessed? By these words, he only wishes to tell his auditors what great advantage they might obtain by attending to his words. For the blessed Virgin, as St. Augustine says, was more happy in having our Saviour in her heart and affections, than in having conceived him in her womb. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 29.** *But the sign of Jonas.* Instead of a prodigy in the heavens or in the air, I will give you one in the bosom of the earth, more wonderful than that of the prophet Jonas, who came out alive from the belly of the fish, which had swallowed him. Thus I will return alive from the bosom of the earth three days after my death. (Calmet) --- He gave them a sign, not from heaven, for they were

unworthy to behold it, but from the deep; the sign of his incarnation, not of his divinity; of his passion, not of his glory. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 31.** *Queen of the South* shall condemn this generation, not by exercising the power of judgment against them, but by having performed an action which, when put in competition with theirs, will be found superior to them. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 34.** *If thy eye be single.* As when the eyes of the body are pure, and free from the mixture of bad humours, the whole body is lightsome; so if the eyes of the mind, viz. reason, faith and understanding, are not infected with the pestiferous humours of envy, avarice, and other vices, the whole mind will be illuminated by the presence of the Holy Ghost. Take care, therefore, lest by giving way to these vices, the light which is in thee be turned into darkness. (Barradius)

**Ver. 36.** *The whole shall be lightsome.* Not only all thy body, but all about thee; all thy ways and actions. (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** *Washed, &c.* There was nothing ordained by the law concerning this washing of the hands, which the Pharisees observed before taking meat. Christ and his apostles washed their hands when they pleased, without looking for any mystery in such things, or making to themselves vain obligations in frivolous and indifferent things. They did not neglect what was ordained by the law in certain cases for purification; but beside that, they observed nothing more. (Calmet)

**Ver. 41.** *But yet that which remaineth, give alms.*[1] The sense seems not to be of *what remaineth*, give alms, as some expound it; but by the Greek, the sense is, *give alms of what you have*, i.e. of your goods, according to your abilities; and as Tobias said to his son, *If thou hast much, give much; if little, give a little willingly.* (Tobias iv. 9.) --- *All things are clean unto you.* Not that alms without other pious dispositions, will suffice to your salvation; but that other necessary virtues will be given you, by the mercies of God. (Witham) --- These are the means I propose to you to gain that interior purity I am speaking of. But will alms suffice to expiate all sorts of crimes? Is it enough for the murderer, the homicide, &c. to give alms? Undoubtedly not. Our Saviour only compares alms-deeds with the exterior washing which the Pharisees affected. As if he had said, "It is not by the washing in common water that you will take out the stains of your souls, by the works of charity. Charity will be more efficacious to cleanse you than all the waters of the rivers and of the sea." Or, according to Euthymius, if you wish to cleanse yourselves truly, bring forth worthy fruits of penance, give up ill acquired possessions; and as for the rest, redeem you sins by alms. Thus shall all things be made clean to you, as well within as without the vase. (Calmet)

**Ver. 43.** *Salutations in the market-place, &c.* Such as wish to be saluted, and have the first places, that they may appear great, are likened to sepulchres, which are covered externally with ornaments, but are filled inwardly with rottenness. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 44.** *Sepulchres that appear not.* This comparison is partly different from that of Matthew xxiii. 27. For there Christ compares hypocrites to *whitened sepulchres*, which may be seen and avoided; here he compares them to sepulchres covered with grass, which appear not: yet the comparison, in the main, is the same; that whether they appear or not, still under them is corruption: as the interior of the Pharisees was always full of vice and corruption. (Witham) --- *Men that walk, &c.* Because they bear with them a fair outside, but are made up of nothing but corruption. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 45.** *Then one of the lawyers, &c.* Correction, which turns to the advantage of the meek, appears always more intolerable to the wicked. Christ denounces woes against the Pharisees for deviating from the right path, and the doctors of the law found them equally applicable to themselves. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas) --- How miserable is the conscience which, upon hearing the word of God, thinks itself insulted, and always hears the punishment of the reprobate

rehearsed as the words of its own condemnation. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 47.** *Woe to you who build, &c.* Not that the building of the monuments of the prophets was in itself blameworthy, but only the intention of these unhappy men, who made use of this outward shew of religion and piety, as a means to carry on their wicked designs against the prince of prophets. (Challoner)

**Ver. 48.** *Build, &c.* See the notes Matthew xxiii. 29. (Witham)

**Ver. 49.** *The wisdom of God said.* In St. Matthew it is, Behold I send to you prophets and wise men; and in this passage of St. Luke, the wisdom of God saith, I will send, &c.: thus is Christ truly the wisdom of the Almighty God. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 51.** *Blood of Zacharias, &c.* This Zacharias was, according to some Zacharias the son of Joiada, whom the Jews slew between the temple and the altar. (Theophylactus, --- also St. Jerome, who moreover mentions that some editions had Zacharias, son of Joiada.) --- *This generation.* Not that this generation of the Jews should be punished for the crimes of others, but that having before their eyes the severe chastisement of their ancestors had received, in punishment of their wickedness, they had not grown better, but had imitated their perversity. (St. John Chrysostom, hom . lxxv. in Matt.)

**Ver. 52.** *You have taken away the key of knowledge.* A comparison of a master that locks others out. As if Christ said: you pretend, as masters and teachers, to open and expound the law and the prophets; and by your false doctrine and interpretations, you neither observe the law, nor permit others to observe it. See Matthew xxiii. 13. (Witham) --- The key of knowledge is faith; for by faith we come to the knowledge of truth, according to that of Isaias, How shall they understand, if they have not believed? Cap. vii, (according to Septuagint) these doctors of the law took away the key of science, by not allowing the people to believe in Christ. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 53.** *And to oppress (i.e. stop) his mouth about many things.*[2] This is the literal signification of the Greek: they started one question upon another, to raise confusion and confound the answers. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 41. Verumtamen quod superest, date eleemosynam *Greek: plen ta enonta dote eleemosunen*; quæ adsunt, quæ penes vos sunt. It is not *Greek: to loipon*, &c.

[2] Ver. 53. Et os ejus opprimere de multis: *Greek: apostomatizein auton peri pleionon*.

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## LUKE 12

**Ver. 1.** *Beware ye of the leaven, &c.* Christ calls the hypocrisy of the Pharisees heaven, which changes and corrupts the best intentions of men; for nothing is more destructive than hypocrisy to such as give way to it. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 3.** *House-tops.* Our divine Saviour speaks here according to the custom of his own nation, where it was not uncommon for men to preach from the house-top, when they wished to deliver anything to the public; for their houses had flat roofs. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 8.** *Whosoever shall confess me.* By these words we are informed, that more than bare inward protestations of fidelity will be demanded of us; for he moreover requires an exterior confession of our faith. (St. Ambrose)



**Ver. 13.** *The inheritance.* This man might think, that Jesus being the Messias, would act like a king and a judge. (Witham) --- *Speak to my brother, &c.* See in this the spirit of this world, at the very time Jesus is teaching disinterestedness, and the contempt of riches, he is interrupted by a man, who begs him to interfere in a temporal concern: deaf to every thing else, this man can think of his temporal interest only. (Calmet) --- He begged half an inheritance on earth; the Lord offered him a whole one in heaven: he gave him more than he asked for. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 14.** *Judge, &c.* Our Saviour does not here mean to say that he or his Church had not authority to judge, as the Anabaptists foolishly pretend; for he was appointed by the Father, the King of kings, and the Lord and Judge of all. He only wished to keep himself as much detached as possible from worldly concerns: 1. Not to favour the opinion of the carnal Jews, who expected a powerful king for the Messias. 2. To shew that the ecclesiastical ministry was entirely distinct from political government, and that he and his ministers were sent not to take care of earthly kingdoms, but to seek after and prepare men for a heavenly inheritance. (St. Ambrose, Euthymius, Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 19.** *Much goods, &c.* It is evident how far this poor man was mistaken, when he called these things goods, which with more reason ought to be esteemed evils. The only things that can rightly be called goods, are humility, modesty, and its other attendants. The opposite to these ought to be esteemed evils; and riches we ought to consider as indifferent. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 22.** *Therefore I say to you, &c.* Our Lord proceeds step by step in his discourse, to inculcate more perfect virtue. He had before exhorted us to guard ourselves against the fatal rocks of avarice, and then subjoined the parable of the rich man; thereby insinuating what folly that man is guilty of, who applies all his thoughts solely to the amassing of riches. He next proceeds to inform us that we should not be solicitous even for the necessities of life: wishing by this discourse to eradicate our wicked propensity to avarice. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 29.** *And be not lifted up on high.*[1] St. Augustine (lib. ii. QQ. Evang. q. 29. t. 3, part 4, p. 257.) expounds it thus: do not value yourselves for the plenty and variety you have of things to eat. Others, by the Greek, look upon it as a metaphor, taken from *meteors* in the air, that appear high, and as it were in suspense whether to remain there or to fall down; so that they expound it: be not distracted and disturbed with various thoughts and cares how to live. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** Christ styles the elect in this place, his little flock, on account of the greater number of the reprobate; or rather through his love of humility, because though the Church be most numerous, yet he wishes it to continue in humility to the end of the world, and by humility to arrive at the reward which he has promised to the humble. Therefore, in order to console us in our labours, he commands us to seek only the kingdom of heaven, and promises us that the Father will bestow it as a reward upon us. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 33.** Be not solicitous that whilst you are fighting for the kingdom of heaven, the necessities of this life will be wanting to you, on account of his command. Sell what you possess, that you may bestow charity; which those do, who having left all things, nevertheless labour with their hands for their livelihood, and to bestow the rest in charity. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 35.** *Let your loins be girded;* i.e. be prepared to walk in the way of virtue; a comparison taken from the custom of the eastern people, who girded up their long garments, when they went about any business. (Witham) --- After our divine Saviour had given his disciples such excellent instructions, he wishes to lead them still farther in the path of perfection, by telling them to keep their loins girt, and to be prepared to obey the orders of their divine Master. By lamps burning in their hands he wished to insinuate, that they were not to pass their lives in obscurity, but to let their lights shine before men. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 38.** In the first watch is childhood, the beginning of our existence, and by the second is

understood manhood, and by the third is meant old age. He, therefore, who does not comply with our divine Master's injunctions in the first or second watch, let him be careful not to lose his soul by neglecting to be converted to God in his old age. (St. Gregory in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 39.** Some have imagined that the devil, our implacable enemy, is designated by the thief, and our souls by the house, and man by the householder: yet this interpretation does not agree with what follows; for the coming of our Lord is compared to the thief, as if surprising us on a sudden. This latter opinion, therefore, seems to be the more probable one. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 48.** *Shall be beaten with few stripes.* Ignorance, when it proceeds from a person's own fault, doth not excuse, but only diminisheth the fault. (Witham)

**Ver. 49.** *I am come to send fire on the earth.* By this *fire*, some understand the light of the gospel, and the fire of charity and divine love. Others, the fire of trials and persecutions. (Witham) --- What is the fire, which Christ comes to send upon the earth? Some understand it of the Holy Ghost, of the doctrine of the gospel, and the preaching of the apostles, which has filled the world with fervour and light, and which was signified by the flames of fire which appeared at the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. My words, says the Lord, in Jeremias, (Chap. xxiii. 29.) are as a fire, and as a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces. Others understand it of the fire of charity, which Christ came to enkindle upon the earth, and which the apostles carried throughout the whole world. But the most simple and literal opinion seems to be, the fire of persecution and war. Fire is often used in Scripture for war: and our Saviour declares in St. Matthew that he is come to bring the sword, and not peace; that is, the doctrine of the gospel shall cause divisions, and bring persecutions, and almost an infinity of other evils, upon those who shall embrace and maintain it. But it is by these means that heaven must be acquired, it is thus that Jesus Christ destroys the reign of Satan, and overturns idolatry, superstition, and error, in the world. So great a change could not be made without noise, tumult, fire, and war. (Calmet)

**Ver. 50.** *I am to be baptized, with troubles and sufferings.* --- *And how am I straitened?* &c. not with fear, but with an earnest desire of suffering. (Witham)

**Ver. 54.** In these words he reproaches them, that they knew well enough how to judge of the weather by the appearance of the heavens; but were ignorant how to distinguish the times: i.e. could not discern that the time marked by the prophets, for the coming of the Messias, was accomplished. In Palestine, the Mediterranean Sea, which was to the west, was accustomed to send clouds and rain; and the south winds, which came from Arabia and Egypt, very warm countries, caused dryness and heat. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 29. Nolite in sublime tolli, *Greek: me meteorizesthe*; See St. Augustine, incipit superbire de talibus. lib. v. QQ. Evang. Q. 29.

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## LUKE 13

**Ver. 1.** *Whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.* These seem to have been some of the seditious followers of Judas, the Galilean, or *Gaulonite*, who denied that God's people were to pay taxes; and it is thought that some of them, coming to offer up sacrifices in the temple, Pilate caused them to be slain at that very time, so that their blood was mixed with the sacrifices. (Witham) --- *Whose blood*, &c. i.e. whom he had caused to be massacred in the temple, at the time they were offering sacrifices. The history, to which allusion is made in this place, is not well known; but there is great probability that these Galileans were disciples of Judas, the Galilean, who taught that they ought not to pay tribute to foreigners. As they were spreading this doctrine in Jerusalem, and perhaps even in the temple, Pilate laid violent hands upon them, and caused

them to be murdered amidst the sacrifices. (Calmet) --- *Galileans*, &c. These were the followers of one Judas, a Galilean, of whom St. Luke makes mention in the Acts of the Apostles, (Chap. v.) who held it unlawful to call any one *lord*. Many of this sect were punished by Pilate, because they would not allow this title to be given to Cæsar; they also maintained that no other sacrifices could lawfully be offered, except such as were prescribed by the law, by which opinion they forbade the accustomed sacrifices offered up for the emperor and people of Rome. Pilate, irritated by these their opinions, ordered them to be slain in the midst of their sacrifices, and this was their blood mixed with that of the victims. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 2.** *Sinners*, &c. People are naturally inclined to believe, that those who are unfortunate, and afflicted with calamities, must likewise be culpable and impious. The Jews were very much given to these sentiments, as we see in many places in Scripture; John ix. 2 and 3. Our Saviour wishes to do away with this prejudice, by telling them that the Galileans, who are here spoken of, were not the most culpable among the inhabitants of that country; shewing by this, that God often spares the most wicked, and sends upon the good the most apparent signs of vengeance, that he may exercise the patience, and crown the merit of the latter, and give to the former an example of the severity which they must expect, if they continue in their disorders. Neither can it be said, that in this God commits any injustice. He uses his absolute dominion over his creatures, when he afflicts the just; he procures them real good, when he strikes them; and his indulgence towards the wicked, is generally an effect of his mercy, which waits for their repentance, or sometimes the consequences of his great anger, when he abandons them to the hardness of their reprobate hearts, and says, "I will rest, and be angry with you no longer." (Ezechiel, Chap. xvi. 42.) This is the most terrible mark of his final fury. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** This prediction of our Saviour upon the impenitent was afterwards completely verified; for Josephus informs us, that under the government of Cumanus, 20,000 of them were destroyed about the temple. (Jewish Antiquities, lib. xx, chap. 4.) That upon the admission of the Idumeans into the city, 8,500 of the high priest's party were slain, insomuch that there *was a flood of blood quite round the temple*. (The Jewish War, lib. iv, chap. 7.) That in consequence of the threefold faction that happened in Jerusalem before the siege of the Romans, the temple was *every where polluted with slaughter*; the priests were slain in the exercise of their functions; many who came *to worship, fell before their sacrifices; the dead bodies of strangers and natives were promiscuously heaped together, and the altar defiled with their blood*. (The Jewish War, lib. vi, chap. 1.) That upon the Romans taking possession of the city and temple, *mountains of dead bodies were piled up about the altar; streams of blood ran down the steps of the temple*; several were destroyed by the *fall of towers*, and others suffocated in the ruins of the galleries over the porches. (The Jewish War, lib. vii, chap. 10.)

**Ver. 4.** *Or those eighteen*, &c. The Almighty permitted these people to be thus chastised, that the others might be filled with fear and apprehension at the sight of another's dangers, and thus become the heirs of the kingdom of heaven. But then you will say, is another punished that I may become better? No; he is punished for his own crimes; but his punishment becomes to those that witness it the means of salvation. (St. John Chrysostom, Concio. 3. de Lazaro.)

**Ver. 5.** *Unless you do penance*, &c. The Jews did not penance; and therefore, forty years after our Lord's Passion, the Romans came, and beginning with Galilee, destroyed this impious nation to its roots, and polluted not only the court of the temple, whither the sacrifices were carried, but the inner sanctuary, with human blood. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 6.** *A certain man*, &c. Each one, inasmuch as he holds a place in life, if he produce not the fruit of good works, like a barren tree encumbers the ground; because the place he holds, were it occupied by others, might be a place of fertility. (St. Gregory)

**Ver. 9.** *And if happily it bear fruit*. It is a way of speaking, when a sentence is left imperfect; yet what is not expressed, may be easily understood; as here we may understand, *well* and *good*, or the like. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** The president of the synagogue, when he saw the woman, who before crept on the ground, now raised by the touch of Christ, and hearing the mandate of God, was filled with envy, and decried the miracle, apparently through solicitude for keeping the sabbath. But the truth is, he would rather see the poor woman bent to the earth like a beast, than see Christ glorified by healing her. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 19.** Our Lord was this mustard-seed, when he was buried in the earth; and He became a tree, when he ascended into heaven; but a tree that overshadowed the whole creation, in the branches of which the birds of heaven rested; that is, the powers of heaven, and all such as by good works have raised themselves from the earth. The apostles are the branches, to repose in whose bosoms we take our flight, borne on the wings of Christian virtue. Let us sow this seed (Christ) in the garden of our hearts, that the grace of good works may flourish, and you may send forth the various perfumes of every virtue. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 21.** The flour represents us Christians, who receive the Lord Jesus into the inner parts of our soul, till we are all inflamed with the fire of his heavenly wisdom. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 24.** *Shall seek, &c.* Shall desire to be saved; but for want of taking sufficient pains, and not being thoroughly in earnest, shall not attain to it. (Challoner) --- Our Lord answers here in the affirmative: viz. that the number of those who are saved, is very small, for a few only can enter by the narrow gate. Therefore does he say, according to St. Matthew, (Chap. vii.) Narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that enter therein. This does not contradict what is said in the 8th chapter of St. Matthew: That many shall come from the east, and sit down in the kingdom of God; for many indeed shall join the blessed company of the angels, but when considered with the number of the slain, they will appear but few. (St. Augustine, serm. xxxii. de Verb. Dei.)

**Ver. 25.** When the Almighty casts any off, he is said not to know them: in the same manner as a lover of truth may be said not to know how to tell a falsehood, being withheld powerfully from it by his love of truth. (St. Gregory, mor. chap. 8.)

**Ver. 26.** These words are addressed particularly to the Jews, because Christ was born of them according to the flesh, eat and drank with them, and taught publicly in their streets; but they apply to us Christians also, for we eat the body of Christ, and drink his blood, when each day we approach the mystical table, and hear him teaching us in the streets of our souls. (Theophylactus) --- Many very fervent at the beginning afterwards grow lukewarm; and many, though at first frozen, have suddenly glowed with virtue; many, who in this world were condemned, have received glory in the next; while others, in honour amongst men, have passed to eternal torments. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 32.** It is rather surprising that Christ should make use of these opprobrious words, which could be of no service to himself, but which would only serve to irritate king Herod, should they come to his ears. But Christ, by these words, probably wished to shew that he was not the least afraid of him whom the Pharisees feigned to have a design on his life: for it is supposed that the Pharisees had invented this fiction, in order to compel him to leave them quiet. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 33.** *Nevertheless I must walk, (i.e. labour in the mission, teaching, &c.) to-day, and to-morrow, &c. i.e. for a while. --- It cannot be that a prophet,[1] &c.* Not that all of the prophets suffered in Jerusalem, though many did; and it is rather to prophesy, that he himself, the great Prophet, and their Messiah, should be put to death at Jerusalem. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 33. Quia non capit prophetam, &c. *Greek: ouk endechetai*, non contingit.

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## LUKE 14

**Ver. 1.** This was the Hebrew expression for taking a meal; their frugality probably suggested this method of expression, bread being the principal part of their repast. (Calmet) --- What a contrast here between the actions of the Pharisees and those of our Saviour! They watched all his actions, in order to have an opportunity of accusing him, and of putting him to death; whilst he, on the contrary, seeks after nothing but the salvation of his enemies' souls. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 2.** Our divine Saviour, regardless of the wicked designs which these Pharisees meditated to destroy him, cures the sick man, who did not dare to ask the favour of him, for fear of the Pharisees. He could only persuade himself to stand in his presence, hoping that Christ would at length cast a compassionate look upon him: who being well pleased with him, did not demand of him if he wished to be cured, but without demur proceeded to work this stupendous miracle in his behalf. (St. Cyril) --- In which Christ did not so much consider whether the action would give scandal to the Pharisees, as whether it would afford the sick man comfort; intimating, that we ought ever to disregard the raillery of the fools, and the scandal which men of this world may take at our actions, as often as they are for the honour of God, and the good of our neighbour. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 3.** *Is it lawful?* Jesus knew their thoughts, and that they would blame him as a sabbath-breaker: yet he healed the man, and confounded them by the example and common practice of pulling an ass out of a pit on the sabbath-day. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** By this example Christ convicts his adversaries, as guilty of sordid avarice, since, in delivering beasts from the danger of perishing on the sabbath-day, they consult only their own advantage, whilst he was only employed in an act of charity towards his neighbour; an action they seemed so warmly to condemn. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 7.** *A parable.* What parable? In the text there is no parable, but only instruction. Maldonatus thinks that our Saviour spoke a parable on this occasion, which St. Luke has omitted, giving us only the moral and the substance of the instruction conveyed by it. (Calmet) --- To take the lowest place at a feast, according to our Saviour's injunctions, is certainly very becoming; but imperiously to insist upon it, is far from acting according to our Saviour's wishes, particularly when it is destructive of regularity, and productive of discord and contention. (St. Basil)

**Ver. 9.** *The lowest place.* A person of the first quality is not to do this literally, which would be preposterous; but it is to teach every on humility of heart and mind. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** Christ does not here forbid the invitation of friends and relatives, since that would be acting directly contrary to his own maxims and spirit, which breathe nothing but charity and union. He merely wishes to purify our motives in the disposal of our charity, by insinuating that there is more merit in giving to the indigent, from whom we can expect no remuneration. (Calmet) --- It is only an effect of avarice, to be liberal to those who will repay us, says St. Ambrose. It is our duty as acknowledged even by heathens (Cicero de Off. lib. i.) to assist those who stand most in need of it; but our practice says the same author, is to be most obsequious to those from whom we expect most, though they want our services the least. St. Ambrose, Ven. Bede, and St. John Chrysostom are of the same opinion.

**Ver. 16.** By this man we are to understand Christ Jesus, the great mediator between God and man. He sent his servants, at supper-time, to say to them that were invited, that they should come; i.e. he sent his apostles to call the people of Israel, who had been invited to his supper on almost innumerable occasions: but they not only refused the invitation, but also murdered the Lord who had invited them. We may remark, that the three different excuses exactly agree with what St. John says: All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life. The one says, *I have married a wife*, by which may be

understood the concupiscence of the flesh; another says, *I have bought five yoke of oxen*, by which is denoted the concupiscence of the eyes; and the pride of life is signified by the purchase of the *farm*, which the third alleges in his justification. (St. Augustine, de verb. Dei.)

**Ver. 23.** *Compel them to come in.* This is almost the only expression in the New Testament, which can give to the intolerant a plea for persecution. The spirit of the gospel is the spirit of mildness, and the compulsion which it authorizes to bring infidels or heretics into the Church, is such as we use towards our friends, when we press them to accept of our hospitality. The great pope, St. Gregory, forbade the Jews to be persecuted in Rome, who refused to receive the faith of Christ. "Tat is a new and unheard of kind of preaching," says he, "which demands assent by stripes." (Haydock)

**Ver. 26.** *Hate not, &c.* The law of Christ does not allow us to *hate* even our enemies, much less our parents: but the meaning of the text is, that we must be in the at disposition of soul so as to be willing to renounce and part with every thing, how near or dear soever it may be to us, that would keep us from following Christ. (Challoner) --- The word *hate* is not to be taken in its proper sense, but to be expounded by the words of Christ, (Matthew x. 37.) that no man must love his *father more than God*, &c. (Witham) --- Christ wishes to shew us what dispositions are necessary in him who desires to become his disciple; (Theophylactus) and to teach us that we must not be discouraged, if we meet with many hardships and labours in our journey to our heavenly country. (St. Gregory) --- And if for our sakes, Christ even renounced his own mother, saying, *Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?* why do you wish to be treated more delicately than your Lord? (St. Ambrose) --- He wished also to demonstrate to us, that the hatred he here inculcates, is not to proceed from any disaffection towards our parents, but from charity for ourselves; for immediately he adds, *and his own life also*. From which words it is evident, that in our love we must hate our brethren as we do ourselves.

**Ver. 28.** *For which of you, &c.* The similitude, which our divine Saviour makes us of, represents the offices and duty of a true Christian, for he has to build within himself and conduct others by his example to war with the devil, the world, and the flesh; and he has to season, purify, and keep all his actions free from corruption by the spiritual salt of mortification and prayer. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 29.** *Lest after, &c.* Here he wishes to shew us, that we are not to embrace any state of life, particularly that of an ecclesiastic, without previous and serious consideration, whether we shall be able to go through with the difficulties and dangers which will inevitably befall us: lest afterwards we find ourselves constrained to yield to our enemies, who will deride us, and say: *This man began to build, and was not able to finish.* (Tirinus)

**Ver. 34.** *But if the salt, &c.* Man, after he has once been illumined with the light of faith, should he be so unfortunate as to fall into the sink of his former evil habits, what remedy is there remaining for him? He is, as our Saviour says, neither profitable for the land nor for the dunghill, but shall be cast out. (Luke xiv. 35.) (Ven. Bede)

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## LUKE 15

**Ver. 4.** *What man, &c.* Christ left the ninety-nine in the desert, when he descended from the angelic choirs, in order to seek last man on the earth, that he might fill up the number of the sheepfold of heaven, from which his sins had excluded him. (St. Ambrose) --- Neither did his affection for the last sheep make him behave cruelly to the rest; for he left them in safety, under the protection of his omnipotent hand. (St. Cyril in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 7.** *Joy in heaven, &c.* What incitement ought it not to be to us to practice virtue, when we reflect that our conversion causes joy to the troops of blessed spirits, whose protection we should

always seek, and whose presence we should always revere. (St. Ambrose) --- There is greater joy for the conversion of a sinner, than for the perseverance of the just; but it frequently happens, that these being free from the chain of sin, remain indeed in the path of justice, but press not on eagerly to their heavenly country; whilst such as have been sinners, are stung with grief at the remembrance of their former transgressions, and calling to mind how they have forsaken their God, endeavour by present fervour to compensate for their past misconduct. But it must be remembered that there are many just, whose lives cause such joy to the heavenly court, that all the penitential exercises of sinners cannot be preferred before them. (St. Gregory, hom. xxxiv.)

**Ver. 8.** In the preceding parable, the race of mankind is compared to a lost sheep, to teach us that we are the creatures of the most high God, who made us, and not we ourselves, of whose pasture we are the sheep. (Psalm xcix.) And in this parable mankind are compared to the drachma, which was lost, to shew us that we have been made to the royal likeness and image even of the omnipotent God; for the drachma is a piece of money, bearing the image of the king. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 10.** *Before the angels.* By this it is plain that the spirits in heaven have a concern for us below, and a joy at our repentance, and consequently a knowledge of it. (Challoner)

**Ver. 11.** *A certain man had two sons.* By the elder son is commonly expounded the Jewish people, who for a long time had been chosen to serve God; and by the *younger son*, the Gentiles, who for so many ages had run blindly on in their idolatry and vices. (Witham) --- Some understand this of the Jews and Gentiles, others of the just and sinners. The former opinion seems preferable. The elder son, brought up in his father's house, &c. represents the Jews; the younger prodigal is a figure of the Gentiles. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** It is ver probable, from this verse, that the children of the family, when come of age, could demand of their parents the share of property which would fall to their lot. For these parables suppose the ordinary practices of the country, and are founded on what was customarily done. Grotius thinks this was the common law among the Phœnicians. --- The Gentiles, prefigured by the prodigal son, received from their father, (the Almighty,) free-will, reason, mind, health, natural knowledge, and the goods which are common to mankind, all which they dissipated and abused. Sinners who have besides received the gift of faith and sanctification, by baptism, and who have profaned the holiness of their state, by crimes, are more express figures of the bad conduct of this son. (Calmet)

**Ver. 16.** *Husks.* This expresses the extreme misery of his condition. There is no need of seeking any other mystery in this word. Horace, by a kind of hyperbole, (B. ii, Ep. 1.) represents the miser as living upon husks to be able to save more.

*Vivit siliquis et pane secundo.*

--- *And no man gave unto him;* i.e. gave him *bread*, mentioned before; for as for the husks, he could take what he pleased. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** How merciful is the Almighty, who, though so much offended, still does not disdain the name of father. --- *I have sinned.* These are the first words of a sinner's confession to the author of nature. God knows all things; still does he expect to hear the voice of your confession. It is in vain to think of concealing your sins from the eyes of him whom nothing can escape; and there can be no danger of acknowledging to him what his infinite knowledge has already embraced. Confess then that Christ may intercede for you, the Church pray for you, the people pour forth their tears for you. Fear not that you cannot obtain pardon, for pardon is promised to you; grace, and a reconciliation with a most tender parent, are held out to you. (St. Ambrose) --- *Before thee,* &c. By this does our Redeemer shew, that the Almighty is here to be understood by the name of father: for the all-seeing eye of God only beholds all things, from whom even the secret machinations of the heart cannot be concealed. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 22.** *The first;* i.e. the best *robe*: by it, is meant the habit of grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Was dead, and is come to life again.* A sinner, in mortal sin, is deprived of the divine grace, which is the spiritual life of the soul. At his conversion it is restored to him, and he begins to live again. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *His elder son, &c.* We have already remarked, that this son represents the Jews. He boasts of having always served his father faithfully, and of never disobeying him. This is the language of that presumptuous people, who believe themselves alone holy; and despising the Gentiles with sovereign contempt, could not bear to see the gates of salvation laid open also to them. The 28th, 29th, and 30th verses express admirably the genius of the Jewish people; particularly his refusing to enter his father's house, shews their obstinacy. (Calmet)

**Ver. 29.** *I have never transgressed, &c.* With what face could the Jews, represented here by the eldest son, say they have never transgressed the commandments of their father? This made Tertullian think that this was not the expression of the Jews, but of the faithful Christians; and, therefore, he interprets the whole parable as applied to a disciple of Christ. But we should recollect, that it is not uncommon for presumption to boast of what it never has done. The whole history of the Jews is full of numberless details of their prevarication and disobedience. (Calmet) --- *A kid, &c.* The Jews demanded a kid, but the Christians a lamb; therefore was Barabbas set at liberty for them, whilst for us the lamb was immolated. (St. Ambrose)

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## LUKE 16

**Ver. 1.** *There was a certain rich man, &c.* By this parable, our Saviour advises his disciples to accompany their penitential works with deeds of mercy to the poor. (Ven. Bede) --- There is a certain erroneous opinion, that obtains pretty generally amongst mankind, and which tends to increase crimes, and to lessen good works: and this is, the foolish persuasion that men are not accountable to any one, and that we can dispose as we please of the things in our possession. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Whereas we are here informed, that we are only the dispensers of another's property, viz. God's. (St. Ambrose) --- When, therefore, we employ it not according to the will of our Master, but fritter and squander it away in pleasure, and in the gratification of our passions, we are, beyond all doubt, unjust stewards. (Theophylactus) --- And a strict account will be required of what we have thus dissipated, by our common Lord and Master. If then we are only stewards of that which we possess, let us cast from our minds that mean superciliousness and pride which the outward splendour of riches is so apt to inspire; and let us put on the humility, the modesty of stewards, knowing well that to whom much is given, much will be required. Abundance of riches makes not a man great, but the dispensing them according to the will and intention of his employer. (Haydock) --- The intention of this parable, is to shew what use each one ought to make of the goods which God has committed to his charge. In the three former parables, addressed to the murmuring Scribes and Pharisees, our Saviour shews with what goodness he seeks the salvation and conversion of a sinner; in this, he teaches how the sinner, when converted, ought to correspond to his vocation, and preserve with great care the inestimable blessing of innocence. (Calmet) --- *A steward, &c.* The parable puts us in mind, that let men be ever so rich or powerful in this world, God is still their master; they are his servants, and must be accountable to him how they have managed his gifts and favours; that is, all things they have had in this world. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *And he called him, &c.* Such are the words which our Lord daily addresses to us. We daily see persons equally healthy, and likely to live as ourselves, suddenly summoned by death, to give an account of their stewardship. Happy summons to the faithful servant, who has reason to hope in his faithful administration. Not so to the unfaithful steward, whose pursuits are earthly: death to him is terrible indeed, and his exit is filled with sorrow. All thunder-stricken at these words, "now thou canst be steward no longer," he says within himself, what shall I do! (St.



Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 8.** *And the lord commanded, &c.* By this we are given to understand, that if the lord of this unjust steward could commend him for his worldly prudence, though it were an overt act of injustice; how much more will the Almighty be pleased with those who, obedient to his command, seek to redeem their sins by alms-deeds? (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- "Give alms out of thy substance," says holy Tobias to his son, "and turn not thy face from any poor person: for so it shall come to pass, that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee. According to thy abilities be merciful. If thou hast much, give abundantly; if thou hast little, take care, even of that little, to bestow willingly a little. For thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward, for the day of necessity. For alms deliver from sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." (Tobias iv. 7, 8, &c.) (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- *Children of this world, &c.* are more prudent and circumspect as to what regards their temporal concerns, than they who profess themselves servants of God, are about the concerns of eternity. --- *Commended the unjust steward.*[1] Literally, the *steward of iniquity*: not for his cheating and injustice, but for his contrivances in favour of himself. --- *In their generation*; i.e. in their concerns of this life. They apply themselves with greater care and pains, in their temporal affairs, than the *children of light*, whom God has favoured with the light of faith, do to gain heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Make for yourselves friends, &c.* Not that we are authorized to wrong our neighbour, to give to the poor: evil is never to be done, that good may come from it. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- But we are exhorted to make the poor our friends before God, by relieving them with the riches which justly indeed belong to us, but are called *the mammon of iniquity*, because only the iniquitous man esteems them as riches, on which he sets his affections; whilst the riches of the virtuous are wholly celestial and spiritual. (St. Augustine, de quæst. Evang.) --- *Of the mammon of iniquity.* Mammon is a Syriac word for riches; and so it might be translated, *of the riches of iniquity*. Riches are called *unjust*, and riches of *iniquity*, not of themselves, but because they are many times the occasion of unjust dealings, and of all kind of vices. (Witham) --- *Mammon* signifies *riches*. They are here called the *mammon of iniquity*, because oftentimes ill-gotten, ill-bestowed, or an occasion of evil; and at the best are but worldly, and false: and not the true riches of a Christian. --- *They may receive.* By this we see, that the poor servants of God, whom we have relieved by our alms, may hereafter, by their intercession, bring our souls to heaven. (Challoner) --- They may receive you into their eternal tabernacles. What a beautiful thought this! What a consolation to the rich man, when the terms of his mortal existence is approaching, to think he shall have as many advocates to plead for his admittance into the eternal mansions of rest, as he has made friends among the poor by relieving their temporal wants. The rich give to the poor earthly treasures, the latter return in recompense eternal and infinite happiness. Hence we must infer, that the advantage is all on the side of the giver; according to the saying of our Lord, happier is the condition of him who gives, than of him who receives. (Haydock)

**Ver. 10.** *He that is faithful in that which is least.* This seems to have been a common saying, and that men judged of the honesty of their servants by their fidelity in lesser matters. For example, a master that sees his servant will not steal a little thing, judges that he will not steal a greater, &c. --- *And he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater.* The interpreters take notice, that here *temporal* goods are called *little*, and *spiritual* goods are called *greater*; so that the sense is, that such men as do not make a right use of their temporal goods, in the service of God, will not make a good use of spiritual graces as they ought to do. See Maldonatus. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon;*[2] i.e. in fading and false riches, which are the occasion of unjust and wicked proceedings. --- *Who will trust you with that which is the true?* i.e. God will not intrust you with the true and spiritual riches of his grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's:* so again is called false worldly wealth, which passeth from one to another; so that it cannot be called a man's own, *who*

*will give you that which is your own?* i.e. how can you hope that God will bestow upon you, or commit to your care, spiritual riches or gifts, which, when rightly managed, would by your own for all eternity? See St. Augustine, lib. ii. qq. Evang. q. 35. p. 263. (Witham) --- *That which is another's*. Temporal riches may be said to belong to another, because they are the Lord's; and we have only the dispensing of them: so that when we give alms, we are liberal of another's goods. But if we are not liberal in giving what is another's, how shall we be so in giving our own? Nothing one would have thought so properly belonged to the Jews, as the kingdom of heaven, the preaching of the gospel, and the knowledge of heavenly things. But they were deprived of all for their infidelity in the observance of the law, which was first intrusted to them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *No servant can serve two masters, &c.* This is added to shew us, that to dispose of our riches according to the will of the Almighty, it is necessary to keep our minds free from all attachment to them. (Theophylactus) --- Let the avaricious man here learn, that to be a lover of riches, is to be an enemy of Christ. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 14.** *Now the Pharisees, &c.* Christ had admonished the Scribes and Pharisees not to presume too much on their own sanctity, but to receive repenting sinners, and to redeem their own sins with alms. But they derided these precepts of mercy and humility; either because they esteemed what he commanded them to be useless, or because they thought they had already complied with them. (Ven. Bede) --- The Pharisees considered temporal riches as true goods, and the recompense which God had promised to such as observed his laws; they therefore laughed at the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which extolled liberality and alms-deeds, and despised the Master who, on all occasions, testified his great regard for poverty in his discourses, in his conduct, in the choice of his apostles, who were all poor, and had no pretensions whatever to exterior pomp or show. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *Who justify yourselves, &c.* But our Lord, detecting their hidden malice, shews that their pretended justice is all hypocrisy. (Theophylactus) --- *But God knoweth, &c.* They justify themselves before men, whom they look upon as despicable, and abandoned sinners, and esteem themselves as not standing in need of giving alms as a remedy of sin; but he who shall lay open the secrets of hearts, sees the *base* atrocity of that pride which thus blinds them, and swells within their breasts. (Ven. Bede) --- Yes, all those exterior actions which appeared great, and which were admired by men, being vitiated with improper motives and sinister designs, are an abomination in the sight of God. (Haydock)

**Ver. 16.** *The law and the prophets, &c.* Not that the law was made void by the coming of John [the Baptist], but that what the law and the prophets had taught, had been suited to the very imperfect dispositions of the Jews, who as yet were incapable of relishing perfect virtue. At the coming of John, the gospel began to be preached, and this called men to a life of perfect sanctity. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- Our Saviour came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the prophets. (Matthew v. 17.)

**Ver. 19.** *There was a certain rich man, &c.* By this history of the rich man and Lazarus, he declares that those who are placed in affluent circumstances, draw upon themselves a sentence of condemnation, if seeing their neighbour in want, they neglect to succour him. (St. Cyril, in Cat. Græc. patrum.) --- He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shut up his bowels against him, how doth the charity of God abide in him? (1 John iii. 17.) A received tradition of the Jews informs us, that this *Lazarus* was a beggar, then at Jerusalem, suffering in the most wretched condition of poverty, and infirmity: him our Saviour introduces, to manifest more plainly the truth of what he had been saying (St. Cyril, in Cat. Græc. patrum.) --- By this, we are not to understand that all poverty is holy, and the possession of riches criminal; but, as luxury is the disgrace of riches, so holiness of life is the ornament of poverty. (St. Ambrose) --- A man may be reserved and modest in the midst of riches and honours, as he may be proud and avaricious in the obscurity of a poor and wretched life. --- Divers interpreters have looked upon this as a true history; but what is said of the rich man *seeing* Lazarus, of his *tongue*, of his *finger*, cannot be literal: souls having no such parts. (Witham) --- In this parable, which St.

Ambrose takes to be a real fact, we have the name of the poor mendicant; but our Lord suppresses the name of the rich man, to signify that his name is blotted out of the book of life: besides, the rich man tells Abraham, that he has five brothers, who were probably still living; wherefore, to save their honour, our Lord named not their reprobated brother.

**Ver. 22.** *Abraham's bosom.*[3] The place of rest, where the souls of the saints resided, till Christ had opened heaven by his death. (Challoner) --- It was an ancient tradition of the Jews, that the souls of the just were conducted by angels into paradise. The bosom of Abraham (the common Father of all the faithful) was the place where the souls of the saints, and departed patriarchs, waited the arrival of their Deliverer. It was thither the Jesus went after his death; as it is said in the Creed, "*he descended into hell,*" to deliver those who were detained there, and who might at Christ's ascension enter into heaven. (Calmet) See 1 Peter iii. 19. --- "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham." (Matthew viii. 11.)

**Ver. 25.** It appears from Philo, (de Execrat. p. 9, 37 b.) that the Jews not only acknowledged the existence of souls, and their state of happiness or misery after this life, but also that the souls of the saints and patriarchs interceded with God for their descendants, and obtained from them the succour they stood in need of. (Calmet)

**Ver. 26.** *Between us and you is fixed a great chaos, or gulf;* i.e. God's justice has decreed, that the bad should forever be separated from the good. We may here take notice thta the Latin and Greek word, (ver. 22) translated *hell*, even in the Protestant translation, cannot signify only the *grave*. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** In this parable we are taught an important truth, viz. that we must not expect to learn our duty from the dead returning to life, nor by any other extraordinary or miraculous means, but from the revelation of truths, which have already been made known to us in the Scriptures, and from those to whom the tradition of the Church has been committed, as a most sacred deposit. These, say the Fathers, are the masters from whom we are to learn what we are to believe, and what to practise. (Calmet)

**Ver. 31.** *If they hear not, Moses, &c.* We think that if we saw a man raised from the dead, who should tells us what he had seen and suffered in another world, it would make more impression upon us than past miracles, which we hear of, or the promises and threats of the prophets, apostles, and our blessed Saviour, which are contained in Scripture; but it is a false notion, a vain excuse. The wicked, and unbelievers, would even in that case find pretexts and objections for not believing. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. iv.) --- They would say that the dead man was a phantom; that his resurrection was not real; his assertions nugatory. When Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, the miracle was known, evident and public; yet we find none of the Pharisees converted by it. They were even so mad as to enter into a design to kill Lazarus, to get rid of a witness who deposed against their incredulity. How many other miracles did he not perform in their sight, which they attributed to the prince of darkness, or to magic? Christ raised himself from the dead. This fact was attested by many unexceptionable witnesses. And what do the hardened Jews do? They object, that his disciples, stealing away the body, maliciously persuaded the people that he had risen again. Such is the corruption of the human heart, that when once delivered up to any passion, nothing can move it. Every day we see or hear of malefactors publicly executed, yet their example has no effect on the survivors, nor does it prevent the commission of fresh crimes. (Calmet) --- "We have also the more firm prophetic word; whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." (2 Peter i. 19.) --- We may learn many very instructive lessons from this affecting history of Lazarus. --- *The rich* may learn the dreadful consequences to be apprehended from riches, when made subservient to *sensuality, luxury, and ambition*. *The poor* may learn to make their poverty and sufferings, however grievous to nature, instrumental to their future happiness, by bearing them with patience and resignation to the will of heaven. The former are taught that to expose a man to eternal misery, nothing more is required than to enjoy all the *good things* of this world according to their own will; the latter, that however

they may be despised and rejected of men, they may still have courage, knowing that the short day of this fleeting life, with all its apparent evils, will soon be over; and that the day of eternity is fast approaching, when every one shall receive according as he has done good or evil in his body. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 8. Villicum iniquitatis, i.e. iniquum, *Greek: oikonomon tes adikias*.

[2] Ver. 11. In iniquo mammona, *Greek: en to adiko Mammona*.

[3] Ver. 22. In sinum Abrahæ, *Greek: eis ton kolpon tou Abraam*. --- Ver. 22. In inferno, *Greek: en to ade*. See Pearson on the Creed, (p. 236) and our Catholic controvertists.

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## LUKE 17

**Ver. 1.** The world being corrupted as it is, and the spread of evil so wide, it is impossible that scandals should not come. (Bible de Vence) --- *It is impossible*, morally speaking, with regard to the malice of men. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *It were better.* Christ here speaks after the manner of the Jews, who were accustomed to inflict this punishment only on the greatest malefactors. So that we must be ready to undergo the most excruciating torments, rather than cause any scandal to our neighbour; though we must here observe, that if our neighbour take scandal at our good works, we ought not on that account to desist from doing good, or desert the truth. (Ven. Bede) --- St. Luke, in this chapter, inserts four instructions, which have no connection with each other, and which by the writers of evangelical harmony, are given in different places; as in Matthew xviii. after ver. 14, &c.

**Ver. 5.** *Increase our faith.* The disciples having heard our Saviour inculcating maxims hard to flesh and blood, such as avoiding scandal, and forgiving our enemies, humbly beg their faith may be increased, that they may be able to comply with these maxims; for they had heard Christ say, that every thing was possible to him that believed. (Theophylactus) --- Christ compares faith to a grain of mustard seed; because, though the grain be small, it is nevertheless stronger than most herbs. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 6.** *To this mulberry-tree.* In St. Matthew, (xvii. 19.) we read, *to this mountain*. Christ might say both at different times. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** the design and end of this parable is to shew that, rigorously speaking, we are useless servants with regard to God. This sovereign Master has a right to exact of us every kind of service, and to make us apply ourselves to any task he might think proper, without our having any reason to complain either of the difficulty, trouble, or length of our labours; we are entirely his, and he is master of our persons, time, and talents. We hold of him whatever we possess, and woe to us if we abuse his trust, by applying our talents to any use contrary to his designs. But though he be Lord and Master, he leaves our liberty entire. If he produces in us holy desires, if he works in us meritorious actions, gives us virtuous inclinations and supernatural gifts, he sets to our account the good use we make of them; and in crowning our merits, he crowns his own gifts. (St. Augustine, lib. ix. Confes. and Serm. 131.) (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *Unprofitable servants.* Because our service is of *no profit* to our Master; and he justly claims it as our bounden duty. But though we are *unprofitable to him*, our serving him is not *unprofitable to us*; for he is pleased to give, by his grace, a value to our good works, which, in consequence of his promise, entitles them to an eternal reward. (Challoner) --- The word *useless*, when joined to servant, generally means a servant from whom his master does not derive the

service he has a right to expect; as in St. Matthew xxv. 30. Here the word is taken in a less odious sense. It means a servant who does not testify sufficient zeal and ardour in his master's service, who is not very eager to please him. With regard to God, we are always useless servants, because he wants not our services; and without his assistance, we can neither undertake nor finish any thing to please him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14.** *To the priests.* Jesus sends them to the priests, to convince the latter of the reality of the cures which he wrought, and oblige them by that to acknowledge him for their Messiah; 2ndly, that the lepers might enjoy the fruit of their cure, by returning to the society of their fellow men, after they had been declared clean, and satisfied all the demands of the law; for there were many ceremonies previous to be gone through. (Calmet) --- And lastly, to shew that in the new law, such as are defiled with the leprosy of sin, should apply to the priests. Hence, says St. Augustine, let no one despise God's ordinance, saying that it is sufficient to confess to God alone. (Lib. de visit. infirm.)

**Ver. 19.** *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* Were not the others also made whole? They were cleansed indeed from their leprosy, but it no where appears that they were justified in their souls like this Samaritan, of whom it said, thy faith hath made thee whole; whereas it was said of the others, that they were made clean, viz. of their leprosy in their body, though not justified in their soul: this the Samaritan alone seems to have obtained. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 20.** *When the kingdom of God should come?* or when is it to come? when will the Messiah come? The Pharisees might say this in a mocking and an insulting manner, to signify that he could not be their true Messiah. --- *The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;* that it, so as to be observed; not with great marks of temporal power, as you imagine. (Witham) --- The Pharisees expected a Messiah powerful according to this world, a conqueror, a monarch, a revenger of the injuries of Israel; one who would restore them to liberty, and bless them with temporal goods and prosperity. In Jesus, they saw nothing, which corresponded to these magnificent hopes; and therefore asked him, by way of insult and reproach, when this kingdom of God would come, which he so often talked of and announced to his disciples. He answers them, that the manifestation of the Messiah, and the establishment of his kingdom, shall not be effected in a conspicuous, splendid manner. It shall be brought about insensibly, and the accomplishment of the designs of the omnipotence of our Lord shall appear a casualty, and the effect of secondary causes. You shall not see the Messiah coming at the head of armies, to spread terror and desolation. His arrival shall not be announced by ambassadors, &c. every thing in the establishment of my kingdom shall be the reverse of temporal power. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** *Is within you.* It is with you; your Messiah is already come. --- *He standeth in the midst of you,* as John the Baptist told you. (John i. 26.) (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *To see one day, &c.* Hereafter, when I shall be no longer visibly among you, you shall heartily wish for one day's conversation with me. (Witham) --- This verse is addressed to the disciples. He insinuates that he will take from them this corporeal presence, and they shall be exposed to persecution and affliction: then they shall wish to see one day of the Son of man, and shall not be able to obtain it. They shall wish ardently to see him, to entertain themselves with him, and consult him, but shall not have that happiness. This was meant to excite the disciples to profit more of his presence whilst they enjoyed it. (Calmet)

**Ver. 24.** *For as lightning, &c.* See Matthew xxiv. 27. (Witham) --- Christ here alludes to the glory with which he shall appear when he shall come to judge the world, surrounded by his angels, &c. when he will appear like lightning, that shall penetrate the inmost recesses of our souls, and shall suffer no crime, not even the slightest thought of our souls, to pass unnoticed. This is the time when he will manifest his glory, and not on his entry into Jerusalem, as the disciples imagined: for he informs them, that he will then have to suffer a cruel death. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 27.** After having compared his second coming to lightning, in order to shew how sudden it

will be, he next compares it to the days of Noe [Noah] and Lot, to shew that it will come when men least expect it; when, entirely forgetting his coming, they are solely occupied in the affairs of this world, in buying and selling, &c. He only mentions those faults which appear trivial, or rather none at all, (passing over the crimes of murder, theft, &c.) purposely to shew, that if God thus punishes merely the immoderate use of what is lawful, how will his vengeance fall upon what is in itself unlawful. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 31.** When you see war lighted up in Judea, lose no time, but betake yourselves to flight for safety. Indeed the Christians, forewarned by these predictions, and other prophecies of the apostles, according to Lactantius, (lib. iv. chap. 21.) fled from the danger beyond the Jordan, into the states of Herod, to Pella and the neighbouring villages. See Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. chap. 5.

**Ver. 32.** As Lot only escaped destruction by leaving all things, and flying immediately to the mountain, whereas his wife, by shewing an affection for the things she had left, and looking back, perished; so those who, in the time of tribulation, forgetting the reward that awaits them in heaven, look back to the pleasures of this world, which the wicked enjoy, are sure to perish. (St. Ambrose) --- *Greek: Ta opisō epilanthanesthai, tois de emprosthen epekteinesthai.* (Philippians iii. 13.)

**Ver. 34.** By these different examples, Christ wishes to insinuate that good and bad men will be found in every state of life. By those in bed, are understood the rich, by those in the mill, are understood the poor; whilst those in the field designate the pastors of his flock, who are labouring in the vineyard of the Lord. (St. Cyril and St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 37.** To the question of his disciples in the preceding verse, our blessed Saviour only returns this enigmatical answer, which seems to mean, that where-ever there are guilty Jews, there shall their enemies pursue them and find them out, not only in Jerusalem, but in all the cities of Judea, Galilee, &c. every where the vengeance of the Lord shall follow them, and overtake them. For the interpretation of other parts of this chapter, see St. Matthew chap. xxiv. (Calmet) --- If we observe some discrepancies between the precise words of our Lord, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, as in St. Matthew chap. xxiv. ver. 40, and in Luke xvii. 34, and alibi passim [elsewhere in various places], we can reconcile those apparent variations, by supposing that our Lord, in the course of his conversation, made use of both expressions. (Haydock)

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## LUKE 18

**Ver. 1.** *Always to pray*, i.e. to pray daily, and frequently; (Witham) and also to walk always in the presence of God, by a spirit of prayer, love, and sorrow for sin.

**Ver. 2.** This judge, who feared not God, nor cared for man, yet yielded to the importunity of the widow, represents the absolute and sovereign power of God. But we must not suppose the Almighty has any of the faults we see in this iniquitous judge. Comparisons are not meant to hold good in every particular. The only consequence to be drawn from the present parable, is this: if a man, who has neither piety nor tenderness for his fellow creatures, yield to the importunity of a widow, who is not wearied out with repeating her petitions; how much more will God, who is full of bounty and tenderness to man, and only seek occasions to grant him his gifts, hear the prayers of the fervent, and fill with benedictions the petitioner, who can continue like the widow to importune his interference, and can beg without languor or discouragement? (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *Avenge me*; i.e. do me justice. It is a Hebraism. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *And he would not for a long time.* The Almighty does not always hear us as soon as we

could wish, nor in the manner that seems best to us; but if we are not always heard according to our desires, we always are as far as is conducive to our salvation. He sometimes delays, in order to exercise our patience, and increase our ardour: sometimes he grants, in his anger, what, in him mercy, he would refuse. Let us then pray always, desire always, love always. Desire always, and you pray always. This is the continual voice of prayer, which the Almighty demands of you. You are silent, when you cease to love. The cooling of charity, is the silence of the heart. (St. Augustine, in Psalm xxxvii.) (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *She weary me out.*[1] This, as much as I am able to find out, seems the literal signification both of the Latin and Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** In the Greek, although he suffer for the present the elect to be oppressed. (Bible de Vence) --- Our divine Redeemer adds, this, to shew that *faith* must necessarily accompany our prayers. For whosoever prays for what he does not believe he shall obtain, will pray in vain; let us, therefore, entreat the Father of mercies to grant us the grace of prayer, and firmness in faith; for faith produces prayer, and prayer produces firmness of faith. (St. Augustine, de verb. Dom. Serm 36.) --- But of this there is little left on the earth, and there will be still less at the second coming of the Son of God.

**Ver. 9.** In this chapter we have three examples of prayer: one of the persevering widow; another of the poor publican, who solicits the divine mercy by the acknowledgment of his crimes; and the third of the proud Pharisee, who only goes to the temple to pronounce his own panegyric, and enter upon a accusation of his humble neighbour, whose heart is unknown to him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 11.** The Pharisee *standing*. The Greek is, standing by himself, i.e. separated from the rest. Some understand this term, *standing*, as if in opposition to *kneeling* or *prostrating*, which they suppose to be the general posture in which the Jews offered up their prayers, and that of the humble publican. The Christians borrowed this practice from them. We see the apostles and disciples praying on their knees: Acts vii. 59, ix. 40, xx. 36. In the Old Testament, we see the same observed. Solomon, (3 Kings viii. 54.) Daniel, (vi. 10.) and Micheas, (vi. 6.) prayed in that posture. Others however, think that the people generally prayed standing, as there were neither benches nor chairs in the temple. (Calmet) --- There are four ways by which men are guilty of pride: 1st, By thinking they have any good from themselves; 2nd, by thinking that though they have received it from above, it was given them as due to their own merits; 3rd, by boasting of the good they do not possess; and fourthly, by desiring to be thought the only persons that possess the good qualities of which they thus pride themselves. The pride of the Pharisee seems to have consisted in attributing to himself alone the qualities of which he boasted. (St. Gregory, mor. lib. xxiii, chap. 4.) --- He who is guilty of publicly speaking against his neighbour, is likewise the cause of much damage to himself and others. 1st, He injures the hearer; because if he be a sinner, he rejoices to find an accomplice; if he be just, he is tempted to vanity, seeing himself exempt from the crimes with which others are charged. 2nd, He injures the Church, by exposing it to be insulted for the defects of its members. 3rd, He causes the name of God to be blasphemed; for, as God is glorified by our good actions, so is he dishonoured by sin. 4th, He renders himself guilty, by disclosing that which it was his duty not to have mentioned. (St. John Chrysostom, Serm. de Phar. et Pub.)

**Ver. 12.** See how the Pharisee here, by pride, lays open to the enemy his heart, which he had in vain shut against him by fasting and prayer. It is in vain to defend a city, if you leave the enemy a single passage, by which he may enter in. (St. Gregory, mor. lib. xix. chap. 12.)

**Ver. 14.** If any one should ask why the Pharisee is here condemned for speaking some few words in his own commendation, and why the like sentence was not passed on Job, who praised himself much more; the difference is evident: the former praised himself without any necessity, merely with an intention of indulging his vanity, and extolling himself over the poor publican; the latter, being overwhelmed with misery, and upbraided by his friends, as if, forsaken of God, he suffered his present distress in punishment of his crimes, justifies himself by recounting his

virtues for the greater glory of God, and to preserve himself and others in the steady practice of virtue, under similar temptations. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 34.** They understood well enough the sense of the words he spoke to them. But they could not understand how they could be reconciled with the idea they had previously conceived of the Messiah. They were scandalized in the first place, to think that God should suffer any thing inflicted by man; they were scandalized in the second place, to hear that sufferings and death could lead to victory and empire; and lastly, they were scandalized, (their own feelings taking the alarm) lest they should be forced to imitate their Master in this part which he had chosen for himself. (Haydock)

**Ver. 35.** This blind man is, according to some interpreters, different from the other two whom Jesus Christ cured as he was going out of Jericho. (Bible de Vence) --- See Matthew xx. 29. and Mark x. 46. et dein.

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[1] Ver. 5. Sugillet me, *Greek: upopiaze me*. The Greek word literally signifies, lest she give me strokes on the face, that make me appear black and blue; which were called, *Greek: upopia*. This word, *Greek: upopiazein*, is only used in one other place in the New Testament, (1 Corinthians ix. 27.) where St. Paul says, castigo, or contundo corpus meum. Now, as we cannot imagine that this judge feared lest the widow should beat him in this shameful manner, the word metaphorically seems to imply, lest she should injuriously upbraid and continually reproach me.

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## LUKE 19

**Ver. 2.** What sinner can despair when he sees the Saviour of mankind seeking to save him; when he beholds even a publican and a rich man, at the same time, who, as our Saviour informs us in another place, are so seldom truly converted, brought to the light of faith, and the grace of a true conversion! (St. Ambrose) --- Zacheus (who as a farmer of the customs, not a collector, as some falsely imagine) immediately hearkened to the interior voice of the Almighty, calling him to repentance; he made no delay, and therefore deserved immediately not only to see, but to eat, drink, and converse with Jesus. (St. Cyril) --- Behold here the three steps of his conversion: 1. an ardent desire of seeing Jesus; 2. the honourable reception he gave him in his house; 3. the complete restitution of all ill-acquired property.

**Ver. 9.** Zacheus is here styled a son of Abraham; i.e. his spiritual son, a partaker of the promises made to Abraham concerning the Messiah: not that he was actually born of his seed, but because he imitated his faith; and as Abraham at the voice of God, left the land and house of his father; so Zacheus renounced his goods and possessions, by giving them to the poor. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 11.** *That the kingdom of God should immediately be manifested.* The disciples were full of the expectation of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, though he had divers times told them he was to suffer and die on a cross. (Witham) --- Notwithstanding all that Jesus had said to them about his kingdom, his death, his consummation, and resurrection, they still believed that the kingdom of God was going to be manifested, and that Jesus, in this journey, would make himself be acknowledged king by the whole nation of the Jews. They could not lay aside the ideas they had formed of the personal and temporal reign of the Messiah. Every thing which they could not reconcile with this standard, was completely impenetrable to them. It was a language they could not comprehend. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** This parable is an exact prophetic history of what happened to Archelaus Antipas, son of Herod the great, about thirty-six years afterwards. Judea being then tributary, he was obliged to go to Rome to receive his kingdom from the hands of the emperor Augustus. The Jews, who



hated him for his cruelty, sent an embassy to the emperor, to accuse him of many crimes, and disappoint him in his hopes of gaining his crown. But Augustus confirmed it to him, and sent him back to reign in Judea, where he revenged himself on those who had opposed his pretensions. With regard to the instruction, which is meant to be conveyed by this parable; this nobleman is the Son of God, who came among the Jews to take possession of the kingdom, which was his due. But being rejected and treated unworthily, and even put to a disgraceful death on the cross, he will one day come again, armed with vengeance, and inflict the effects of his anger upon them. This was partly fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, and will be completed at the general judgment. (Calmet) (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 13.** *Ten* pieces of money, each of which was called a *mna*. To translate *pounds*, gives the English reader a false notion, the Roman coin called a *mna* not corresponding to our pound. (Witham) --- A *mna* was 12½ ounces, which, at five shillings per ounce, is £3 2s. 6d.

**Ver. 19.** All the disciples of Christ have not the same degree of honour in this world, not in the next; because all do not make an equal use of the graces they receive. Some are in the first rank, as apostles; then those, to whom the gift of prophecy has been committed; then doctors, &c. each exalted according to his merit. For there are many mansions, and many degrees of glory, in the house of the heavenly Father. (Calmet) --- For there is one brightness of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars; for star differeth from star in brightness. (1 Corinthians xv. 41.)

**Ver. 34.** It may here be asked, how the owners of the colt knew who *the Lord* was, of whom the disciples spoke? It may be answered, that perhaps they had already heard that Jesus of Nazareth, who the Jews thought was to be their temporal king, was coming about that time to Jerusalem, and that they saw from their dress, or other external marks, that they were the disciples of Jesus. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 40.** *The stones.* This is a proverb, as if he had said: God has resolved to glorify me this day, in order to fulfil the prophecies. Nothing can hinder the execution of his decrees; if men were silent, he would make even the stones to speak. (Calmet) --- At the crucifixion of our Redeemer, when his friends were silent through fear, the very stones and rocks spoke in his defence. Immediately after he expired, the earth was moved, the rocks split, and the monuments of the dead opened. (Ven. Bede) --- Nor is it any wonder if, contrary to nature, the rocks bespeak the praises of the Lord, since he was even praised by a multitude, much more insensible than the rocks themselves, in crucifying him only a few days after, whom they now salute with Hosannahs of joy. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 41.** *He wept.* St. Epiphanius tells us, that some of the orthodox of his time, offended at these words, omitted them in their copies, as if to shed tears, were a weakness unworthy of Christ: but this true reading of the evangelist is found in all copies, and received by all the faithful; and the liberty which those who changed them took, was too dangerous ever to be approved of by the Church. Neither do these tears argue in Jesus Christ any thing unworthy of his supreme majesty or wisdom. Our Saviour possessed all the human passions, but not the defects of them. The Stoics, who condemned the passions in their sages, laboured to make statues or automata of man, not philosophers. The true philosopher moderates and *governs* his passions; the Stoic labours to *destroy* them, but cannot effect his purpose. And when he labours to overcome one passion, he is forced to have recourse to another for help. (Calmet) --- Our Saviour is said to have wept six times, during his life on earth: 1st, At his birth, according to many holy doctors; 2ndly, at his circumcision, according to St. Bernard and others; 3rdly, when he raised Lazarus to life, as is related in St. John, chap. xi.; 4thly, in his entry into Jerusalem, described in this place; 5thly, during his agony in the garden, just before his apprehension, when, as St. Luke remarks, (Chap. xxii.) *his sweat was as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground*; and 6thly, during his passion, when he often wept, on account of his great distress of mind, occasioned principally by the knowledge he had of the grievousness of men's sins, and the bad use they would make of the redemption he was, through so many sufferings, procuring for them. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 42.** *If thou also hadst known.* It is a broken sentence, as it were in a transport of grief; and we many understand, *thou wouldst also weep.* Didst thou know, even *at this day*, that *peace* and reconciliation which God still offers to thee. (Witham) --- What can be more tender than the apostrophe here made use of by our Saviour! *Hadst thou but known*, &c. that is, didst thou but know how severe a punishment is about to be inflicted upon thee, for the numberless transgressions of thy people, thou likewise wouldst weep; but, alas! hardness in iniquity, thou still rejoicest, ignorant of the punishment hanging over thy head. Just men have daily occasion to bewail, like our blessed Redeemer, the blindness of the wicked, unable to see, through their own perversity, the miserable state of their souls, and the imminent danger they are every moment exposed to, of losing themselves for ever. Of these, Solomon cries out; (Proverbs ii. 13.) *They leave the right way, and walk through dark ways.* We ought to imitate this compassion of our blessed Redeemer; and, as he wept over the calamities of the unfortunate Jerusalem, though determined on his destruction; so we ought to bewail the sins not only of our friends, but likewise of our enemies, and daily offer up our prayers for their conversion. (Dionysius)

**Ver. 43.** *And compass thee*, &c. Christ's prophecy is a literal description of what happened to Jerusalem, under Titus. (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** *All the people*, as they heard him with so great attention. So Virgil said:

-----*pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore.* (Witham)

--- The original Greek, *exekremato autou akouon*, shews how eagerly they caught the words that dropped from his sacred lips, all enraptured with the wisdom of his answers, and the commanding superiority of his doctrines. Seneca (Controv ix. 1.) uses a similar turn of expression: *Ex vultu discentis pendent omnium vultus.* The chief priests and rulers were all apprehension lest the people, who followed Jesus with such avidity, and who had conceived such high sentiments of his character, might prevent the execution of their murderous designs.

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## LUKE 20

**Ver. 1.** *In one of the days.* This happened on the last week (on the Tuesday) two or three days before Christ suffered. See the contents of this chapter, Matthew xxi. and xxii. and Mark xi. and xii. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Authority?* By what authority do you make yourself a teacher of the people, a censor of the priests, a reformer of the laws and customs? If Jesus Christ had not publicly given undeniable proofs of his mission, by his miracles, the Pharisees would have had a right to demand an answer to this question; but, after what had been done in their own sight, it was no longer excusable to oppose the preaching of the Son of God. (Calmet) --- Our Saviour himself teaches, that if he had not proved the divinity of his mission by his doctrine and works, it had been no sin to disbelieve or reject him. (John v. 31. and 36. and also x. 25, 37, and xv. 22, 24.

**Ver. 4.** Jesus does not gratify them by a direct answer; they did not deserve it, because they only interrogated him through captious and improper motives. He only replies by casting on them the very difficulties with which they sought to entangle him. (Calmet) --- Our divine Redeemer proposes to the chief priests a question concerning St. John the Baptist, to shew them how inconsistent was their uniform opposition to the ways of God. Because, though they believed in what was preached by St. John, (at least outwardly, through fear of the Jews) yet they would not believe *him*, or *his* doctrines, to whom St. John had given testimony, "That he was the Lamb of God, that had come to take away the sins of the world." (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 9.** *A long time.* Not that God (who is here represented by the man that planted a vineyard) confines himself to any particular place, either distant or near; but he only seems to absent

himself in order that when he comes to receive the fruit of the vineyard, he may punish the negligent more severely, and reward the diligent with greater liberality. Likewise God is more intimately present with the good, by continually showering down upon them his special graces; and less so with the wicked, by refusing them, on account of their indispositions, any of his favours. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 15.** As this whole parable may be applied exactly to the Jews, to the prophets and Christ; so may this last part, with no less accuracy, be applied to our Saviour. The husbandmen, before they killed the lord's beloved son, first cast him out of the vineyard. So the Jews did not kill the Son of God immediately themselves: they first cast him out from themselves, into the hands of Pilate, a Gentile, and then procured his death. (Theophylactus) --- Thus sinners likewise act, by casting Christ out of their hearts, and crucifying him by sin. (Ven. Bede) --- To reconcile St. Matthew and St. Luke, we must observe, says St. Augustine that this parable was not only spoken to those who questioned his authority, but to the people themselves; as St. Luke tells us.

**Ver. 18.** *Fall upon.* That is, whosoever sins against God, yet believes, will be spared by God for a short time to repent, though he kills his own soul by mortal sin: but, *upon whomsoever it shall fall*, that is, he who denies Christ, and continues on hardened in his sin, upon him the fury of God shall fall, and he shall be utterly destroyed. It will grind him to powder, *like the dust which the wind driveth from the face of the earth.* (Psalm i.) (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 19.** *Lay hands on him.* Thus they themselves proved him to be the Lord's beloved Son, as he had just described himself in the preceding parable. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 20.** *Of the governor, &c.* Of the governor, Pilate, who in the name of the Romans, exercised absolute authority in the country: for the Jews had lost the power of life and death, which was put into the hands of their presidents. (Calmet)

**Ver. 22.** If our divine Saviour had returned them for answer, that they ought to give tribute to Cæsar, they would have accused him of being an enemy to the law; but if, on the contrary, he said it was not lawful, they would have accused him to Pilate as an enemy of the state. (Theophylactus) --- For there was then a great misunderstanding among the Jews: some, who wished to keep peace with the Romans, said that it was lawful; but the Pharisees denied it, and said: "The people of God ought to be exempt from such a tax. They were bound by the law to give tithes and first-fruits to God; therefore they ought not to be bound by human laws to give likewise tax to men who were heathens." (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 26.** We may here be astonished at the incredulity of the chiefs of the Jews, who, though they ought to have admired his wisdom, as something divine, and believed in him, are only surprised that he should have escaped their duplicity and snares. (Ven. Bede) --- Their pride must have been a good deal hurt, to have been thus publicly refuted and confused by the wisdom of our Saviour's answer. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 36.** *The children of resurrection;* i.e. of the just, who shall rise to a happy resurrection: not but that the wicked shall also rise, but to their condemnation and greater misery. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ begins with stating the wide difference between the state of things in this mortal life and in that which is to come: that marriage necessary here, will be unnecessary hereafter. For, in this life, they are children of men, subject to death, and therefore under the necessity of continuing their race by generation; but in the next life, they shall be *children of resurrection*, living for eternity, never to die, and consequently sons of God, and immortal. Resurrection is a kind of regeneration to immortality. Hence St. Paul explains to our Saviour's rising again, these words of the 2nd Psalm: *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* (Calmet)

**Ver. 39.** The Scribes, seeing the Sadducees thus silenced, seemed to side entirely with our Saviour saying: Master, thou hast said well. And, apprehensive of being exposed to a similar disgrace and discomfiture themselves, they were afraid to ask him any more questions. But this

was only an apparent and false conformity; for they afterwards procured him to be put to death by the Romans. Thus mortal hatred or envy may indeed be smothered for a time, but can hardly ever be extinguished. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 44.** Christ indeed is both the Lord and Servant of David. He is Servant, according to the flesh, being a descendant of David; and he is Lord, according to the spirit, being Lord of all. (St. John Chrysostom) --- We hear in our times of a new sect of Pharisees, who neither believed that Christ is the true Son of God, nor that he is God born of a pure virgin. To such we object this question: How is he the Son of David, and his Lord? Not by human, but by divine dominion. (St. Cyril) --- He has two natures: the nature of man, according to which, David was his father; and the nature of God, according to which, he was Son of God, and Lord of David. Thus is the difficulty solved.

**Ver. 45.** How forcible are our divine Redeemer's reasonings, when he uses any text out of the prophets. When he performs the most stupendous miracles, his enemies generally have something to reply; when he cites a text of Scripture, they have nothing to say. All are silent. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 46.** The reproach he makes the Scribes in this place, is similar to that he had objected against the Pharisees. (St. Matthew xxiii. 5.) Both these sects were filled with the same spirit of pride and vanity, which shewed itself in their dress, in their exterior, and in every part of their conduct. If our Saviour here attacks them upon their long trains, or other affected forms of their dress, he does not pronounce an absolute condemnation of things, which in themselves are indifferent, but their abuse of them, making them serve only the purpose of vanity and affectation. (Calmet)

**Ver. 47.** These shall receive a greater condemnation, because they not only commit ordinary evil actions, but also make their prayers, and virtue itself, a cloak to their hypocrisy and vanity, and the cause of their greater depravity, famishing the widows whom themselves ought to compassionate and relieve. (Theophylactus) --- Or, the greater honours and rewards they received for their wickedness, the greater punishment must they endure to expiate it. (Ven. Bede) --- Jesus Christ seems in this place to allude to the avaricious practice of the Jews, draining the purses of widows by their stipulated long prayers for their departed husbands, (see Matthew xxiii. 14.; Mark xii. 40.) and thus abusing so holy a thing as prayer, merely to gratify their avarice.

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## LUKE 21

**Ver. 3.** Whatever we offer to the Almighty with a good intention is acceptable to him; for he regards not the gift, but the heart of the giver. (Ven. Bede) --- God does not appreciate the smallness of the gift, but the greatness of the affection with which it is offered. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. i. ad Hebræos.)

**Ver. 6.** It was by the divine dispensation of Providence that his city and temple were destroyed; for had the ancient rites and sacrifices continued, some that were but weak in their faith, might have been filled with astonishment at the sight of these different modes of worship, existing at the same time, and thus have been lead astray from the path of truth. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 7.** *Master, when shall these things be?* &c. See the annotations, Matthew xxiv. 3. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *In my name.* They shall not say that they belong to me, or that I sent them: but they shall take to themselves my name, viz. Christ, or Messiah, which title is incommunicable to any but myself. In effect, in less than two centuries, there appeared many false Christs and impostors, who pretended to be the one that was to come, the desired of nations. (Calmet) --- Perhaps this

prophecy is yet to be more expressly fulfilled before the dissolution of the world. Many pious and learned Christians suppose this passage to refer to the time of Antichrist. (Haydock)

**Ver. 11.** *Terrors from heaven.* Josephus, in his history of this war, in which Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, (lib. vii. chap. 12) relates, at length, many of the prodigies which were the forerunners of the dreadful end of this unfortunate city. During a whole year a meteor, like a flaming sword, was seen impending over the city. There were likewise seen in the air, appearances of chariots and numerous armies, which pressed one upon another. On the night of Pentecost, the priests, after a confused noise, heard distinctly these words, "Let us go hence;" which are supposed to have been spoken by the angels, who had hitherto guarded and protected the holy city, but now were taking their leave of it. Josephus was in the Roman camp, before the city, during the siege, and an eye-witness of what passed on the occasion. (Haydock)

**Ver. 12.** This verse is spoken to the apostles alone; and was verified, by most of them having been martyred and put to death, before the destruction of Jerusalem. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *I will give, &c.* In some parts it is said, that Christ himself will speak by the mouths of his disciples, as in this passage of St. Luke; in other places, as St. Matthew Chap. xvi. that the Father will speak; and St. Matthew Chap. x. that the Spirit of the Father will speak. In these different texts there is no contradiction, but a most perfect harmony. What one of the divine Persons says, all three say; for the voice of the Trinity is only one. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 18.** *A hair of your head, &c.* A hair shall not perish from the head of the disciples of Christ; because not only their most heroic actions, and their public confessions of his name, but even their passing thoughts shall be crowned with adequate rewards. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 19.** *In your patience, &c.* We then truly possess our souls, when we live in all things perfect, and from the citadel of virtue command and control all the motions of the mind and heart. (St. Gregory, Mag. Moral. v. chap. 13.)

**Ver. 22.** *Days of vengeance, &c.* These are truly the days of vengeance; days, that will arise to punish this people for having spilt the blood of the Lord. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 24.** Whoever reads Josephus's history of the calamities which befall Jerusalem before its destruction, will find none of these terrible menaces unfulfilled. Seventy thousand were carried away captives in this war. After the soldiers were weary of killing, Titus ordered the finest of the young men to be kept to adorn his triumph. The number of captive Jews was so great in Rome, as to make the heathen poet, Rutilius Numantianus, who lived about the year 410, complain of it as a great burden to the empire.

Atque utinam nunquam Judea subacta fuisset  
Pompeii bellis, imperioque Titi;  
Latus excisæ pestis contagia serpunt  
Victoresque suos natio victa premit.

--- *Trodden down, &c.* After Jerusalem had been taken and destroyed by the Romans, another city was built from its ruins, called Ælia, after the name of the emperor Ælius Adrian. This was inhabited by pagans and some Christians for the Jews were forbidden even to come near it, for more than two or three centuries. Tertullian informs us, that they even bought, at a great price, permission to see it at a distance, and drop a tear over the ashes of their ancient and ill-fated country. Thus was Jerusalem trodden under foot, till the time of the nations was accomplished; that is, till Christianity, in every nation, had triumphed over the persecution of paganism. (Calmet)  
--- *Till the times of the nations be fulfilled.* According to the common exposition of this, and some other places, the Jews from the time of the destruction of their temple and city, under Titus Vespasian; and especially from their utter destruction under the emperor Adrian, in punishment of their obstinate blindness, shall remain dispersed through the world under miseries and oppressions, till the gospel hath been preached to all nations; then, not long before the end of the world, the Jews shall be converted, and acknowledge Jesus to be their true Messiah. See

Romans xi. 25. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *The powers of heaven, &c.* Some explain this of the angels, who shall be terrified and tremble at the sight of so many calamities. Others understand it of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, stars, &c. which shall in some sort, likewise, be confused in the general dissolution. The prophets often make use of such expressions, when speaking of the fall of monarchies, or the ruin of nations. *The heavens shall be astonished and moved, &c.* (Ezechiel xxxii. 7; Joel iii. 15.) (Calmet)

**Ver. 27.** The Jews shall not see him corporally, but at the last judgment. Then, says the Scripture, (Zacharias xii. 10.) *They shall see him whom they pierced* with nails. But in the ruin of Jerusalem, all who will compare his predictions with the event, can evidently see that this was the day of his coming, so plainly marked in his words. Every body could see that this was evidently the hand of God that punished them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 37.** *In the mount that is called Olivet.* In this last week, Christ, after preaching in the day-time in the temple, when constantly in the evenings to pray in the garden of Gethsemani, as Judas knew very well. See Chap. xxii. ver. 39. (Witham)

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## LUKE 22

**Ver. 3.** *And Satan entered into Judas.* The meaning only seems to be, that the devil tempted and overcame him. (Witham) --- Satan entered into Judas not all at once, but by degrees. He first gained possession by avarice, next by theft, and lastly he impelled him to the blackest treachery and cruel parricide. The Scripture only says that Satan had entered into him when he was entirely abandoned to iniquity, had hardened his heart against all grace, and shut his ears against every instruction of Jesus. In like manner the Scripture says of a good man, who is strengthened in grace, that the Holy Spirit dwells in him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** Many even now shudder at the mention of the crime of Judas, and are surprised to think that he could be guilty of such ingratitude, when themselves are negligent in avoiding the like crimes. For he who breaks the law of charity and truth, betrays Christ, who is charity and truth, and does it not through any infirmity or ignorance, but designedly and maliciously. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 15.** *With desire I have desired:* literally, *with a desire have I desired.*[1] The repetition expresseth a great and earnest desire. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Taken the chalice.* This is not the chalice of his blood, (the latter is spoken of ver. 20, and 1 Corinthians xi. 25.) but it is the cup which the master of the repast blessed with ceremony, then drank of it, and gave it to all the guests. The modern Jews still observe this custom; not only on the Pasch, but on all other great feasts. The father of the family pours wine into a cup, takes it in his right hand, elevates it, blesses it, tastes, and gives it round to the invited. Our Saviour on this occasion complies with the custom;; and after supper takes the chalice, which he converts into his own blood. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *I will not drink, &c.* i.e. from this hour of the supper, to the time of his resurrection, in which he will come in the kingdom of God, he would not taste wine. For St. Peter testifies, (Acts x. 41.) that he took meat and drink after his resurrection. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 19.** **THIS IS MY BODY.** See the annotations on the same words of consecration, Matthew xxvi. 26.; Mark xiv. 22. and 1 Corinthians xi. 24. --- *Do this for a commemoration of me.* By these words he gave a power and precept to them, and their successors, to all bishops and priests, to consecrate and offer up the same; yet so, that they are only the ministers and instruments of

Jesus Christ, who instituted this sacrifice, this and all other sacraments, who is the chief and principal Priest, or offerer. It is Christ that chiefly consecrates and changes the elements of bread and wine into his own body and blood; it is he that chiefly and principally forgiveth sins in the sacraments of baptism, penance, &c. It is what St. Augustine so often repeats against the Donatists, that it is Christ that baptizeth, though the instrumental minister be a sinner or a heretic; and this is what all Catholics confess and profess. --- The holy sacrifice and sacrament is to be offered and received with a devout and grateful remembrance of Christ's benefits, and especially of his sufferings and death for all mankind. But to teach that it is a bare, though devout memorial, or a *remembrance only*, so as to exclude the *real presence* of Christ, under the outward appearances of bread and wine, is inconsistent with the constant belief and consent of all Christian churches, both of the west and east, and contradicts the plain words of Christ. The learned bishop of Meaux, in his *Exposition of the Catholic Faith*, desires all Christians to take notice, that Christ does not command them to remember him, but *to take his body and blood* with a remembrance of him, and his benefits: this is the import of all the words, put together. *This is my body: this is my blood: do this in, for, or with a remembrance of me.* (Witham) --- This sacrifice and sacrament is to be continued in the Church to the end of the world, to shew forth the death of Christ, until he cometh. But this commemoration, or remembrance, is by no means inconsistent with the real presence of his body and blood, under these sacramental veils, which represent his death; on the contrary, it is the manner that he himself hath commanded, of commemorating and celebrating his death, by offering in sacrifice, and receiving in the sacrament, that body and blood by which we were redeemed. (Challoner) --- *Which is given*, &c. He does not say, which shall be offered for you, but which is offered;[2] because it was already a true sacrifice, in which Christ was truly present which he offered in advance to his eternal Father, before that which he was going to offer the next day, in a different manner, on the cross. This sacrifice was the consummation of the figurative Pasch, and the promise or pledge of the bloody offering, which Christ would make on the cross. ... It was not the mere figure of his body, which was crucified, but the true body and the true blood. In the same manner it is both the one and the other which are given, and really present, in the Eucharist. (Calmet) --- To renew the memory of what I have this day done, in giving you my body; and what I shall do to-morrow, in delivering my blood and my life for the whole world, do you hereafter what you now see me do. Take bread, break it, and say, This is my body; and it will become so really and truly, as it now is in my hands. (Calmet)

**Ver. 29.** *And I assign to you, as my Father hath assigned to me, a kingdom;* i.e. as my heavenly Father decreed to exalt me, even as man, and with my human nature, above all creatures; so will I also make you, according to your different merits, partakers of my glory. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *That you may eat and drink* of the spiritual banquet of the joys of heaven which in the Scriptures are divers times compared to a feast or banquet. (Witham) --- *Sit upon thrones.* Judas is excepted from the dignity of this great promise. For it is probable he had gone out before the Lord spoke these words. They likewise are excepted, who (St. John vi. 66.) having heard the words of an incomprehensible mystery, turned back and went away. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 31.** *Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.* In these words is expressed both what Satan desired, and what God permitted. Satan desired leave to tempt them, that he might make them fall from their faith in Christ. Almighty God permitted this temptation, this trial, to convince them how weak they were of themselves: he permitted their frailty to be partly overcome, yet so that rising again by his grace, they should be cleansed and purified as *wheat when it is sifted*: and that shortly after, being strengthened and confirmed by the coming of the Holy Ghost, they might become new men, enabled to stand firm against all the attacks of their greatest adversaries. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *That thy faith fail not.* The faith of Peter, established by the coming of the Holy Ghost, hath never failed, nor can fail, being built upon a rock, which is Christ himself, and being guided by the spirit of truth, as Christ promised. (John xv. 26. and xvi. 13.) --- *And thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren,* even all the other apostles and bishops, over whom I have made and constituted thee and thy successors the chief head, that such a head being appointed by

divine authority, all occasions of schisms and divisions might cease, says St. Jerome. (Witham) --- Admire the superabundance of the divine patience. That the disciple might not lose courage, he promised him pardon before he has committed the crime, and restores him again to his apostolic dignity, saying, *confirm thy brethren*. (St. Cyril)

**Ver. 36.** *That hath not, &c.* Whilst the apostles are contending for prerogative, he reminds them that now is the time of danger and slaughter; for I, your Master, (says he) shall be led to a dishonourable death, and reputed among the wicked: as all which hath been foretold of me shall have their end; that is, be fulfilled. Wishing also to insinuate the violence of the assaults they themselves will have to sustain, he mentions a sword; but does not reveal all, lest they should be too much alarmed; nor does he entirely suppress the mention of it, lest sudden attacks might overpower them, had they not been forewarned. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 38.** *Behold here are two swords, &c.* The disciples not understanding the hidden meaning of the words in the preceding verse, and thinking they should have need of swords against the attack of the traitor Judas, say, behold here two swords. (St. Cyril) --- But if he had wished them to rely upon human aid, not even a hundred swords would have sufficed; but, if the power of man was unnecessary in their regard, even two swords are sufficient, and more than are wanted. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Even two swords are sufficient testimony of our Saviour's having suffered spontaneously. One to shew that the apostles had courage to contend for their Master, and that their Lord had the power of healing the servant, Malchus, who was maimed; the other, which was not drawn from its scabbard, shews that the apostles were withheld from doing in his defence as much as they could have done. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 43.** *An angel ... strengthening him.* Christ, our Redeemer, was truly God and truly man. And being made man by a real union of his divine person and nature, to our weak and infirm human nature, he likewise took upon him our infirmities, sin excepted. We must consider him as man, when we read of his being tempted in the wilderness, (Matthew iv.) when he wept at the raising of Lazarus out of the grave, (John xi.) as often as we read of his praying; and here, when we read of his praying, and redoubling his prayer in the garden, when we find him seized with fear, sadness, and grief: for though, as God, he could prevent and hinder these passions and affections natural to man, yet he could also permit them to affect his human nature; as he permitted himself to be seized with hunger, after fasting forty days; and so he permitted his human nature to be seized with fear and grief in this garden of Gethsemani. As angels came and ministered to him after his fast in the wilderness, so an angel came as it were to propose to him the divine decree, that he was to suffer and die for the redemption of mankind; and as man, he is said to be strengthened and comforted by the angel: he, who as God, was Lord and maker of the angels, and so needed not to be strengthened by his creatures. Besides what happened to Christ as man, were ordained as instructions for us. We are taught by angels appearing, that they were not only ready to assist and wait upon Christ, but that, by the order of divine Providence, they are also ready to assist us in our temptations and afflictions. --- *In an agony.* This Greek word signifies, a strife, or combat; not that there could be any opposition or contrariety in the interior of Christ, whose human will was always perfectly subject to his divine will, and the sensitive part to reason: yet, inasmuch as he was truly man, his human nature dreaded all those sufferings which at that time were represented to his soul, and which in a few hours he was to undergo. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *And his sweat became as drops of blood, &c.* This has sometimes happened, though in a lesser degree, to persons under extraordinary grief, if we believe Aristotle, lib. iii. *Animanium*, chap. xix. p. 891, and lib. de part. *Animalium*, chap. v. p. 1156. Ed. Aureliæ Allobr. an 1607. --- This passage of Christ's bloody sweat, and of the apparition of the angel, was heretofore wanting in divers both Greek and Latin copies; as appears by St. Jerome, (lib. ii. cont. Pelagianos. tom. iv, part 2, p. 521) and by St. Hilary, lib. x. de Trin. p. 1062. Nov. Ed. It seems to have been left out by ignorant transcribers, who thought it not consistent with the dignity of Christ. But we find it in the above-said place, in St. Jerome, in St. John Chrysostom (hom. lxxxiv. in Matt.), in St. Augustine (in Psalm cxl. tom. iv, p. 1564, and in Psalm xciii, p. 1013.) in St. Epiphanius in Ancorato, p. 36, Ed. Petav. (Witham)



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[1] Ver. 15. *With a desire have I desired.* This is commonly reputed a Hebraism, or form of speech peculiar to the Hebrews: *hearing, I have heard; seeing, I have seen, &c.* But the judicious critic, Mr. Blackwall, has produced parallel expressions out the most exact Greek classics, in his learned book, entitled, *The Sacred Classics defended and illustrated*; and has clearly proved, by examples, that many forms of speech, called, reputed, and carped at, as Hebraisms, are frequently found in the best Greek classics. (Witham)

[2] Ver. 19. In the original, the present tense is used in this and in the following verse. *Greek: Touto esti to soma mou, to uper umon didomenon.* And, *Greek: Touto to poterion, ... to uper umon ekchunomenon.* Here we must also remark, that the relative *Greek: To, which,* is not governed or ruled (as some would perhaps think) by the noun, *blood,* but by the word *chalice, or cup; (Greek: poterion)* which evidently sheweth that the blood, as the contents of the chalice, or as in the chalice, is shed for us: (in the present tense, for so the Greek hath it, and not only as upon the cross) And, therefore, as it followeth hence evidently, that it is no bare figure, but his blood indeed, so it followeth necessarily that it is a sacrifice and propitiatory, as shed for our sins. For all who know Scripture phraseology, know also that blood to be shed for sin, is to be sacrificed in atonement for sin. --- Beza, in his Annot. Nov. Test. an. 1556, [erroneously] says this cannot be truly said either of the chalice, or of the contents of the chalice; which is to give the lie to the evangelist, or to deny it to be true Scripture, though he declares the words are found in all both Greek and Latin copies. (Bristow)

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## LUKE 23

**Ver. 7.** *He sent him away to Herod.* Pilate, in this instance, not only extricated himself from the importunities of the Jewish priests, (ver. 5) but moreover obeyed the Roman law in that particular, which forbade any one to be condemned by a governor to whom he was not the subject. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 11.** *And mocked him.* It is evident from the behaviour of Herod on this occasion, that he was far from believing him to be that seditious person he was represented; otherwise he would have undoubtedly treated his prisoner with less ridicule, and paid more serious attention to the accusations of his enemies. (Theophylactus) --- *Putting on him a white garment.* The Greek signifies not only a white, but a shining splendid robe: perhaps with some resemblance to royal garments, but at the same time through scorn and derision. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Nothing worthy of death is done to him.* Herod has not treated him as a criminal, or one worthy of death. He only derided him as a fool: had there been any cause to punish him, he would not have failed to have done it himself, or commanded me to put him to death. (Calmet)

**Ver. 16.** It was a very common punishment among the Jews to scourge those who had committed crimes for which death would have been too severe. According to the laws of the Hebrews, (Deuteronomy xxv. 3.) the number of blows could not exceed thirty-nine. Pilate dares not condemn Jesus to death, because he believes him innocent; yet not to disoblige the people and magistrates, who demanded his death, he takes a middle way, which, as is usual in such cases, satisfies neither party. He neither saves the innocent Victim, nor satisfies justice. In lieu of one punishment, Jesus suffers two. He is at length both scourged and crucified. (Calmet)

**Ver. 28.** *Weep not over me.* If you knew the evils that threaten and must soon fall upon your city, upon yourselves, and upon you children, you would preserve your tears to deplore your own misfortunes. My death is for the good of mankind; but it will be fatal to your nation because you have been pleased to make it so. In the ruin of Jerusalem, which is at hand, happy shall they be

who have no children. They shall save themselves the grief of seeing their sons and daughters perish miserably, and in some sort of suffering as many deaths as they have children to die. (Calmet)

**Ver. 31.** *In the green wood:* by which are signified persons of virtue and sanctity; as by the *dry wood*, the wicked, who bring forth no fruit, and who, like dry wood, are fit to be cast into the fire. (Witham) --- If they be thus cruel with me, how will they treat you!

**Ver. 33.** *Called Calvary.* A place at a small distance from Jerusalem, where condemned malefactors were beheaded. So Christ, as a malefactor, dies on Calvary for the redemption of all: that where sin abounded, grace might more abound. (Ven. Bede) --- In this mountain, according to the Hebrew doctors, were interred the remains of our protoparent, Adam. (St. Athanasius)

**Ver. 43.** *I say to thee: This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise;* i.e. in a place of rest with the souls of the just. The construction is not, *I say to thee this day*, &c., but, thou shalt be with me this day in the paradise. (Witham) --- *In paradise.* That is, in the happy state of rest, joy and peace everlasting. Christ was pleased by a special privilege, to reward the faith and confession of the penitent thief with a full discharge of all his sins, both as to the guilt and punishment, and to introduce him, immediately after death, into the happy society of the saints, whose *limbo* (that is, the place of their confinement) was now made a *paradise* by our Lord's going thither. (Challoner) --- The soul of the good thief was that same day with Jesus Christ, in the felicity of the saints, in Abraham's bosom, or in heaven, where Jesus was always present by his divinity. (St. Augustine) --- St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, says he entered heaven before all the patriarchs and prophets. St. John Chrysostom thinks that paradise was immediately open to him, and that he entered heaven the first mankind. (Tom. v. homil. 32.)

**Ver. 51.** *Arimathea.* In other parts of Scripture it is called *Ramatha*, a city of Judea, where Samuel, the prophet, was born. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 52.** *This man went to Pilate.* We may suppose that from his rank and condition in life, he had always access to Pilate.

**Ver. 54.** *Parasceve.* That is, the eve or day of preparation for the sabbath. (Challoner) --- *And the sabbath drew near.* Literally, *shined*. The sabbath began in the evening, at sunset. It may, perhaps, be said to shine by the moonlight, at full-moon, or because of a great many lights that used to be set up at that time, on account of the great sabbath. (Witham) --- We learn from Maimon, that all the Jews were so strictly bound to keep a light in their dwellings on the sabbath-day, that although a man had not bread to eat, he was expected to be from door to door, to purchase oil for his lamp. (Pastorini)

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## LUKE 24

**Ver. 5.** It is worthy of remark, that none of the disciples or friends of Christ, were so much astonished and struck at the many apparitions of angels, &c. as to be cast down to the ground, as the guards and his enemies were, but only through respect and reverential fear looked down upon the ground. Nor even did any of them fall down prostrate to adore our Saviour, when he appeared to them; because Christ was not now to be sought in the earth, among the dead, but was risen, and was to be looked for from heaven. Hence is derived the Catholic custom of praying in Pascal time, and on all Sundays, &c. not on the knee, but with the body respectfully bent, and bowing *down their countenance towards the ground*. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 13.** St. Jerome thinks the Cleophas, one of the two disciples, was a citizen of Emmaus, and that he invited Jesus to take meat in his house. His house was afterwards changed into a church,

which the same Father says existed in his time. Some think Cleophas was brother to St. Joseph; others, that he was husband of Mary, sister of the blessed Virgin Mary, and father of St. James the less. Both the Latins and Greeks keep the feast of St. Cleophas, and give him the name of an apostle. Usuard says he was martyred by the Jews. (Calmet)

**Ver. 16.** *But their eyes were held:* either by our Saviour's changing his features, or in what manner he pleased. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Art thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem? or, art thou the only stranger in Jerusalem?* which was to signify, that every one must needs have heard of what had passed in regard to Jesus. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *We hoped, &c.* as if they had lost their former hopes, or now knew not what to hope for: but perhaps, as St. Augustine observes, they might use this caution speaking before a stranger. (Witham) --- These two disciples were in the same error as the other Jews; who expected that the Messias would deliver them from subjection to strangers, and re-establish them in their ancient liberty. The cross and passion had been a subject of scandal and fall to them. They say, *we did hope*; as if their hopes were now at an end. What increased their diffidence was, that Christ had promised to rise again the third day, and some of the women had said that he really had risen. But they expected as public and glorious a manifestation of his resurrection, as his death had been ignominious and known to the whole world. Behold, now this is already the third day since these things are passed:; if he had wished to manifest his power, he should have done it already. Thus the disciples reason, as if the third day were already past, and as if it were certain that he was not risen again. So difficult a thing is it to believe what we very ardently wish? (Calmet)

Proprium hoc miseros sequitur vitum  
Nunquam rebus credere lætis.

**Ver. 30.** The ancient Fathers think our Saviour consecrated, on this occasion, and administered the Eucharist to the two disciples. In the Acts of the Apostles, this same term, *breaking of bread*, is explained without difficulty of the Eucharist. St. Luke seems fond of this manner of expression, to signify that sacrament. (Calmet)

**Ver. 37.** The apostles thought they saw a Spirit, either good or bad, that had taken the form of Jesus, and was come to deceive them. For that they did not doubt spirits appeared, we have abundant proofs throughout the whole New Testament: and our Saviour, instead of combating this opinion, seems rather to have confirmed it on more than one occasion. Indeed St. Augustine thinks it cannot, without temerity, be denied, that there are occasional apparitions of angels, of demons, and the souls of the dead. (Calmet) --- This, however, will not justify the credulity of many ignorant and weak people, who think that nobody can die, but their spirit is sure to appear; much less will it justify the superstitious observations of unusual occurrences, which are so commonly reported to happen, as significant of a departed soul. These occurrences are rare; nor should we suppose that the Almighty would be willing to suspend or change the established laws of nature without a sufficient cause, viz. some known good either to the departed soul, or surviving friends. (Haydock)

**Ver. 39.** *A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have.* This was one argument of a true and real body. We may take notice, that Christ brought such proofs, as he knew were sufficient to convince them of his resurrection, though they were not of themselves demonstrations. For when they imagined they saw or touched a body, and that they eat with them, these things might apparently be done by a spirit. See Genesis xviii. ver. 9. and Genesis xix. ver. 3. and ver. 16. where we read that angels, in the shape of men, *eat*, and took Lot and his wife, and his daughters, *by the hand*, and led them away from Sodom. Our senses, therefore, may sometimes be deceived, as may be shewn by divers other instances. But the arguments which Christ made us of at this time, to induce the apostles to believe his resurrection, are to be taken with all the circumstances: as 1st, with the corroborating testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, in which his resurrection was foretold; 2ndly, they called to their minds what he himself had told

them so often, that he would rise again the third day; 3rdly, concurred also the testimonies already given by the angels, that he was risen; 4thly, the miracles at his death and resurrection; 5thly, Christ himself at the same time opened *their understanding*, to know and believe this truth, that he was truly risen. (Witham)

**Ver. 43.** Christ eat, not because he stood in need of food to sustain himself after his resurrection, as we sustain our bodies and lives by corporal refreshment; but he did it, to shew his disciples that his body was really risen from the dead. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 45.** If, after all the extraordinary opportunities of instruction, which the apostles had had from the mouth of our divine Saviour, it was still necessary that he should instil into them a new light, by opening their minds to understand the Scriptures; what are we to think of the presumptuous attempts of the numerous tribe of modern self-inspired interpreters, who are always ready to descant on the word of the Lord; though so perfectly ignorant that their authority, so far from being admitted, would be laughed to scorn, were they to attempt to explain the slightest difficulty, on the most indifferent subject of profane literature? To such a degree has the spirit of seduction spread itself at the present day! (Haydock)

**Ver. 47.** *Beginning at Jerusalem.* The sense is, that they were first to preach to the Jews, and afterwards to all nations. (Witham)

**Ver. 49.** *The promise of my Father;* i.e. the Holy Ghost, whom Christ had promised that his Father and he would send. (John xiv. 26. and xvii. 7.) (Witham)

**Ver. 51.** Like a second Elias he was taken into heaven, but in a much more glorious manner. Elias was taken up in a mortal and corruptible body: but our divine Saviour, in a glorious, impassible, and immortal state; where now he is our head, having taken upon himself the nature of man, and is crowned with more than angel's glory. (Theophylactus) --- What a glory this for us! Our head is clothed with everlasting glory; so shall we, his members, receive a share in his eternal kingdom. (St. John Chrysostom)

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## JOHN

### THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

#### INTRODUCTION

St. John, the evangelist, a native of Bathsaida, in Galilee, was the son of Zebedee and Salome. He was by profession a fisherman. Our Lord gave to John, and to James, his brother, the surname of *Boanerges*, or, sons of thunder; most probably for their great zeal, and for their soliciting permission to call fire from heaven to destroy the city of the Samaritans, who refused to receive their Master. St. John is supposed to have been called to the apostleship younger than any of the other apostles, not being more than twenty-five or twenty-six years old. The Fathers teach that he never married. Our Lord had for him a particular regard, of which he gave the most marked proofs at the moment of his expiring on the cross, by intrusting to his care his virgin Mother. He is the only one of the apostles that did not leave his divine Master in his passion and death. In the reign of Domitian, he was conveyed to Rome, and thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, from which he came out unhurt. He was afterwards banished to the island of Patmos, where he wrote his book of Revelations; and, according to some, his Gospel. *Tota antiquitas in eo abunde consentit, quod Domitianus exilii Joannis auctor fuerit.* (Lampe. Proleg. lib. i. cap. 4.) --- In his gospel, St. John omits very many leading facts and circumstances mentioned by the other

three evangelists, supposing his readers sufficiently instructed in points which his silence approved. It is universally agreed, that St. John had seen and approved of the other three gospels. (St. Hier. [St. Jerome,] de vir. illust. Eusebius, lib. iii, chap. 24.) --- St. Luke, says a learned author, seems to have had more learning than any other of the evangelists, and his language is more varied, copious, and pure. This superiority in style may perhaps be owing to his longer residence in Greece, and greater acquaintance with Gentiles of good education. --- St. Denis, of Alexandria, found in the gospel of St. John, elegance and precision of language, not only in the choice and arrangement of expressions, but also in his mode of reasoning and construction. We find here, says this saint, nothing barbarous and improper, nothing even low and vulgar; insomuch, that God not only seems to have given him light and knowledge, but also the means of well clothing his conceptions. (Dion. Alex. [Denis of Alexandria] apud Euseb. lib. vii, chap. 25.) --- Our critics do not join with St. Denis. They generally conceive St. John, with respect to language, as the least correct of the writers of the New Testament. His style argues a great want of those advantages which result from a learned education: but this defect is amply compensated by the unexampled simplicity with which he expresses the sublimest truths, by the supernatural lights, by the depth of the mysteries, by the superexcellency of the matter, by the solidity of his thoughts, and importance of his instructions. The Holy Ghost, who made choice of him, and filled him with infused wisdom, is much above human philosophy and the art of rhetoric. He possesses, in a most sovereign degree, the talent of carrying light and conviction to the mind, and warmth to the heart. He instructs, convinces, and persuades, without the aid of art or eloquence. --- St. John is properly compared to the eagle, because in his first flight he ascends above all sublunary objects, and does not stop till he meets the throne of the Almighty. He is so sententious, says St. Ambrose, that he gives us as many mysteries as words. (De Sacram. lib. iii, chap. 2) --- From Patmos our saint returned to Ephesus, where he died. (Euseb. lib. iii. hist. eccles.) --- It is said that the original gospel was preserved in the church of Ephesus till the seventh age [century], at least till the fourth; for St. Peter, of Alexandria, cites it. See Chron. Alex. and manuscript fragment. de paschate apud Petav. et Usher. --- Besides the gospel, we have of St. John three epistles and the Book of Revelations; and though other productions have been palmed on the world under the name of our evangelist, the Catholic Church only approves of those above specified. Ancient Fathers have given him the name of the *Theologian*: a title his gospel, and particularly the first chapter, deserves. Polycratus, bishop of Ephesus, tells us that St. John carried on his forehead a plate of gold, as priest of Jesus Christ, to honour the priesthood of the new law, in imitation of the high priests of the Jews. (Polycr. apud Euseb. liv. v, chap. 24.) --- This gospel was written in Greek, about the end of the first hundred years from Christ's nativity, at the request of the bishops of the Lesser Asia [Asia Minor], against the *Cerinthians* and the *Ebionites*, and those heretics, or *Antichrists*, as St. John calls them, (1 John iv. 3.) who pretended that Jesus was a mere man, who had no being or *existence* before he was born of Joseph and Mary. The blasphemies of these heretics had divers abettors in the first three ages [centuries], as *Carpocrates*, *Artemon*, the two *Theodotus*, *Paul of Samosata*, *Sabellius*, and some others; on whom, see St. Irenæus, St. Epiphanius, St. Augustine, &c. To these succeeded, in the beginning of the fourth century, *Arius*, of Alexandria, and the different branches of the blasphemous Arian sect. They allowed that Jesus Christ had a being before he was born of Mary; that he was made and created before all other creatures, and was more perfect than any of them; but still that he was no more than a creature: that he had a beginning, and that there was a time *when he was not*: that he was not *properly God*, or *the God*, not the same God, nor had the same *substance* and *nature*, with the eternal Father and Creator of all things. This heresy was condemned by the Church in the first General Council, at Nice, ann. 325. --- After the Arians rose up the *Macedonians*, who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost; and afterwards the Nestorians, Eutychians, &c. In every age pride and ignorance have produced some heresies; for, as the Apostle says, (1 Corinthians xi. 19.) *there must be heresies*. Towards the beginning of the sixteenth age [century] Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, &c. set themselves up for *reformers*, even of that general and Catholic *faith* which they found every where taught, and believed in all Christian Churches. Luther owns that he was then *alone*, the only one of his communion, (if so it may be called); yet none of these called in question the mysteries of the *Trinity*, or of the *Incarnation*. --- But not many years after, came the blasphemous sect of the *Socinians*, so called from *Lælius* and *Faustus Socini*. These, and their followers, renewed the condemned errors of the Arians. We

scarce find any thing new in the systems of these men, who would pass for *somebody*, like Theodas, Acts v. 36.; or who, like *Simon*, the *magician*, and first heretic, would be looked upon as *great men*, and great wits, by daring to be *free-thinkers*, and thereby *bold blasphemers*. --- To do justice to Calvin, he did not think these Socinians fit to live in any Christian society: and therefore he got *Michael Servetus* burnt alive at Geneva, ann. 1553; and *Valentinus Gentilis*, one of the same sect, was beheaded at Berne, ann. 1565. I must needs say, it seems an easier matter to excuse the *warm sharp* zeal of Calvin, and his Swiss brethren, in persecuting to death these Socinians with *sword* and *faggot*, than to shew with what justice and equity these men could be put to death, who followed the very same principle, and the *only rule of faith*; i.e. Scriptures expounded by every man's private reason, or private spirit; which the pretended Reformers, all of them, maintain with as much warmth as ever, to the very day. --- Heretics in all ages have wrested the sense of the Scriptures, to make them seem to favour their errors: and by what we see so frequently happen, it is no hard matter for men who have but a moderate share of wit and sophistry, by their licentious fancies and arbitrary expositions, to turn, change, and pervert Scripture texts, and to *transform almost any thing into any thing*, says Dr. Hammond, on the second chapter of St. John's Revelation. But I need not fear to say, this never appeared so visibly as in these last two hundred years; the truth of which no one can doubt, who reads the *History of the Variations*, written by the learned bishop of Meaux. --- These late Reformers seem to make a great part of their religion consist in reading, or having at least the Bible in their mother-tongue. The number of translations into vulgar languages, with many considerable differences, is strangely multiplied. Every one rashly claims a right to expound them according to his private judgment, or his private spirit. And what is the consequence of this; but that as men's judgments and their private interpretations are different, so in a great measure are the articles of their creed and belief? --- The Scriptures, in which are contained the revealed mysteries of divine faith, are, without all doubt, the most excellent of all writings: these divers volumes, written by men inspired from God, contained not the *words of men*, but the *word of God*, which *can save our souls*: (1 Thessalonians ii. 13. and James i. 21.) but then they ought to be read, even by the learned, with the spirit of humility; with a fear of mistaking the true sense, as so many have done; with a due submission to the Catholic Church, which Christ himself commanded us *to hear* and obey. This we might learn from the Scripture itself. The apostle told the Corinthians, that even in those days there were *many who corrupted and adulterated the word of God*. (2 Corinthians ii. 17.) St. Peter gives us this admonition: that in the Epistles of St. Paul, *are some things hard to understand, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction*. --- It was merely to prevent and remedy this abuse of the best of books, that it was judged necessary to forbid the ignorant to read the Scriptures in vulgar languages, without the advice and permission of their pastors and spiritual guides, whom Christ appointed to *govern his Church*. (Acts xx. 28.) The learned University of Paris, 1525, at that time, and in those circumstances, judged the said prohibition necessary: and whosoever hath had any discourses with persons of different religions and persuasions in our kingdom, especially with Anabaptists, Quakers, and such as pretend to expound the Scriptures, either by their private reason or by the private spirit, will, I am confident, be fully convinced that the just motives of the said prohibition subsist to this very day. Ignorant men and women turn Scripture texts to the errors of their private sects, and wrest them to their own perdition; as the very best of remedies prove pernicious and fatal to those who know not their virtues, nor how to use them, and apply them. --- They might learn from the Acts of the Apostles, (Chap. xv.) that as soon as a doubt and dispute was raised, whether the Gentiles converted by the apostles, were obliged to observe any of the ceremonies of the law of Moses, this first controversy about religion was not decided by the private judgment, or private spirit, even of those apostolical preachers, but by an assembly or council of the apostles and bishops, held at Jerusalem; as appears by the letter of the council sent to the Christians at Antioch. *It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, &c.* to us, whom Christ promised to direct by the *Spirit of truth*; with whom, he assured us, he would *remain to the end of the world*. --- The very same method, as it is evident by the annals of Church history, hath been practised to the very time, and will be to the end of the world. It is the rule grounded on the command and promises of Christ, when he founded and established the Christian Church. All disputes about the sense of the Scriptures, and about points of the Christian belief, have been always decided by the successors of St. Peter, and the other apostles; even by general councils,

when judged necessary: and they who, like Arius, obstinately refused to submit their private judgment to that of the Catholic Church, were always condemned, excommunicated, and cut off from the communion of the Church of Christ. --- Nor is this rule and this submission to be understood of the ignorant and unlearned only, but also of men accomplished in all kind of learning. The ignorant fall into errors for want of knowledge, and the learned are many times blinded by their pride and self-conceit. The sublime and profound mysteries, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation of the eternal Son of God, the manner of Christ's presence in the holy sacrament, are certainly above the reach of man's weak reason and capacity; much less are they the object of our senses, which are so often deceived. Let every reader of the sacred volumes, who pretends to be a competent judge of the sense, and of the truths revealed in them, reflect on the words which he finds in Isaia: (Chap. lv. 8, 9) *For my thoughts are not your thoughts; nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts.* How then shall any one, by his private reason, pretend to *judge*, to *know*, to *demonstrate*, what is possible or impossible to the incomprehensible power of God? --- A self-conceited Socinian, big with the opinion he has of his own wit and knowledge, will boldly tell us, that to say or believe that three distinct persons are one and the same God, is a manifest contradiction. Must we believe him? Or the Christian Catholic Church, in all ages? That is, against the greatest authority upon earth: whether we consider the Church as the most illustrious society and body of men; or whether we consider the same Church as under the protection of Christ and his divine promises, to teach them all truth to the end of the world. Besides this, experience itself should make the said Socinian distrust his own judgment as to such a pretended contradiction, when he finds that the brightest wits, and most subtle philosophers, after all their study and search of natural causes and effects, for so many hundred years, by the light of their reason could never yet account for the most common and obvious things in nature, such as are the *parts of matter*, and *extension*, *local motion*, and the *production* of numberless *vegetables* and *animals*, which we see happen, but know not how. See the author of a short answer to the late Dr. Clark and Mr. Whiston, concerning the divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Ghost. An. 1729. --- The latest writers among the pretended Reformers hesitate not to tell us, that what the Church and its councils have declared, as to Christ's real presence in the holy sacrament, is *contradicted by all our senses*; as if our senses, which are so often mistaken, were the supreme and only judges of such hidden mysteries. Another tells us, that for Christ to be truly and really present in many places, in *ten thousand places at once*, is a thing *impossible in nature and reason*; and his demonstrative proof is, that *he knows* it to be impossible. With this vain presumption, he runs on to this length of extravagant rashness, and boldly pronounces, that should *he find such a proposition in the Bible*, nay, though with his eyes *he should see a man raise the dead*, and *declare that proposition true*, *he could not believe it*: and merely because *he knows it impossible*: which is no more than to say, that it does not seem possible to his weak reason. I do not find that he offers to bring any other proof, but that it is *contrary to his senses*, and that *God cannot assert a contradiction*. And why must we take it for a contradiction, only because he tells us, *he knows it* to be so? It was certainly the safest way for him, to bring no reasons to shew it impossible to the infinite and incomprehensible power of the Almighty: this vain attempt would only have given new occasions to his learned antagonist, the author of the *Single Combat*, to expose his weakness even more than he has done. --- May not every *Unitarian*, every *Arian*, every *Socinian*, every *Latitudinarian*, every *Free-thinker*, tell us the same? And if this be a sufficient plea, none of them can be condemned of heresy or error. Calvin could never silence Servetus, (unless it were by lighting faggots round him) if he did but say, *I know* that three distinct persons cannot be one and the same God. It is a *contradiction*, and *God cannot assert a contradiction*. *I know* that the Son cannot be the same God with the Father. It is a contradiction, and therefore impossible. So that though I find clear texts in the Scriptures, that *three give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one*: though Christ, the Son of God, tells us, that *he and the Father are one*, or *one thing*; nay, though I should with my own eyes, see men *raise the dead* to confirm these mysteries, (as many are recorded to have done) and *declare* them to be revealed divine truths, *I cannot believe them*, because *I know them* to be false, to be *nonsense*, to be *contradictions to reason and nature*. The like the Free-thinker may tell us, with the *Pelagians*, as to the existence of original sin, that all men should become liable to eternal death for Adam's

sinning; with the *Manicheans*, that men cannot have free will to do, or abstain from, sinful actions, and yet God know infallibly from eternity what they will do; with the *Origenists*, that God, who is infinite goodness itself, will not punish sinners eternally, for yielding to what the inclinations of their corrupt nature prompt them. They have the same right to tell all Christendom, that they *know* these pretended revealed mysteries to be *nonsense, impossibilities, and contradictions*. And every man's private judgment, when, with an air of confidence, he says, *I know it*, must pass for infallible; though he will not hear of the Catholic Church being infallible, under the promises of our Saviour, Christ. --- But to conclude this preface, already much longer than I designed, *reason* itself, as well as the *experience* we have of our own weak understanding, from the little we know even of natural things, might preserve every sober thinking man from such extravagant presumption, pride and self-conceited rashness, as to pretend to measure God's almighty and incomprehensible power by the narrow and shallow capacity of human understanding, or to know what is possible or impossible for Him that made all things out of nothing. In fine, let not human understanding *exalt itself against the knowledge of God*, but bring into a rational captivity and submission *every thought to the obedience of Christ*. Let every one humbly acknowledge with the great St. Augustine, whose learning and capacity, modestly speaking, were not inferior to those of any of those bold and rash pretenders to knowledge, *that God can certainly do more than we can understand*. Let us reflect with St. Gregory of Nazianzus (Orat. xxxvii. p. 597. C.) that if we know not the *things under our feet*, we must not pretend to *fathom the profound mysteries of God*.<sup>[1]</sup> --- And, in the mean time, let us pray for those who are thus *tossed to and fro* with every *wind* and *blast* of different *doctrines*, (Ephesians iv. 14.) that God, of his infinite mercy, would enlighten their weak and blinded understanding with the light of the *one true faith*, and bring them to the *one fold* of his Catholic Church. (Witham)

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[1] Naz. Orat. xxxvii. Greek: *Mede ta en posin eidenai dunamenoi ... me theou bathesin embateuein*.

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## JOHN 1

**Ver. 1.** *In the beginning was the word*:<sup>[1]</sup> or rather, *the word was in the beginning*. The eternal word, the increated wisdom, the second Person of the blessed Trinity, the *only begotten Son* of the Father, as he is here called (ver. 14.) of the *same nature and substance*, and the *same God*, with the Father and Holy Ghost. This word *was always*; so that it was never true to say, *he was not*, as the Arians blasphemed. This word *was in the beginning*. Some, by the *beginning*, expound the Father himself, in whom he was always. Others give this plain and obvious sense, that the word, or the Son of God, was, when all other things began to have a being; he never began, but was from all eternity. --- *And the word was with God*; i.e. was with the Father; and as it is said, (ver. 18) *in the bosom of the Father*; which implies, that he is indeed a *distinct person*, but the same in nature and substance with the Father and the Holy Ghost. This is repeated again in the second verse, as repetitions are very frequent in St. John. --- *And the word was God*. This without question is the construction; where, according to the letter we read, *and God was the word*. (Witham) --- The Greek for the word is Greek: *Logos*, which signifies not only the exterior word, but also the interior word, or thought; and in this latter sense it is taken here. (Bible de Vence) --- Philo Judæus, in the apostolic age, uses the word Greek: *Logos*, p. 823, to personify the wisdom and the power of God. Greek: *Logos estin eikon Theou di ou sumpas o Kosmos edemiourgeito*. By a similar metonymy, Jesus Christ is called the way, the truth, the life, the resurrection. --- *And the word was God*. Here the eternity and the divinity of the second Person are incontrovertibly established; or, we must say that language has no longer a fixed meaning, and that it is impossible to establish any point whatever from the words of Scripture. (Haydock)

**Ver. 2.** *The same was in the beginning with God*. In the text is only, "this was in the beginning;" but the sense and construction certainly is, *this word* was in the beginning. (Witham)



**Ver. 3.** *All things were made by him,[2] and without him was made nothing that was made.* These words teach us, that all *created being*, *visible* or *invisible* on earth, every thing that ever *was made*, or began to be, were *made*, produced, and created by this eternal word, or by the Son of God. The same is truly said of the Holy Ghost; all creatures being equally produced, *created*, and *preserved* by the three divine Persons as, by their *proper*, *principal*, and *efficient* cause, in the same manner, and by the same action: not by the Son, in any manner inferior to the Father; nor as if the Son produced things only *ministerially*, and acted only as the *minister*, and *instrument* of the Father, as the Arians pretended. In this sublime mystery of one God and three distinct Persons, if we consider the *eternal processions*, and *personal proprieties*, the Father is the *first Person*, but not by any *priority of time*, or of *dignity*; all the three divine Persons being *eternal*, or *co-eternal*, *equal* in all perfections, being one in nature, in substance, in power, in majesty: in a word, one and the same God. The *Father* in no other sense is called the *first Person*, but because he proceeds from none, or from no other person: and the eternal Son is the second Person begotten, and proceeding from him, the Father, from all eternity, proceeds now, and shall proceed from him for all eternity; as we believe that the *third divine Person*, the *Holy Ghost*, always *proceeded* without any beginning, doth *now proceed*, and *shall proceed* for ever, both from the Father and the Son. But when we consider and speak of any creatures, of any thing that was made, or had a beginning, all things were *equally created* in time, and are *equally preserved*, no less by the *Son*, and by the *Holy Ghost*, than by the *Father*. For this reason St. John tells us again in this chapter, (ver. 10.) that *the world was made by the word*. And our Saviour himself (John v. 19.) tells us, *that whatsoever the Father doth, these things also in like manner*, or in the same manner, *the Son doth*. Again the apostle, (Hebrews i. ver. 2.) speaking of the *Son*, says, *the world was made by him*: and in the same chapter, (ver. 10.) he applies to the *Son* these words, (Psalm ci. 26.) *And thou, O Lord, in the beginning didst found the earth*: and the heavens are the *works of thy hands*, &c. To omit other places, St. Paul again, writing to the Colossians, (Chap. i. ver. 16, 17.) and speaking of *God's beloved Son*, as may be seen in that chapter, says, that *in him all things were created, visible and invisible---all things were created in him, and by him*, or, as it is in the Greek, *unto him*, and *for him*; to shew that the Son was not only the efficient cause, the *Maker* and *Creator* of all things, but also the last end of all. Which is also confirmed by the following words: *And he is before all, and all things subsist in him, or consist in him*; as in the Rheims and Protestant translations. I have, therefore, in this third verse, translated, *all things were made by him*, with all English translations and paraphrases, whether made by Catholics or Protestants; and not *all things were made through him*, lest *through* should seem to carry with it a different and a *diminishing signification*; or as if, in the creation of the world, the eternal word, or the *Son of God*, produced things only *ministerially*, and, in a manner, inferior to the Father, as the Arians and Eunomians pretended; against whom, on this account, wrote St. Basil, lib. de spiritu Sto. St. John Chrysostom, and St. Cyril, on this very verse; where they expressly undertake to shew that the Greek text in this verse no ways favours these heretics. The *Arians*, and now the *Socinians*, who deny the Son to be *true God*, or that the word *God* applies as properly to him as to the Father, but would have him called God, that is, a *nominal god*, in an inferior and improper sense; as when Moses called the *goa of Pharaoh*; (Exodus vii. 1.) or as men in authority are called *gods*; (Psalm lxxxi. 6.) pretend, after Origen, to find another difference in the Greek text; as if, when mention is made of the Father, he is styled *the God*; but that the Son is only called *God*, or a *God*. This objection St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, and others, have shewn to be groundless: that pretended significant *Greek article* being several times omitted, when the word *God* is applied to God the Father; and being found in other places, when the Son of God is called God. See this objection fully and clearly answered by the author of a short book, published in the year 1729, against Dr. Clark and Mr. Whiston, p. 64, and seq. (Witham) --- *Were made*, &c. Mauduit here represents the word: ---"1. As a cause, or principle, acting extraneously from himself upon the void space, in order to give a being to all creatures:" whereas there was no void space before the creation. Ante omnia Deus erat solus, ipse sibe et mundus et locus, et omnia. (Tertullian, lib. cont. Prax. chap. v.) And St. Augustine in Psalm cxxii. says: antequam faceret Deus Sanctos, ubi habitabat? In se habitabat, apud se habitabat. --- The creation of all things, visible and invisible, was the work of the whole blessed Trinity; but the Scriptures generally attribute it to the word; because wisdom, reason, and

intelligence, which are the attributes of the Son, are displayed most in it. (Calmet) --- What wonderful tergiversations the Arians used to avoid the evidence of this text, we see in St. Augustine, lib. iii. de doct. Christ. chap. 2; even such as modern dissenters do, to avoid the evidence of *This is my Body*, concerning the blessed Eucharist. (Bristow)

**Ver. 4.** *In him:* i.e. in this word, or *Son of God*, was life; because he give life to every creature. Or, as Maldonatus expounds it, because he is the author of grace, which is the spiritual life of our souls. --- *And the life was the light of men*, whether we expound it of a rational soul and understanding, which he gives to all men; or of the spiritual life, and those lights of graces, which he gives to Christians. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *And the light shineth*, or did shine, *in darkness*. Many understand this, that the light of reason, which God gave to every one, might have brought them to the knowledge of God by the visible effects of his Providence in this world: but *the darkness did not comprehend it*, because men, blinded by their passions, would not attend to the light of reason. Or we may again understand it, with Maldonatus, of the lights of grace, against which obstinate sinners wilfully shut their eyes. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *That all men might believe through him;* i.e. by John the Baptist's preaching, who was God's instrument to induce them to believe in Jesus the Christ, or the Messias, their only Redeemer. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** *He;* that is John the Baptist, *was not the true light:* but the word was the true light. In the translation, it is necessary to express that the word was the true light, lest any one should think that John the Baptist was this light. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *He was in the world*, &c. Many of the ancient interpreters understand this verse of Christ as God, who was *in the world* from its first creation, producing and governing all things: but the blind sinful world did not know and worship him. Others apply these words to the Son of God made man; whom even God's own chosen people, the Jews, at his coming, refused to receive and believe in him. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *His own.* This regards principally the Jews. Jesus came to them as into his own family, but they did not receive him. It may likewise be extended to the Gentiles, who had groaned so long a time in darkness, and only seemed to wait for the rising sun of justice to run to its light. They likewise did not receive him. These words, though apparently general, must be understood with restriction; as there were some, though comparatively few, of both Jews and Gentiles, who embraced the faith. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** *He gave to them power to be made the adoptive sons of God*, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. They are made the children of God by believing and by a new spiritual birth in the sacrament of baptism, *not of blood;* (literally, no of bloods) *not by the will*, and desires of the *flesh*, not by the *will of men*, nor by human generation, as children are first born of their natural parents, but *of God*, by faith and divine grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *And the word was made flesh.* This word, or *Son of God*, who was *in the beginning*, from all eternity, at the time appointed by the divine decrees, *was made flesh*, i.e. became man, by a true and physical union of his *divine person*, (from which the *divine nature* was inseparable) to our human nature, to a human soul, and a human body, in the womb, and of the substance, of his virgin Mother. From the moment of Christ's incarnation, as all Christians are taught to believe, he that was God from eternity, became also true man. In Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer, we believe *one divine Person* with *two natures*, and *two wills*; the one *divine*, the other *human*: by which *substantial union*, one and the same Person became truly both God and man; not two persons, or two sons, as Nestorius, the heretic, pretended. By this union, and a mutual communication of the proprieties of each nature, it is true to say, that the Son of God, remaining unchangeably God, was made man; and therefore that God was truly conceived and born of the

virgin Mary, who, on this account, was truly the Mother of God: that God was born, suffered, and died on the cross, to redeem and save us. The *word*, in this manner made man, *dwelt in us*, or among us, by this substantial union with our human nature, not *morally only*, nor after such a manner, as God is said to dwell in a temple; nor as he is in his faithful servants, by a spiritual union, that the same person is truly both God and man. --- *And we saw his glory*, manifested to the world by many signs and miracles; we in particular, who were present at his transfiguration. (Matthew xvii.) --- *Full of grace and truth*. These words, in the construction, are to be joined in this manner: *the word dwelt in us, full of grace and truth*; and *we have seen his glory*, &c. This fulness of grace in Christ Jesus, infinitely surpassed the limited *fulness*, which the Scripture attributes to St. Stephen, (Acts vi. 8.) or to the blessed virgin Mother: (Luke i. 28.) they are said to be full of grace, only because of an extraordinary communication and greater share of graces than was given to other saints. But Christ, even as man, his grace and sanctity were infinite, as was his person. --- *As of the only begotten of the Father*. [3] If we consider Christ in himself, and not only as he was made known to men by outward signs and miracles, St. John Chrysostom and others take notice that the word *as*, no ways diminisheth the signification; and that the sense is, we have seen the glory of him, who is truly from all eternity the *only begotten Son* of the Father: who, as the Scriptures assure us, is his *true*, his *proper* Son, *his only begotten*, who was *sent into the world*, who *descended from heaven*, and *came from the Father*, and *leaving the world*, returned *where he was before*, *returned to his Father*. We shall meet with many such Scripture texts, to shew him to be the eternal Son of his eternal Father; or to shew that the Father was always his Father, and the Son always his Son: as it was the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church, and as such declared in the general council of Nice, that this, his only Son, *was born or begotten of the Father before all ages ... God from God, the true God from the true God*. It was by denying this truth, "that the Son was the Son always, and the Father always, and from all eternity, the Father;" that the blaspheming Arius began his heresy in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, against his bishop of Alexandria, St. Alexander. See the letter copied by St. Epiphanius, Hær. 69. p. 731. Ed. Petavii. (Witham) --- *Dwelt among us*. In a material body, like ours, clothed with our nature. He is become mortal, and like us in every thing, but sin and concupiscence. The Greek literally translated, is, *he has pitched his tent amongst us*, like a stranger and passenger, who makes no long stay in one place. The body in Scripture, is sometimes called a tent or tabernacle, in which the soul dwells, as 2 Peter i. 14. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *Is preferred before me*. [4] Literally, *is made before me*. The sense, says St. John Chrysostom is, that he is greater in dignity, deserves greater honour, &c. though born after me, he was from eternity. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *And of his fulness we all have received*; not only Jews, but also all nations. --- *And grace for grace*. [5] It may perhaps be translated *grace upon grace*, as Mr. Blackwall observes, and brings a parallel example in Greek out of Theognis, p. 164. It implies abundance of graces, and greater graces under the new law of Christ than in the time of the law of Moses; which exposition is confirmed by the following verse. (Witham) --- Before the coming of the Messias all men had the light of reason. The Greeks had their philosophy, the Jews the law and prophets. All this was a grace and favour bestowed by God, the author of all good. But since the word was made flesh, and caused the gospel of salvation to be announced to all men; he has invited all nations to the faith and knowledge of the truth. Thus he has given us one grace for another; but the second is infinitely greater, more excellent, and more abundant than the first. The following verse seems to insinuate, that the evangelist means the law by the first grace, and the gospel by the second. Compare likewise Romans i. 17. The Jews were conducted by *faith to faith*; by *faith* in God and the law of Moses, *to the faith* of the gospel, announced by Christ. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *No man hath seen God*. No mortal in this life by a perfect union and enjoyment of him. Nor can any creature perfectly comprehend his infinite greatness: none but his only begotten divine Son, who *is in the bosom of his Father*, not only by an union of grace, but by an union and unity of substance and nature; of which Christ said, (John xiv. 11.) *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The Jews sent, &c.* These men, who were *priests* and *Levites*, seem to have been sent and deputed by the sanhedrim, or great council at Jerusalem, to ask of John the Baptist, who was then in great esteem and veneration, whether he was not their Messiah; who, as they knew by the predictions of the prophets, was to come about that time. John declared to them he was not. To their next question, if he was not *Elias*? He answered: *he was not*: because in person he was not; though our Saviour (Matthew xi. 14.) says he was *Elias*: to wit, in spirit and office only. Their third question was, if he was *a prophet*? He answered, *no*. Yet Christ (Matthew xi.) tells us, he was *a prophet, and more than a prophet*. In the ordinary acceptation only, they were called prophets who foretold things to come: John then, with truth, as well as humility, could say he was not a prophet; not being sent to foretell the coming of the Messiah, but to point him out as already come, and present with the Jews. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *The voice of one crying in the wilderness.* See Matthew iii. 3.; Mark i. 3.; Luke iii. 4.; and Isaiah xl. 3. by all which John was his immediate precursor. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *Hath stood.* St. John the Baptist, by these words, which he spoke to the priests and Levites, sent to him by the Pharisees, did not mean to tell them, that Jesus was either at the present time standing amongst them, or that he had ever been in the presence of the self same people; but they may be understood two different ways, either with regard to his divinity; in that sense, Jesus was always by his divine presence amongst them; or in regard to his humanity; either that he lived in the same country, and among their countrymen, or, that he stood actually amongst them, because Jesus was accustomed yearly to go up to Jerusalem on the festival of the Pasch. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 29.** *Behold the Lamb of God.* John the Baptist let the Jews know who Jesus was, by divers testimonies. 1st, By telling them he was the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin, or sins of the world, who was come to be their Redeemer, and to free mankind from the slavery of sin; 2ndly, that he was *greater* than he, *and before him*, though *born after him*; 3rdly, that God had revealed to him that Jesus was to *baptize in the Holy Ghost*; 4thly, that he saw the *Spirit descending upon him* from heaven, and *remaining upon him*; 5thly, that he was *the Son of God*, ver. 34. (Witham) --- *Who taketh away.* It was only a being like Christ, in whose person the divine and human natures were united, that could effectually take away the sins of the world. As man, he was enabled to suffer; and as God, his sufferings obtained a value equal to the infinite atonement required. (Haydock)

**Ver. 39.** *Staid with him that day.* Yet they did not continually remain with him, as his disciples, till he called them, as they were fishing. See the annotations, Matthew iv. 18. (Witham)

**Ver. 42.** *Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, or of John.* Jesus, who knew all things, knew his name, and at the first meeting told him he should hereafter be called *Cephas*, or *Petrus*, a rock, designing to make him the chief or head of his whole Church. See Matthew xvi. 18. (Witham) --- *Cephas* is a Syriac word, its import is the same as rock or stone. And St. Paul commonly calleth him by this name: whereas others, both Greeks and Latins, call him by the Greek appellation, *Peter*; which signifies exactly the same thing. Hence St. Cyril saith, that our Saviour, by foretelling that his name should be now no more *Simon*, but *Peter*, did by the word itself aptly signify, that on him, as on a rock most firm, he would build his Church. (Lib. ii. chap. 12. in Joan.)

**Ver. 46.** *Can any thing of good come from Nazareth?* Nathanael did not think it consistent with the predictions of the prophets, that the Messiah, who was to be the Son of David, and to be born at Bethlehem, should be of the town of Nazareth; which he did not imagine could be the place of Jesus's birth. But when he came to Jesus, and found that he knew the truth of things done in private, and in his absence, he professed his belief in Jesus in these words: *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel.* We may here take notice, with Dr. Pearson, on the second article of the Creed, that the Jews, before the coming of Christ, were convinced that he was to be the Son of God; (though they have denied it since that time) for they interpreted, as foretold of their Messiah, these words: (Psalm ii. 7.) *The Lord said to me, thou art my Son, this*

day have I begotten thee: and this is what Nathanael here confessed. The same is confirmed by the famous confession of St. Peter, (Matthew xvi. 16.) *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*; by the words of Martha, (John xi. 27.) *I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into the world*: In fine, by the question which the Jewish priest put to our Saviour, (Matthew xxvi. 63.) *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God*. See also John vi. 17. and John xx. 31. (Witham)

**Ver. 50.** *Greater things than these.* Greater miracles and proofs that I am the Messias, and the true Son of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 51.** *You shall see the heaven open, &c.* It is not certain when this was to be fulfilled: St. John Chrysostom thinks at Christ's ascension; others refer it to the day of judgment. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Et Deus erat Verbum, *Greek: kai theos en o logos*. *Greek: Logos* was a word very proper to give all that should believe a right notion of the Messias, and of the true Son of God. *Greek: Logos*, according to St. Jerome, (Ep. ad Paulinum. tom. iv. part 2, p. 570. Ed. Ben.) signifies divers things; as, the *wisdom* of the Father, his *internal word* or *conception*; and, as it were, *the express image of the invisible God*. Here it is not taken for any *absolute divine attribute* or *perfection*; but for the *divine Son*, or the *second Person*, as really distinct from the other two divine Persons. And that by *Greek: Logos*, was to be understood him that was truly God, the Maker and Creator of all things; the Jews might easily understand, by what they read and frequently heard in the Chaldaic Paraphrase, or Targum of Jonathan, which was read to them in the time of our Saviour, Christ, and at the time when St. John wrote his gospel. In this Paraphrase they were accustomed to hear that the Hebrew word *Memreth*, to which corresponded in Greek, *Logos*, was put for him that was God: as *Isaias xlv. 12, I made the earth*; in this Targum, *I, by my word, made the earth*: *Isaias xlviii. 13, My hand also hath founded the earth*; in this Paraphrase, *in my word I founded the earth*: *Genesis iii. 8, They heard the voice of the Lord God*; in the Paraphrase, *the voice of the word of God*. See Walton, prolog. xii, num. 18, p. 86.; Maldonatus on this place; Petavius, lib. vi. de Trin. chap. 1.; Dr. Pearson on the Creed, p. 11.; Dr. Hammond's note on St. Luke, chap. i, p. 203, &c. However, St. John shews us that he meant him who was the true God, by telling us that the world, and every thing that was made, was made by this word, or *Greek: Logos*; that in this word was life; that he was in the world, and was the *light* of the world; that he had glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, &c.

[2] Ver. 3. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt: *Greek: panta di autou egeneto*: all things were made by him. Let not any one pretend that *Greek: di autou*, in this verse signifies no more than, that all creatures were made by the *Word*, or *Son of God*, ministerially as if he was only the *instrument* of the eternal Father, the chief and *principal cause* of all things; of whom the apostle says, *Greek: ex ou ta panta*, ex ipso omnia. --- Origen unless perhaps his writings were corrupted by the Arians, seems to have given occasion to this *Greek: leptalogia*, as St. Basil calls it, to groundless quibbling and squabbling about the sense of the prepositions; when he tells us, (tom. ii, in Joan. p. 55. Ed. Huetii.) the *Greek: di ou* never has the *first place*, but always the *second place*, meaning as to dignity: *Greek: oude pote ten proten choran echei to di ou deuteran de aei*. It is like many other false and unwarrantable assertions in Origen; as when we find in the same commentary on St. John, that he says only God the Father is called *Greek: o Theos*. Origen may perhaps be excused as to what he writes about *Greek: di ou* and *Greek: ex ou*, as if he spoke only with a regard to the *divine processions* in God, in which the Father is the *first person*, from whom proceeds even the eternal Son, the second person. But whatever Origen thought, or meant, whom St. Epiphanius calls the father of Arius, whose works, as then extant, were condemned in the fifth General Council; it appears that the Arians, in particular Aetius, of the Eunomian sect, pretended that *Greek: ex ou* had always a more eminent signification, and was only applied to the Father; the Father, said he, being the true God, the only principal efficient cause of all things; and *Greek: di ou* was applied to the word, or Son of God, who was not the same true God, to signify his interior and ministerial production, as he was the *instrument* of the Father. Aetius, without regard to other places in the Scripture, as we read in St. Basil, (lib. de Sp.

S. chap. ii. p. 293. Ed Morelli. an. 1637) produced these words of the apostle: (1 Corinthians viii. 6.) *Greek: eis Theos, pater, ex ou ta panta ... kai eis kurios, Iesus Christos; di ou panta*: unus Deus, Pater, ex quo omnia, ... et unus Dominus Iesus Christus; per quem omnia. He concluded from hence, that as the prepositions were different, so were the natures and substance of the Father and of the Son. --- But that no settled and certain rule can be built on these prepositions, and that *Greek: di ou*, in this third verse of the first chapter of St. John, has no *diminishing signification*, so that the Son was *equally* the *proper* and *principal efficient cause* of all things that were made and created, we have the authority of the greatest doctors, and the most learned and exact writers of the Greek Church, who knew both the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and the rules and use of the Greek tongue. --- St. Basil (lib. de Spir. S. chap. iii. et seq.) ridicules this *Greek: leptologian*, which, he says, had its origin from the vain and profane philosophy of the heathen writers, about the difference of causes. He denies that there is any fixed rule; and brings examples, in which *Greek: di ou* is applied to the Father, and *Greek: ex ou* to the Son. --- St. Gregory of Nazianzus denies this difference, (Orat. xxxvii. p. 604. Ed. Morelli. Parisiis, ann. 1630) and affirms that *Greek: ex ou*, and *Greek: di ou*, in this verse, has no *diminishing* nor inferior signification: *Greek: ei de to di ou nomizeis elattoseos einai*, &c. --- St. Cyril of Alexandria, (lib. i. in Joan. p. 48.) makes the very same remark, and with the like examples. His words are: Quod si existiment (Ariani) **per quem**, *Greek: di ou*, substantiam ejus (Filii) de æqualitate cum Patre dejicere, ita ut **minister** sit potius quam **creator**, ad se redeant insauī, &c. --- St. Ambrose, a doctor of the Latin Church, (lib. ii. de Sp. S. 10. p. 212. 213. Ed. Par. an. 1586.) confutes, with St. Basil, the groundless and pretended differences of *ex quo* and *per quem*. --- I shall only here produce that one passage in Romans, (Chap. xi. 36.) which St. Basil and St. Ambrose make use of, where we read: ex ipso, et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia, (*Greek: ex autou, kai di autou, kai eis auton ta panta*) et in ipsum omnia. Now either we expound all the three parts of this sentence, as spoken of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, (as both St. Basil and St. Ambrose understand them) and then *Greek: ex ou* is applied to the Son; or we understand them of the Father, and *Greek: di ou* is applied to the first Person: or, in fine, as St. Augustine observes, (lib. i. de Trin. chap. 6.) we interpret them in such a manner, that the first part be understood of the Father, the second of the Son, the third of the Holy Ghost; and then the words that immediately follow in the singular number, *to him be glory for ever*, shew that all the three Persons are but one in nature, one God; and to all, and to each of the three Persons, the whole sentence belongs. --- Had I not already said more than may seem necessary on these words, I might add all the Greek bishops in the council of Florence, when they came to an union with the Latin bishops about the procession of the Holy Ghost. After many passages had been quoted out of the ancient Fathers, some of which had said that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, *Greek: ek tou patros, kai ek tou uiou*, many others had asserted that he proceeded *Greek: ek tou Patros dia tou uiou*; Bessarion, the learned Grecian bishop, in a long oration, (Sess. 25.) shewed that *Greek: di uiou* was the same as *Greek: ek tou uiou*. The Fathers, said he, shew, *Greek: deiknusin isodunamouosan te ek ten dia*. See tom. xiii. Conc. Lab. p. 435. All the others allowed this to be true, as the emperor John Paleologus observed. (p. 487.) And the patriarch of Constantinople, when he was about to subscribe, declared the same: *Greek: esti to dia tou uiou, tauton to ek tou uiou*. Can any one imagine that none of these learned Grecians should know the force and use of these two prepositions, in their own language?

[3] Ver. 14. Gloriam quasi Unigeniti, *Greek: os monogenous*. St. John Chrysostom says, the word quasi, *Greek: os*, does no ways here diminish, be even confirms and increases the signification; as when we say of a king, that he carries himself like a king. *Greek: To de os entauthen ouch omoioseos estin, alla bebaioseos*.

[4] Ver. 15 and 27. Aute me factus est, *Greek: emprosthen mou gegonen*, is preferred before me: St. John Chrysostom says, he is *Greek: lamproteros, entimoteros*, illustrios, honorabilior.

[5] Ver. 16. Gratiam pro gratia, *Greek: charin anti charitos*, gratiam; so Job, (ii. 4.) pellem pro pelle, i.e. omnem pellem.

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## JOHN 2

**Ver. 1.** *The Mother of Jesus* was present. It is supposed she was then a widow, since in all the rest of the history of Jesus, not a single word occurs respecting St. Joseph. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *They have no wine.* The blessed virgin Mother was not ignorant of the divine power of her Son, and that the time was come when he designed to make himself known to the world. She could not make her request in more modest terms. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** Some of the Fathers have spoken without sufficient precaution on this action of the blessed Virgin; supposing she was actuated by some inclination to vanity, in begging her Son perform a miracle on this occasion; that some of the glory of it might accrue to her, and that on this account our Saviour answers her with severity, saying, *Woman*, (not *Mother*) what is it to thee or me. Other Fathers, with more reason, attribute the interference of the blessed Virgin to her charity and compassion for the new married couple. Whatever turn be given to our Saviour's answer, it must be acknowledged it has in it the appearance of something severe. But the Fathers have explained it with mildness, observing that our Saviour only meant to say, Mother, what affair is it of ours if they want wine? Ought we to concern ourselves about that? Others think that he wished, by these words, to let his Mother know that she must not forestall the time appointed by the heavenly Father, as if her demand were unseasonable and out of time. But most of the Fathers and best commentators understand, that he speaks here not as man and Son of Mary, but as God; and in that quality, he observes to his Mother, I have nothing in common with you. It is not for you to prescribe when miracles are to be performed, which are not to be expected in compliance with any human respect. I know when my power is to be manifested for the greater glory of God. (Calmet) ---See the like forms of speech, Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34; &c. --- *My hour is not yet come.* It is not yet time. He waited till the wine was quite done, lest any should believe that he had only increased the quantity, or had only mixed water with the wine. He would have his first miracle to be incontestable, and that all the company should be witnesses of it. (St. Augustine, *et alii patres passim.* --- Christ's first miracle in the New Testament, was a kind of transubstantiation in changing water into wine; the first miracle Moses performed when sent to the Jews, was transubstantiation. (Exodus iv.) The first Moses and Aaron performed, when sent to the Egyptians, was transubstantiation. (Exodus vii.)

**Ver. 6.** *Two or three measures*, [1] called *metreta*. Both the Latin and Greek text, by the derivation, may signify a measure in general, according to the Rhemish translation: but *metreta* was a particular measure of liquids: yet, not corresponding to our *firkins*, I could not think it proper with the Protestant and M. N. to put *two or three firkins*. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *When men have well drunk*, [2] or plentifully; this is the literal sense: nor need we translate, when *they are drunk*, being spoken of such company, where our Saviour, Christ, his blessed Mother, and his disciples, were present. See Genesis xlii. 34; 1 Machabees xvi. ver. 16, where the same word may be taken in the same sense. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** This was the first miracle which Jesus had performed in public, and to manifest his glory; but Maldonatus is of opinion that he had before wrought many miracles, known to the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; which gave her the confidence to ask one now. This opinion is no way contrary to the evangelist. His disciples believed in him. They had believed in him before or they would not have followed him. This confirmed their faith. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *He drove them all out of the temple.* According to St. John Chrysostom (hom. lxvii. in Matt.) this casting out was different from that which is there related, chap. xxi. ver. 12. (Witham) --- How could the Son of the carpenter, Joseph, whose divinity was yet unknown to the people, succeed in expelling so great a multitude from the temple! There was undoubtedly something divine in his whole conduct and appearance, which deterred all from making resistance. The

evangelist seems to insinuate this by putting these words: "*The house of my Father*," into our Saviour's mouth, which was making himself immediately the Son of God. This made Origen consider this miracle, in overcoming the unruly dispositions of so many, as a superior manifestation of power to what he had shewn in changing the nature of water at Cana. (Haydock) --- Jesus Christ here shews the respect he requires should be shewn to the temple of God; and St. Paul, speaking of the profaners of God's Church, saith: *If any man defile the temple of God, he will God destroy.* (1 Corinthians iii. 17.) Which in a spiritual sense may be understood of the soul of man, which is the living temple of the living God. (Haydock)

**Ver. 20.** *Six and forty years, &c.* This many understand of the time the second temple was building, from the edict of Cyrus to the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes. Others, of the enlarging and beautifying the temple, which was begun by Herod the great, forty-six years before the Jews spoke this to our Saviour. (Witham) --- Interpreters are much embarrassed by these words; as the building of the temple, which then existed, had been finished in much less than 46 years. Herod renewed the temple from the foundations, and spent in that work only nine years and a half. It was begun 46 years before the first Pasch at which our Saviour appeared. (Usher, ad an. Mundi 3987.) --- But this prince, according to Josephus, continued to make new building and embellishments to the very time in which the Jews uttered these words: it is now 46 years, &c.

**Ver. 24.** *Trust himself to them.* The Fathers generally understand these words, *to them*, to refer to those who believed in him, mentioned in the preceding verse. Though they believed in him, he did not trust himself to them, because he knew them. He knew their weaknesses, their inconstancy, their unsteadiness. He knew they would abandon him on the first occasion; and that his passion, his cross, his doctrines, would be a subject of scandal. St. Augustine compares these first believers to catechumens. They believe in Christ, confess his name, and sign their foreheads with his cross: but Jesus Christ does not trust himself to them; he does not trust to them the knowledge of his mysteries; he does not reveal to them the secrets of his religion. (Calmet) --- The catechumens were not allowed to be present at the holy mysteries of the sacrifice of the mass, but went out after the instruction of the gospel; whence the first part of the mass was frequently called the mass of the catechumens.

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[1] Ver. 6. *Metretas binas vel ternas*, Greek: *ana metretas duo e treis*. See Walton's preface to his first volume, p. 42, and others, de ponderibus et mensuris.

[2] Ver. 10. When they have drank well: *cum inebriati fuerint*, Greek: *otan methusthosi*. See Legh. Crit. Sac. on the word Greek: *methuo*.

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## JOHN 3

**Ver. 2.** *By night.* Nicodemus was at this time weak in faith, and therefore did not wish to endanger himself by coming to our Saviour in open day, when the enemies of Christ could see him. For many (as this evangelist informs us in chap. xii. ver. 42,) of the chief men also believed in him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess, that they might not be cast out of the Synagogue. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It appears from this verse that Jesus Christ wrought many miracles, even in the first year of his preaching: though not very publicly, and amidst the crowd. However, few of those which he performed in Judea are noticed by the evangelist.

**Ver. 5.** *Unless a man be born again of water, and the Holy Ghost.* Though the word *Holy* be now wanting in all Greek copies, it is certainly the sense. The ancient Fathers, and particularly St. Augustine in divers places, from these words, prove the necessity of giving baptism to infants: and by Christ's adding *water*, is excluded a metaphorical baptism. See also Acts viii. 36. and x. 47. and Titus iii. 5. (Witham) --- *Except a man be born again.* That is, unless you are born again



by a spiritual regeneration in God, all the knowledge which you learn from me, will not be spiritual but carnal. But I say to you, that neither you nor any other person, unless you be born again in God, can understand or conceive the glory which is in me. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 8.** *The Spirit breatheth where he will.* The Protestant translation has *the wind*: and so it is expounded by St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril on this verse; as if Christ compared the motions of the Holy Ghost to the *wind*, of which men can give so little account, whence it comes, or whither it goes. Yet many others, as St. Augustine, St. Ambrose and St. Gregory, understand this expression of the Holy Ghost, of whom it can only be properly said, that *he breatheth where he will.* (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *And knoweth not these things.* That is, of baptism given by in a visible manner, and you understand not, how will you comprehend greater and heavenly things, if I speak of them? (Witham) --- Many passages, both in the law and the prophets, implied this doctrine of *regeneration*; for what else can be the meaning of the *circumcision of the heart*, commanded by Moses; (Deuteronomy x. 16.) of the renewal of a clean and right spirit, prayed for by David; (Psalm 1.) of God's giving his people a new heart and a new spirit. (Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, &c.) But the Pharisees, taken up with their rites and traditions, paid little attention to spiritual things of greater moment.

**Ver. 11.** *We speak what we know.* It may perhaps be asked here, why Christ speaks in the plural number? To this we must answer, that it is the only Son of God, who is here speaking, showing us how the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from both. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 13.** *No man hath ascended --- but he that descended from heaven, the Son of man, who is in heaven.* These words, divers times repeated by our Saviour, in their literal and obvious sense, shew that Christ was in heaven, and had a being before he was born of the Virgin Mary, against the Cerinthians, &c. That he *descended* from heaven: that when he was made man, and conversed with men on earth, he was at the same time in heaven. Some Socinians give us here their groundless fancy, that Jesus after his baptism took a journey to heaven, and returned again before his death. Nor yet would this make him *in heaven*, when he spoke this to his disciples. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** This comparison of the serpent lifted up in the desert, upon which whoever looked was immediately cured from the bite of the fiery serpents, is a figure of the crucifixion of Christ on Calvary. And we remark, that our divine Saviour makes use of these words, *the Son of man must be lifted up* or *exalted*; (*exaltari*) by which form of expression he would teach us, that he does not consider the cross as a disgrace, but as a glory; (Theophylactus and St. John Chrysostom) and moreover, that as the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, were cured by looking upon the brazen serpent, so are Christians cured by looking up with an active faith, replete with love and confidence, on Jesus Christ crucified.

**Ver. 16-17.** *Give his only begotten Son --- God sent not his Son into the world.* He was then his Son, his only begotten Son, before he sent him into the world. He was not, therefore, his Son, only by the incarnation, but was his Son *from the beginning*, as he was also his *word* from all eternity. This was the constant doctrine of the Church, and of the Fathers, against the heresy of the Arians, that God *was always Father*,<sup>[1]</sup> and the Son *always* the eternal Son of the eternal Father. See note on chap. i. ver. 14. (Witham) --- *The world may be saved.* Why, says St. Augustine, is Christ called the Saviour of the world, unless from the obligation he took upon himself at his birth? He has come like a good physician, effectually to save mankind. The man, therefore, destroys himself, who refuses to follow the prescriptions of his physician. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 18.** *Is not judged.* He that believeth, viz. by a faith working through charity, is not *judged*; that is, is not *condemned*; but the obstinate *unbeliever* is *judged*; that is, *condemned already*, by

retrenching himself from the society of Christ and his Church. (Challoner)

**Ver. 19.** *The judgment.* That is, the cause of his condemnation. (Challoner)

**Ver. 22.** *And baptized.* Not Christ himself, but his disciples. See chap. iv. 2. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Salem.* A town situated upon the river Jordan, where formerly Melchisedech reigned. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 29.** He of whom you complain is the bridegroom, and I am the friend of the bridegroom, sent before to prepare his bride; that is, to collect for him a Church from all nations. (Alcuin.) --- The servants of the bridegroom do not rejoice in the same manner as his friends: I am his friend, and I rejoice with very great joy, because of the bridegroom's voice. He must increase, and I must decrease; by which words the great precursor demonstrates to the world, that not the least envy with regard to his divine Master rankles in his heart; by on the contrary, that he should be happy to see all his followers desert him, to run to Jesus Christ. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 30.** *He (Christ) must increase,* not in virtue and perfection, with which he is replenished, but in the opinion of the world, when they begin to know him, and believe in him: and in like manner, I must be diminished, when they know how much he is above me. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *He that cometh from above,* meaning Christ. *He that is of the earth,* meaning himself, *is from the earth,*[2] is earthly, is but a frail and infirm man; and so *speaketh as from the earth:* this seems rather the sense, than that he speaketh of, or concerning the earth. See the Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *Waht he hath seen and heard.* The meaning is not by his senses, but what he knows for certain, having the same knowledge as his eternal Father. See chap. v., ver. 19. And no one; i.e. but few *now receive* his testimony. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *He that hath received his testimony.* These following words to the end of the chapter, seem to be the words of St. John the Baptist, rather than of the evangelist. The sense is, whosoever hath believed, and received the doctrine of Christ, hath attested as it were under his hand and seal, *that God is true,* and hath executed his promise concerning the Messias. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *Doth not give the Spirit by measure.* Christ, even as man, has a plenitude of graces. See chap. i. ver. 14. And *all things,* all creatures, both in heaven and earth, are given *into his hands,* and made subject to him, as man. See 1 Corinthians xv. 26. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *The Father loveth the Son.* The Father loveth John, loveth Paul, yet he hat not given all things into their hands. The Father loveth the Son, not as a lord does his servants, not as an adopted Son, but as his only begotten Son; therefore hath he given all things into his hands, that as the Father is, so may the Son be. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 36.** The divinity of the Son is in this chapter proved as clearly as in 1 John v. 7. "There are three who give testimony in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." Which verse is entirely omitted by Luther in his version; for which omission he is severely reprov'd by Keckerman. But while Catholics and Protestants deduce from this and many other places in Scripture, the divinity of Jesus Christ, as an indubitable and irrefragable consequence, how may learned Arians, Socinians, and Unitarians read the saem texts, and deduce quite contrary consequences? How clearly does this prove that the *Bible only* cannot prove the exclusive rule of faith. With reason does the Cambridge divinity professor, Dr. Herbert Marsh, ask in his late publication on this subject, p. 18, "Are all Protestants alike in their religion? Have we not got Protestants of the Church of England, Protestants of the Church of Scotland, Protestants who hold the profession of Augsburg? Have we not both Arminian and Calvinistic

Protestants? Are not the Moravians, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Quakers, and even the Jumpers, the Dunkers, the Swedenborgians, all Protestants? Since, then Protestantism assumes so many different forms, men speak quite *indefinitely*, if they speak of it without explaining the particular kind which they mean. When I hear of a Swedish or a Danish Protestant, I know that it means a person whose religion is the *Bible only*, as expounded by the *Synod of Dort*. In like manner a Protestant of the Church of England, is a person whose religion is the *Bible only*; but the Bible as expounded by its *Liturgy* and *Articles*. How, therefore, can we know, if we give the *Bible only*, what sort of Protestantism will be deduced from it?" --- In the same publication, Dr. Herbert Marsh, p. 21, adds, "Protestants of every description, however various and even opposite in their opinions, claim severally for themselves the honour of deducing from the Bible irrefragable and indubitable consequences. The doctrine of conditional salvation is an indubitable consequence to the Arminian. The doctrine of absolute decree, an indubitable consequence to the Calvinist. The doctrines of the trinity, the atonement and the sacraments, which the Church of England considers as indubitable consequences of the Bible, would not be so, if the Unitarians and Quakers were right in the consequences which they draw from the Bible. But the consequences which they deduce appear indubitable to them." This the professor properly styles protestantism in the abstract, or generalized, and nearly allied to apostasy from Christianity: a system, p. 16, "by which many a pilgrim has lost his way between the portal of the temple and the altar --- disdaining the gate belonging only to the priests, and approaching at once the portals of the temple, they have ventured without a clue, to explore the inmost recesses; and have been bewildered in their way, till at length they have wandered to the devious passage, where Christianity itself becomes lost from the view." See his *Inquiry into the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-Book with the Bible*.

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[1] Ver. 16, 17. Greek: *Aei Theos, aei uios; ama pater, ama uios*. Arius began his heresy by denying this, as it appears in his letter to Eusebius, of Nicomedia, in St. Epiphanius, hæc. 69, p. 731.

[2] Ver. 31. Qui est de terra, de terra est, Greek: *o on ek tes ges, ek tes ges esti, kai ek tes ges lalei*. et de terra loquitur.

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## JOHN 4

**Ver 1.** This knowledge which the Pharisees had of our Saviour's making so many disciples, and baptizing such members, could not prevail upon them to follow him for their salvation; otherwise Christ would not have departed out of Judea. Jesus knew full well that this, their knowledge, would not work their conversion, but only stir up their envy, and excite them to persecute him; and therefore he retired. He could indeed have remained amongst them in security, had he chosen to exercise his power; but he would not: that so he might leave an example to his faithful servants, teaching them to flee from the rage of their cruel persecutors. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 2.** St. John Chrysostom thinks that this baptism, given by the disciples of Christ, did not at all differ from the baptism of St. John the Baptist; both, in his opinion, being used to prepare the people for Christ; but Alcuin interprets it otherwise. Some will ask, says he, whether the Holy Ghost was given by this baptism, since it is said the Holy Ghost was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified? To this we answer: that the Holy Ghost was given, though not in that manifest manner as after the ascension; for as Christ, as man, had always the Holy Ghost residing within him, and yet after his baptism received the Holy Ghost, coming upon him in a visible manner, in the shape of a dove; so before the manifest and public descent of the Holy Ghost, all the saints were his hidden temples. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 5.** This is what Jacob gave to his son Joseph, when calling him to him just before he died,

he said: (Genesis xlviii. ver. 22.) I give thee a portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorrite, with my sword and bow. (Theophylactus) --- It was thirty-six miles from Jerusalem, and the same place as *Sichem*, (Genesis xxxiv.) the capital of Samaria, now called Neplosa.

**Ver. 10.** *Thou didst know the gift of God;* i.e. the favour now offered thee by my presence, of believing in me. --- *And he would have given thee living water*, meaning divine graces; but the woman understood him literally of such water as was there in the well. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** The Samaritan woman says, *our father Jacob*; because the Samaritans claimed lineage from Abraham, who was himself a Chaldean; and they; therefore, called Jacob their father, because he was Abraham's grandson. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Or she calls him their father because they lived under the law of Moses, and were in possession of that spot of ground which Jacob had bequeathed to his son Joseph. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 13.** *Shall thirst again.* After any water, or any drink, a man naturally thirsts again; but Christ speaks of the spiritual water of grace in this life, and of glory in the next, which will perfectly satisfy the desires of man's immortal soul for ever.

**Ver. 15.** *Sir, give me this water.* The woman, says St. Augustine, does not yet understand his meaning, but longs for water, after which she should never thirst. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Call thy husband.* Christ begins to shew her that he knows her life, to make her know him and herself. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Our fathers adored on this mountain, &c.* She means Jacob and the ancient patriarchs, whom the Samaritans called their fathers; and by the *mountain*, that of Garizim, where the Samaritans had built a temple, and where they would have all persons adore, and not at Jerusalem; now she had a curiosity to hear what Christ would say of these two temples, and of the different worship of the Jews and of the Samaritans. (Witham) --- Sichem was at the foot of Mount Garizim. The Samaritans supposed the patriarchs had exercised their religious acts on this mountain. (Bible de Vence) --- Josephus (Antiquities, lib. xiii. chap. 6.) gives the dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans. Both parties referred themselves to the arbitration of king Ptolemy Philometer, who gave judgment in favour of the Jews, upon their stating the antiquity of their temple, and the uninterrupted succession of the priesthood, officiating there throughout all ages. In this controversy, the intelligent reader will see some resemblance to that which subsists between Catholics and Protestants. See Dr. Kellison's Survey of the New Religion, p. 129. --- The woman in this place must mean *offering sacrifice*, for *adoration* was never limited to any particular place. It is clear from 3 Kings ix. 3. from 2 Paralipomenon vii. 12. that God had chosen the temple of Jerusalem; but the Samaritans rejected all the books of Scripture, except the Pentateuch of Moses. The schism was begun by Manasses, a fugitive priest, that he might hold his unlawful wife thereby, and obtain superiority in schism; which he could not do whilst he remained in the unity of his brethren. How forcibly do these circumstances remind us of a much later promoter of schism, king Henry VIII. It is true the Protestants appeal to the primitive Christians, as the Samaritans appealed to the patriarchs, but in the argument both must stand or fall by the incontrovertible proof of continual succession.

**Ver. 22.** The Israelites, on account of their innumerable sins, had been delivered by the Almighty into the hands of the king of Assyria, who lead them all away captives into Babylon and Medea, and sent other nations whom he had collected from different parts, to inhabit Samaria. But the Almighty, to shew to all nations that he had not delivered up these his people for want of power to defend, but solely on account of their transgressions, sent lions into the land to persecute these strangers. The Assyrian king upon hearing this, sent them a priest to teach them the law of God; but neither after this did they depart wholly from their impiety, but in part only: for many of them returned again to their idols, worshipping at the same time the true God. It was on this account that Christ preferred the Jews before them, saying, *that salvation is of the Jews*, with whom it was

the chief principle to acknowledge the true God, and hold every denomination of idols in detestation; whereas, the Samaritans by mixing the worship of the one with the other, plainly shewed that they held the God of the universe in no greater esteem than their dumb idols. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 23.** *Now is the time approaching, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth*, without being confined to any one temple or place; and chiefly in spirit, without such a multitude of sacrifices and ceremonies as even the Jews now practise. Such adorers God himself (who is a pure spirit) desires, which they shall be taught by the Messiah. (Witham) --- Our Lord foretells her that sacrifices in both these temples should shortly cease, giving her these three instructions: 1. That the true sacrifice should be limited no longer to one spot or nation, but should be offered throughout all nations, according to that of Malachias; (i. 11.) 2. That the gross and carnal adoration by the flesh and blood of beasts, not having in them grace, spirit, and life, should be taken away, and another sacrifice succeed, which should be in itself invisible, divine, and full of life, spirit, and grace; 3. That this sacrifice should be truth itself, whereof all former sacrifices were but shadows and figures. He calleth here spirit and truth that which, in the first chapter, (ver. 17) is called grace and truth. Now this is not more than a prophecy and description of the sacrifice of the faithful Gentiles in the body and blood of Christ; for all the adoration of the Catholic Church is properly spiritual, though certain external objects be joined thereto, on account of the state of our nature, which requireth it. Be careful then not to gather from Christ's words that Christian men should have no use of external signs and offices towards God; for that would take away all sacrifice, sacraments, prayers, churches and societies. &c. &c. (Bristow)

**Ver. 25.** *I know that the Messiah cometh.* So that even the Samaritans, at that time, expected the coming of the great Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver 26.** *Jesus saith to her: I am he.* Christ was pleased to own this truth in the plainest terms to this Samaritan woman, having first by his words, and more by his grace, disposed her heart to believe it. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *His disciples ... wondered, &c.* They admired his humility, finding him discoursing with a poor woman, especially she being a Samaritan. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** The Samaritans looked for the Messiah, because they had the books of Moses, in which Jacob foretold the world's Redeemer: *The sceptre shall not depart from Juda, nor a leader from his thigh, until he come that is to be sent.* (Genesis xlix. 10.) And Moses himself foretold the same: *God will raise to thee a prophet of the nations, and of thy brethren.* (Deuteronomy xviii. 15.) (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 34.** *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.* Such ought to be the disposition of every one who, as a minister of Christ and his Church, is to take care of souls. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *For they are white already to harvest.* The great harvest of souls was approaching, when Christ was come to teach men the way of salvation, and was to send his apostles to convert all nations. They succeeded to the labours of the prophets, but with much greater advantages and success. And to this is applied that common saying, that *one soweth and another reapeth.* (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** By these words our Saviour testifies to his disciples, that the prophets had sown the seed in order to bring men to believe in Christ. This was the end of the law, this the fruit which the prophets looked for to crown their labours. He likewise shews that he himself that sent them, likewise sent the prophets before them; and that the Old and New Testament are of the same origin, and have the same design. (St. John Chrysostom in St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 42.** *This is indeed the Saviour of the world.* These Samaritans then believed that Jesus was the true Messiah, sent to redeem the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *For Jesus himself gave testimony, &c.* The connexion and reason given here by the word *for*, is obscure, when it is said, *Jesus went into Galilee and gave testimony that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.* One would think this should not be a reason for his going into Galilee, but rather why he should not go thither. St. Cyril,[1] and also St. John Chrysostom distinguish different parts of Galilee; and say that when *Jesus went into Galilee*, the meaning is, that he would not at that time go *to Nazareth*, where he was bred, nor *to Capharnaum*, where he had lived for a time, but went *to Cana*, and those *other parts* of Galilee; and that the word *for* only gives the reason of this, that he would not go to Nazareth or Capharnaum, because no prophet is honoured in his own country. And for the same reason he again said to the *ruler*: (ver. 48) *Unless you see sign and wonders you believe not*: whereas the Samaritans, from whom he was now coming readily believed without such miracles. (Witham)

**Ver. 53.** *Thy son liveth*; i.e. thy son is recovered, at this very moment. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 44. St. Cyril, in Joan. p. 202. Interjacentem Nazareth præterit, *Greek: paratrechei ten Nazareth dia tou mesou keimenen.* St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiv. in Joan. tom. 8, p. 203. quare addidit, *quia, Greek: gar*, quod non in Capharnaum, sed in Galileam, et in Cana abiit.

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## JOHN 5

**Ver. 1.** Observe here the malice of the Pharisees; they were more hurt at the cure of the sick man, than at the violation of the sabbath. Therefore, they ask not, Who healed you; but, as if they wished to keep that out of sight, Who told you to take up you bed? (St. John Chrysostom) --- But he answers: The same who healed me: Why should I not receive orders from him from whom I have received my health? (St. Augustine) --- By the festival, mentioned in ver. 1, is generally understood the Passover; and this was the second from the commencement of Christ's ministry. St. Matthew calls it by this name, chap. xxvi. 5; St. Mark, Chap. xiv. 2. and xv. 6; and St. Luke, Chap. xxiii. 17. For the first Passover, see above, John ii. 13; for the third, John vi. 4; for the fourth and last, Matthew xxvi. 17. The first three are only mentioned by St. John, the fourth by all the evangelists.

**Ver. 2.** *Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatice.*[1] Some translate, the *sheep-pond*. It is true the Greek word signifies something belonging to *sheep*. But because the ancient Latin interpreter thought fit to retain the Greek, *probatice*, and also because of the different expositions, I have not changed the word. Some think it was so called, as being near the gate called the *sheep-gate*: others, as being near the *sheep-market*: others, because the sheep that were brought to be sacrificed, were washed in it; or, at least, that the blood and entrails of sheep and beast sacrificed, were thrown into it, or washed there. In the ordinary Greek copies we read thus: there is *at*, or *near*, the Probatice, a *pond* or *fish-pond*. In Hebrew it was called *Bethsaida*, a house for fishing: and in most Greek copies, *Bethchesda*, a *house of mercy*, (perhaps because of the cures done there) having *five porches*, covered and arched, for the convenience of the infirm that lay there, waiting for the motion of the water. (Witham) --- The word *Greek: probaton*, signifies a sheep. This pond is therefore called Probatice, because there the priests washed the sacrifices. (St. Augustine) --- In imitation of this sick man, if we wish to return God thanks for his favours, or to enjoy the pleasure of his company, we must fly the crowd of vain and wicked thoughts that continually tempt us; we must avoid the company of the wicked, and fly to the sanctuary, that we may render our hearts worthy temples of that God who vouchsafes to visit us. (Alcuin)

**Ver. 4.** *And an angel of the Lord.*[2] In many Greek copies is now wanting, *of the Lord*; but at least the ancient Fathers, and interpreters, expound it of a true angel, and of a miraculous cure:

so that I cannot but wonder that so learned a man as Dr. Hammond, should rather judge these cures to have been natural. By the *angel*, he would have us to understand a messenger sent from the temple, who was to stir up the blood, and the grosser and thicker parts from the bottom of the pond, and that these cures were made much after the same manner, as, in some cases, persons find a cure by being put into the belly of a beast newly opened. Into what extravagant interpretations are men of learning sometimes led by their private judgment! What scholar of Galen or Hippocrates, ever pretended that this was a certain and infallible cure for all manner of diseases? Yet here we read: that *he who got first into this pond, after the motion of the water, was healed, whatsoever distemper he was seized with.* The *blind* are particularly named: Is this a certain remedy that restores sight to the blind? (Witham) --- The effect produced could not be natural, as only one was cured at each motion of the waters. The longing expectation of the suffering patients, is a mark of the persevering prayer with which poor sinners should solicit the cure of their spiritual infirmities. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5. Infirmity.** The Greek, *astheneia*, signifies in its radical interpretation, a loss of strength: in this place it seems to denote a confirmed palsy.

**Ver. 6. *Wilt thou be made whole?*** No doubt but the poor man desired nothing more. Christ put this question, to raise him to a lively faith and hope. (Witham)

**Ver. 8. *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.*** The man found himself healed at that very moment, and did as he was ordered, though it was the sabbath-day. The Jews blamed him for it: he told them, that he who had healed him, bade him do so. And who it was he knew not, till Jesus finding him in the temple, said to him: (ver. 14.) *Sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee.* Upon this he went, not out of malice, but out of gratitude, and told the Jews that Jesus had cured him. (Witham)

**Ver. 14. *Sin no more, &c.*** By these words our Saviour shews, that his infirmity was sent in punishment of his sins. When our souls are covered with the leprosy of sin, we are frequently insensible of our misfortune; whereas, as soon as the body is attacked with sickness, though ever so inconsiderable, we are not to be pacified till the physician has been consulted, and some remedy applied to remove, if possible, the complaint. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxvii. in Joan.) --- Men are astonished that God, for so short a pleasure as is found in the perpetration of sin, should have decreed an everlasting punishment in the fire of hell; for they say, Shall I be punished for ever, for having indulged a sinful thought for a single moment? But their astonishment will cease, when they consider that punishments are not inflicted on sins in proportion to the length of time that was spent in their perpetration, but that they are proportioned to their malice. Now the malice of sin being infinite, aimed against the infinite majesty and infinity sanctity of God, the punishment, to be any ways commensurate, must be infinite. If, therefore, the sinner dies charged with the infinite debt of mortal sin unrepented of, as the time of mercy and repentance finishes with the present life, the sin must necessarily remain, God's hatred for sin must necessarily remain, and the punishment justly inflicted must necessarily continue. (Haydock) --- These words are applicable to every penitent sinner, when he returns from the tribunal of confession, and shew how careful he ought to be not to relapse into his former sins. "For he who after pardon sins again, is unworthy of mercy; who being cured, makes himself sick again, and who being cleansed, defiles himself again." (Tom. ii. St. John Chrysostom, de lapsu prim. hom.)

**Ver. 17. *My father worketh until now:[3] and I work.*** The Jews looked upon it of obligation to do nothing on the sabbath, because God is said to have *rested the seventh day*; on which account the *rest* on the seventh day was commanded. Christ puts them in mind, that though it be said *he rested the seventh day*, (that is, produced no more new kinds of creatures) yet that God may be said to work always, by preserving and continually governing the world: *and I*, saith he, do all things that he doth, *I work* with him, being one and the same in nature and substance with him: nay, even as man, I do nothing but what is conformable to his will; and so you need not fear that I break the sabbath. --- The Christian faith teacheth us, that Jesus Christ was both God and Man.

The objections of the ancient and modern *Arians*, only shew that Christ was also truly a man, and that divers things which he speaks of himself, or which are said of him in the holy Scriptures, apply to him as man. Nothing is more certain, and agreed on by all. But at the same time we ought to take notice, that Christ has affirmed many things of himself, and many things are asserted of him in the Scriptures, which by no means could be applied to him unless he were also truly and properly one and the same God with his eternal Father. And these are the passages by which the Arians and Socinians might be convinced of their errors and blasphemies. (Witham) --- If Christ had not been the natural Son of God, these words, which he says in excuse of his seeming breach of the sabbath, would rather have increased the strength of their accusation. For no governor, when accused of any crime, excuses himself by saying the king does the same. But as the Son is equal to the Father, his excuse is a true one. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxvii. in Joan.) --- The rest God entered into after the creation, and which he was pleased to honour by that of the sabbath, is no hinderance to the operations of his power in the preservation of his works, nor to the operations of his grace in the sanctification of souls.

**Ver. 18.** *That God was his Father,[4] making himself equal to God.* In divers places of the Old Testament, God is called the *Father* of the Israelites, and they his *children*: but here, and on several other occasions, the Jews very well saw, that he called God his Father in a quite different sense from that in which he could be said to be their Father; that his words make him equal to God, and that he *made himself God*. See John x. 33; John xix. 7; Luke xxii. 70; &c. And therefore St. Augustine says on this verse: (Trac. xvii. in Joan.) *Behold the Jews understand what the Arians do not.* (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The Son cannot do any thing of himself,[5] but what he seeth the Father do.* In like manner, (ver. 30.) Christ says, *I can do nothing of myself. As I hear, so I judge.* Again (Chap. viii. 28.) *I do nothing of myself; but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things.* All these, and the like expressions, may be expounded, with Maldonatus and Petavius, (lib. ii. de Trin. chap. 4.) of Christ, as man. But the ancient Fathers commonly allowed them to be understood of Christ as God, and as the true Son of God proceeding from him from all eternity; as when it is said, *the Son cannot do any thing of himself*, it is true, because the eternal *Son is not of himself*, but always proceeds from the Father. 2. Because the *works* of all the three Persons, by which all things are produced and preserved, are inseparable. 3. When it is said, that the Son doth nothing, but what he *seeth* the Father doing: that *he worketh*, as the Father hath *taught* him, *or shewed* to him: these expressions bear not the same sense as when they are applied to men, or to an inferior or a scholar, who learns of his master, and follows him; but here, says St. Augustine, to *see*, to *hear*, to *be taught by the Father*, is no more than to proceed from him, to do and produce by the same action, all that the Father doth and produceth. This is the general interpretation of the ancient Fathers: St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine. The words immediately following, confirm this exposition, when it is said: *For what things soever he* (the Father) *doth, these also in like manner the Son doth*, i.e. the very same things by an unity of nature, of will, and of action: nor could these words be true, unless the Son was the same true God with the Father. (Witham) --- This must be understood, that he cannot do any thing contrary to the will of the Father. He does not say, "The Son does nothing of himself, but he Son can do nothing of himself, in order to shew their likeness and perfect equality." For by saying this, he does not betray any want of power in the Son; but, on the contrary, shews his great power. For when we say that God cannot sin, we do not esteem it a want of power; so when the Son says he cannot do any thing of himself, his meaning is, that he cannot do any thing contrary to the will of the Father; which certainly is a great perfection. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxvii. in Joan.)

**Ver. 20.** *Greater works than these will he* (the Father) *shew him*, &c. These words may also, with Maldonatus be expounded of Christ, as man; but the ancient interpreters understand them of Christ, as God, in this sense, that the Father, and the Son, or the Father by the Son, will shew greater miracles hereafter done by Christ, that more persons may admire and believe. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *For as the Father ... giveth life, so also the Son giveth life to whom he will; where these*



words, *to give life to whom he will*, shew the power of the Son and of the Father to be equal. (Witham) --- Our Saviour here mentions the greater works he spoke of in the preceding verse; for it is much more wonderful that the dead should rise, than that the sick should recover their health. We are not to understand these words, as if they meant some were raised to life by the Father, and others by the Son; but that the Father raises those whom the Son raises. And lest any one should understand this, that the Father makes use of the Son as his minister, through whose means he raises the dead, he immediately adds, &c. (St. Augustine, Tract. xxi. in Joan.) --- We see the lovers of this temporal and perishable life, labour to the utmost of their power, I will not say to avoid death, but merely to prolong their frail existence. If, therefore, men labour with so much solicitude, if they strain every nerve to prolong their lives but for a few years; how foolish and blind to their interest must those be, who live in such a manner as to be deprived of the light of eternal day! (St. Augustine, De verb. Dei. Sermon. 64.)

**Ver. 22.** *Neither doth the Father judge any man.* It is certain that God is the Judge of all, by divers places of the holy Scriptures; and to judge, belongs both to the Father and to the Son, as they are the same God: so that when it is added, that *the Father hath given all judgment to the Son*,<sup>[6]</sup> this is meant of the exterior exercise of his judgment upon all mankind at the end of the world, in as much as Christ then will return, in his human body, to judge all men, even as man, in their bodies. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Hath everlasting life.* That is, a title to an eternal inheritance of glory, by believing in the Father, and in the Son, and also in the Holy Ghost, as we are taught to believe at our baptism. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *The hour cometh ... when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.* Though some understand this of the rising of Lazarus; others of those that rose with Christ at his resurrection: yet by these words, *when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God*, seems rather to be signified the general resurrection at the end of the world; and though it be said, that *now is the hour*, this may be spoken of the last age of the world; and, as St. John says, (1 John ii. 18.) *children, it is the last hour.* In fine, some interpreters understand these words of a spiritual resurrection from sin, which Christ came to bring to the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *To execute judgment, because he is the Son of man;* or, because, he is God made man, and is to come to judgment in a visible manner, to judge all men. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *Unto the resurrection of judgment.* That is, condemnation. (Challoner)

**Ver. 30.** *I can do nothing of myself, &c.* See ver. 19. St. John Chrysostom also take notice, that it may be no less with truth said of the Father, that he can do nothing of himself, nor without his Son, nor both of them without the Holy Ghost; because both they, and their actions, are inseparable. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *If I bear witness of myself, &c.* Christ tells the Jews elsewhere, (chap. viii. 14.) that though he should bear witness of *himself, it would be true.* But the sense of the words in this place is: I could allow you, that if I only gave testimony of myself you might seem to have some reason to except against my testimony: but now besides my own words, you have had also the testimony of John the Baptist, who divers times witnessed that I am the Messias, and the *Son of God*, come to take away the sins of the world. 2. You have had the testimony of my eternal Father, particularly at my baptism. 3. You have yet a greater testimony, by the works and miracles wrought before your eyes, and at the same time foretold by the prophets. 4. The prophets, and the *Scriptures*, which *you search*, or which I remit you to, to search them diligently, these also bear witness concerning me. (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** You do not observe the commandment he gave you. (Deuteronomy xviii. 15. 19.) of listening to the prophet He would send you.

**Ver. 39.** Or, *You search the Scriptures: (scrutamini; Greek: ereunate).* It is not a command for all to read the Scriptures; but a reproach to the Pharisees, that reading the Scriptures as they did, and thinking to find everlasting life in them, they would not receive him to whom all those Scriptures gave testimony, and through whom alone they could have that true life. (Challoner) --- This hope is the cause and motive which leads to this study; and eternal life is the end they propose to themselves in it. Hence, from the context and mode of argumentation made use of, the indicative, *you search*, instead of the imperative mood, *search ye*, is best supported. Catholics are most unjustly accused of depriving the faithful of the use of the holy Scriptures. The council of Trent, (Session v. canon i. de reform.) makes this proviso; that in churches where there exists a prebendary, or benefice, set apart for lectures on sacred Scripture, the bishops, &c. shall compel those holding such benefice to expound the sacred Scriptures themselves, should they be equal to the duty; or, by a proper substitute, chosen by the bishop or local ordinary. Also in monasteries of monks, it is prescribed that if abbots neglect, let the bishops of the places compel their compliance; and in convents where studies can be conveniently prosecuted, let there be also a lecturer on Scripture appointed, to be chosen from the most able professors. Moreover, in public universities, where this most honorable and most necessary of all lectures has not been instituted, let the piety and charity of religious princes and governments provide for it; so that the Catholic faith may be defended and strengthened, and sound doctrine protected and propagated. And where the lecture has been instituted, but discontinued, let it be re-established. Moreover, no one was to be appointed to this office, whose life, morals, and learning had not been examined and approved by the bishop of the place, &c.

**Ver. 40.** *And you will not come to me.* Christ now gives them reason why they do not *receive him*, and his doctrine, nor *believe in him*; because they are void of the *love of God*, full of self-love, envy, pride, seeking for praise and glory one from another. Hence you will not receive me, who *come in the name of my Father*, sent to redeem the world. *But if another*, such as false prophets, or even *Antichrist* himself, who will pretend to be the Messiah, *come in his own name*, him you will receive. (Witham) --- It is proper to remark, that the testimonies here adduced all rise gradually one above another, and make a body of evidence that must leave the incredulous Jews without excuse: for they pay no regard to Jesus Christ himself, nor to John the Baptist, nor to the evidence of miracles, nor to the voice of God, nor to the Scriptures, nor even to Moses himself.

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[1] Ver. 2. *Probatice piscina*: some Greek copies, *Greek: probatike kolumbeta*. But in the common copies, *Greek: epi te probatike kolumbeta*, i.e. prope piscinam, &c. *Greek: Kolumbeta* signifies lavacrum. See Legh's Crit. Sacra.

[2] Ver. 4. *Angelus Domini*. The word *Greek: kuriou*, Domini is found in several of the best Greek manuscripts though wanting in others. But that the cure was miraculous, see St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. Is. p. 207*, tom. viii. *Greek: Aggelos iatiken enetikei dunamin*. St. Ambrose, lib. de initandis, chap. iv. St. Augustine (trac. xvii. in Joan.) credas hoc Angelica virtute fieri solere. St. Cyril on this place, Angeli descendentes de cœlo piscinæ aquam turbabant.

[3] Ver. 17. *Pater meus usque modo operatur*, *Greek: ergazetai*. See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. le.* on these words. St. Cyril, lib. ii. in Joan. chap. vi. St. Augustine, trac. xvii. in Joan. &c.

[4] Ver. 18. *Patrem suum*, or proprium suum patrem, *Greek: ton patira idio*.

[5] Ver. 19. *Non potest filius a se*, &c. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. le.* (t. viii. p. 222.) a seipso nihil facit, neque pater a seipso facit, *Greek: oude o pater aph eautou ti poion*. See St. Cyril, lib. ii. in Joan. St. Augustine, trac. xvii. in Joan. on the same texts. St. Athanasius, orat. 2. cont. Arianos, tom. ii. p. 488. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. xxxvi. 584. tom. i. Ed. Par. an. 1630. St. Ambrose (tom. ii. in Ps. cxviii.) Nihil a se facit filius: quia per unitatem operationis, nec filius sine patre facit, nec sine filio pater. St. Hilary, lib. vii. De Trin. P. 927. Ed. Ben. But St. Jerome (tom. iv. part 2, p. 521. Ed. Ben.) Non possum facere a meipso, objiciebant Ariani; sed

respondet Ecclesia, ex persona hominis hæc dici, &c. St. Jerome does not mean that he had a human or created person, as the Nestorians pretend; but that these words were spoken, or might be understood of Christ, inasmuch as his human nature was united to his divine person.

[6] Ver. 22. Omne iudicium dedit filio. St. Augustine expounds it (trac. xxi.) sed iudicium manifestum. Pater occultus erit iudex, filius manifestus, quia mani feste ad iudicium veniet.

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## JOHN 6

**Ver. 1.** *Galilee.* St. John does not usually relate what is mentioned by the other evangelists, especially what happened in Galilee. If he does it on this occasion, it is purposely to introduce the subject of the heavenly bread, which begins ver. 37. He seems, moreover, to have had in view the description of the different passovers during Christ's public ministry. As he, therefore, remained in Galilee during the third passover, he relates pretty fully what passed during that time. We must also remark, that as the other three evangelists give, in the same terms, the institution of the blessed sacrament, St. John omits the institution, but gives in detail the repeated promises of Jesus Christ, relative to this great mystery.

**Ver. 4.** From the circumstances of the passover, the number that followed Jesus was greatly increased. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5.** Our Lord first said, (Matthew xiv. 16.) *Give them to eat;* but afterwards, accommodating himself to the weakness of his disciples, he says: *Whence shall we buy bread?* So there is no contradiction.

**Ver. 10.** The text in St. Matthew adds: *without counting the women and the children,* who might possibly amount to an equal number.

**Ver. 11.** In the Greek, there is this addition: *He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sitting.* The Syriac, and some Greek copies agree with the Vulgate.

**Ver. 12.** To make the miracle still more conspicuous to the multitude, Jesus Christ shewed, that not only their present wants were supplied, but that there remained as much, or more, after they had all been filled, than there had been at first presented to Him.

**Ver. 14.** *The Prophet indeed.* That is, the Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** St. John here corrects what relates to Jesus, and then what relates to the disciples. For if we attend to the order of time, the apostles got into the boat before Jesus went to the mountain. But, in matters of this nature, it is usual for the historians to follow their own choice. (Polus, Synop. critic.)

**Ver. 19.** *Five and twenty or thirty furlongs.* About three or four miles.

**Ver. 21.** In St. Matthew xiv. 26. and St. Mark vi. 51. we find that Jesus entered into the boat. St. John does not deny it; but he remarks a circumstance not notice by the others: *The vessel was presently at the land.* (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 26.** Christ did not return an express answer to their words, but he replied to their thoughts. For they seem to have put this question to him, that by flattering him, they might induce him to work another miracle, similar to the former; but Christ answers them not to seek for their temporal prosperity, but for their eternal welfare. The Church is daily filled, says St. Augustine, with those who come to petition for temporal advantages, that they may escape this calamity, obtain that

advantage in their temporal concerns: but there is scarce one to be found who seeks for Christ, and pays him his adoration, through the pure love he bears him. (Maldonatus)

**Ver. 27.** *For him hath God the Father sealed.* The sense seems to be, that Christ having wrought so many miracles in his Father's name, the Father himself hath thereby given testimony in his favour, and witnessed, as it were, under his seal, that Jesus is his true Son, whom he sent into the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *What sign then dost thou shew?* And foreseeing that he might, with great propriety, allege the recent miracle, they contrast it with what Moses performed in the desert. It is true, they say, you once fed 5,000 persons with five loaves; but our fathers, to the number of 600,000 did eat, not for once, but during forty years, manna in the desert; a species of food infinitely superior to barley bread. (Bible de Vence) See Numbers i. 46.

**Ver. 31.** Christ having declared that he was greater than Moses, (since Moses could not promise them bread which should never perish) the Jews wished for some sign by which they might believe in him; therefore they say, Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, but you have only given us bread; where then is the food that perishes not? Christ therefore answers them, that the food which Moses gave them, was not the true manna from heaven, but that it was only a figure of himself, who came down from heaven to give life to the world. (St. Augustine) --- St. John Chrysostom observes, that the Jews here acknowledge Christ to be God, since they entreat Christ not merely to ask his Father to give it them; but, do thou thyself give it us.

**Ver. 32.** *Moses gave you not bread from heaven;* i.e. the manna was not given to your forefathers by Moses, but by God's goodness. 2ndly, neither came it from heaven, but from the clouds, or from the region of the air only. 3rdly, It did not make them that eat it live for ever; but they that spiritually eat me, the living bread; that is, believe in me, and keep my commandments, shall live for ever. --- Ver. 37, 44, and 66. *No one can come to me, unless the Father draw him.*<sup>[1]</sup> These verses are commonly expounded of God's elect; who are not only called, but saved, by a particular mercy and providence of God. God is said to *draw them* to himself by special and effectual graces, yet without any force or necessity, without prejudice to the liberty of their free-will. A man, says St. Augustine, is said to *be drawn* by his pleasures, and by what he loves. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** A life of immortality and eternal happiness to all who worthily receive it.

**Ver. 34.** St. Augustine with all the Fathers, believed that the Jews did not understand this in its proper sense; but only understood a material bread, of superior excellence to the manna, which would preserve their health and life for ever (St. Augustine); or at least, a far more delicious bread, which they were to enjoy during the whole course of their lives.

**Ver. 36.** You demand this bread; behold it is before you, and yet you eat it not. I am the bread; to believe in me is to eat me. You see me, but you believe not in me. (St. Augustine) --- It is to this place that those words of St. Augustine are to be referred: "Why do you prepare your teeth and belly? believe in me, and you have eaten me." Words which do not destroy the real presence, of which he is not speaking in this verse. (Maldonatus, 35.) --- Jesus Christ leads them gradually to this great mystery, which he knows will prove a stumbling block to many. The chapter begins with the miraculous multiplication of the loaves; then Christ walking on the sea; next he blames the Jews for following him not through faith in his miracles, but for the loaves and fishes, and tells them to labour for that nourishment which perishes not, by believing in Him, whom the Father had sent; and then promises, that what their fathers had received in figure only, the manna, the faithful shall receive in reality; his own body and blood.

**Ver. 38.** Christ does not say this as if he did not whatever he wished; but he recommends to us his humility. He who comes to me shall not be cast forth, but shall be incorporated with me, because he shall not do his own will, but that of my Father. And therefore he shall not be cast

forth; because when he was proud, he did his own will, and was rejected. None but the humble can come to me. (St. Hilary and St. Augustine) --- An humble and sincere faith is essentially necessary to believe the great mysteries of the Catholic faith, by means of which we come to God and believe in God. (Haydock)

**Ver. 41.** *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.* These Jews did not believe that Christ was the true and eternal Son of God, who came down from heaven, and was *made flesh*, was made man. He speaks of this faith in him, when he calls himself the *living bread*, the mystical bread of life, that came to give life everlasting to all true and faithful believers. In this sense St. Augustine said, (trac. xxv. p. 489) *why dost thou prepare thy teeth and belly? only believe, and thou hast eaten*; but afterwards he passeth to his sacramental and real presence in the holy sacrament. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *Draw him.* Not by compulsion, nor by laying the free-will under any necessity, but by the strong and sweet motions of his heavenly grace. (Challoner) --- We are drawn to the Father by some secret pleasure, delight, or love, which brings us to the Father. "Believe and you come to the Father," says St. Augustine, "Love, and you are drawn. The Jews could not believe, because they would not." God, by his power, could have overcome their hardness of heart; but he was not bound to do it; neither had they any right to expect this favour, after the many miracles which they had seen. (Calmet)

**Ver. 45.** Every one, therefore, that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned of him who I am, cometh to me by faith and obedience. As to others, when the Scripture says they are *taught by God*, this is to be understood of an interior spiritual instruction, which takes place in the soul, and does not fall under the senses; but not less real on that account, because it is the heart, which hears the voice of this invisible teacher.

**Ver. 47.** Thus Jesus Christ concludes the first part of his discourse: "Amen, amen, he that believeth in me, hath everlasting life;" which shews that faith is a necessary predisposition to the heavenly bread.

**Ver. 48.** Because the multitude still insisted in begging for their corporal nourishment and remembering the food that was given to their fathers, Christ, to shew that all were figures of the present spiritual food, answered, that he was the bread of life. (Theophylactus) --- Here Jesus Christ proceeds to the second part of his discourse, in which he fully explains what that bread of life is, which he is about to bestow upon mankind in the mystery of the holy Eucharist. He declares then, in the first place, that he is the bread of eternal life, and mentions its several properties; and secondly, he applies to his own person, and to his own flesh, the idea of this bread, such as he has defined it.

**Ver. 51.** Christ now no longer calls the belief in him, or the preaching of the gospel, the bread that he will give them; but he declares that it is his own flesh, and that flesh which shall be given for the life of the world. (Calmet) --- This bread Christ then gave, when he gave the mystery of his body and blood to his disciples. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 52.** *The bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.* [2] In most Greek copies we read, *is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world.* Christ here promised what he afterwards instituted, and gave at his last supper. He promiseth to give his *body and blood to be eaten*; the same body (though the manner be different) which he would give on the cross for the redemption of the world. The Jews of Capharnaum were presently scandalized. *How* (said they) *can this man give us his flesh to eat?* But notwithstanding their murmuring, and the offence which his words had given, even to *many* of his disciples, he was so far from revoking, or expounding what he had said of any figurative or metaphorical sense, that he confirmed the same truth in the clearest and strongest terms. *Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat, &c.* And again, (ver. 56.) *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* I cannot omit taking notice of what St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril, in their commentaries on this place, have left us

on these words, *How can this man do this?* These words which call in question the almighty and incomprehensible power of God, which hinder them, says St. John Chrysostom, from believing all other mysteries and miracles: they might as well have said: *How* could he with five loaves feed five thousand men? This question, *How can he do this?* Is a question of infidels and unbelievers. St. Cyril says that *How*, or, *How can he do this?* cannot, without folly, be applied to God. 2ndly, he calls it a question of *blasphemy*. 3rdly, a *Jewish word*, for which these Capharnaïtes deserved the severest punishments. 4thly, He confutes them by the saying of the prophet Isaias, (lv. 9.) that God's *thoughts* and *ways* are as much above those of men, as the *heavens* are *above the earth*. But if these Capharnaïtes, who knew not who Jesus was, were justly blamed for their *incredulous, foolish, blasphemous, Jewish* saying, *how can he give us his flesh to eat?* much more blameable are those Christians, who, against the words of the Scripture, against the unanimous consent and authority of all Christian Churches in all parts of the world, refuse to believe his real presence, and have nothing to say, but with the obstinate Capharnaïtes, *how can this be done?* Their answers are the same, or no better, when they tell us that the real presence contradicts their senses, their reason, that they *know* it to be false. We may also observe, with divers interpreters, that if Christians are not to believe that Jesus Christ is one and the same God with the eternal Father, and that he is truly and really present in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, it will be hard to deny but that Christ himself led men into these errors, which is blasphemy. For it is evident, and past all dispute, that the Jews murmured, complained, and understood that Christ several times *made himself God, and equal to the Father* of all. 2ndly, When in this chapter, he told them he would give them *his flesh to eat*, &c. they were shocked to the highest degree: they cried out, this *could not be*, that these words and this speech was *hard and harsh*, and on this very account *many* that had been his disciples till that time, *withdrew themselves* from him, and left him and his doctrine. Was it not then at least high time to set his complaining hearers right, to prevent the *blasphemous* and *idolatrous opinions* of the following ages, nay even of all Christian Churches, by telling his disciples at least, that he was only a *nominal God*, in a *metaphorical* and *improper sense*; that he spoke only of his body being *present* in a *figurative* and *metaphorical sense* in the holy Eucharist? If we are deceived, who was it that deceived us but Christ himself, who so often repeated the same points of our belief? His apostles must be esteemed no less guilty in affirming the very same, both as to Christ's divinity, and his real presence in the holy sacrament, as hereafter will appear. (Witham) --- Compare the words here spoken with those he delivered at his last supper, and you will see that what he promises here was then fulfilled: "this is my body given for you." Hence, the holy Fathers have always explained this chapter of St. John, as spoken of the blessed sacrament. *See the concluding reflections, below.*

**Ver. 53.** Because the Jews said it was impossible to give them his flesh to eat, Christ answers them by telling them, that so far from being impossible, it is very necessary that they should eat it. "Unless you eat," &c. (St. John Chrysostom) --- It is not the flesh of merely a man, but it is the flesh of a God, able to make man divine, inebriating him, as it were, with the divinity. (Theophylactus) See Maldonatus.

**Ver. 54.** *Unless you eat ... and drink*, &c. To receive both the body and blood of Christ, is a divine precept, insinuated in this text; which the faithful fulfil, though they receive but in one kind; because in one kind they receive both the body and blood, which cannot be separated from each other. Hence life eternal is here promised to the worthy receiving, though but in one kind: (ver. 52.) *If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world:* (ver. 58.) *He that eateth me, the same also shall live by me:* (ver. 59.) *He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.* (Challoner)

**Ver. 55.** Jesus Christ, to confirm the notion his disciples had formed of a real eating of his body, and to remove all metaphorical interpretation of his words, immediately adds, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and *drink* his blood, you shall not have life in you. ... For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;" which could not be so, if, as sectarists pretend, what he gives us in the blessed sacrament is nothing but a bit of bread; and if a figure, certainly not so striking as the manna.

**Ver. 58.** *As the living Father hath sent me, his only, his true Son, to become man; and I live by the Father, proceeding always from him; so he that eateth me, first by faith only, by believing in me; and secondly, he that eateth my body and blood, truly made meat and drink, though after a spiritual manner, (not in that visible, bloody manner as the Capharnaïtes fancied to themselves) shall live by me, and live for ever, happy in the kingdom of my glory. (Witham)*

**Ver. 61.** If Christ had wished to say nothing else than that his disciples should be filled with his doctrine, that being his flesh and blood, it would not have been a hard saying; neither would it have shocked the Jews. He had already said as much in the former part of his discourse: but he goes on in still stronger terms, notwithstanding their complaints; and, as they were ignorant how he would fulfil his promise, they left him, (Calmet) and followed the example of the other unbelieving Jews, as all future sectarists have, saying: *how can this be done?*

**Ver. 62.** If you cannot believe that I can give you my flesh to eat, now that I am living amongst you, how will you believe, that, after my ascension, I can give you to eat my glorified and immortal flesh, seated on the right hand of the majesty of God? (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 63.** *If then you shall see, &c.* Christ, by mentioning his ascension, by this instance of his power and divinity, would confirm the truth of what he had before asserted; at the same time, correct their gross apprehension of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, in a vulgar and carnal manner, by letting them know he should take his whole body living with him to heaven; and consequently not suffer it to be, as they supposed, divided, mangled, and consumed upon earth. (Challoner) --- The sense of these words, according to the common exposition, is this: you murmur at my words, as hard and harsh, and you refuse now to believe them: when I shall ascend into heaven, from whence I came into the world, and when my ascension, and the doctrine that I have taught you, shall be confirmed by a multitude of miracles, then shall you and many others believe. (Witham)

**Ver. 64.** *The flesh profiteth nothing.* Dead flesh, separated from the spirit, in the gross manner they supposed they were to eat his flesh, would profit nothing. Neither doth man's flesh, that is to say, man's natural and carnal apprehension, (which refuses to be subject to the spirit, and words of Christ) profit any thing. But it would be the height of blasphemy, to say the living flesh of Christ (which we receive in the blessed sacrament, with his spirit, that is, with his soul and divinity) profiteth nothing. For if Christ's flesh had profited us nothing, he would never have taken flesh for us, nor died in the flesh for us. --- *Are spirit and life.* By proposing to you a heavenly sacrament, in which you shall receive, in a wonderful manner, spirit, grace and life. These words sufficiently correct the gross and carnal imagination of these Capharnaïtes, that he meant to them his body and blood to eat in a visible and bloody manner, as *flesh*, says St. Augustine, *is sold in the market, and in the shambles*;[3] but they do not imply a figurative or metaphorical presence only. The manner of Christ's presence is spiritual and under the outward appearances of bread and wine; but yet he is there truly and really present, by a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of his body and blood, which *truly* and *really* become our spiritual food, and are truly and really received in the holy sacrament. --- *The flesh*[4] of itself *profiteth nothing*, not even the flesh of our Saviour Christ, were it not united to the divine person of Christ. But we must take care how we understand these words spoken by our Saviour: for it is certain, says St. Augustine, that the *word made flesh*, is the cause of all our happiness. (Witham) --- When I promise you life if you eat my flesh, I do not wish you to understand this of that gross and carnal manner, of cutting my members in pieces: such ideas are far from my mind: the flesh profiteth nothing. In the Scriptures, the word *flesh* is often put for the carnal manner of understanding any thing. If you wish to enter into the spirit of my words, raise your hearts to a more elevated and spiritual way of understanding them. (Calmet) --- The reader may consult Des Mahis, p. 165, a convert from Protestantism, and who has proved the Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist in the most satisfactory manner, from the written word. Where he shows that Jesus Christ, speaking of his own body, never says *the flesh*, but *my flesh*: the former mode of expression is used to signify, as we have observed above, a carnal manner of understanding any thing.

**Ver. 68.** *Jesus said to the twelve: Will you also go away?* He shews them, says St. John Chrysostom, that he stood not in need of them, and so leaves them to their free choice. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ remarking in the previous verse that the apostate disciples had left him, to walk no more with him, turning to the twelve, asks them, *Will you also go away?* The twelve had heard all that passed; they had seen the Jews strive amongst themselves, and the disciples murmur and leave their Master; they understood what he said in the same literal sense; it could, indeed, bear no other meaning; but when Jesus put the above question to them, leaving them to their free choice, whether to follow him, or to withdraw themselves, Simon Peter answered him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" and therefore art able to make good thy words, however hard and difficult they may appear to others. --- We may here admire not only the excellency of their faith, but the plain, yet noble motive of their faith: they believe, because he is Christ, the Son of God, (or, as it is in the Greek, the Son of the *living God*) who is absolutely incapable of deceiving his creatures, and whose power is perfectly equal to perform the promises he here makes them.

**Ver. 69.** *Simon Peter, the chief or head of them, said in the name of the rest: Lord, to whom shall we go?* It is only from thee that we hope for salvation. *Thou hast the words of eternal life: we have believed, and known,* and remain in this belief, that *thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* (Witham)

### Concluding reflections on this chapter.

If we take into consideration all the circumstances of this chapter, it will be difficult to conceive how any person can bring their mind to think that there is no connexion between this chapter and the institution of the blessed sacrament. It must proceed, as Dr. Clever, the Protestant Bishop of Bangor, affirms, "from the fear of giving advantage to the doctrine of transubstantiation." He moreover adds: "whilst the institution is considered as a memorial only, nothing can well be further from being plain." See his Sermon on the Lord's Supper. The holy Fathers have unanimously understood these repeated promises of Christ with a reference to the institution. St. Cyprian, of the third age [century] quoting the promises of Christ, *the bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world*, deduces this conclusion: "Hence it is manifest, that they have this life, who touch his body, and receive the Eucharist." Qui corpus ejus attingunt. (De Orat. Dom. p. 147.) St. Hilary, of the fourth age [century] quoting Christ's words, says: "there is no place left to doubt of the truth of Christ's flesh and blood, de veritate carnis et sanguinis non relictus est ambigendi locus; for now, by the profession of the Lord himself, and according to our belief, it is truly flesh and truly blood." (De Trin. lib. viii. p. 954-6.) St. Basil, of the fourth century also, citing ver. 53 and 54 of this chapter, says: "about the things that God has spoken there should be no hesitation, nor doubt, but a firm persuasion that all is true and possible, though nature be against it: *Greek: Kan e phusis machetai*. Herein lies the struggle of faith." (Reg. viii. Moral. t. 2, p. 240.) Again the same saint says: "it is very profitable every day, to partake of the body and blood of Christ, *Greek: phagein to soma kai piein to aima tou kuriou emon, for he that eateth my flesh*. &c. (John vi. 55.) --- "We communicate four times in the week; on Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and on the other days, if there be a commemoration of any saint." (Ep. xcii. t. 3, p. 186.) --- St. Ambrose, of the same age, says: "the manna in the desert was given in figure. You have known things more excellent. For light is preferable to the shadow; truth to the figure; the body of Christ to the manna of heaven. But you may say: I see somewhat else: how do you assert that I shall receive the body of Christ?" He gives this answer: "How much more powerful is the virtue of the divine blessing, than that of nature; because by the former, nature itself is changed? ... If the blessing of men (he here instances Moses changing a rod into a serpent, and many other miraculous changes) was powerful enough to change nature, what must we not say of the divine consecration, when the very words of the Lord operate? For that sacrament which we receive, is accomplished by the word of Christ. If the word of Elias could call down fire from heaven, shall not the word of Christ be able to change the outward elements? ... The word of Christ could draw out of nothing what was not, shall it not be able to change the things that are into that which they were not? ... Was the order of nature followed



when Jesus was born of a Virgin? Certainly not. Then why is that order to be looked for here? It was the true flesh of Christ, which was crucified, which was buried; and this is truly the sacrament of his flesh ... Our Lord himself proclaims, *This is my body.*" --- If Jesus Christ, during his public ministry, performed so many visible and palpable miracles as we read of in the gospels, was it not to induce us to believe without doubting the truths that escape our senses, and surpass our reason? If we believe the water was changed into wine at the marriage feast of Cana; if we believe that the bread in the hands of Christ and his apostles was not diminished, by being broken and divided among five thousand, why cannot we believe the miracle of the Eucharist on the authority of Christ's word, "the bread that I will give you, is my flesh? This is my body," &c. Not one of all the ancient Fathers has ever denied the real presence; not one of them all has ever said, that the body of Jesus Christ is received in figure only.

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[1] Ver. 37. Nisi pater traxerit eum. St. Augustine, trac. 26, p. 495. noli te cogitare invitum trahi; trahitur animus et amore.

-----trahit sua quemque voluptas. Virg. Ecl. ii.

[2] Ver. 52. Quomodo potest hic, &c. *Greek: pos dunatai outos*; St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlv. in Joan. in the Greek, hom. xlv. tom. 8, p. 272. *Greek: otan gar e zetesis tou pos eiselthe, sunerchetai kai apistia.* St. Cyril, lib. iv. in Joan. p. 359. Illud quomodo stulte de Deo proferunt, *Greek: to pos anoetos epi theou legousin.* --- Hoc loquendi genus omni scatere blasphemia, *Greek: dusphemias apases.* --- Judaicum verbum. *Greek: to pos loudaikou rema.* He takes notice how much the nature and power of God is above human capacity; he shews it by examples, and then concludes, (p. 360) De quibus miraculis si tuum illud **quomodo** subinde inferas, omni plane Scripturæ Divinæ fidem derogabis, *Greek: ole pantelos apeitheseis theia graphe.*

[3] Ver. 64. St. Augustine, 27. p. 503, carnem quippe intellexerunt, quomodo in cadavere dilaniatur, aut in macello venditur.

[4] Ver. 64. St. Augustine, 27. p. 503, caro non prodest quicquam, sed caro sola ... nam si caro nihil prodesset, verbum caro non fieret.

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## JOHN 7

**Ver. 2.** This was the festival of Tabernacles, on which the Jews made tents, in imitation of those which were their habitations during their sojournment in the wilderness, for forty years. See Leviticus xxiii. 34. The Jews called it a festival day; though it consisted not of one, but of many days successively. (St. Augustine, tract. 28. in Joan.)

**Ver. 3.** These brethren of Christ were the relatives of the blessed Virgin, not her children. For, as in the sepulchre, where the body of our Saviour was deposited, no other mortal lay either before or since; so neither did the womb of Mary ever either before or after bear any other body but that of her divine Son. (St. Augustine, tract. 28. in Joan.)

**Ver. 5.** *Neither did his brethren believe in him;* by his brethren here, we are to understand his kindred, this townsmen or countrymen, at or about Nazareth. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Go you up to this festival day,* which lasted eight days. --- *I go not with you, nor to be there at the first day, nor in that public manner as you desire.* But when the *feast was half over*, about the fourth day, Jesus went thither in a private manner, yet so that when he arrived, he spoke publicly in the temple. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** But why does he ascend to the festival day, when he said he would not? He did not say, I *will* not ascend, but only, I *do* not ascend; that is, in your company. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlvii. in Joan.) --- Or, I do not go up to this festival, viz. the first or second day of the feast, which lasted eight days, and to which you wish me to ascend: but he went afterwards, when the first part of the festival was over. (St. Augustine, tract. 28. in Joan.)

**Ver. 12.** It was the people that held the favourable opinion of Christ, whilst on the contrary, the Scribes and Pharisees speak ill of him, saying, he seduceth not us, but he seduceth the multitude. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlviii. in Joan.)

**Ver. 13.** No one publicly took the part of Jesus, however favourable were their private sentiments; for the Jews hated and persecuted such as sided with him. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 15.** Whilst the Jews proceeded no further than to admire the wisdom of our Saviour, when they could easily have seen that what he taught he knew by the power of God, Christ himself reveals to them the source of his wisdom, saying: *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlviii. in Joan.) --- St. Thomas Aquinas, the great doctor of the schools, and styled the angelic doctor, informs us that in all the scriptural difficulties he met with, he uniformly had recourse to prayer, and that he acquired greater light and knowledge at the foot of his crucifix than from any books or masters. (Haydock)

**Ver. 16.** *My doctrine is not mine;* i.e. not mine only, but also the Father's; from whom I proceed, and with whom I am always. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *He is true:* seeketh truth, and not his own glory. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** The law of Moses prescribes that you shall not kill, but this law you transgress; for, why do you seek to kill me? You do not observe the law; otherwise you would learn from that law, that I am the Christ, and not seek to put me to death, when I appear amongst you. (St. Augustine, tract. 30, in Joan.) --- If I cure on the sabbath-day, do not you also give circumcision, and also cure the wound on the sabbath? (Bible de Vence) --- See ver. 23, of this chapter.

**Ver. 20.** *Thou hast a devil:* art possessed with a devil, mad, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *One work I have done.* He means by healing the man at the pond, who had been ill thirty-eight years. (Witham) --- Jesus here speaks of the cure that he had performed on the paralytic, eighteen months before, and which had scandalized the Jews. See Chap. v, ver. 9. et dein. of this gospel. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 26.** *Have the rulers,* &c. the chief priests, elders, and all the members of the great sanhedrim. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *We know this man whence he is.* They looked upon him as no more than a man, and they thought they knew his father to be St. Joseph; they knew his Mother and kindred. --- *But when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* Thus said some of the people; but, doubtless, the more learned knew Christ was to be born at Bethlehem. (Witham) --- The Jews had imbibed this opinion of the secrecy of the origin of Christ from the prophet Isaias, Chap. liii. *Who shall relate his generation?* But they likewise were acquainted with many other texts of Scripture relative to the Messiah, which plainly point out the place of his birth, viz. Bethlehem, and also the place of his residence, when it is said, He shall be called a *Nazarite*. His generation is indeed unknown with regard to his divinity, as Christ himself told the Jews in his answer: He is true that sent me, but you know him not. But as to his humanity, his origin is well known: You know me, and whence I am you know. (St. Augustine, tract. 31. in Joan.)

**Ver. 28.** *You both know me;* i.e. you know me as man, and where I have been educated. --- *But him that sent me,* from whom I proceeded, and who sent me into this world to be its Redeemer,

*you know not*; because you know not, that he was always, and from all eternity, my eternal Father, and I his eternal Son. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** The faith of these was not at all sound, as appears from the following words, which they spoke. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xlix. in Joan.)

**Ver. 32.** *The Pharisees* understood well enough that his words signified he was their Messiah, and the true Son of God. And they sent some servants to seize him, and bring him to them. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *Yet a little while and I am with you*: and then *I go*, and return to him that sent me, with whom I am always; but as man, I shall leave the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *And shall not find me*. Some understand it, you shall wish me conversing with you, as at present, healing diseases, &c. but as I shall suffer death shortly, you shall not find me. Others expound it, you shall seek for your Messiah, but not owning *me*, who am truly he, you shall not find your Messiah; and you *cannot come* to me in my kingdom of glory, because you will not believe in me. (Witham) --- Or *where I shall be*. The present tense is not unfrequently used for the future, by the hagiographers. See Chap. xiii. 33.

**Ver. 35.** *Will he go to the dispersed among the Gentiles*, or to the dispersed Gentiles, and Jews among them to preach to them? (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*. By this living water, are signified the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were promised to the faithful. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** *As yet the spirit was not given*, in that particular and extraordinary manner, *because Jesus was not yet glorified* by his ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost. (Witham) --- It is said that the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb of his mother; that Zacharias, when he prophesied concerning his son, and the blessed Virgin, when she prophesied concerning our Lord, were both filled with the Holy Ghost; that Simeon and Anna were inspired by the Holy Ghost, to declare the greatness of Christ. How can this be otherwise reconciled with this text of St. John, that by saying that this gift of the Holy Ghost, after the ascension of Christ, was much more abundant than it had ever been before? For we never read that men inspired by the Holy Ghost before the coming of Christ, spoke languages which they had never learned. (St. Augustine, 4 de Trin. chap. xx.) --- The Holy Ghost is still received, but none speak with tongues: because the Church herself, being spread over the whole earth, speaks the languages of all. (St. Augustine, tract. 32. in S. Joan.) --- The primitive Christians of Corinth consulted St. Paul on the subject of these spiritual gifts or graces, frequently communicated in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. In his Epistle, addressed to them, (1 Corinthians chap. xii.) he explains those gifts, and complains that some among the Corinthians made not a right use of these gifts; especially those who had the *gift of tongues*, and made use of it rather through vanity, than for the profit of others. In the last verse of 1 Corinthians chap. xii. he adds: *But be zealous for the better gifts. And I shew to you a yet more excellent way*. And in the 13th chapter, he describes the excellence, the characters of *charity* which he extols far above all other gifts. (Haydock)

**Ver. 41.** A prophet does not come from Galilee, but the Lord of the prophets does. (St. Augustine, tract. 38. in Joan.) --- Without faith, without advantage, they again return to their habitations of infidelity and impiety. (Alcuin)

**Ver. 49.** *But this multitude ... are accursed*; i.e. falls under the curses of the law, by being seduced and led away by false preachers. (Witham)

**Ver. 52.** They say to Nicodemus: *Art thou also a Galilean*, who defendest this Galilean, whereas no prophet, nor especially the Messiah, comes from Galilee? (Witham) --- *A prophet*, properly *the prophet*: for they could not be ignorant that the prophet Jonas was from Galilee. We have not

indeed the article *the* in this verse, but we find it in ver. 40, with which this appears to correspond. (Haydock)

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## JOHN 8

**Ver. 1, &c.**[1] The last verse of the foregoing chapter, and the eleven verses that follow in this, are not found in the greater part of our present Greek copies, yet they are in some manuscripts and so are retained in the Protestant translation. We read nothing of them in the commentaries of St. John Chrysostom or St. Cyril; but St. Jerome (lib. ii. con. Pelag. tom. 4, part 2, p. 521. Ed. Ben.) says, they were found in many both Latin and Greek copies. St. Ambrose (Ep. 52.) says this passage, of the woman taken in adultery, was always famous in the Church. St. Augustine expounds them, tract. in Joan, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Wrote with his finger*, as one that was musing about something else. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** We cannot with any propriety reprehend or condemn faults in others, if we ourselves be guilty of the same, or other great faults, St. Cyril, in Joan. --- See annotations on Matt. vii, ver. 1.

**Ver. 9.** *Went out one by one*,[2] confounded, and as it is in the ordinary Greek copies, convicted by their own conscience. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** Hence we may see how impious is the doctrine of those who say that God is the author of sin. Christ did not say to the woman: I do not condemn thy sin; or, go and live now as thou pleasest, I will free thee from all punishment due to any sin thou shalt commit: but he only said, *Go, and from henceforth sin no more*: thus preserving his amiable virtue of clemency, and still not encouraging vice. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 14.** *Although I give testimony* (or witness) *of myself, my testimony is true*. He gives them the reason, ver. 16; because he is not alone, but the Father (who also beareth witness) is also with him. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *You judge*, and also bear testimony concerning other men, *according to the flesh*, and according to outward shew and appearances only. *I judge no one* in this manner. And whatever judgment I pass, or if I give testimony, my testimony is true, as coming also from the Father, with whom I am one in nature, though a distinct person: and *two*, according to the law, are enough to give evidence. (Witham) --- *You judge according to the flesh*, &c. Because you do not understand the ways of God, and think you only see in me the person of man; therefore I seem to you to be arrogant, bearing witness of myself. Man indeed, who wishes alone to bear testimony of himself, is arrogant, and not to be believed, because all men are frail and liable to be deceived; but light and truth itself can neither deceive nor be deceived. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 19.** *Where is thy Father?* They knew well enough by other discourses, that he had called and declared God to be his Father; but they had a mind to make him own it again, that they might accuse him as guilty of blasphemy. --- *Neither me do you know, nor my Father*: you will not own me to have been always his Son, nor him to have been always my Father, but *did you know me* to be his Son, always proceeding from him, *you would know my Father also*, and know him as my Father from all eternity. (Witham) --- As in common conversation we often say, "when you have seen one, you have seen the other;" when two persons or things seem perfectly alike as to outward appearances, so here Christ says, *If you did know me, you would know my Father also*: not that the Father is the Son, or the Son the Father, but because the Father is like the Son. (St. Augustine) --- Here might the Arians, and all who maintain that Christ is a mere creature, blush; for if he were a creature, how can any one who knows him likewise know God? Therefore is Christ consubstantial with the Father, for he who know the Son, knows the Father also.

(Theophylactus)

**Ver. 21.** *I go my way, and you shall seek me, &c.* See the foregoing chapter, ver. 34. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *I am not of this world:* he speaks of his divine person, as the words evidently shew. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *Who art thou? Jesus said to them: The beginning,[3] who also speak to you.* This text and the construction of it is obscure, both in the Latin and in the Greek. St. Augustine and some of the Latin Fathers, expound it in this manner: *I am the beginning* of all things, who now being made man, speak to you. But this does not seem the construction, if we consult the Greek text; (where *the beginning* is not in the nominative, but in the accusative case) and therefore St. Augustine having considered more attentively the Greek, thinks that something must be understood, as *believe me to be the beginning:* he looks upon this to be the sense and the construction, as being connected with what was said two verses before; to wit, *if you believe not that I am he*, the true Messias, *you shall die in you sins.* "That they might," says St. Augustine (tract. 38, num. 11, p. 560) "know what they were to believe," he made them this answer, as if he had said: believe me to be the beginning, the cause, the author of all things, who am now become man, and speak to you. Other later interpreters are of opinion that *the beginning* is here a Grecism, and signifies that same as *at first*, or from the beginning. The sense therefore and construction may be, I am, what I said and told you at first, and from the beginning; that is, I am your Messias, the true Son of God, sent into the world, &c. (Witham) --- The Pharisees, indignant at the liberty with which Jesus spoke to them, demand of him in a rage, Who art thou, to speak to us in this imperious manner, to say that we shall die in our sins? Jesus answered them, that he was the *Beginning*, Author, Creator, and Ruler of all things. This is the more orthodox and more becoming interpretation. Or, I am, in the first place, what I have already told you; viz. (ver. 12.) I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Or, it may mean, I am what I have always from the beginning told you. I am the Son of God, the Messias, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 26.** *And the things I have heard from him, &c.* For Christ, to *hear* from his Father, to see, &c. is the same as to proceed from him, to be of the same nature and substance. See chap. v, ver. 19. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Now they, &c.* Some of the more ignorant among the Jews understood not Christ when he clearly enough signified that he was equal to God, and of one and the same nature; but at other times they that heard him, perceived it very well; and so, in this place, they were for stoning him to death. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *When you shall have lifted up, &c.* That is, have put me to the death of the cross; (see John iii. 14. and xii. 32.) *you*, that is, many of you, *shall know*, and believe in me, as your Messias. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** If you persevere in the true faith, and in the observance of my words, you shall be my disciples indeed. It is not sufficient to believe; you must likewise do what my words command you to do: nor will it be sufficient to have the true faith for a time; you must persevere in that faith to the end. (St. Augustine, Ven. Bede, St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, Euthymius, &c.) --- Faith alone without perseverance, or abiding in God's commandments, will not suffice. (Bristow)

**Ver. 32.** *And the truth shall make you free.* They were affronted at these words, as if he hinted they were slaves, and not a free people. They tell him, therefore, that they were never *slaves to any one*. They can only pretend this of themselves: for, their forefathers were slaves to the Egyptians, to the Babylonians, &c. and besides they were now the subjects, if not slaves, to the Romans. But Christ speaks of the worst of slaveries, and tells them the such as live in sin, *are slaves to sin.* (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *Now the servant abideth not in the house for ever,* nor has a right to live in that manner as a son and a child of the family has to live in his father's house. A slave or servant, though he live ever so long in his master's house, his condition is quite different from that of a son of the family: and thus Christ puts them in mind that though they be of the race of Abraham, and in that sense can pretend to be his children, yet having made themselves slaves to sin, and remaining in that sin, by which they refuse to believe in him, their Messias, they are not the spiritual children of Abraham, nor can they inherit the promises made to Abraham, till, by the grace of Christ, they believe in him, and become his adoptive children. (Witham)

**Ver. 36.** Many never was without free-will; but, having the grace of Christ, his will is truly made free from the servitude of sin. (St. Augustine, tract. 41. in Joan.)

**Ver. 37.** *You.* That is, many of you, *seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you;* that is, is not rightly understood, nor received by you: you reject my doctrine, and are displeased with it. (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** *The things that you have seen with your father.* That is, you follow the suggestions of the devil, whom, (ver. 44.) in plain terms, he calls their *father*. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** Not only faith but good works make men children of Abraham. See James, chap. ii.

**Ver. 41.** *We are not born of fornication; we have one Father, God.* These Jews perceived that Christ had hinted that they were not the true and faithful sons of Abraham; and therefore they replied in this manner. But Christ answered, *if God was your Father, if you were his dutiful children, you would also believe in me, and love me; for I have proceeded from him, and am come from him, his true Son: and not sent into the world by him. But you cannot hear my word, because you will not, by your own wilful obstinate blindness.* (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *You are of your father, the devil,* and have made yourselves his slaves. --- *He was a murderer from the beginning* of the world, having brought both a corporal and a spiritual death by sin, upon all mankind. --- *He abode not in the truth,* in the ways of truth and obedience to God. --- *He is a liar, and the father thereof:* that is, the father of lies. *I speak truth,* being truth itself. (Witham) -- St. Augustine compares heretics, who drive Christians out of the Church, to the devil, who was the cause of our first parents' banishment from paradise. (Cont. lit. Petil. lib. ii. chap. 13.)

**Ver. 51.** *He shall not see death,* he shall not die, *for ever.* That is, he shall not incur an eternal death, as they who die in sin: but they understood his words of the death of the body. (Witham) --- You accuse me of being possessed with a devil, because I preach to you a doctrine far different from what you are accustomed to hear; but I speak nothing but the truth; I give honour to my Father, I execute his orders; and the words I now speak to you, are the words of eternal life. Whoever observes them shall not die. Moses promised a long life to those who observed what was commanded in the old law, and offered them as their reward goods and temporal prosperity. But I now offer you an eternal life. Believe my words, keep them, and observe my ordinances, and you shall not feel the death of the soul, the second, eternal, and most miserable of deaths. (Calmet)

**Ver. 56.** *Abraham, your father, rejoiced that he might see my day,* my entrance into this world, my incarnation, my birth, my manifestation in Israel, my death and passion. (St. Irenæus, Origen, St. Cyril, &c.) --- He waited with impatience for the deliverance of the whole world. *He saw it, and was glad.* He saw it in spirit, for God revealed it to him. He saw it approaching in the birth of his son Isaac, and in the miraculous deliverance of his dear son, when he was commanded to offer him in sacrifice to the Lord. The vivacity of his faith made him, as it were, present at the time of my birth, though then so far off. (St. John Chrysostom, Leont., Theophylactus, Euthymius) --- It is not unlikely that this patriarch, and the others who were with him, detained in limbo, were apprised of the incarnation and coming of the Messias, which would fill them with an effusion of inexpressible joy. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Christ here teaches us two things. 1. That he was

before Abraham. 2. That the Jews were not true sons of Abraham, now treating so rudely him, who, even before his coming, had given the patriarch so much joy. (Calmet)

**Ver. 58.** *Before Abraham was made, I am.*[4] Christ here speaks of his eternal existence as God. St. Augustine shews this by these very words, *I am*. He does not say, *before Abraham was made, I was made*: because, as the Son of God, he never was made: but *I am*, which shews his eternal divine nature. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. In multis Latinis et Græcis codicibus invenitur. S. Hierom. [i.e. St. Jerome] See the Greek edition of the New Testament, at Amsterdam, ex officina Westenians, an. 1711, in notis Criticis in fin, p. 17.

[2] Ver. 9. *Greek: apo tes suneideseos, elegchomenoi.*

[3] Ver. 25. Principium qui et loquor vobis. St. Augustine reads, quia loquor vobis, as we find in some Greek manuscripts and in St. Cyril, p. 511. In the common copies we read, *Greek: ten archen, oti kai lalo umin*. And as *Greek: ten archen* is in the accusative case, so we may take principium; and to be taken adverbially, to signify the same as primum, a principio, imprimis. Maldonatus is of the same opinion, as well as many others, and brings examples to shew that *Greek: ten archen* (i.e. *Greek: kata ten archen*) is often taken for primum: and so the sense will be, *I am what I told you from the beginning*, i.e. the Messiah, and this I now tell you again. We may also take notice, that the Greek construction is hard to be accounted for, *Greek: ten archen oti*, not *Greek: os, qui*, nor *Greek: e*, to agree with *Greek: arche*.

[4] Ver. 58. Abraham fieret, ego sum; *Greek: prin Abraam genesthai, ego eimi*. St. Augustine, (tract. xliii. in Joan. num. 17. p. 588.) intellige, *fieret* ad creaturam, *sum* vero pertinere ad divinam substantiam: non dixit, antequam Abraham esset, ego eram, ... neque dixit, ego factus sum ... agnoscite creatorem, discernite creaturam.

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## JOHN 9

**Ver. 2.** When Christ healed the paralytic, he dismissed him with this injunction: *Behold thou art made whole; now sin no more*. From this the disciples concluded, that his infirmity was sent him in punishment of former sins. When, therefore, they saw this man afflicted with blindness, they inquired of their divine Master, whether it was on account of his or his parents' sin. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 3.** When Christ says that neither he nor his parents had sinned, we must not understand that he was born without original sin, nor even that he had not committed other sins. For both he and his parents had sinned; but the meaning is, that this blindness was not a penal blindness inflicted in punishment of any sin either himself or his parents had committed; but, as is afterwards subjoined, it was sent him for the manifestation of the glory of God. (St. Augustine, tract. xlv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 4.** *Whilst it is day*. That is, during all the time of this mortal life; *the night comes*, that is, death. (Witham) --- He speaks of that night of which mention is made in St. Matthew chap. xxii. *Cast him into exterior darkness*. This is a night in which none can work, but only receive the reward of their labours. If you wish to work, work now whilst you live; for beyond the grave there is neither faith, nor labour, nor repentance. (St. John Chrysostom, as above.)

**Ver. 5.** Thus the day of which I am to avail myself is the time of my mortal life; and the night which is to follow this, is that of my death. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 6.** *He spat on the ground.* With clay and spittle he cured the blind man, to make the miracle more visible. (Witham) --- From the example of Jesus Christ, religious ceremonies are introduced in the administration of the sacraments; and can the Church be blamed for copying her divine Founder? (Haydock)

**Ver. 7.** The fountain of Siloe was at the foot of the walls of Jerusalem, to the east, where its waters were collected in a reservoir for the benefit of the city. Thither our Saviour sent the blind man. The word *Siloe* signifies *sent*, and was a figure of Christ, who was sent by his eternal Father into the world to enlighten all men, of whom this blind man was the emblem. The pool of Siloe represents the sacrament of baptism, by which we are sanctified and made Christians. It is still to this day held in great veneration by the Turks, who think its waters very beneficial in diseases of the eyes. (Calmet) --- Its waters signify those of divine grace and *light*, communicated to the faithful soul through Jesus Christ, who was *sent* of God. (Bible de Vence) --- Thus Sedulius:

-----Cognoscite cuncti,  
Mystica quid doceant animos miracula nostros.  
Cœca sumus proles miseræ de fœtibus Hevæ,  
Portantes longo natas errore tenebras.  
Sed dignante Deo mortalem sumere formam  
Tegminis humani, facta est de Virgine nobis  
Terra salutaris, quæ fontibus oblita sacris  
Clara renascentis referat spiracula lucis.

**Ver. 17.** The Hebrews gave the name of prophet to all those who were honoured by the Almighty in a particular manner. And it was a maxim amongst them, that a prophet could dispense with the law of the sabbath. (Calmet) --- Do you wish to know what he believed Jesus to be? asks St. Augustine. And falling down, he adored him. Before, he regarded him as a holy man, as a prophet; but he did not adore him until he understood him to be the Son of God; whereas no sooner did he know this, than, falling down, he paid him that sovereign worship which is due to God alone. (Calmet)

**Ver. 22.** *The Jews had already agreed,* or combined together, that if any one owned him for the Messiah, he should be turned out of their synagogues, as a person excommunicated. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** Give glory to God, before whom thou art speaking, and tell us the truth. It could not be this man who cured thee; for we know he is a sinner, who seduceth the people. (Bible de Vence) --- So say our separated brethren, when they derogate from miracles done by saints, pharisaically pretending the glory of God, as if it were not God's glory when his servants act by his power and virtue. Witness Peter's shadow, (Acts v.) and Paul's handkerchiefs that cured diseases, and expelled wicked spirits. (Acts xix. 11, 12.)

**Ver. 27.** *I have told you already, and you have heard.* In almost all Greek manuscripts we now read, and you have *not* heard. Beza, with good reason, here prefers the Latin Vulgate, as more correct than the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *They reviled him* with scornful[1] and disdainful language. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *God doth not hear sinners.* That is, in so particular a manner, as to work miracles in favour of them and their doctrine. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard.* Though we read of many miracles done by Moses and the prophets, this, saith he, is the first example of any man receiving his sight who had been born blind. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** *For judgment I am come into this world.* Christ said (chap. iii. 17.) *that God did not send*



*his Son to judge the world:* the same he repeats; (John xii. 47.) nor is this contradictory to those words: the meaning here is not that he is come to exercise the office of a judge, but he tells them what will be the consequences of his coming, and their refusing to believe in him, that they shall be justly punished with the greatest severity for their wilful blindness. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ came into the world that the pagans, who were yet in darkness, might receive light, and that the Jews, who enjoyed the light, might fall into darkness. The Jews were thus condemned, on account of their presumption and hardness of heart, and grace was granted to the Gentiles to enter into the true Church. These are the designs of the Almighty upon mankind, some of whom remain in infidelity, whilst others receive the light of faith; but all is done by the secret and impenetrable decrees of the justice and wisdom of God. The Holy Ghost, by these words, tells us only what was to be the event, not what was the cause of these things. We must seek for the cause of them in the malice of the heart of man, and in the depth of the judgments of God. (Calmet) --- *I am come*, &c. Not that Christ came for that end, that any one should be made blind; but that the Jews, by the abuse of his coming, and by their not receiving him, brought upon themselves this judgment of blindness. (Challoner)

**Ver. 40-41.** The Pharisees them replied: *and are we also blind?* Jesus said to them: *if you were blind*, by ignorance in not having heard of me, and my doctrine, you might be excused for not believing; but now *saying, we see:* and having been yourselves in the occasions and opportunities of seeing, *your sin remaineth*, and you in your sins. (Witham) --- *If you were blind*, &c. If you were invincibly ignorant, and had neither read the Scriptures, nor seen my miracles, you would not be guilty of the sin of infidelity: but now, as you boast of your knowledge of the Scriptures, you are inexcusable. (Challoner) --- If you had humility enough to acknowledge your blindness and ignorance, and seriously to seek for a remedy, you would soon be delivered from sin, and freed from the evil of blindness. But filled as you are with presumption, you remain still in blindness, which, as it is voluntary, is at the same time criminal and inexcusable. This is your evil; this you sin. (Calmet) --- We here see that it is judged by truth itself far better not to read the Scriptures at all, than to read them with bad dispositions; not to see the miracles of Jesus Christ, than to refuse our assent to their author. At the present day all read the Scriptures, but do we see any marked improvement in the moral world? The text, without any comment, is given to Churchmen and to Dissenters: the latter gladly accept the offering, because, as the Rev. Frederick Noland observes, (in his objections of a Churchman to uniting with the Bible society, p. 34) "the authorized version is in many places accommodated to their peculiar opinions, through the conciliatory spirit of the Church, which revised the text for the purpose of doing their objections away." And in his note on this part, he adds: "The last revisal of the translation of the Bible was undertaken, as is notorious, for the purpose of removing certain objections made to the old version by the non-conformists. That the execution has been answerable to the intent, is evident from the fact of the Dissenters having withdrawn their exceptions, and adopted the version. Comp. Nichols. Defens. Eccles. Anglic. p. 33. Pierre. Vindic. Fratr. Dissent. p. 60-67." Thus (Acts xiv. 23.) "*Greek: cheirotonesantes de autois presbuterous kat ekklesian.* When they had ordained them elders by election, in every church. (Bp's Bible.) When they had ordained them elders in every church. (Authors. vers.) These words, as applied to St. Paul and St. Barnabas, who had merely received first orders, (Acts xiii. 2.) form in the former version an argument against presbyters' right to ordain, and in the latter one in favour of that practice." As a further accommodation, he says the word *elders* was substituted for *presbyters*, &c. "Independency in the very nature of it is schism; for every congregation is a different church." (Sherl. Def. of Stillingfl.)

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[1] Ver. 28. Maledixerunt, *Greek: eloidoresan*, reviled, rather than cursed.

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**Ver. 1, &c.** In this parable the *fold* is the Church: the *good shepherd*, and also the *door* is Christ: the *thieves* and *robbers* are false guides; the *hirelings*, such ministers as seek their own profit and gain, and a good living, as they call it; the *wolves*, heretics; the *sheep* not yet *brought into the fold*, the Gentiles not then converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *His own sheep by name.* By this is signified the particular care. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *He goeth before them,* leads them by his instructions and example. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *All they who come are thieves,* meaning those who came of their own accord, without being sent: not so the prophets, who had their mission from God. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** How happy are we in having such a shepherd, so great, so good, so loving, so careful of our true welfare! O he is the true shepherd indeed, that came down from heaven to seek the poor sheep that was lost; and when he found it, took it upon his own shoulders to carry it home with joy to his heavenly fold. How dearly have his sheep cost him, for truly has he made good in himself sentence, that the *good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep*. Let us then ever follow and obey, love and embrace this true shepherd of our souls. (Meditations for every Day, vol. ii. p. 417.) The good pastor gives his life for his sheep; he exposes himself to every danger to save them, no inclemency of the weather, no frost or cold, no rains or tempests, can drive him from looking over his sheep, to defend them from the attacks of wolves, &c. and like Jacob he might say, day and night was I parched with heat, and with cold, and sleep departed from my eyes. (Genesis xl.) Or, like David speaking to Saul: "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion or a bear, and took a ram out of the midst of the flock; and I pursued after them, and struck them, and delivered it out of their mouths; and they arose up against me, and I caught them by the throat, and I strangled them, and killed them." (1 Kings xvii.) This is a model of a true pastor. But Jesus Christ has done more than this for us. He has exposed his life and his repose, he has spilled his blood, he delivered himself to the fury of his enemies, and has offered himself as a victim on the cross to his eternal Father, to free us, his lost sheep, from the most cruel wolf, the devil. And ever since his death he has always protected his Church, assisted and consoled his distressed flock under all their sufferings, pouring into their hearts the consolations of the holy Spirit, and sending to them holy teachers, to govern and lead them in the holy path of salvation. Such were the apostles and their successors, the bishops and priests of the holy Catholic Church, whom he has sent, and will continue to send, to govern his flock to the end of time. (Calmet.)

**Ver. 13.** Every bishop and pastor is bound to abide with his flock in the time of danger, and persecution, except himself be personally sought for, rather than his flock, or the flock itself forsake him. In such cases the pastor may fly, as the apostles did, and St. Athanasius and others. (St. Athanasius, Apol. de sua fuga.; St. Augustine, ep. 180.)

**Ver. 14.** *I know mine, and mine know me.* To *know*, in the style of the holy Scriptures, is to love and approve. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *I lay down.* That is, in a short time shall lay down *my life for my sheep*: for all, and in a special manner for my elect. See ver. 28. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *One fold.* In the Greek *one flock*. The signification is the same that is, there shall be one church of Jews and Gentiles converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, &c.* Christ here speaketh of himself, as made man for the redemption of mankind: or rather, as he was our Redeemer, both God and man: for he laid down his life, and died as man, and had power to take it up again, as God. Yet the *command* of laying it down, he as man received from the Father: thus as man, he was obedient to him even to the death on the cross. See Philippians ii. 8. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** In the gallery of Solomon, which was near the temple, supposed to be attached to the eastern gate of the court, and called *beautiful*. See Acts iii. 2.

**Ver. 24.** *If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.* St. John the Baptist had told them several times who Jesus was. See John chap. i. He himself had not only owned it in plain terms to the Samaritan woman, (John iv. 26.) but he had frequently delivered this truth so openly to them, that he came from heaven, that he was sent into the world that all men should be saved by believing in him, that he was the Son of God, and one with the Father, that they easily perceived he made himself God: but these men would have him to declare it again, that they might accuse him. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *The works and miracles, that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me,* and shew who I am, being foretold by the prophets. See John v. 31, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *Because you are not of my sheep,* refusing to believe in me, and to follow my doctrine, by your own wilful blindness. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** Christ here says that his sheep hear his voice, and follow him: but let us ask ourselves, Do we cling close to this heavenly shepherd? Do we follow him, both by our faith and by our lives? Do we know him, and hear his voice? Do we fly from strangers, the world, the flesh, and the devil? If so, we are his sheep indeed; and if we persevere, he will bring us, in spite of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the pastures of eternal life. But if we run away from our shepherd, to follow these strangers, we must expect to fall a prey to wolves. (Med. vol. ii. p. 417)

**Ver. 28.** *They shall not perish for ever: and no man shall snatch them out of my hand.* He speaks of his elect, of those whom he called by a special Providence and mercy, whom he blessed with more than ordinary graces, and with the gift of final perseverance to the end in his grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *That which my Father hath given[1] me, is greater than all.* We may look upon this as the true reading by Tertullian, St. Hillary, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, &c. The ancient Fathers make use of these words, to shew the eternal procession of the Son from the Father; and that they are one in nature, substance, power, &c. The reading in the ordinary Greek copies is now different. *My Father, who gave me them, (the sheep) is greater than all. No one can snatch, or pull them by force, out of the hand of the Father.* He had said just before, *no one shall, or can snatch them, out of my hand.* And this shews that the *hand*, that is, the power of the Father and the Son, is equal, is one and the same. See St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *I and the Father are one,[2] or one being,* not one *person*, nor one by an union of *affection* only, but in nature, substance, power, and other perfections, as appears by the whole text: for Christ here tells them that none of his elect shall perish, because no one can snatch them out of his hands, no more than out of the hand of his Father: and then adds, that he and his Father are one, or have one equal power: and if *their power*, says St. John Chrysostom, *is the same, so is their substance.* Christ adds, (ver. 38.) that *the Father is in him, and he in the Father;* which also shews an union of nature and substance, and not only of love and affection, especially when taken with other words of our Saviour Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Then took up stones, &c. because, they said, being a man, thou makest thyself God.* The Jews, says St. Augustine, understood well enough what the Arians will not understand, that from Christ's words it follows that he was one and the same God with the eternal Father. (Witham) --- The Jews, in opposition to our Saviour's doctrine, took up stones to destroy him, in order that he might preach no more to them. So heretics at the present time exercise the odium of their impiety against the same Lord, by perverting his holy doctrines, and, as much as in them lies, pulling him and his servants down from the glorious seats of heavenly bliss. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 34.** This is addressed to princes established to govern the people of God. They are the

image of God on earth by the authority they exercise, and which they have received from Him. --- *Is it not written in you law*, (under which were also comprehended the Psalms) *I have said: you are Gods?* &c. Christ here stops the mouths of the Jews, by an argument which they could not answer, that sometimes they were called *Gods*, who acted by God's authority. *I have said: you are Gods*. (Psalm lxxxi. 6.) But then he immediately declares, that it is not in this sense only that he is God. 1st, Because he has been *sanctified* by the *Father*, which St. Augustine and others understand of that infinite sanctification, which he has necessarily by always proceeding from the Father. Others expound it of a greater sanctity and fulness of grace above all other saints, given to him, even as he was man. But 2ndly, he adds at the same time, and confirms what he had often told them, that he was the *Son of God*, *sent into the world*: that his *works* shew that *he was in the Father, and the Father in him*. by this they saw that he was far from recalling or contradicting what he had said before. And therefore (ver. 30.) *they sought to apprehend him*, and put him to death for *blasphemy*. (Witham) --- *Eloim*, which name of God was so called from judging, and may be interpreted judges. (Menochius)

**Ver. 39.** *And he escaped out of their hands*; perhaps making himself invisible, or hindering them by his divine power. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 29. Pater meus quod dedit mihi, majus est omnibus. See Tertullian, lib. contr. Praxeam. chap. xxii, p. 513. C. Ed. R.; St. Hilary, lib. vii. ed Trin. p. 930. Ed. Ben.; St. Ambrose, lib. iii. de Sp. S. chap. 18. Ed. Par. 1586.; St. Augustine, tract. 49. in Joan. p. 616, Quid dedit filio Pater majus omnibus? ut ipse illi esset Unigenitus Filius. St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that by *the hand of the Father*, is here understood *his power*. And that it follows from hence, that the power or hand of the Father and the Son is equal, is one and the same: and if their power, says he, is the same so is their substance, *Greek: ei de e dunamis e aute, endelon oti kai e ousia. om. xa.* (in Joan. 363. tom. viii. nov. Ed. Ben.)

[2] Ver. 30. Unum sumus, *Greek: en esmen*, i.e. says St. John Chrysostom, secundum potentiam. *Greek: kata ten dunamin entautha legon.* See St. Cyril, p. 667.; St. Augustine, tract. 49. p. 617, Huc usque Judæi tolerare potuerunt ... tune vero more suo duri ad lapides concurrunt ... ideo irati sunt, quia senserunt non posse dici, Ego et pater unum sumus, nisi ubi æqualitas est Patris et Filii. ... Ecce intelligunt Judæi, quod not intelligunt Ariani.

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## JOHN 11

**Ver. 1.** At the end of the preceding chapter, we are told that Jesus went into the place where John the Baptist was first baptizing. This place, as may be gather from St. John, (chap. i. ver. 28. and 44.) was Bethania; but not the Bethania where the sister of Lazarus resided. The Bethania where Christ was at this time was beyond the Jordan, and was likewise called Bethabara; whereas the Bethania where Lazarus lay sick, was two miles to the south of Jerusalem, and formed a part of the suburbs of that city. It is called the town of Martha and Mary, because they lived there; in the same manner as Bethsaida is called the city of Peter and Andrew. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *This sickness is not unto death.* This is, though he truly die, it is not designed that he remain dead. (Witham) --- This sickness is not unto death; because his death itself was not unto death, but rather to the working of a great miracle, by which men were brought to the true faith, and thus avoided an eternal death. (St. Augustine, tract. 49. in Joan.) --- Lazarus indeed died of this sickness, but he did not die as other men, to continue dead; for Jesus raised him again to the glory of God. (Sts. Cyril, Chrysostom, &c.)

**Ver. 9.** Some, by the day in this place, understand the time preceding the Passion of our Saviour; and, by the night, the time of his Passion. (Theophylactus) --- By this he encouraged his disciples,

assuring them that the day of his sojournment on earth was not yet over; and therefore that the Jews, with all their malice and hatred, could not hurt him. But when the night (the time of his Passion) comes, then their power over him commenced. This is your hour, says he to them, and the power of darkness. (Calmet) --- The Hebrews then divided the day into twelve parts of equal duration, from the rising to the setting sun. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 11.** *Lazarus ... sleepeth.* It is strange that the disciples could imagine that Christ spoke of an ordinary sleep, and that he would go two or three days' journey to awake him. Nothing but the fear and concern they were under, would make them think so. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** To men indeed he was dead, but to God he slept. For the Almighty as easily raised him from his grave, as man can raise the slumberer from his bed. (St. Augustine, tract. 49. in Joan.)

**Ver. 15.** When Christ says, *that you may believe*, we must not suppose he means, that they might begin then for the first time to believe, but that their faith, already begun, might be increased; for the faith of the disciples still stood in need of miracles, to make it grow more strong and rooted. (St. Augustine, as above.)

**Ver. 16.** *Thomas ... said, let us also go, that we may die with him.* That is, with Jesus: this he said, exhorting the other disciples not to fear. (Witham) --- The words, Thomas and Didymus, have the same radical signification; both meaning *twins*.

**Ver. 18.** *About fifteen furlongs.* About two Italian miles. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *If thou hast been here.* These words shew that the faith of the two sisters was but weak; as if the Son of God was not everywhere: or as if he could not restore him to life when dead and buried. (Witham) --- Martha believed in Christ, but not as she ought to have done. She did not yet believe him to be God, but addressed him as one who is remarkable for virtue, and approved of by heaven. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. 61. in Joan.)

**Ver. 23.** *Thy brother shall rise again.* Martha took notice that Christ did not express, whether immediately, or at the general resurrection, which she and the Jews generally believed. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *I am the resurrection, and the life.* That is, the author of both. (Witham) --- I am the resurrection, I am he who will at the last day raise him up; I can, therefore, if I will, raise him up now also. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 27.** *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* Martha breaks out into an act of perfect faith. See Chap. i. ver. 49. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** It was customary to visit, occasionally, the sepulchres, there to weep over the deceased. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 33.** *He groaned in the spirit, and troubled himself.* The Latin and Greek, both in this and the 38th verse, express a more than ordinary inward trouble. Christ, as he was truly man, had the affections and passions of human nature; yet so that he was master, even of the first motions, which could not raise in him any disturbance or disorderly inclinations. He permitted, therefore, and, as it is said, raised in himself these affections of compassion and grief at this time. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *Where have you laid him?* He asks what he knows, says St. Augustine, to raise their attention, their faith, hope, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *Jesus wept.* A mark of his human nature, when he was going to give them a proof of his divinity, in raising the dead to life. (Witham) --- The tears of the disconsolate sisters called forth tears from the tender commiseration of Jesus. Nor was it unworthy the Son of God to shed tears. See Luke xix. 41. About to give proofs of his divinity in raising the dead, he is pleased to give,

first, undoubted proofs of his humanity, that he might shew himself both God and man.

**Ver. 39.** *Take away the stone.* He could have done this by his word and command; or he could have made Lazarus come out without taking off the stone; he need not to pray, who could do and command every thing. (Witham)

**Ver. 41.** *Father, I give thee thanks, that thou hast heard me.* He knew that what he asked, even as man, must needs be granted; but he prayed for our instruction. (Witham) --- Christ was about to pray for the resurrection of Lazarus; but his eternal Father, who alone is good, prevented his petition, and heard it before he presented it. Therefore does Christ begin his prayer, by returning his almighty Father thanks for having granted his request. (Origen, tract. 18. in Joan.)

**Ver. 43.** *He cried with a loud voice: Lazarus come forth.* His will had been sufficient. He calls upon the dead man, says St. John Chrysostom, as if he had been living; and it is no sooner said than done. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *Loose him, and let him go.* Christ, says St. Gregory, by giving these orders to his apostles, shews that it belongs to his ministers to loose and absolve sinners, when they are moved to repentance, though it is God himself that forgiveth their sins; and they by his authority only. (Witham) --- Lazarus comes forth bound from the sepulchre, that he might not be thought to be a phantom; and that the bystanders might themselves loose him, and touching and approaching him, might know for certain that it was he. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxiii. in Joan.) --- St. Cyril and St. Augustine both adduce this verse to shew the power of priests in absolving sinners. See St. Cyril, lib. vii. last chap. in Joan. and St. Augustine, tract. 49. in Joan.

**Ver. 47.** *The chief priests ... said: what do we? &c.* as if they had said: why are we so slow, so remiss, and indolent in our proceedings against this man, when we daily see what numbers he draws after him by his miracles? (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** *The Romans will come upon us,* in case he be admitted as our great Messias, and our King. (Witham)

**Ver. 49.** *But one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest, &c.* He said not this, says the evangelist, *of himself*, but as the *high priest of that year*. The spirit of prophecy was given him, and he foretells that Jesus was to lay down his life both for the nation of the Jews, and for all mankind. The gift of prophecy itself does not make a man holy. It was also given to the wicked Balaam. (Numbers chap. xxiv.) (Witham) --- It is supposed that he exercised the *sacrificial office* alternately with his father-in-law, Annas, who, as we have seen in Luke iii. 2. was also high priest. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 50.** How great is the power of the Holy Ghost? From a wicked mind he brings forth the words of prophecy. And how great is the power attached to the pontifical dignity! For Caiphas having becoming high priest, though unworthy of that dignity, prophesies, not knowing indeed what he says. The Holy Ghost makes use of his tongue only, but touches not his sinful heart. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxiv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 51.** The same words have an impious and sacrilegious sense in the intention of the high priest, the enemy of Jesus Christ: and a divine and prophetic sense, in the intention of the Holy Ghost. (Bible de Vence) --- We here behold the privilege of the office and order, though in a wicked person: and as we have the assistance of God for the utterance of truth, which Caiphas neither meant nor knew, we may rest satisfied that Christ will not leave Peter's chair; (Luke xxii. 32.) whose faith he promises should never fail, though the occupants be as bad as their enemies describe them.

**Ver. 54.** Ephrem was a small city or town in the neighbourhood of Bethel. Some suppose it to be the same as Ephron, mentioned in 2 Paralipomenon xiii 19., and 1 Machabees v., 2 Machabees

xii. 17. Eusebius and St. Jerome say it was situated about 20 miles to the north of Jerusalem. (Calmet) --- Here he remained with his disciples till the time in which he had resolved to deliver himself up into the hands of his enemies. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 55.** This was the last Pasch that our Saviour kept upon earth, and the one on which he suffered death for our salvation. (Calmet) --- It is well called the Pasch of the Jews, and not of the Lord, since on it they were laying snares to apprehend their Saviour. (Origen) --- Thus making this day of festivity a day of murder. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv. in Joan.) --- They went up so early to purify themselves by the sacrifices ordered by the law. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 56.** He had not then arrived, because He would not expose himself to the fury of his enemies before his own time. (Bible de Vence)

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## JOHN 12

**Ver. 1.** On the tenth day of the month the Jews were accustomed to collect the lambs, and other things in preparation for the ensuing great feast. On this day, likewise, they generally had a small feast, or treat for their friends, at which time Jesus coming to Bethania, joined his friends in their entertainment. This was most likely in the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Martha served at the table herself, thinking herself happy in waiting on Jesus, whom she considered as her Lord and God. Lazarus was one of them that were at table, to shew himself alive, by speaking and eating with them, and thus confounding the inexcusable incredulity of the Jews. And Mary too shewed her loving attachment to Jesus, by anointing his feet with her precious ointment. (Theophylactus, St. Augustine, and St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 6.** Judas did not then begin to be wicked: he followed Christ, not in heart, but in body only. This our Master tolerated, to give us a lesson to tolerate the bad, rather than divide the body. (St. Augustine, in Joan. tract. 50.)

**Ver. 8.** *Me you have not always with you.* He speaks of his corporal presence; for by his majesty, by his providence, by his ineffable and invincible grace, he ever fulfils what he said, (Matthew xxviii.) *Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.* (St. Augustine, tract. 50 in Joan.)

**Ver. 10.** *To kill Lazarus.* A foolish thought, says St. Augustine, as if Christ who had raised him to life from a natural death, could not also restore him to life, when murdered by them. (Witham) --- O foolish thought, and blinded rage! As if you could, by putting Lazarus to death, take away power from the Lord; as if Christ, who had already raised one that had died, could not as easily have raised one that was slain. But, lo! he has done both. Lazarus dead, he hath restored to life, and himself slain, he hath raised to life. (St. Augustine, tract 50. in Joan.)

**Ver. 19.** *Do you see that we prevail nothing?*[1] Thus said the Pharisees, being vexed that so many followed Christ, even after they had ordered, that whosoever owned him, should be turned out of their synagogues; and after they had employed men to apprehend him, but to no purpose. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Gentiles ... come up to adore.* These either were proselytes who had been Gentiles, and now had embraced the Jewish law: or they were such among the Gentiles, who owned and served the one true God, as Cornelius did, (Acts, chap. x.) but did not submit themselves to circumcision, and all the other Jewish rites and ceremonies. These could only enter into that part of the temple, called the court of the Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Unless the grain of wheat.* The comparison is this, that as the seed must be changed,

and corrupted in the ground, before it fructify, so the world would not be converted but by Christ's death. (Witham) --- By this grain of corn our Saviour means himself, who was to die by the infidelity of the Jews, and be multiplied by the faith of the Gentiles. (St. Augustine, tract. 51. in Joan.)

**Ver. 26.** We must minister to Jesus by seeking not our own things, but the things of Christ; that is; we must follow him, we must walk in his footsteps, we must perform the corporal works of mercy, and every other good work, for his sake, till we come to put in practice the most perfect act of charity, the laying down our lives for our brethren. Then will he crown us with the greatest of rewards, the happiness of reigning with him. And where I am, there shall my minister be. (St. Augustine, tract. 51. in Joan.)

**Ver. 27.** *Now is my soul troubled.* Christ permitted this fear and horror to come upon his human nature, as he did afterwards in the garden of Gethsemani. *Father, save me from this hour;* yet he presently adds, *but for this cause I came unto this hour;* that is, I came into this world for this end, that I might die on a cross for all mankind. In like manner, when he had said in the garden, *let this cup pass from me,* he presently joined these words: *but not my will, but thine be done.* (Witham) --- Lest the disciples, upon hearing our Saviour exhorting them willingly and courageously to suffer death, should think within themselves, that he could well exhort them to these things, being himself beyond the reach of human misery, he assures them in this place, that he himself is in agony, and yet does not refuse to die for them. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxvi. in Joan.)

**Ver. 28.** *Father, glorify thy name,* by my sufferings and death, as well as by many miracles that shall follow. *A voice came from heaven,* and so loud, that some there present compared it to *thunder:* and at the same time these words were heard: *I have glorified it, thy name, and I will glorify it again,* by a number of ensuing miracles at Christ's death, at his resurrection and ascension, as well as by all those miracles, which the apostles and disciples wrought afterwards. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** As the soul of Christ was troubled, not on his own account, but for the sake of the people; so this voice came from heaven, not for his sake, but for that of the people. What it announced was already known to him; the advantage and instruction of the Jews was its end, object, and motive. (St. Augustine, 52. tract. in Joan.)

**Ver. 31.** *Now is the judgment of the world:* their condemnation, says St. John Chrysostom, for not believing. --- *The prince of this world,* that is, the devil, *shall be cast out* from that great tyranny, which he had over mankind, before Christ's incarnation. (Witham) --- By these words Christ informs the Gentiles that wished to see him, that soon he would punish the incredulous Jews, and cast off their synagogue, for their malice and insatiable hatred against him; and that the prince of this world, that is, the worship of idols, should be destroyed, and all called to the true faith. (Calmet)

**Ver. 32.** *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth:* that is, on the cross. See the same expression, John iii. 14. and viii. 28. --- *I will draw all things,* all nations, *to myself* by faith. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *How sayest thou the Son of man must be lifted up?* By these words of the people, Christ, in this discourse must have called himself *the Son of man,* though it is not here mentioned by the evangelist. The people also tell him, they had heard that their Messiah was to *abide for ever:* which was true as to his spiritual kingdom of grace, not as to such a glorious temporal kingdom, as they imagined. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *Yet a little while,[2]* that is, for a very few days, I, who am the *light* of the world, am *with you.* (Witham) --- How much do the Jews now do, and yet they know not what they do: but like men that are walking in the dark, they think they are in the right way, when alas! they are quite the contrary. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxvi. in Joan.)



**Ver. 39.** *They could not believe*, [3] that is, they would not, says St. Augustine, or it could not be, considering their wilful obstinate blindness. (Witham) --- But where then is the sin, if they could not believe? They could not believe, because they would not. For as it is the glory of the will of God, that it cannot be averse to its own glory, so it is the fault of the will of man, that it cannot believe. (St. Augustine, tract. 53. in Joan.) They could not believe. Since the prophet has foretold it, and he cannot but say the truth, it is impossible that they should now believe. Not but they had it in their power to believe; and had they believed, the prophet would never have foretold the contrary. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxvii. in Joan.)

**Ver. 40.** *He hath blinded their eyes*, &c. See Matthew xiii. 14. (Witham) --- God blinded the Jews, not by filling them with malice, but by refusing them his graces, of which they had made themselves unworthy, and which they before abused and despised. It was their perverse will, their pride, presumption, and obstinacy, that brought on them this judgment. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 43.** *For they loved the glory of men.* This was one of the chief obstacles of their belief: yet many even of the chief of them believed in him; but durst not own it for fear of being disgraced, and turned out of their synagogues. Do not human considerations, and temporal advantages, hinder men from seeking out, and embracing the truth?

**Ver. 45.** *He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.* In what sense these words are true, see John xiv. ver. 9. where they are repeated again, and with other expressions to the same sense. (Witham)

**Ver. 47.** *I do not judge him.* To judge here, may signify to condemn. St. Augustine expounds it in this manner: I do not judge him at this my first coming. St. John Chrysostom says, it is not *I only* that judgeth him, but the works also that I do.

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[1] Ver. 19. *Quia nihil proficimus.* In most Greek copies, and also in St. John Chrysostom, we read: you see that you prevail nothing; as if these words had been spoken by some of Christ's friends, to make his adversaries desist. *Greek: Theoreite oti ouk opheleite ouden.*

[2] Ver. 35. *Adhuc modicum lumen in vobis est,* *Greek: eti mikron chronon, to phos meth umon esti.* They mistake, who take *modicum* for an adjective, that agrees with *lumen*.

[3] Ver. 39. *Non poterant credere.* St. Augustine (tract. 53.) *Quare autem non potuerunt, si a me quærat, cito respondeo, quia nolebant.*

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## JOHN 13

**Ver. 1.** *Before the festival day*, or feast of the Pasch. see the note on this word Pasch, Matthew xxvi. ver. 2. Here when St. John says, *before the festival day*, he means in the evening, or latter evening after sunset, on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, when the great feast of *Azyms* or *unleavened bread* was begun, (for the Jews began their feasts from sunset on the foregoing day) so that the hours from sunset, at least, on the 14th day of the month of Nisan (at which time the paschal lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread belonged to the *first*, and *great day of Azyms*, which lasted till sunset on the 15th day of the month of Nisan. St. John therefore says, *the day before*, meaning after sunset on the 14th day of the month; but yet it was part of the same great feast, which was kept on the 15th day. See also the note Matthew xxvi. ver. 17. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *And when supper was done.* By this we must not understand, that the supper was over; for we afterwards find the Jesus again sat down, and gave bread to the traitor. But these words

only mean, that all had partook of refreshment, and might be therefore said to have supped. (St. Augustine, tract. 55. in Joan.) --- He knew that he went out from God, and would return to God; but at the same time, he did not leave God, when he went out from him, nor us, when he returns to him. (St. Augustine, as above.) --- And though he went out from God, and returns to him, yet here he condescends to perform the office, not of the Lord God of the universe, but of a man and a slave; (St. Augustine) and this, says St. John Chrysostom, (hom. lxi. in Joan.) that he might tread all pride under foot: doing every thing himself on this occasion, to teach us with what eagerness we ought to perform the duties of humility.

**Ver. 4.** *He riseth from supper;* that is, after *supper was done*, or ended, as it is here said, (ver. 2. and 1 Corinthians xi. 25.) *girded himself* like a servant, to wash and wipe the feet of his apostles. (Witham) --- If we compare the text of the four evangelists, it will appear that the washing of the feet preceded the institution of the blessed Eucharist, of which St. John is silent. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5.** St. Ambrose and St. Bernard shew that this washing was mysterious, and significative of the very great purity expected of those that receive the blessed Eucharist.

**Ver. 6.** *Lord, dost thou wash my feet?* My master, my Lord, the true Son of the living God, wilt thou wash the feet of me, thy servant, thy disciple, a poor vile sinner? this must not be. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me.* At this, Peter, as one thunderstruck, replied: *Lord, not my feet only, but my head;* whatever my Lord pleaseth. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *He that is washed,* &c. The feet are always apt to contract some dust or dirt; and in the mystical sense, he that is washed by the sacraments of baptism, or penance, from greater sins, must still endeavour to cleanse, and purify his affections from lesser failings of human frailty. And you, my apostles, are clean from greater offences, *but not all of you*, meaning the traitor Judas. (Witham) --- It is impossible that the extremities of the soul (if we may be allowed the expression) should not, as long as we tread upon this earth, receive some stain or other; although in the opinion of men, the soul appear just. Many indeed after baptism, are covered with the dust of sin, even to the head, but those who are disciples indeed, need only to wash their feet. (Origen, tract. 32. in Joan.) --- The foulness of the feet, when the rest is clean, signifies the earthly affections, and remains of former sins remitted, which are to be cleansed by devout acts of charity and humility. (St. Ambrose, lib. iii. de Sacram. chap. 1; St. Bernard, de cæn. Dom. ser. 1.) --- Though his disciples were clean, still he washed their feet, conformably to that of the Apocalypse, chap. xxii. "He that is clean, let him be cleansed still." (Origen, tract. 32. in Joan.)

**Ver. 14.** *You also ought to wash one another's feet.* Not that he made this a standing precept according to the letter; but designed it as a lesson in humility. We find this custom literally observed in several churches, as it is now down every year by diverse prelates, and by Christian kings and princes. (Witham) --- He gives us an example of a more elevated act of virtue, that we may at least learn to practise the lower degrees of it. For he indeed was their Lord, but when we perform this office, we can but do it to our fellow-servants. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxx. in Joan.) --- That it is, blessed Peter, which you were ignorant of, but which he promises to explain afterwards. (St. Augustine, tract. 58. in Joan.)

**Ver. 18.** *Shall lift up his heel against me.* It is the sense of those words, (Psalm xl. 10.) *hath supplanted me;* and they were spoken of Judas's sin in betraying Christ. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ applies in this place to the perfidy of Judas, that which David appears to have said on occasion of the perfidy of Achitophel, who was thus a figure of the perfidious Judas. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 23.** *One of his disciples.* St. John himself *was lying at table in* (or towards) *the bosom of Jesus.*[1] These words seem to express the manner that the Jews were placed at table. They had couches about a table, to lean or lie upon; and three for example upon each couch. The master, or head of the company, was placed in the midst; so that we may suppose, that Christ was placed on one of these couches in the midst, St. Peter on one side of him, and St. John on the other; and

that St. John, in that resting and leaning posture, had his head all the time turned, and inclined towards Christ's bosom: yet it can scarce be imagined, that his head laid continually upon our Saviour's breast or bosom; for this posture would have been very uneasy to Jesus, or to any one. St. John then leaned all supper time towards Jesus's bosom or breast, but not upon it. (Witham) --- Whilst all were fearing for themselves, and Peter, the very head of the apostles, was trembling, St. John rests; reposing on the bosom of Jesus. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxi. in Joan.)

**Ver. 25.** When Christ had said, *one of you is to betray me*, St. Peter whispered with St. John, by turning to him behind Jesus's back, and desired him to ask, *who this was*: now *when John had leaned down upon the breast of Jesus*, or as the Greek hath it, *falling down on the breast of Jesus*, as a person may do in a great concern, or fit of grief, he said, *Lord, who is it?* This posture seems to have been only for that moment of whispering, and to have been different from the posture of eating at table. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Satan entered into him*, who presently went out with great anger and indignation. It was then night, likely about nine o'clock. (Witham) --- *That which thou dost, do quickly.* It is not a license, much less a command, to go about his treason: but a signification to him, that Christ would not hinder or resist what he was about, do it as soon as he pleased: but was both ready, and desirous to suffer for our redemption. (Challoner) --- Christ does not by these words exhort the traitor, much less command him, to perform his wicked deed; but he means to reprobate it, and at the same time testify that he would not hinder his being betrayed. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxi. in Joan.) --- It is the voice not of command, but of permission, not of a person in fear, but of one prepared for death. (St. Leo)

**Ver. 31.** *Jesus said: now is the Son of man glorified*: the time is at hand, when he shall be glorified by miracles at his death, resurrection, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** The commandment of mutual love had been previously given, but evidently misconstrued and abridged by the Jews to friends only, to this life only, and for earthly respects: but Jesus Christ reneweth it and enlargeth it after the form of his own love towards us, and giveth grace to observe it. (Bristow)

**Ver. 36.** You cannot follow me yet to the dying for justice sake, for you are not yet prepared for martyrdom; you cannot yet follow me to the glory of my body, when risen from the dead, but must wait till the general resurrection; you cannot follow me to the bosom of my Father, being not yet sufficiently perfected in charity. (St. Augustine, tract. 64. in Joan.)

**Ver. 37.** This commandment was already in the old law, where it is written, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; how then does our Saviour call it a *new* command? It is new, not because we simply love one another; but because we love one another, as he has loved us: not as men love one another, as being fellow creatures, but united in love, as being all the children of the Most High; that so we may be brethren to his only begotten Son, bearing to all the same love that he has borne to us. (St. Augustine, tract. 64. in Joan.) --- By this shall I moreover know that you truly love me. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 38.** The love which St. Peter bore our Saviour was exceedingly tender, but it was not yet sufficiently strong. (St. Bernard, Sermon. iv. in Cant.) --- Jesus therefore asks him, *Wilt thou lay down thy life for me?* Do you think yourselves sufficiently strong to perform this heroic act for love of me? so far are you from exposing your life for me, that you will shortly deny me. (Menochius)

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[1] Ver. 23. *Erat recumbens in sinu Jesu*, ver. 23. And *cum recubisset super pectus Jesu*, ver. 25. In the Greek, ver. 23, Greek: *anakeimenos epi to kolpo tou Iesou*; and ver. 25, Greek: *epipeson epi to stethos tou Iesou*. The word Greek: *anakeimenos* from Greek: *anakeisthai*, seems to express no more than the manner in those days of leaning, or lying at table: as in the

Latin, accumbere, or discumbere; but *Greek: epipeson*, from *Greek: epipiptein epi to stethos*, signifies a bowing or falling down on Christ's breast, as it were in a fit of trouble or grief. See the author of the Analysis, diss. xxxvi. St. John Chrysostom, (hom. xlii. p. 423, tom. 8, Nov. Ed. Ben.) seems to make a difference betwixt these two expressions, when he says: Joannes ... in sinu Jesu recubat, nec recubat solum, sed in pectus incidit: neque hoc solum quæsitum dignum est, &c. *Greek: o loannes anakeitai eis ton kolpon tou Iesou, kai ouk anakeitai monon, alla kai to stethei epipiptei, kai ou touto monon axion zeteseos, &c.*

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## JOHN 14

**Ver. 1.** After having answered the questions of St. Peter, Jesus again addresses himself to his disciples, and bids them not to be afflicted or troubled, at what he says to them. Many Greek and Latins begin this chapter thus: *Jesus said to his disciples, let not your hearts be troubled.* (St. John Chrysostom) --- Euthymius; Leont.; Theophylactus; Theodor.; &c. agree, that our Saviour wished to encourage his apostles, who were so much troubled, because he had said, that Peter should deny him. They thought within themselves, if Peter, who is the strongest, and most resolute amongst us, shall so far forget himself, as to deny his master, what will become of us? Jesus seeing their anxiety, tells them not to be troubled; but to believe in him, and in his words, for he had said, that he would not lose any, whom his Father had given him; (John chap. vi, ver. 39.) and that whosoever should believe in him, should have life everlasting. (chap. iii, ver. 15.) --- *Let not you heart be troubled.* Christ here begins those incomparable discourses to his apostles, which are set down in the four next chapters. His sufferings and death now approaching, he forewarns them *not to be troubled.* You believe in God, and put your trust in him; *believe also*, and trust *in me*, no less than in him. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *In my Father's house.* He does not say of your Father: for though God be the Father of all by creation, and of the just, by the grace of adoption; yet Christ in several places, calls him his Father, in a quite different sense, that is, as he was his eternal Father, as the ancient interpreters observe. (Witham) --- These *many mansions* signify different degrees of glory in heaven. (St. Jerome, lib. ii. adv. Jovin.)

**Ver. 3.** *I will come again:* not only by rising the third day, but at your death, and at the day of judgment: *that where I am, you also may be*, and may receive the reward of eternal happiness in my kingdom.

**Ver. 4.** *And whither I go, you know, and the way you know.* Thomas replied, we know neither. *Jesus saith to him, I am the way.* They knew it, says St. Augustine, (tract. 69.) but they did not know, that they knew it: they knew their Master, Jesus Christ, and he was the way: they also knew, that is, believed, the kingdom of heaven, but they knew not, that he was returning thither: for as yet their imaginations were upon a temporal kingdom. --- *I am the way*, by my doctrine and example: I am *the Truth*, by my promises; and I am *Life*, by the graces I offer and give. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *If you know me, you would surely[1] have known my Father also.* That is, (says St. John Chrysostom; St. Cyril; &c.) did you know me to be his true, and eternal Son, you would always know him to be the Father from all eternity. And from *henceforth*, especially from the coming of the Holy Ghost, you shall know him with a more perfect knowledge. *And you have seen him*, not as to the divine nature: in this manner, you have neither seen him, nor me. But,

**Ver. 9.** *He that seeth me, seeth the Father also:[2]* that is, he seeth him, who is not a man only, but who also, by my divine nature, am one and the same with the Father: so that he who believes, and as it were sees, or knows by faith, who I am, cannot but know, that I am one with my eternal Father; not one person, as the Sabellians fancied, but one in nature and substance. The ancient Fathers take notice against the Arians, that these words, and others that follow in this

chapter, could not be true, if Christ was no more than a creature, though ever so perfect, there being an infinite distance betwixt God and the highest of his creatures. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* These words confirm the equality of the Father and the Son: nor can they be expounded of an union of *affection* only, by what Christ told them before. (John v. 17. and 19.) *As the Father worketh till now, so I work: and whatsoever things the Father worketh, these also in like manner the Son doth.* (Witham) --- In the Son and in the Father, there is one and the same essence, the same wisdom, the same power; so that what the Son says, he does not say it of himself, and what the Son does, he does not do it of himself; but it is the Father, who abideth in the Son, who both acts and speaks.

**Ver. 12.** *And greater than these shall he do, because I go to the Father.* Christ speaks of the greatness of visible miracles, and tells them, that after his ascension, they shall be enabled, even to do greater miracles than he has yet shewn to the world. He would give this power to his disciples, who were to convert the world; and perhaps the greatest miracle of all, was the conversion of the whole world. (Witham) --- Behold another proof of my divinity, viz. the wonderful miracles those perform, who believe in me. An impostor may seduce the vulgar with false miracles, or, perhaps, with real wonderful prodigies; but he cannot confer that power on others. Behold, I have performed miracles by my own power, without any deceit, and always with a sovereign authority. I have given those, who believe in me, power to work in my name, as great, and even greater miracles, than I have done myself. All this I have done, to shew you, that I am equally God with the Father. I truly am so, then, for it would be impossible for God to assist an impostor, a liar, and an enemy to his honour and glory. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *That will I do.* He does not now say, this the Father will do: to shew that the power of both is equal, and the same. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** Instead of afflicting yourselves at our separation, and my going to the Father, you ought, if you truly love me, to testify your affection, by a faithful observance of my commandments. Behold, this is the best proof you can give me of your attachment: better far than any exterior sign of grief and tenderness. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 16.** *Paraclete.* This is a comforter: or also an advocate: inasmuch as by inspiring prayer, he prays, as it were, in us, and pleads for us. --- *For ever.* Hence it is evident, that this spirit of truth was not only promised to the persons of the apostles, but also to their successors, through all generations. (Challoner) --- I have not changed the word *Paraclete*, which signifies, both an advocate and a comforter. *He shall remain with you, and in you, for ever.* What greater happiness, what greater security for the faithful, than to have this divine promise, the Holy Ghost, *the Spirit of truth*, remaining with the Church for ever, to protect her, and preserve her from all errors and heresies? (Witham) --- If the Holy Ghost had been promised only to the apostles, their successors could not have challenged the promise. But the promises and privileges were not merely personal, but attached to their office perpetually. Hence, the Holy Ghost, in every age and clime, perpetually watches over the Catholic Church, and preserves her from both open and secret attacks of her enemies.

**Ver. 19.** *The world seeth me no more, after my death; but you shall see me,* conversing with you for forty days, after my resurrection. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *In that day,* when I am risen again, or when the Holy Ghost is come, *you shall know that I am in the Father,* and how, and in what manner: as also, *how I am in you, and you in me.* Our Saviour Christ, on several occasions, speaks of different ways of being *united*, or of *being one*; as first, of being one in nature and substance, and by such an union, as agrees only with the divine persons, who are one in all things. 2ndly, Persons may be *one*, or *united* in affection and love, which also, as to its most perfect manner, agrees only with the three divine persons; but a similitude, and an imitation of this union of love, is found among creatures, both when they love God, and when for God's sake, they love one another: yet these unions are as different as God,

and his creatures. The Arians and Socinians lay hold on these expressions, and of the words, (chap. xvii. ver. 21.) when Christ prays, that his disciples *may be one, as he and his Father are one*, which words imply no more than a similitude, and an imitation of that union of love (with which the three divine persons love one another) though at an infinite distance. If the old or new Arians examined, with a sincere desire of finding the truth (which they ought to seek from many passages in the New Testament, as well as from the sense and tradition of the Church, guided by the promised Spirit of Truth) they might certainly find how different is the union of nature and substance of the eternal Son with his eternal Father, and of that union of the three divine persons, when they are said to be one, from that inferior and lesser union of love and affection, by which either God loves his adoptive children, his faithful servants, or they love one another: they would easily discover, that many things are said of the unity and union of the divine persons, which could not be true, unless they were one and the same God, *coeternal* and *consubstantial*, which by no means can be said of God and his creatures, nor of the union of affection only, by which the creatures love one another. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** Now that Christ in this place speaks only of this imperfect union of affection, appears by the following words: *he that keepeth my commandments, loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him*, by a recompense of glory in the next life. (Witham)

**Ver. 22-25.** *Lord, how is it? Literally, what is done, or, what will be done, that thou art about to manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?* This apostle imagined, that the Messiah would make manifest his glory of a temporal kingdom, not to them only, but to all the world. But Christ, by his answer, lets him know, that he spoke only of a *manifestation* of his love to those that loved him. *If any man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come to him*, that is, the three divine persons, will come to his soul, in a special manner, so as to bless him with an infusion of graces, and make our abode in his soul. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name*, as proceeding also from me: and therefore Christ saith, in the next chapter, (ver. 26) that *he himself will send him from the Father. He will teach you all things, &c.* He will give you a more perfect knowledge of all those truths, which I have taught you. (Witham) --- *Teach you all things.* Here the Holy Ghost is promised to the apostles, and their successors, particularly, in order to teach them all truth, and to preserve them from error. (Challoner) --- The Scripture, in different places, remarks, that the apostles did not understand the accomplishment of prophecies, as soon as they were fulfilled. (Luke xxiv. 27.) They could not draw the comparison between the actions of our Saviour, and the figures of the old law: but no sooner had the Holy Ghost descended upon them, than they explained the Scriptures, their hearts and eyes being opened and enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit. (Calmet) --- See chap. xvi. ver. 12. and 13.

**Ver. 28.** *The Father is greater than I.*[3] According to the common exposition, Christ here speaks of himself, as made man, which interpretation is drawn from the circumstances of the text, Christ being at that time, going to suffer, and die, and shortly after to rise again, and ascend into heaven, all which agree with him, as man, and according to his human nature. But the Arians can take no advantage from these words, (though with divers of the ancient Fathers, we should allow them to be spoken of Christ, as the Son of God:) the Father may be said in some manner to be greater than the Son, if we consider the order of the divine processions, that is, that the Father is the first person, and proceeds from no other; whereas the Son proceeds from the Father. If any one, says St. John Chrysostom, will contend, that the Father is greater, inasmuch as he is the cause, from which the Son proceedeth, we will bear with him, and this way of speaking: provided he grant that the Son is *not of a different substance*, or nature. St. Athanasius allows the same, and takes notice, that though the Father is said to be greater, yet he is not said to be better, nor more excellent, than the Son; because they are one and the same in substance, nature, and other perfections. (Witham) --- The enemies of the divinity of Christ here triumph, and think they have the confession of Christ himself, that he is less than the Father. But if they would distinguish the two natures of Christ, their arguments would all fall to the ground. Jesus Christ, as man, and a creature, is inferior to his Father, the Creator; but, as God, he is, in every respect, equal to him.

(St. Basil, St. Augustine, &c.) --- Others, likewise, answer it thus: Following the confused opinion of the world, and even of the apostles themselves, who as yet only considered Christ as a prophet, and as a man, eminent in virtue and sanctity, he was less than the Father. (St. John Chrysostom; Leont.; Theophylactus; Euthymius) --- And likewise the title of Father, (as we generally use the word) is greater, and much more honourable, than that of Son; and in this respect, Christ is inferior to his Father. (St. Athanasius; St. Hilary; St. Epiphanius; St. Gregory of Nazianzus; and St. Cyril) --- But this appellation, though really true, does not destroy the equality of the persons, because Christ has declared, in numerous other places, that he is equal to the Father; that he is in the Father; and that he and the Father are one. The apostles ought to have rejoiced that Christ was going to the Father, who was superior to him, considering him in his human nature; because, then, would the Son shew forth his honour and glory to be equal to the Father's, in heaven. This would have been a mark of a pure, solid, and disinterested love, which ought to have inspired the apostles, if they truly loved their divine Master. (Calmet) --- Protestants assume to themselves the liberty of making the Bible only, the exclusive rule of faith, yet refuse this privilege to others. Thus Luther insisted, that his catechism should be taught, and followed. Calvin burnt Servetus for explaining his faith, by his own interpretation of the Bible, particularly of these words, *the Father is greater than I*. The Church of England compels every clergyman to swear to the Thirty-nine Articles, and has inflicted the severest penalties on such as interpreted the Bible according to the principles of Socinus; and on Catholics, who understand the words of Jesus Christ, *This is my body: this is my blood*, in the literal and obvious sense of the words. As long as each individual is at liberty to expound Scripture by the private spirit, it is a great injustice to compel any one, by penal laws, to yield his judgment to any authority, that is not less fallible than his own.

**Ver. 31.** *As the Father hath given me commandment, so I do.* --- He again speaks of himself, as man. *Arise, let us go hence.* Yet by chap. xviii. ver. 1. Christ still continued the like instructions, either in the same place, or in the way to Gethsemani. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 7. *Cognoscetis eum*, in the present Greek copies (one excepted) we read, *cognoscitis*, Greek: *ginoskete*; Maldonatus judges it the true reading. But not only St. Augustine and the Latin Fathers, but even St. John Chrysostom reads it in the future tense, Greek: *gnosesthe*: and takes particular notice of this reading. Greek: *to men mellontos*, hom. lxxiii. tom. 8. p. 432. Ed. Montfaucon.

[2] Ver. 9. *Qui videt me, videt & Patrem.* See St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *om od*. p. 435. Nov. Ed. si alterius esset substantiæ, non hoc dixisset, Greek: *ei de eteras ousias en, ouk an touto eipen*. See St. Cyril, p. 777.

[3] Ver. 28. *Pater major me est*, Greek: *o pater meizon mou estin*. St. John Chrysostom, hom. Greek: *oe*. p. 443. Nov. Ed. Si quis vero dixerit majorem esse Patrem, ut filii principium, non huic contradicemus, Greek: *kath o aitios tou uiou, oude touto anteroumen*. See St. Athanasius, Orat. 1. Cont. Arianos, p. 362. Ed. Ben. non dixit, *Pater præstantior est me*, Greek: *kreiton mon esti*, ne quis eum alium a Patris natura, esse suspicaretur, sed *major* dixit, non quidem magnitudine quadam, aut tempore, sed quia ex ipso Patre gignitur, &c. See St. Augustine, tract. 78. p. 699. propter formam servi, dicit, *Pater major me est*, &c.

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## JOHN 15

**Ver 1.** *I am the true vine.* Christ, says St. Augustine, speaks of himself, as man, when he compares himself to a *vine*, his disciples to the *branches*, and his Father to the *husbandman*. He himself, as God, is also the husbandman. --- *Without me, you can do nothing*, that shall be meritorious of a reward in heaven. (Witham) --- These words are supposed to have been spoken

by our Saviour, when on the road, as he was going from the house, where he had supped, to the garden of Olives. It was then about midnight. (Calmet) --- Though many other interpreters think they were spoken before Jesus Christ left the house.

**Ver. 2.** He here shews, that the virtuous themselves stand in need of the help of the husbandman; therefore the Almighty sends them tribulations, and temptations, that they may be cleansed, and rendered firm, like the vine, which, the more it is pruned, the more vigorous are its shoots. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 3.** See John xiii. 10.

**Ver. 7.** On account of our being in this world, we sometimes ask for that, which is not expedient for us. But these things will not be granted us, if we remain in Christ, who never grants us any thing, unless it be profitable to us. (St. Augustine, tract. 81. in Joan.) --- If we abide in Christ, by a lively faith, and his words abide in us by a lively, ardent charity, which can make us produce the fruits of good works, all that we ask, will be granted us. (Bible de Vence) --- These conditional expressions, if you remain in the vine, if you keep my commandments, &c. give us to understand, that our perseverance and salvation are upon conditions, to be fulfilled by us. --- (St. Augustine, de cor. & gra. chap. 13.)

**Ver. 8.** It is the glory of the husbandman, to see his vine well cultivated, and laden with fruit. And it is the glory of God, my Father, to see you filled with faith, charity, and good works, and to behold you usefully employed, in the conversion of others. Then will men, seeing your heavenly Father, as the author of all these blessings. (St. Matthew v. 16.) (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *As I also have kept my Father's commandments.* He still speaks of himself, as man. (Witham) --- This frequent admonition, of keeping the commandments, proveth, that a Christian's life consists not in faith only, but in good works. (Bristow)

**Ver. 14.** *You are my friends.* A wonderful condescension, says St. Augustine, in our blessed Redeemer, who was God as well as man, to call such poor and sinful creatures, his friends; who, when we have done all we can, and ought, are still but unprofitable servants. *I have called you my friends, because I have made known to you, &c.* We can only understand these words, as St. John Chrysostom takes notice, of *all things* which they were capable of understanding, or which it was proper to communicate to them; for, as Christ tells them in the next chapter (ver. 12.) *I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.* (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** O ineffable grace! For what were we, before Christ chose us, but wretched and abandoned creatures? Such we were; but now we are chosen, in order that we may become good by the grace of Him that hath chosen us. (St. Augustine, tract. 86. in Joan.)

**Ver. 18.** *If the world hate you.* The wicked, unbelieving world, hate and persecute you, as they have done me; remember, that the servant must not desire to be treated better than his master. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** Here Christ predicts, that many will be deaf to the words of his Church, as they have neglected to attend to his precepts.

**Ver. 22.** *They would not have sin,* or would not be guilty of sin: that is, they might be excused, as to their not believing me to be their Messiah: but after so many instructions, which I have given them, and so many, and such miracles done in their sight, which also were foretold of their Messiah, they can have no excuse for their obstinate sin of unbelief. *They have hated both me, and my Father:* that is, by hating me, the true Son, who have one and the same nature with my Father, they have also hated him, though they pretend to honour him as God. See on this chapter St. Augustine (tract. 81.) and St. John Chrysostom (hom. lxxvi.) in the Latin edition, hom. lxxvii. in Joan. in the Greek.



**Ver. 24.** How can this be true, that Christ wrought greater wonders than any one else had ever done? We find recounted in the Old Testament, the miracles of Elias and Eliseus, who raised the dead to life, healed the sick, and brought down fire from heaven; of Moses, who afflicted Egypt with plagues, divided the Red Sea, for the passage of the Israelites, and brought water from the rock; of Josue, who stopped the waters of the Jordan, for the passage of the children of Israel, and in the battle of Gabaon, made the sun and moon stand still; in all which miracles, there appeared a greater manifestation of power, than in any of the miracles wrought by our Saviour, during his ministry. But to this may be answered, that the miracles of our Saviour were much more numerous than those of any of the saints of the Old Testament, even of Moses himself; particularly when we compare the few years which he preached, and manifested the glory of his Father by his miracles, with the long life of Moses: Christ did not preach full four years, whereas Moses governed the people forty years. Again, if the miracles of Jesus were not of so astonishing a nature, at least they always had for their object, the healing of the sick, and the good of the people; which the prophets have given us, as the distinguishing characteristics of the miracles of the Messiah. Add to this, the ease and authority with which he performs them, which are most sensible proofs of their superiority. But what chiefly distinguishes his miracles, from those of the other saints, is, that he performed them in proof of his divinity, and of his mission, as the deliverer of Israel: whereas the prophets only perform miracles, as the ministers of the Lord, and as so many voices, which foretold the Messiah. Besides, if the ancient saints could work miracles, they never could confer that power upon others, as Christ did upon his disciples, of which the Jews themselves were witnesses, in all the places whither Christ sent his disciples. We omit mentioning his resurrection, which at this time he had not performed, but had already foretold, and which was the greatest miracle that has ever been performed. (Calmet)

**Ver. 26.** *Whom I will send.* The Holy Ghost is sent by the Son: therefore he proceedeth from him also, as from the Father; though the schismatical Greeks think differently; (Bristow) otherwise, as Dr. Challoner says, he could not be sent by the Son.

**Ver. 27.** *You shall give.* He vouchsafes to join together the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and of the apostles; that we may see the testimony of truth, jointly to consist in the Holy Ghost, and in the prelates of the Catholic Church. See Acts xv. 28.

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## JOHN 16

**Ver. 1.** Which the persecutions you will have to suffer, on the part of man, may possible occasion, particularly with the weak.

**Ver. 4.** *That when the hour of them shall come*[1], *you may remember that I told you.* This is both the sense and the construction, by the Greek text, which here determines the construction of the Latin. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *None of you asketh me, whither goest thou?* St. Peter had put this question, chap. xiii. 36. and Thomas, chap. xiv. 5. The meaning, then, of Christ's words here, seems to be, that having told you, I am going to leave you, and also *going to him that sent me*, you do not ask, says St. Cyril, to be fully and thoroughly informed about it. (Witham) --- You suffer yourselves to be entirely overcome with grief; and none of you inquire of me, whither I am going. You look on my departure as an eternal separation between us, and take leave of me, as if we were never to meet again. But be persuaded; my absence will only be for a short continuance; and this absence will be honourable and glorious for me, and extremely advantageous for you. If you were fully persuaded of this, you would inquire how long I should be absent, and whither I was going; as one friend in the act of parting, is always accustomed to ask another. But you only torture your minds with the pain and grief you will have to suffer at my loss. (Menochius, Tirinus,

&c.)

**Ver. 6.** *Sorrow hath filled your heart:* and this sorrow hindereth you from asking, what you should earnestly desire to know. (Witham) --- Peter had put the question above, chap. xiii. 36. and Thomas, chap. xiv. 5. But Jesus Christ means, that they did not persevere in their questions, so as to obtain satisfactory information, where, when, and for what end he was going, and how soon he was to return to them, or if to return at all. For it is customary with friends, to put the most minute questions on all these heads to friends, when they are about to be separated from each other. (Menochius)

**Ver. 7.** *I tell you ... it is expedient for you that I go:* that I leave you, as to my *corporal presence*: that I suffer death, for the redemption of all men. *And if I go not, the Paraclete will not come,* according to the order of the divine decrees: his coming to sanctify you with his gifts, and to teach you all things, is not to be till after my ascension. When I am gone, *I will send him to you.* The Father and I will send him, for he proceedeth from both. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *He will convince*[2], or convict the world. Others translate, he will *reprove the world of sin*, &c. These words have occasioned a great many expositions. I here follow St. Cyril, that the Holy Ghost will condemn the Jews, and all obstinate unbelievers, *of their sin*, in not believing, after so many miracles, and so many pregnant motives, that ought to induce them to submit to the Christian faith. 2ndly, *Of justice*, by shewing the justice and innocence of Christ, and also, that true justice and sanctification cannot be obtained, but by his grace. 3rdly, *Of judgment*, by shewing that the world, and the prince of this wicked world, the devil, is justly condemned, his empire in a great measure destroyed, and that all the wicked will be justly condemned, and punished with him. (Witham) --- The Holy Ghost, by his coming, brought over many thousands, 1st, To a sense of their sin, in not believing in Christ. 2ndly, To a conviction of the justice of Christ, now sitting at the right hand of his Father. And 3rdly, To a right apprehension of the judgment prepared for them that choose to follow Satan, who is already judged and condemned. (Challoner) --- The Greek text, in addition, has *Greek: oti ou pisteuousin eis eme*. Because they have not believed in me. This accusation and conviction of sin, cannot naturally fall on any, but the incredulous Jews. St. Augustine, Ven. Bede, St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, and many others, are of opinion, that this sin was their unbelief in Jesus, after all the miracles he had done in their presence, after so many prophecies so clearly accomplished in his person, after so many prodigies and wonders, which happened at his death, at his resurrection, and after his resurrection. They are accused, and convinced of sin, particularly by sensible effects of the Holy Spirit, in the apostles, by the gift of miracles and tongues, and that supernatural knowledge, which was communicated, not only to the apostles, but also to all the first Christians. These are the means, which the Paraclete, the consoling and assisting Spirit, makes us of, to condemn, and convince the world of sin; that is, of incredulity, which is the source and foundation of all other sins. The world had calumniated and despised its Saviour. It had condemned him, as a liar, as a seducer, magician, a man possessed by the devil, a destroyer of the law of God. To which the Son of God made no resistance; he only replied, that he did not wish to take the execution of justice upon himself, and that he was not come into the world to judge the world. Therefore, he committed all to the Holy Spirit, who, in the persons of the apostles, did justice to the Son, by shewing to the whole world, his doctrines, his life, his miracles, and the accomplishment of all the ancient prophecies in his person. All that the apostles preached, they confirmed by most stupendous miracles, gained the hearts of pagans to believe Jesus as their Redeemer, and called down imprecations upon the heads of the incredulous Jews, who had rejected a prophet, visibly sent by God, a Saviour and Redeemer of his people, who, in his person, bore all the characters of the divinity. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will teach you all truth;* will direct you and the Church, in the ways of truth. *For he shall not speak of himself*, or of himself only, because, says St. Augustine, he is not from himself, but proceedeth from the Father and the Son. *Whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak*[3]; this his *hearing*, says St. Augustine, is his *knowledge*, and his *knowledge is his essence*, or being, which from eternity is from the Father and the Son. The like

expressions are applied to the Son, as proceeding from the Father. (John v. 30. and viii. 16. &c.) (Witham) --- If he shall teach all truth, and that for ever, (chap. xi; ver. 26.) how is it possible, that the Church can err, or hath erred in matters of faith, at any time, or in any point of doctrine? In this supposition, would not the Holy Ghost have forfeited his title of *Spirit of Truth*?

**Ver. 15.** *All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine.* The obvious sense of these words, shews, that the Son hath the same nature, and the same substance with the Father, and that he is one, and the same God with him. And by Christ's adding: *therefore he* (the Holy Ghost) *shall receive of mine*, we are taught, that the third person proceeds from both the Father, and the Son, and that he receives, and has the same perfections. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *a little while, and now you shall not see me, &c.* Many expound these words in this manner: that after a little while, you shall not see me, because even to-morrow, I shall be taken from you by death: and again, *after a little while, you shall see me*, because the third day I shall rise again, and converse with you, till my ascension. St. Augustine gives another interpretation, (tract. 101.) that by the first *little while*, may be understood, the short time till Christ's ascension, and by the latter *little while*, the short time that the apostles were to live in this world; after which they should see, and enjoy Christ for ever in the kingdom of heaven. And this exposition seems to agree better with the following promise. (Witham) --- In a few hours, I shall be separated from you, to be delivered up to my enemies, and put to the cruel death of the cross; and after a short time, I shall rise again; then you shall see me in my new state of glory. St. John Chrysostom, both Sts. Cyrils, Theophylactus, Euthymius, St. Augustine, and others, interpret this verse differently; thus: Not long hence, I shall be entirely separated from you; you shall not see me, because I shall go to the Father, by my ascension; but you shall see me again, after a short time, at my second coming, to judge the living and the dead. All the time, that shall pass between my ascension, and my second coming, is in the eyes of God only as a moment. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, which is past and gone. (Psalm lxxxix. ver. 4.) And the apostle calls all time a moment, a time that soon passes. (1 Corinthians vii. and 2 Corinthians iv.)

**Ver. 20.** *Your sorrow shall be turned into joy*, chiefly at the end of your mortal life; then you shall have a joy, never to be taken from you. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** The joy you will feel at my resurrection, shall ever be unalterable, and unremitting, because there I shall give you assurances and proofs of your future resurrection, and immortality. As you have been partakers in my labours, in my ignominies, and in my sorrows, so also shall you have a share in my glory, in my resurrection, and immortal bliss. Behold, these will rise to your ever unalterable and permanent joy. This is the opinion of St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, Theophylactus, and others.

**Ver. 23.** *In the day*[4], or at that time, in that happy state, *you shall not ask*, you shall not need to ask me any questions: nor even desire to have any happiness, but what you will enjoy. *But now if you ask*, that is, petition for *any thing of the Father in my name, he will give it you*, whatever graces or assistances you stand in need of: ask them in my name, as I am your chief Mediator, through whose merits all shall be granted you. This is the constant practice of the Church, to ask for all graces through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Witham) --- *In my name*. In consequence of this promise, the Church concludeth all her prayers, even those that are addressed to the saints, *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*, through Christ our Lord.

**Ver. 24.** *Hitherto you have not asked any thing in my name*: by the merits of me, your Mediator and Redeemer. They were not yet acquainted, says St. Cyril, with this manner of praying and petitioning, as they were afterwards. (Witham)

**Ver. 26-27.** *In that day ... I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you*, or shall need to ask the Father for you, though I am your Redeemer, your chief Advocate and Mediator, by dying for all the world. --- *For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from God*, sent to be your Redeemer. --- *I came forth from the Father*, both as

begotten of him from all eternity; and I also came into the world, as sent from him to become man, to become the Redeemer of the world, both as God and man. Now *I am going*, as man, *to leave the world, and go to the Father*, with whom I am, and have always been, as God. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *In this we believe that thou camest forth from God*; that is, we are more confirmed, than ever, that thou art the Messiah, the true Son of God. Yet St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, and St. Augustine, take notice, that their faith was but imperfect, till after Christ's resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Ghost; and therefore Christ answered them, (ver. 31. &c.) *Now do you believe? the hour cometh, that you shall be dispersed*, &c. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 4. Ut cum venerit hora eorum, reminiscamini quia Ego dixi vobis, *Greek: otan elthe e ora, mnemoneuete auton*, &c. where the construction is not hora eorum, but reminiscamini eorum, &c.

[2] Ver. 8. Arguet mundum, *Greek: elegxei*, which St. Cyril expounds by *Greek: katakrine*. See St. Augustine interpretation on that verse, tract 95. p. 733.

[3] Ver. 13. Non loquetur a semetipso, St. Augustine says on these words, (tract 99.) quia non est a semetipso. Sed quaecunque audiet, loquetur ... ab illo audiet, a quo procedit ... a quo est illi essentia, ab illo scientia; & audientia nihil aliud est quam scientia.

[4] Ver. 23. Non me rogabitis quicquam, *Greek: ouk erotesate*, which commonly signifies to ask questions: but when it follows, *Greek: aitesete ton patera*, this is properly to petition for.

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## JOHN 17

**Ver. 1.** *Glorify thy Son*, by signs and miracles, lest dying so disgraceful a death, I seem to be no more than another man: *that thy Son may glorify thee*, that my death may make thee praised and glorified. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Power over all flesh, that he may give life everlasting to all*[1] *whom thou hast given him*. He speaks of himself, as made man, and the Redeemer of mankind. If we ask, who are they, who in this sense are said *to be given to Christ*: it is true, only the elect, or *predestined*, are given by a special and uncommon mercy. In this sense St. Augustine, (tract. 111. p. 779.) *They are not said to be given, to whom he shall not give life everlasting*. Yet not only the elect, but all believers, nay, all men whatsoever, may be said to be given to him, inasmuch as by his coming to redeem all, sufficient help and means are offered to all men, whereby they may be saved: and inasmuch as Christ came, suffered, died, and offered up his death for all men. See 2 Corinthians v. 15. (Witham) --- Thou hast given him power over all flesh: by this our Saviour shewed, that his preaching was directed, not to the Jews only, but to every nation of the earth. Are then all saved? Christ has done sufficient for the salvation of all, and if they are not saved, it is the fault, not of him that speaketh, but of those that receive not his word. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxix. in Joan.)

**Ver. 3.** *This is life everlasting*; that is, the way to life everlasting, *that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*[2]. The Arians, from these words, pretended that the Father only is the true God. St. Augustine and divers others answer, that the sense and construction is, *that they may know thee, and also Jesus Christ thy Son, whom thou hast sent to be the only true God*. We may also expound them with St. John Chrysostom and others, so that the Father is here called the only *true God*, not to exclude the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are the same one true God with the Father; but only to exclude the false gods of the Gentiles. Let the Socinians take notice, that (1 John v. 20.) the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is

expressly called *the true God*, even with the Greek article, upon which they commonly lay so much stress. (Witham) --- *Life everlasting*. Both the life of glory in heaven, and of grace here, consisteth in the knowledge of God; the former in perfect vision, the latter in faith working by charity. For knowledge of God, without keeping his commandments, is not true knowledge, but unprofitable knowledge. (1 John xi.)

**Ver. 5.** *And now, glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was.* *Glorify me*, is the same as make me known to men; so that the sense may be, make men know, that I had the same glory *with thee*, before *the world was* created, and from all eternity. Others understand, that Christ as man, here prays that his eternal Father would make known to men, that glory, which it was decreed from eternity should be given him: that is, that all creatures should be made subject to him, even as he was man, and appointed to be judge of the living and the dead. See 1 Corinthians xv. 26; Ephesians i. 22. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *To the men whom thou gavest me out of the world.* By whom we may understand his apostles and disciples. *They were thine*, and also mine, as I am God. See ver. 10. --- *and to me thou gavest them*, inasmuch as I am become man, their Saviour, their Redeemer, &c. (Witham) --- Had then the Father any thing which the Son had not? By no means. But Christ, as Son of God, had from eternity what he had not as Son of man; because he had not yet taken flesh of his virgin mother. All that he had as God, he attributes to his Father. (St. Augustine, tract. 106. in Joan.)

**Ver. 7-8.** *Now they have known that all things which thou gavest men, are from thee.* That is, says St. Augustine,[3] they now know, and will know more perfectly hereafter, that I myself am from thee, or proceed from thee, and am sent by thee to redeem the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *I pray for them, I pray not for the world.* That is, now in this prayer, when I desire special graces and assistances for them, to discharge their duty, as my apostles; yet we must take notice, that (ver. 20.) Christ prays for all *those, who should believe in him*. He also prayed (Luke xxiii. 34.) for all, even for those that crucified him, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*. (Witham) --- The prayer I now offer up to thee, O my Father, is all in behalf of my disciples, it is not for the world. I pray not now for the incredulous Jews, nor for such of the Gentiles as shall afterwards believe in me; for them I will pray at another time. At present I speak to thee for my apostles only: they call for my first care, because they are thine, and thou has given them to me. (Calmet) --- Jesus Christ prayed with an absolute and an efficacious prayer, for all those, for whom his prayer was to be heard: he begged for them, whatever his Father had predestined to give them; but he asked for nothing, that his Father had predestined not to give them.

**Ver. 10.** *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine.* They must needs be *equal*, says St. Augustine, to *whom equally belong* all things, and all persons; on which words St. John Chrysostom also says, (hom. lxxxi.) *Do you see the equality?* (Witham) --- And all mine are thine, and thine are mine: as if he said: whatever thou hast given to me remains still thine, for mine are thine; and whatever is thine, is likewise mine, for thine are all mine. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxx. in Joan.)

**Ver. 11.** *And now I am no more in the world:* that is, I am now leaving the world, as to a corporeal and visible presence: yet St. Augustine takes notice, that Christ saith afterwards, (ver. 13.) *these things I speak in the world:* therefore he was still for some short time in the world. And as to his true invisible presence with his Church, he gave us this promise, (Matthew xxviii. 20.) *Behold I am with you all days, even to the end of the world.* --- *Keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me.*[4] Christ, as man, says St. Augustine, asks of his Father, to preserve those disciples whom he had given him, who were to preach the gospel to the world. --- *That they may be one, as we also are.* These words cannot signify an equality, nor to be one in nature and substance, as the divine persons are one, but only that they may imitate, as much as they are able, that union of love and affection. See St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, and St. Augustine on these words. (Witham) --- Here Jesus Christ prays especially, that the apostles and his Church may be kept in

unity of religion, and free from schism.

**Ver. 12.** *While I was with them, I kept them in thy name.*[5] He still speaks, says St. John Chrysostom, as man, and after a *human manner*, by mentioning the advantage they seemed to enjoy, as long as he conversed visibly with them on earth, not that his invisible presence should be less beneficial to them. --- *And none of them hath perished, except the son of perdition*, the wretched Judas, whose fall was foretold in the Scriptures. (Psalm cviii.) He hath perished, that is, now is about being lost, by his own fault, says St. John Chrysostom on this place. And St. Augustine on Psalm cxxxviii. *How did the devil enter into the heart of Judas? he could not have entered, had not he given him place.* (Witham) --- *That the Scripture may be fulfilled*: this does not any ways shew, that it was the will of God that Judas should be lost; but only that what happened to Judas was conformable to the prophecies, and not occasioned by them. Who will doubt, says St. Augustine, (lib. de Unit. Eccl. chap. ix.) but that Judas might, if he pleased, have abstained from betraying Christ. But God foretold it, because he foresaw clearly the future perversity of his disposition. (Calmet) --- See above, (xiii. 18.) one of the principal passages of Scripture relative to the treachery of Judas, in which the traitor's crime had been predicted.

**Ver. 14.** He tells his Father the reason why the world hated them, because they were not of the world. By generation, indeed, they were of the world; but by regeneration, they were not of the world. Thus they became like to himself, being born again of that Holy Spirit, by whose all powerful operation, he took upon himself the form of a servant. But although they were not of the world, still was it necessary that they should remain in the world; therefore he continues, I ask not that thou wouldst take them out of the world. (St. Augustine, tract. 107. in Joan.)

**Ver. 18.** *As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.* He speaks of that mission, which agreed with him, as man, and become man for the salvation of mankind, to which also the apostles, and their successors were to co-operate, as the ministers and instruments of Christ, by virtue of their mission for him. (Witham) --- For the same intent as Christ himself was sent, were the apostles sent also: whence St. Paul says, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and he has placed in us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians v. 19.) (Glossarium.)

**Ver. 19.** *And for them do I sanctify myself*[6]. St. Augustine expounds it, I sanctify them, who are my members, in myself. The interpretation of St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril, seems preferable, that to *sanctify* in the style of Scriptures, is oftentimes the same as to offer up a sacrifice: so the sense here is, I sacrifice, and offer up myself on the cross for them and all mankind. (Witham) --- By this Christ shews, that he sanctified the apostles, by sanctifying himself; because they are the members of his body. (St. Augustine, tract. 107. in Joan.) --- Or, according to St. John Chrysostom, I offer myself up to be the victim in their behalf. For victims, and whatever is dedicated to God, are called holy. He, their head, was offered up, and they also are immolated, according to that of the apostle, Romans xii. Exhibit your members a living sacrifice, holy, &c. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxi. in Joan.)

**Ver. 20.** After having prayed for his apostles in particular, he now begins to pray for all that would afterwards, by their preaching, believe in his name; (St. Augustine, tract. 109. in Joan.) and by this he likewise comforts his disciples, shewing them, that they would prove the instruments of the salvation of others. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. 80. in Joan.) --- This divine prayer of Jesus Christ is a great comfort to all Christians; it is introduced in the holy Canon of the Mass, before the consecration, as here it was made just before his visible sacrifice on the cross. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21.** Christ does pray that his disciples may be one, as he and his heavenly Father are one; not that the unity may resemble the unity of persons in the divinity, by a perfect and exact likeness; but only as far as it is possible for men to imitate the perfections of God, as when he says, "Be ye merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful." (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxi. in Joan.)

**Ver. 22.** *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given to them.* St. John Chrysostom expounds this of the power of working miracles: St. Augustine rather understands the glory of heaven, which he had given, prepared, and designed to give them in heaven. This seems to be the sense by the 24th verse, where he says, *Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me, may be with me.* (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** I will make thy name known to them, by giving them, by means of the Holy Ghost, a perfect knowledge. For if they know Thee, they will likewise know that I am not different from Thee, but thy own well begotten Son. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxi. in Joan.)

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[1] Ver. 2. Ut omne quod dedisti ei, det eis vitam æternam, *Greek: ina pan o dedokas outo, dose autios zoen aionion.* That is, ut omnibus quos dedisti, &c.

[2] Ver. 3. Ut cognoscant te, &c. St. Augustine, tract. 105. p. 671. Ordo Verborum est, ut te, & quem misisti Jesum Christum, cognoscant solum verum Deum. See also St. Ambrose (lib. v. de fide, chap. ii. t. 4. p. 138.) where he treats of this verse at large. St. John Chrysostom gives this interpretation (hom. lxxix.) Solum verum Deum, &c. ad eorum qui dii non sunt differentiam. In the Greek, (hom. lxxx. p. 474. t. 8.) Ed. Montfaucon. *Greek: pros autidiastolen ton ouk onton theon phesi.* See likewise St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. xxxvi. p. 586.

[3] Ver. 7. Quia omnia quæ dedisti mihi, abs te sunt. That is, says St. Augustine, (tract. 106. p. 767.) cognoverunt, quia abs te sum, &c.

[4] Ver. 11. Serva eos in nomine tuo, quos dedisti mihi. Some Greek manuscripts have in nomine tuo, quod dedisti mihi, *Greek: o dedokas moi.* Or, as St. Cyril reads, *Greek: en onomati sou o dedokas moi.* which is the same by a Grecism, as *Greek: o dedokas.* --- Ut sint unum sicut & nos. St. John Chrysostom says, non æqualitate, sed pro homana facultate, or quantum hominibus fas est, *Greek: os anthropois dunaton.* (hom. *Greek: pb.* p. 484.) nov. Ed. Ben.

[5] Ver. 12. Cum essem, cum eis, &c. He speaks, says St. John Chrysostom, as man, *Greek: os anthropos dialegetai.* (hom. *Greek: pa.* p. 480.) --- In the same place, nisi filius perditionis, *Greek: ei me,* &c. nisi, it is not, *Greek: alla,* sed. --- Non perdom, that is, says St. John Chrysostom in the same place, quantum in me erit, non perdam ... non me impellente, vel relinquire: quod si sponte resiliant, non ex necessitate traham. *Greek: ei de aph eauton apodedosi, pros anagken ouch elko.* St. Augustine, *Quomodo diabolus intravit in cor Judæ, non intraret, nisi ille locum daret.*

[6] Ver. 19. Sanctifico meipsum. Quid est hoc, says St. Augustine, (tract. 108.) nisi eos in meipso Sanctifico, quoniam membra ejus sunt? St. John Chrysostom, (hom. *Greek: pb.* p. 484) Offero tibi Sacrificium, *Greek: prospero soi thusian.* St. Cyril says the same, lib. xi. in Joan. p. 989.

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## JOHN 18

**Ver. 1.** *Over the torrent, or brook Cedron,*[1] which ran betwixt Jerusalem and Mount Olivet, in the valley of Cedron, or of Hennon, or of Josaphat, not of Cedars, as in many Greek copies. See the history of Christ's Passion. (Matthew xxvi. and xxvii.) (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** Jesus here asks them, whom they were seeking, not as if he were ignorant of their errand, but to shew them, that of their own power they could do nothing, because, though he, whom they sought, was present, and stood before them, yet, they did not know him. (Theophylactus) --- The darkness of the night could not have been the reason why they did not

see him, because, as the evangelist observes, they had lanterns and torches with them, and if they could not see him, at least they might have known him by his voice; for how could Judas, their leader, who was one of his own apostles, be unable to know him by his voice. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 6.** Jesus again shews the Jews his power, and works another miracle before them, to give them another opportunity of being converted; but they would not: they still persevere in their hardness of heart; he therefore now delivers himself up to them, as now they can have no excuse for their incredulity. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 13.** Some are of opinion that Annas and Caiphas both dwelt in the same house. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 15.** Peter followed Jesus, but at a distance, for he was afraid. And so did another disciple. St. Jerome, and St. John Chrysostom, and after him, Theophylactus, with some others, believe that this other disciple was St. John himself. (Calmet)

**Ver. 17.** St. John gives here Peter's first denial, which is reunited to the other two by all the preceding evangelists. This is one of the circumstances, which the others may have neglected, to unite three similar facts, and relating to the same object. (Bible de Vence) --- St. Peter, the prince and head of the Church, was permitted to fall, to teach him to treat with more mildness and condescension those, whom he would afterwards have to raise out of the same miserable state of sin. One weak and frail man is placed over another, that seeing him unhappily fallen, he may give him his kind and helping hand, to free him from that unhappy state, in which he knows himself to have been. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Of all which our divine Saviour suffered in the court of Caiphas, nothing so much affected him as the dangerous fall of Peter, the chief of all his apostles, who had received the most signal favours from him. He had boasted that very night, that although all the rest of the disciples should abandon their master, he would never forsake him. Yet, see the weakness and inconstancy of human nature; at the voice of a poor maid, he forthwith denies his master; repeats his denial a second, and a third time, and even swears with an imprecation, that he never knew the man. O what is man, when he confides too much in himself! Let us look to ourselves, and see, that we never fall into the same unfortunate state. But if we have the misfortune to imitate this apostle in his fall, let us likewise imitate him in his speedy repentance: for immediately after his fall, going out, he wept bitterly; a practice which, it is said, he ever after retained, as often as he heard the cock crow. (Butler's Lives of the Saints)

**Ver. 21.** *Why askest thou me?* Caiphas, in quality of judge, was to examine the crimes laid to the charge of the accused, by the testimony of witnesses. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Annas sent him bound to Caiphas.* Christ was but a little while there: for both the box on the ear, given to our Saviour, and St. Peter's denial, were at the house of Caiphas: so that St. John does not here observe the order of time. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *Tha they might eat the Pasch.* They, who by the Pasch will always understand the paschal-lamb, look upon it certain from these words, that the Scribes and Pharisees at least, had deferred eating the paschal-lamb, till Friday the 15th day, in the evening: but there are passages in the Scripture, which shew, that the word *Pasch*, or *Phase*, comprehended not only the paschal sacrifice of the lamb, but also the sacrifices, that were to be eaten with unleavened bread, during the seven days of the paschal solemnity, as Deuteronomy xvi. 2. *thou shalt offer up the Phase, or Pasch, to the Lord, of sheep and oxen.* And 1 Paralipomenon xxxv. 8. *They gave to the priests to make the Phase, or Pasch, in altogether two thousand six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen.* The oxen, therefore, were also given, to make up the Pasch, and were comprehended by the word *Pasch*, or *Phase*. It might, therefore, be these paschal sacrifices, and not the paschal-lamb, which the priests designed to partake of, and therefore would not enter into the palace of Pilate. See Tillemont against Lamy, on the 2nd passage out of St. John, tom. ii. p. 696. See also the Lexicon of Mr. Heure on the word *Paque*. (Witham)



**Ver. 35.** It pleased God, that Christ, who was to die both for the Jews and the Gentiles, should be betrayed by the one, and put to death by the other. (Bristow)

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[1] Ver. 1. Cedron, not Cedrorum. In most Greek copies, *Greek: ton Kedron*. In some manuscripts *Greek: tou Kedron*. So the Protestant translation, the brook Cedron.

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## JOHN 19

**Ver. 1.** Pilate's motive, for ordering our Saviour to be scourged, was no other than this; that the Jews might be satisfied with these his numerous sufferings, and might no longer seek his death. For the same reason, likewise, he permitted his soldiers to inflict those unheard of cruelties, related in the sequel. (St. Augustine, tract. 110. in Joan.)

**Ver. 11.** *Unless it were given, or permitted thee from above. Therefore, he that delivered me to thee, hath the greater sin.* Some expound this of Judas; others, rather of the high priest Caiphas, with the Jewish council: for they could not be ignorant that Jesus was their Messiah, having seen the miracles Jesus did, and knowing the predictions of the prophets. (Witham) --- Lest any should think, from what our Saviour had said, that Pilate was not in fault, in this place, he here adds, that he that had delivered him up, had the greater sin: God, indeed, had permitted it; but still these instruments of his death were not without fault. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxiii. in Joan.) --- Christ had been delivered into the power of Pilate through envy, and Pilate was about to exercise that power through fear. But though this last motive of fear can never justify any one, who condemns the innocent, yet still it is much more pardonable than the motive of envy, which was the incentive of the Jewish multitude. (St. Augustine, tract. 116. in Joan.) --- Judas delivered Jesus into the hands of the priest, but both the priests and the people delivered him up to Pontius Pilate.

**Ver. 14.** *The Parasceve of the Pasch;* that is, the day before the paschal sabbath. The eve of every sabbath was called the Parasceve, or day of preparation. But this was the eve of a high sabbath, viz. that which fell in the paschal week. (Challoner) --- It was about the sixth hour when they crucified him. St. Mark, in his gospel, says, it was at the third hour that Jesus was crucified. These two evangelists are easily reconciled, if we consider that according to the custom of the Jews, all that took place between the third hour and the sixth hour of their day, was said to have happened in the third hour: their days being divided into four parts of three hours each, in the same manner as the nights were into four watches, of three hours each. St. Mark, therefore, might say very well, that the crucifixion of our Saviour took place in the third hour: though it might have been towards the conclusion of this general division of the day: whilst St. John, with a reason equally as good, says that it happened about the sixth hour. (John Nicolaus, in his marginal notes on St. Thomas Aquinas' Aurea Catena.)

**Ver. 17.** St. John makes no mention of what took place on the way to Calvary, when Jesus, being worn out by fatigue, could not proceed any farther, and they were obliged to relieve him of his burden, and to give it to a man, named Simon, of Cyrene, to carry for him, as is related in St. Matthew xxvii. 32. and St. Mark xv. 21. (Calmet) --- For the honour paid in the early ages to the holy cross see St. Cyril, lib. vi. cont. Julian.; St. Jerome, ep. xvii.; St. Paulin. ep. xi.

**Ver. 19.** He is the king, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also. But it is not without reason, that he is called king of the Jews. For they were the true olive (Romans xi.); and we, the wild olive, have been ingrafted, and made partakers of the virtue of the true olive. Christ, therefore, is the king of the Jews, circumcised, not in the flesh, but in the heart, not according to the letter, but the spirit. (St. Augustine, tract. 118. in Joan.)

**Ver. 20.** As there were probably many Gentiles at Jerusalem at this time, on account of the festival day, this inscription was written in three different languages, that all might be able to read it. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxiv. in Joan.) --- It was written in Hebrew, on account of the Jews, who glorified in the law of God; in Greek, on account of the wise men of all nations; and in Latin, because of the Romans, who at that time commanded almost every nation of the earth. (St. Augustine, tract. 118. in Joan.)

**Ver. 23.** *They made four parts.* Christ's upper garment had seams, which the four executioners could easily divide; but his under garment, or vest, was *without seam*, so that being cut, it would have been of no use. (Witham) --- This coat without seam is a figure of the unity of the Church. (St. Cyprian, de unit. Eccles.) --- The Rev. Fred. Nolan, of Woodford, in Essex, in his late work, entitled, *Objections of a Churchman to uniting with the Bible Society*, after quoting 2 Peter iii. 15, 16, says: "That the Bible may, therefore, prove the remote, but innocent cause of harm, is not, I apprehend, to be disputed, if we are to admit of its own authority:" p. 23, and again, p. 24, "that the present mode of circulating the Scriptures must prove a most effectual specific for multiplying sects and schisms; and consequently, for increasing, to an infinite degree, the greatest evil, under which Christianity has suffered, from the time of its promulgation, down to the memorable epoch of this happy invention, for the establishment of Christian *faith*, and the extension of Christian *unanimity*." P. 62 in the same work, "That the Bible is the foundation of our religion, is new doctrine, unless in the divinity of the conventicle. We are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. (Ephesians ii. 20.) On this foundation others still build, who are labourers together with God; (1 Corinthians xi. 9. 10.) of which divine co-operation the successors of the apostles have an express promise, to the end of the world. (Matthew xxviii. 20.) And by persons thus authorized (John xx. 21.) apostolical tradition has been delivered down to the present day, p. 63. The *one body*, of which our Lord was resolved his Church should consist, was to have *one faith*, (Ephesians iv. 4, 5.) it was to contain *no schism*, (1 Corinthians xii. 25.) but the present confederacy is formed on the principle of combining every sect and party, and this, while we have received an express prohibition against associating with those, who reject apostolical traditions, committed to the Church." (2 Thessalonians iii. 6. 14.) In a foot-note on the above, the learned divine very appositely cites St. Ignatius, in which quotation we find these emphatic words: *Greek: Me planasthe adelphoi mou, eis tis schizonti akolouthei, Basileian theou ou Kleronomei.* Be not deceived, my brethren, not only acknowledged schismatics, but whoever shall join with a schismatic, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. The same apostolic Father, in another part, adds: he who corrupts the faith of God, for which Christ suffered, shall go into unquenchable fire: *Greek: eis to pur to asbeston choresei.* St. Alexander, in the fourth century, says of the Arians: that seamless garment, which the murderers of Jesus Christ would not divide, these men have dared to rip asunder. *Greek: Tou arrehton chitona schisai eiolmesan.*

**Ver. 27.** *The disciple took her to his own*[1] home, or into his own are, not for his mother, by the Greek expression. See St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Because it was the Parasceve.* It is also called, (ver. 14.) *the day of preparation of the Pasch.* Literally, *the Parasceve of the Pasch.* And (ver. 31.) *the Jews, because it was the preparation, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for that was a great sabbath day, &c.* Some pretend, by these expressions, to prove that Friday, the year Christ suffered, was not the first and great day of the *feast of Azyms*, but only the day of preparation, and that on Friday night the Jews eat the paschal lamb, and not the night before, or Thursday night, as Christ had done with his disciples. But according to the common exposition, Friday is here called *the day of preparation*, for the great and solemn sabbath, which happened in the paschal week. See Tillemont on the 5th passage out of John, p. 698, section 11. and 12. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *There came out blood and water*, which naturally could not come from a dead body. (Witham) --- Hence it is, that the sacred mysteries flow; as often, therefore, as thou approachest

the awful cup, approach it as if thou wert going to drink from thy Saviour's sacred side. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxiv. in Joan.) --- The holy Fathers say, that the spouse [i.e. the Church] of Jesus Christ was here taken out of his side, whilst sleeping on the cross, as Eve was from Adam's side, when he was cast asleep in Paradise.

**Ver. 36.** *You shall not break a bone of him.* This, which was literally spoken of the paschal lamb, (Exodus xii. 46.) the evangelist applies to Christ, of whom the lamb was a figure. (Witham) --- This had been said of the paschal lamb, which was a figure of Jesus Christ. (Exodus xii. 46. and Numbers ix. 12.)

**Ver. 37.** This text is from Zacharias xii. 10. and seems to refer most literally to Jesus Christ.

**Ver. 39.** *About a hundred pounds.* This seems a great quantity. It may be, they did not use it all. And besides, it was the custom of the Jews, at their great burials, to cover the body with spices and perfumes. (Witham)

**Ver. 41.** This is added, lest it should be said, that it was not Christ, but some other, that rose from the dead; or at least, that he rose by the virtue of some other person reposing there. (Calmet).

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[1] Ver. 27. *Accepit eam discipulus in sua.* Not in suam. *Greek: eis ta idia.*

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## JOHN 20

**Ver. 1.** As our Saviour had been interred in great haste, the holy women who had before accompanied Jesus in all his journeys, brought perfumes to embalm his sacred body again, in a manner more proper, than Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had been able to do before. St. John makes mention of Mary Magdalene only, because it was his intention to give a particular relation of all that she did: but we learn from the other evangelists, that there were three holy women at the sepulchre together, viz. Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome. (Calmet) --- This was on the first day of the week, the morrow of the sabbath. (Bible de Vence) --- Christ rose again, leaving the stone and seals still lying on the sepulchre. But as this was to be believed by others also, after the resurrection, the tomb was opened, and thus the belief of what had taken place, propagated. This it was that struck Magdalene; for as soon as she saw the stone rolled from the sepulchre, without entering, or even looking into it, she immediately ran, in the ardour for her affection, to carry the news to the disciples. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxiv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 5.** *He saw the linen cloths lying.* St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that Christ's body being buried with myrrh, the linen would stick as fast to the body as pitch, so that it would be impossible to steal, or take away the body without the linen cloths. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *He saw and believed.* He did not yet believe that Jesus was risen from the dead, because he was still ignorant that he was to rise from the dead. For although the apostles had so often heard their divine Master speak in the most plain terms of his resurrection, still being so much accustomed to parables, they did not understand, and imagined something else was meant by these words. (St. Augustine, tract. 120. in Joan.)

**Ver. 14.** It may be asked, why Magdalene, after putting the question to the angels, turns around, without waiting for the answer. No doubt, as soon as she had spoken, the heavenly messengers perceived their Lord behind Mary, and by their looks and actions, gave her to understand that they beheld their Lord. This caused her immediately to look behind her. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 15.** *If thou hast taken him away.* Thinking him, as the evangelist remarks, to be the gardener, how comes it, that without saying whom she sought, she asks if he had taken him away? Because such was the ardour of her love, that she could not imagine any one could think of any other but him, of whom her own mind was so full. (St. Gregory, hom. xxv. in Evan.)

**Ver. 16.** *Jesus saith to her, Mary.* Magdalene, now in grief and tears, knew not Jesus, till he called upon her by her name, and with his usual voice: then with joy, she cried out, *Rabboni, Master.* And Jesus saith to her, *touch me not,* &c. The meaning of which words seems to be: I am not yet leaving thee, nor *ascending* to the Father, so that thou mayest have time enough to embrace my feet afterwards; now *go to my disciples,* &c. (Witham) --- Magdalene, having inquired where he had placed him, appears to have turned towards the angels, to inquire the cause of the awe and reverence she had observed in them. Upon this, Jesus calls upon her by name, and she, turning again towards him, discovers him by his voice. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxv. in Joan.)

**Ver. 17.** I will not leave you again; be not in a hurry to touch me; you shall all have this pleasure. I will remain with you some time, before my ascension. Announce my resurrection to my apostles. You shall see me again. This is the interpretation most modern commentators put upon this place. Others suppose, that Magdalene imagined he was risen from the dead to live with men as before, like Lazarus. He addresses these words to her to disabuse her of this notion. (Calmet)

**Ver. 19.** *And the doors were*[1] *shut, or being shut;* and remaining still shut, his glorified body entered by penetration through the doors, as he did at his resurrection. Maldonatus take notice, that Calvin was the first that denied this, against the belief of all the ancient Fathers and interpreters, who call this a miracle of divine power. (Witham) --- The same power which could bring Christ's whole body, entire in all its dimensions, through the doors, can, without the least question, make the same body really present in the sacrament; though both the one and the other be above our comprehension. (Challoner) --- Therefore it is a want of faith to limit the power of Christ, by the ordinary rules of place, and to deny that he can be in the blessed Sacrament, and on so many altars as he pleaseth. We do not still join the Ubiquists or Brentiani, who, quite contrary to the Zuinglians, maintain, that the humanity of Jesus Christ is in every place where his divinity is. This is contrary to faith. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21.** *As the Father hath sent me.* The word *mission*, when applied to our Saviour Christ, sometimes signifies his eternal procession from the Father, and sometimes his mission, as he was sent into the world to become man, and the Redeemer of mankind: the first mission agrees with him, as the eternal Son of God; the second, as man, or as both God and man. The mission which Christ here gives his apostles, is like this latter mission, which this great difference, that graces and divine gifts were bestowed on Christ, even as man, without measure: and the apostles had a much lesser share in both these missions. See St. Augustine, lib. iv. de Trin. chap. xix. xx. tom. 4. p. 829. and seq. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ here shews his commission, and so giveth power to his apostles to forgive sins, as when he gave them commission to preach and baptize throughout the world, he made mention of his own power. Hence, whosoever denies the apostles, and their successors, the right of preaching, baptizing, and remitting sins, must consequently deny that Christ, as man, had the power to do the same. St. Cyprian, in the 3rd century, ep. lxxiii. says: "for the Lord, in the first place, gave to St. Peter, on whom he built his Church, *super quem ædificavit Ecclesiam*, the power that what he loosed on earth, should be loosed also in heaven. And after his resurrection, he speaks also to his apostles, saying, as the Father sent me, &c. whose sins you shall forgive," &c. Why, on this occasion, passing over the other apostles, does Jesus Christ address Peter alone? Because he was the mouth, and chief of the apostles. (St. John Chrysostom, de Sacerd. lib. ii. chap. 1.)

**Ver. 22.** *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* It was said, (John vii. 39.) *that the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not glorified.* The sense must need be, that the holy Spirit was not given in

that solemn manner, nor with so large an effusion of spiritual gifts and graces, till the day of Pentecost, after Christ's ascension: but the just, at all times, from the beginning of the world, were sanctified by the grace of the Holy Ghost, as no doubt the apostles were, before this time. Now at this present, he gave them the power of forgiving sins. (Witham) --- Some say, that our Saviour did not then confer the Holy Ghost on his disciples, but only prepared them for the receiving of the Holy Ghost. But surely we may understand, that even then they received some portion of spiritual grace, the power, not indeed of raising the dead, and working other miracles, but of forgiving sins. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxv. in Joan.) --- St. Cyril of Alexandria, speaking of the remission of sins, promised in this text, asks, "How then, or why, did Christ impart to his disciples a power, which belongs to the divine Spirit, should likewise possess the power of forgiving sins, and of retaining such as they judged expedient; that Holy Spirit, according to his good pleasure, forgiving and retaining, through the ministry of men." (In Joan. lib. xii. chap. 1.)

**Ver. 23.** *Whose sins you shall forgive,*[2] &c. These words clearly express the power of forgiving sins, which, as God, he gave to his apostles, and to their successors, bishops and priests, to forgive sins in his name, as his ministers, and instruments, even though they are sinners themselves. For in this, they act not by their own power, nor in their own name, but in the name of God, who as the principal cause, always remitteth sins. This is generally allowed to be done by God's ministers in the sacrament of baptism, as to the remission of original sin; and the Catholic Church has always held the same of God's ministers, in the sacrament of penance. (See the Protestant Common Prayer Book, in the Visitation of the Sick.) --- *Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained:* by which we see, that to priests is given a power to be exercised, not only by *forgiving*, but also by *retaining*; not only by *absolving* and *loosing*, but also by *binding*, by *refusing*, or *deferring* absolution, according to the dispositions that are found in sinners, when they accuse themselves of their sins. From hence must needs follow an obligation on the sinner's part, to declare, and confess their sins in particular, to the ministers of God, who are appointed the spiritual judges, and physicians of their souls. A judge must know the cause, and a physician the distemper: the one to pronounce a just sentence, the other to prescribe suitable remedies. (Witham) --- See here the commission, stamped by the broad seal of heaven, by virtue of which, the pastors of Christ's Church absolve repenting sinners upon their confession. (Challoner)

**Ver. 24.** *Thomas ... was not with them.* Yet no doubt the like power of forgiving sins was given to him, either at this time or afterwards. See St. Cyril. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *I will not believe.* St. Cyril thinks, that the grief and trouble St. Thomas was under, might partly excuse his want of belief: however, we may take notice with St. Gregory, the his backwardness in believing, was permitted for the good of Christians in general, that thereby they might be more convinced of Christ's resurrection. (Witham) --- The doubts of St. Thomas are of greater advantage to the strengthening of our faith, than the ready belief of the rest of the apostles. For when he proceeded to touch, to assure his faith, our minds, laying aside every, even the least doubt, are firmly established in faith. (St. Gregory the Great)

**Ver. 27.** *Put in thy finger hither.* Christ, to shew he knew all things, made use of the very same words in which St. Thomas had expressed his incredulous dispositions. Our blessed Redeemer would have the mark of the spear, and the prints of the nails to remain in his glorified body, to convince them it was the same body: and that they might be for ever marks of his victory and triumph over sin and the devil. The evangelist does not say, that St. Thomas went and touched Christ's body, though it is very probable he did as he was ordered. But how could a body that entered in, when the doors were shut, be *felt*, or be *palpable*? St. John Chrysostom[2] answers, that Christ at that time permitted his body to be palpable, and to resist another body, to induce St. Thomas to believe the resurrection; and that when he pleased, his body could not be felt. In like manner, his body was either visible or invisible, as he had a will it should be. In fine, he could eat in their sight, though he stood not in need of any nourishment. See St. Augustine.

*Be not incredulous, but faithful.* In the Greek, be not an *unbeliever*, but a *believer*. --- *My Lord, and my God;* that is, I confess thee to be my Lord, and my God; and with the Greek article, to be

him, that is, *the Lord*, and *the God*. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 19. 29. Cum fores essent clausæ: januis clausis, *Greek: ton thuron kekleisamenon*. See St. Ambrose, in Psal. cxviii.; St. Augustine, tract. 121. in Joan. De Agone Christiano, chap. 24. 4. 6. p. 257. Epist. ad Volusianum. t. 3. p. 405, where he says, *demus Deum aliquid posse, quod nos fateamur investigare non posse*. In talibus rebus tota ratio facti est potentia facientis. See St. Cyril on this place, lib. xii. p. 1092, 1103, and 1107. St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxv. p. 315. Lat. Ed. and hom. lxxxvii. Ed. Ben. p. 520, *Greek: to gar outo lepton kai kouphon os kekleisamenon eiselthein ton thuron*. &c. See St. Jerome, ad Eustochium in Epitaph. Paulæ. t. 4. p. 685. and lib. i. cont. Jovin. t. 4. p. 178; St. Leo, serm. i. de Resurr.; St. Epiphanius, her. lxiv. p. 593. Ed. Petav. &c.

[2] Ver. 23. [27.] Whose sins you shall forgive, &c. See St. Cyril, lib. xii. in Joan. p. 1101, *Greek: metanoousi sugginoskontes*. St. John Chrysostom, hom. lxxxvi. p. 517. nov. Ed., *Magna est sacerdotum dignitas, quorum remisieritis peccata, &c.* See also lib. iii. de sacerdotibus. t. 1. p. 383. nov. Ed. Ibid., *noli esse incredulus, sed fidelis, Greek: kai me ginou apistos, alla pistos*.

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## JOHN 21

**Ver. 3.** How comes it that Peter, after his conversion, should return to his fishing, when Jesus Christ had said, that he that sets his hand to the plough, and looks back, is not worthy of the kingdom of heaven? The employments they applied to before their conversion, without being guilty of sin, these they might, without fault, exercise, after their conversion: therefore Peter returned to his fishing; but St. Matthew never returned to his custom-house, because when once converted, we never can be allowed to give ourselves to these employments, which of themselves lead to sin. And there are many pursuits which can scarcely, or not at all, be followed without sin. (St. Gregory, hom. xxiv. in Evan.)

**Ver. 5.** *Have you any meat?*[1] Have you any thing to eat? This is what is literally signified, both in the Latin and in the Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *It is the Lord.* St. John Chrysostom says, we may here see the different characters of the two apostles, Peter and John; the former is more ardent, the latter more sublime; the first more vehement, the last more penetrating; for these reasons, John was the first to know Christ, Peter the first to hasten to him. (Hom. lxxxvi.)

**Ver. 8.** The evangelist praises Peter, and excuses the other apostles: all come to Christ; the former leaving his boat, his companions, his nets and prey, arrives more expeditiously; the latter with the impediments of the boat and nets, &c. &c. arrive also, but not so readily; a just figure this of religious, who leave all to go directly to God, and of those who remain in the world, and have to navigate a treacherous element with imminent danger of shipwreck. (Maldonatus) --- The poet Sedulius writes thus on the nets:

Pendula fluctivagam traxerunt retia prædam,  
Per typicam noscenda viam; nam retia dignis  
Lucida sunt præcepta Dei, quibus omnis in illa  
Dextra parte manens concluditur, ac simul ulnis  
Fertur apostolicis Domini ad vestigia Christi.

**Ver. 9.** *Hot coals lying, and a fish laid thereon, and bread.* The fish caught in the net were not yet drawn to land. These things, then, were created out of nothing, or miraculously transported thither, by the divine power. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty-three;* a figure of the great number to be converted by the labours of the apostles. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *And none of them who were at meat, durst ask him, who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.* It is likely he appeared to them with a countenance different, and brighter than before his death; yet they were presently so convinced it was Jesus, that they were ashamed to ask or doubt of it. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to his disciples.* He had appeared to them more than thrice, even the very day of his resurrection. (Matthew xxviii. 16.) Here it is called the third time either because it was the third different day; or because it was the third time that he had them appeared to a considerable number together. After this, he appeared to them frequently, and conversed with them for forty days, till his ascension. See Acts i. 3. and 1 Corinthians xv. 5. (Witham) --- This must be understood of the third day, or of the third time, that our Saviour appeared to his apostles assembled: the first day, being the day of his resurrection; the second, eight days after, when St. Thomas saw, and believed; and on this day of their fishing. (St. Augustine, tract. 122. in Joan.) --- The evangelists relates ten different manifestations of our Saviour, after his resurrection. First, he was seen by the women at the sepulchre; 2ndly, he was again seen by the same holy women, returning from the sepulchre; 3rdly, by St. Peter; 4thly, by the two going to Emmaus; 5thly, by many at Jerusalem, when Thomas was not with them; 6thly, at the time when St. Thomas saw him; 7thly, at the sea of Tiberias; 8thly, by the eleven, on a mountain of Galilee, according to St. Matthew; 9thly, according to St. Mark, by the disciples, at their refreshment, because he was going to sup with them no more; and 10thly, on the day of his ascension, raised from the earth into heaven. (St. Augustine, de Concord. Ev. lib. iii. chap. 25.)

**Ver. 15.** *Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?* That is, more than any one of these love me. Christ puts this question thrice to St. Peter, that this triple protestation of love, says St. Augustine, might correspond to his triple denial. St. Peter did not answer that he loved him more than the rest did, which he could not know, but modestly said: *yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee:* and the third time, *thou knowest all things,* and the hearts of all men, *thou knowest how much I love thee.* At each protestation, Jesus answered, *feed my lambs;* and the third time, *feed my sheep.* To feed, in the style of the Scriptures, is to guide, rule, and govern. St. Ambrose and some others take notice, as if by the *lambs*, might be understood the people, and by the *sheep*, those placed over them, as bishops, priests, &c. but others make no such difference in this place, betwixt *lambs* and *sheep*, only as comprehending all the members of Christ's Church, of what condition soever, even the rest of the apostles. For here it was that Christ gave to St. Peter that power which he had promised him, (Matthew xvi. 18.) that is, He now made St. Peter head[1] of his whole Church, as he had insinuated at the first meeting, when St. Andrew brought him to our Saviour, when he changed his name from Simon to Peter: again, when he chose him, and made him the first of his twelve apostles; but particularly, when he said, *thou art Peter, (a rock) and upon this rock will I build my Church,* &c. Upon this account the Catholic Church, from the very first ages, hath always revered, and acknowledged the supreme power of the successors of St. Peter, in spirituals, over all Christian Churches. This appears also by the writings of Tertullian, of St. Irenæus, of St. Cyprian, of the greatest doctors and bishops, both of the west and east, of St. Jerome, St. Augustine, of St. John Chrysostom, in several places, of the first general Councils, particularly of the great Council of Chalcedon, &c. (Witham) --- *Simon (son) of John.* The father's name is here added, to discriminate him from Simon Thaddeus, that every one might know that the chief care of the universal Church was not given to any other apostle but Peter. This Simon of John is the same as Simon Bar-jona. See Matthew xvi. 17. (Menochius) --- St. Peter had three times renounced his master; and Jesus, to give him an opportunity of repairing his fault by a triple confession, three several times demanded of him, if he loved him more than these? That, as St. Augustine remarks, he who had thrice denied through *fear* might thrice confess through *love*. (Calmet)

**Ver. 16-17.** The lambs and the sheep of our Saviour here mean the faithful, who compose his Church, without any distinction of Jew or Gentile. St. Peter, by these words, is appointed to take

charge of the whole flock, as being the chief and prince of the apostles. He is, in some manner, the pastor, not of the sheep only, but of the pastors themselves. They have each their own flock to look after; but to him is committed the care of all; he alone is the pastor of all. (Calmet) --- *Feed my sheep*. Our Lord had promised the spiritual supremacy to St. Peter; (St. Matthew xvi. 19.) and here he fulfils that promise, by charging him with the superintendency of all his sheep, without exception; and consequently of his whole flock, that is, of his whole Church. (Challoner)

**Ver. 18.** *Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands ... signifying by what death he should glorify God;* that is, that a cross should be the instrument of his death and martyrdom. --- *Whither thou wouldst not:* which is no more than to say, that a violent death is against the natural inclination of any man, even though he be ever so willing, and disposed to undergo it. (Witham) --- By this is meant the martyrdom of St. Peter, which took place thirty-four years after this. He was first cast into prison, and then led out to punishment as Christ had foretold him. He stretched out his arms to be chained, and again he stretched them out, when he was crucified; for he died on the cross, as the ancients assure us. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** *Lord, what shall this man do?* St. John Chrysostom thinks, it was the love and friendship, that St. Peter had for St. John, that moved him to ask this question. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Jesus saith: so I will have him remain,*[3] &c. That is, in case I will have him remain; or, as it is in the Greek, *if I will have him remain, what is that to thee?* It is thy duty, and thy concern, to follow me. (Witham) --- When Christ told St. Peter to follow him, he meant, that he should go like himself to the death of the cross; but when he says of St. John, *So I will have him to remain till I come*, he insinuates that his beloved disciple should not undergo a violent death; but remain in the world, till he should visit him by death, and conduct him to glory. It may likewise be understood of the Revelation, in which our Saviour manifested himself in his glory to this his beloved disciple. In the Greek, it is, *if I will have him to remain;* and this is the true reading, according to Estius, and Jansenius, bishop of Ghent, authorized by many Latin copies. Others refer these words of Christ to his coming to destroy Jerusalem: an epoch which St. John survived.

**Ver. 23.** *This saying, therefore:*[4] that is, a report went about among the disciples, the John was *not to die*. But St. John himself, as St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom observe, took care to tell us, that Christ said not so. Nor do we find any sufficient grounds to think that St. John is not dead. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *This is that disciple, &c.* Some conjecture, that these words were added by the Church of Ephesus. But the ancient Fathers, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril, St. Augustine, expound them as they do the rest, without any such remark. Nor is it unusual for a person to write in this manner of himself, as of a third person. It is what St. John hath done of himself, chap. xix. ver. 35. (Witham) --- Some conjecture, that these words were added by the Church of Ephesus, to point out St. John to be the real author of this history, and to record their own assent to this his testimony. But the ancient Fathers give no such comment. Nor is it unusual for a person to write of himself, as of a third person. It is what St. John hath done before.

**Ver. 25.** *The world*[5] *itself, I think, &c.* It is an hyperbolical way of speaking, says St. Cyril, common enough, even in the holy Scriptures; and only signifies, that a very great number of things, which Christ did and said, have not been recorded. (Witham) --- This is a figure of speech, called hyperbole, and only means that it would require many, many books, to contain all the various actions and sayings of our divine Lord.

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[1] Ver. 5. Numquid pulmentarium habetis? *Greek: me ti prosphagion.*

[2] Ver. 15. He made St. Peter head of his whole Church. See Tertullian, lib. de pudicitia, p. 556. Ed. Rig. where he calls the successor of St. Peter, Pontificem maximum, & Episcopum Episcoporum; St. Irenæus, lib. iii. chap. 3; St. Cyprian, ep. 55. p. 84, Ed. Rig. Navigare audent &



ad Petri Cathedram, atque ad Ecclesiam principalem. See St. Jerome, epist. lvii. and lviii. p. 175. nov. Ed. St. Augustine. --- St. John Chrysostom on this place, hom. lxxxviii. p. 525. nov. Ed. Cur. aliis prætermisissis (Petrum) alloquitur? he answers, *Greek: ekkritos en ton Apostolon, kai stoma ton matheton, kai koruphe tou chorou*, cœtus illius caput. ... fratrum præfecturam suscipe; *Greek: egcheirizetai ten prostasian ton adelphon*. And a little after, p. 527. putting the objection, why St. James, and not St. Peter, was made bishop of Jerusalem, he answers; because St. Peter was to be over the whole universe; *Greek: tes oikoumenes echeirotone*, &c. The same St. John Chrysostom, lib. ii. de Sacerd. chap. 1. tom. 1. p. 372. nov. Ed. Ben. qua de causa ille sanguinem effudit suum? certe ut oves eas acquireret, quarum curam tum Petro, tum Petri Successoribus committebat. --- Conc. Chalced. Lab. tom. 4. p. 565. The Council thus writes to St. Leo; omnibus constitutus interpres, quibus tu quidem tanquam caput membris præeras, &c. *Greek: pasin ermeneus kathestamenos*, &c. And p. 368. Petrus per Leonem ita locutus est; *Greek: Petros dia Leontos tauta exephonesen*. See Annotation for Matthew xvi. ver. 18.

[3] Ver. 22. Sic eum volo manere, *Greek: ean auton thelo menein*.

[4] Ver. 23. St. Augustine, tract. 124. p. 819. D. Hanc opinionem Joannes ipse abstulit, non hoc dixisse Dominum, aperta contradictione declarans: cur emin subjungeret, non dixit Jesus, non moritur, nisi ne hominum cordibus quod falsum fuerat inhæreret? &c. So St. John Chrysostom says, he spoke this to prevent or correct this mistake. p. 528. *Greek: diorthoutai*.

[5] Ver. 25. Nec ipsum arbitror mundum, &c. St. Cyril on this expression, p. 1123, *Greek: uperbolikos*. See St. Augustine at the end of his 124. tract. where he says, such hyperboles are found elsewhere in the holy Scripture.

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## ACTS

### THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

#### INTRODUCTION.

St. Luke, who had published his gospel, wrote also a second volume, which, from the first ages, hath been called *the Acts of the Apostles*. Not that we can look upon this work, as a history of what was done by all the apostles, who were dispersed in different nations; but we have here a short view of the first establishment of the Christian Church, a small part of St. Peter's preaching and actions, set down in the first twelve chapters, and a more particular account of St. Paul's apostolical labours, in the following chapters, for about thirty years, till the year 63, and the 4th year of Nero, where these acts end. (Witham) --- St. Luke, after giving us the history of the life, actions, miracles, sufferings, and instructions of Jesus Christ, in his gospel, here give us the life and actions of the apostles, the primitive Christians, and particularly all that relates to St. Paul, by way of an appendix. And what could he give more useful or more important to the Church, whether we consider the noble examples he offers for our imitation, or the excellent lessons for our improvement in spiritual wisdom? He describes in this book the accomplishment of many things that had been predicted by Jesus Christ, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the prodigious change effected in the minds and hearts of the apostles: we behold here the model of Christian perfection, in the lives of the first Christians, and the practice of the most eminent virtues, in the conduct of the blessed apostles; the miraculous operations of the holy Spirit, in the conversion of the Gentiles, and this wonder of wonders, the foundation of the holy Catholic Church, the establishment of the spiritual kingdom of God promised through all the inspired oracles, and the daily addition which the Lord made to his Church, of such as should be saved. (chap. 2. ver. 47. and chap. xv. ver. 5.) --- St. Luke has entitled this work, *the Acts of the Apostles*, that we may seek therein, says St. John Chrysostom, (tom. 5. hom. xii.) not so much the miracles that the

apostles performed, as their good deeds, and eminent virtues. In appearing to give us a simple history, says St. Jerome, this holy physician furnishes us with as many remedies, to cure the maladies of our souls, as he gives us words for our instruction. (Ep. 103.) --- It is thought, that his principal design was to oppose to the false acts of the apostles, that were then in circulation, a true and authentic history of the actions of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Catholic Church has ever held this work in such great esteem, that it has not only superseded every pretended history of the kind, that preceded it, but also every ascititious one that has succeeded it. (St. Augustine, de consen. Evang. lib. iv. chap. 8.) --- It is very probable, that St. Luke wrote his acts at Rome, whilst he was near St. Paul, during the time of his confinement, for he remained with him till his deliverance. There can be no doubt that the work was written in Greek, and in a more pure and polished style, than we find in any other writings of the New Testament. St. Luke generally cites the Septuagint, apparently because he was ignorant of the Hebrew; and because, St. Paul more frequently having to preach to the Gentiles, preferred citing the sacred text in the language known in common, sooner than in Hebrew, which was understood by few. See St. Jerome, in Isai. vi. and again, tradit. Hebr. in Genes. 45. --- The Catholic Church has ever admitted this book into the canon of Scriptures; though many heretics, says St. Augustine, have rejected it. (ep. 253. and lib. de util. cred. 7.) St. John Chrysostom, (hom. i. in Acta) complains, that this book, in his time, was not sufficiently attended to, which he esteems as no less useful than the gospel itself. Erasmus, in his preface to the Acts, says, that he had, in the first instance, some notion of adding this book to St. Luke's gospel, as they are both addressed to the same person, and the Acts are not inconsiderable part of the sacred history; for, as the gospel shews the seed committed to the earth, and sown in the field, the Acts represent it as taking root, shooting up, and producing its fruit. --- The Acts have not uniformly held the same place in the Testament which they hold at present. Sometimes this book was inserted immediately before the book of Revelation, as St. Augustine and others insinuate. At other times, we find it between the epistles of St. Paul and the canonical epistles. Some persons express their surprise, that St. Luke, who was the inseparable companion of St. Paul, has not given the account of St. Paul's martyrdom. St. John Chrysostom (hom. i. in Acta) gives an excellent solution: "the apostles, and other apostolic men, wrote little, but did a great deal." The martyrdom of St. Paul, that took place in the public theatre of Rome itself, and before the eyes of all the Christians of this capital of the world, could not remain unknown, but the voyages and other circumstances of his life, too useful to the Church to be suffered to pass into oblivion, called for the exertions of St. Luke's eloquent pen, which, though admirably accommodated to an historic design, is not wholly free from Hebraisms, and Syriacisms. The Acts of the Apostles include the history of the infant Church, from the day of our Lord's ascension into heaven, till the deliverance of St. Paul, two years after his arrival at Rome, i.e. a space of thirty years, from the year 33, to the year 63 of Jesus Christ, or from the 19th year of Tiberius, till the 9th year of Nero. This golden book paints, as it were, the face of the primeval Christian Church; it places before our eyes the singular providence of God, in founding and protecting his Church, and how the apostles, (in spite of every opposition of the armed power of the whole world, to oppress the gospel,) without any foreign assistance of learning, credit, power, or expectation of any temporal advantages, but relying solely on the power of truth, and the virtue of the holy Spirit, laboured in the propagation of the faith, without intermission, till the power of God, under the ignominy of the cross, became eventually triumphant. See Wm. Whitfield Dakins, LL.D. in his prolegomena. --- It may be divided into four parts. In the first eight chapters, St. Luke gives the origin and progress of the Christian Church among the Jews. From the 9th to the 16th, he shews how widely it was spread among the Gentiles: from the 16th to the 20th, the diverse peregrinations of St. Paul, till his last journey to Jerusalem: and from the 20th to the end, with what patience he underwent innumerable sufferings, trials, and indignities, with what magnanimity he had head against the violent surges of persecution, and his astonishing equanimity under every possible calamity. --- This account, which is not continued beyond his two years' imprisonment in Rome, contains a general sketch of the history of the Church during the epoch it describes of thirty years. The leading facts therein contained are, the choice of Matthias to be an apostles, in the room of Judas; the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; the preaching, miracles, and sufferings of the apostles at Jerusalem; the conversion of St. Paul; the call of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert; the persecution of the Christians by Herod Agrippa; the preaching of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles, by the express command of the Holy Ghost; the

decree made at Jerusalem, declaring that circumcision, and a conformity to other Jewish rites and ceremonies were not necessary in Gentile converts; the miraculous cures performed by the handkerchiefs and aprons which had only touched the body of St. Paul; whilst the latter part of the book is exclusively confined to the history of St. Paul, of whom, as we have already seen, St. Luke was the constant companion for several years. --- The place of its publication is doubtful. A learned prelate advances, that the probability appears to be in favour of Greece, though some contend for Alexandria, in Egypt. This latter opinion rests upon the subscriptions at the end of some Greek manuscripts, and of the copies of the Syriac version; but the best critics think, that these subscriptions, which are also affixed to other books of the New Testament, deserve but little weight; and in this case they are not supported by any ancient authority. But the sentiment of this learned prelate, does not bias the opinion we gave at the beginning, and which we find confirmed by Alban Butler, in his life of St. Luke, vol. x. p. 432. where he says, "that St. Luke attended St. Paul at Rome, whither he was sent prisoner from Jerusalem in 61. The apostle remained there two years in chains; but was permitted to live in a house which he hired, though under the custody of a constant guard; and there he preached to those who daily resorted to hear him. From ancient writings and monuments belonging to the Church of St. Mary in via lata, which is an ancient title of a Cardinal Deacon, Boronius, in his Annals ad. an. 55. and Arringhi, in his Roma Subterranea, lib. iii, chap. 41. tell us, that this Church was built upon the spot where St. Paul then lodged, and where St. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles."

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## ACTS 1

**Ver. 1.** St. Luke, who was the author of this history, alludes, in this verse, to his gospel, which he calls his first discourse. In that he informs us, not only of the actions, but also the doctrines of our Saviour. These words, to do and to teach, are the abridgment of the whole gospel: here he gives us the Acts of the Apostles, that is, an history of their travels and preaching. In the beginning of this work he speaks of all the apostles, and what they did before their dispersion. As soon as he comes to the mention of St. Paul, he takes notice of no one else, but is entirely taken up with the narrative of his actions. He addresses his book to Theophilus, which signifies a friend of God, or one who loves God, as if he intended to dedicate it to all the faithful, who believed in, and loved God. But it is more probable that this was the same distinct person, well known to St. Luke, and illustrious for his birth, because he gave him the title of *Greek: kratiste, most excellent*. [Luke i. 3.] (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *Until the day on which, giving commandments by the Holy Ghost to the apostles whom he had chosen, he was taken up.* As the Scripture was written without distinction of verses, and without any stops, or *commas*, which were added afterwards) the construction, and joining of words in this verse, is ambiguous. The question is, with what part of the verse these words, *by the Holy Ghost*, are to be joined. The sense may be, 1. that he was taken up by the Holy Ghost: but this is generally rejected. 2. That he gave his commandments by the Holy Ghost to his apostles; that is, says St. John Chrysostom, that he gave them spiritual commands, that came from the Holy Ghost, or from his holy Spirit. 3. The most probable exposition seems to be, *that he gave his special commandments to his apostles, or to those whom he chose to be his apostles, by the Holy Ghost, or by his holy and divine spirit.* (Witham) --- The power to preach, to baptize, to remit sins, and generally the whole commission and charge of the government of his Church after him in his name, and with his authority; which government was given them, together with the Holy Ghost, to assist them therein for ever. (Bristow)

**Ver. 3.** *Appearing, &c.* Why did he not appear to all, but only to his disciples? Because to many of them, who did not know the mystery, he would have seemed a phantom. For if the disciples themselves were diffident, and terrified, and required to touch him with their hands, how would others have been affected? But we know from their miracles, the truth of the resurrection, which is made evident to all succeeding generations. Perhaps the apostles did not perform miracles.

How then was the world converted? This is a fact which cannot be denied, and that it should have been brought about by twelve poor illiterate fishermen, without miracles, would be the greatest of all miracles, far beyond the reach of all human means. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. i. chap. 1. on Acts.) --- "And speaking of things pertaining to the kingdom of God," as we read in the Greek, and in the Protestant version, that is, pertaining to the Church, which is the kingdom of God, Greek: *ta peri tes basileias tou theou*, which plainly makes for unwritten tradition. (Estius)

**Ver. 4.** *And eating with them.*[1] This is a literal translation from the vulgar Latin. But the Protestant translation from some Greek copies, would have it, *And being assembled together, he commanded them, &c.* Mr. Bois defends the Latin Vulgate and even by the authority of St. John Chrysostom who doubtless understood the Greek text, as well as any one, and who takes the Greek word here to signify *eating*: for he observes that he apostles elsewhere proved Christ's resurrection by his *eating and drinking with them*. (Acts x. 4.) St. Jerome also says, the derivation of the Greek word, is from eating salt together. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Baptized with the Holy Ghost*, that is, cleansed, and sanctified by the plentiful graces he shall pour upon you. (Witham)

**Ver. 6-7.** *Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?* Some of them, as St. John Chrysostom observes, had still their thoughts upon a temporal kingdom of the Messias. Christ, to divert them from such imaginations, tells them, their business is to be witnesses of his doctrine and miracles, particularly of his resurrection, *even to the utmost bounds of the earth*, to all the nations of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *He was raised up.* Raised himself up, and ascended, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Behold two men*, that is, two angels, stood by them in white apparel. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *So shall he come, as you have seen him going.* This word *going*, says St. John Chrysostom, sufficiently intimates, that he ascended by his own power: for so *will he come* by his own power to judge the world. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ shall come on the last day, in the same body, in the same majesty, to judge the living and the dead. This he had likewise promised, in more than one place of the gospel, speaking of the vengeance, which he will exercise on the city of Jerusalem. St. Jerome, St. Hilary, and many other ancients, have believed that the Son of God will appear again on Mount Olivet, and that all people shall be assembled to judgment. (St. Jerome, super Joel iii. 2.; St. Hilary, super Matthew xxiv. 32.) --- And that same body, which thus ascended to heaven, and which will thus descend, is given us in the blessed Sacrament. "O miracle! exclaims St. John Chrysostom, He that sitteth with his Father above, is at the same time handled by men below. Jesus Christ ascending to heaven, both hath his flesh with him above, and hath left it with us below. Elias being taken up, left his disciple, Eliseus, his mantle and double spirit, but the Son of Man ascending, left his own flesh for us." (Lib. iii. de Sacerd. him. 2. ad pop. Ant. hom. de divit. et paup.) --- Sulpicius Severus, and St. Paulinus, assure us, that the marks of the feet of our Saviour were imprinted in the place off which he rose to heaven; and St. Augustine informs us, that many in his time went to Judea, to venerate these sacred marks. Ven. Bede testifies the same in the eighth age [i.e. in the 8th century]. In the time of Constantine the great, the empress Helen built a church on the place. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** *Sabbath-day's journey.* It cannot now be precisely determined what this distance was, but it is most probable, that it was about a mile. On particular occasions, it perhaps was allowed to exceed a little. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13-14.** *Into an upper room*, to be more retired in prayer. There they were *persevering with one mind in prayer*. These few words denote to us three dispositions to receive the Holy Ghost. 1. *Prayer*. 2. *Perseverance* in it. 3. *To be of one mind*, perfectly united in charity, and the love of one another. (Witham) --- This is the last mention that is made in Scripture of the blessed Virgin Mary. She lived the rest of her time with the Christians (as here she is particularly named and

noted amongst them) and especially with St. John, the apostle, to whom our Lord recommended her. (St. John xix 26. 27.) She undoubtedly communicated to the evangelists many circumstances relative to the actions, words, and mysteries of her divine Son.

**Ver. 15.** *Peter, rising up, &c.* Peter, says St. John Chrysostom[2] on this place, who was prince, or chief of the apostolical college, who had authority over them all, who by his place and dignity, might, without them, have chosen, and appointed a new apostle to succeed Judas, (Christ having said to *him, confirm thy brethren,*) &c. yet he consults them. (Witham) --- Here Peter acts and ordains in virtue of his supremacy, and the other apostles agree to his appointment.

**Ver. 18.** *Possessed a field.* Judas is here said to have done, what was done by others, with the thirty pieces of money, the *reward of his iniquity. And being hanged,* that is, as St. Matthew says, (chap. xxvii. 5.) having *hanged himself, he burst asunder.* The Greek has it, *falling headlong,*[3] as perhaps he did, by his judgment of God, from the place or tree where he hanged himself. (Witham) --- Judas did not possess the potter's field, but he furnished the price to buy it, giving back the thirty pieces of silver. (Menochius) --- We often say in common, that we have done what happens in consequence of any action of ours, though it was not in our first intention. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20.** *His bishoprick.* The words were prophetically spoken in the Psalms, of the traitor Judas. (Witham) --- *Let their habitation.* In some manuscript copies, in both Greek and Syriac, we read *his.* In the Psalms, the text was written against the Jews, the persecutors of Christ in general; but in this place, Peter applies it to Judas in particular. (Estius, in a different place.)

**Ver. 21.** *Came in, and went out among us.* That is, *conversed with us.* (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *To his own place* of perdition, which he brought himself to. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *And he gave them lots,* which they might lawfully do, when they knew that both of them were fit, and every way qualified for the office. (Witham) --- *Lots.* This method of deciding the election of ministers by lots, is one of those extraordinary methods which was inspired by God; but can seldom or ever be imitated. Where both candidates appeared equally worthy, as in the present case, and human judgment cannot determine which is to be preferred, it cannot be said that it was wrong to decide it by lots. Thus were avoided any of the evil consequences which might have happened by one party being preferred before the other. St. Augustine observes, that in a doubtful case, where neither part is bad, to decide by lots is not in itself wrong. *Sors enim non aliquid mali est, sed res est in dubitatione humana divinam indicans voluntatem.* (In Psalm xxx.) (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 4. *Greek: sunalizomenos, A salis & mensæ communione.* Some copies *Greek: sunaulizomenos.*

[2] Ver. 15. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om.g.tou chorou protos, &c.*

[3] Ver. 18. *Suspensus crepuit medius, Greek: prenes genomenos.*

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## ACTS 2

**Ver. 1.** *Altogether in one*[1] *place.* The Greek signifies, were all of one mind. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *A sound, &c.* Perhaps this was a kind of thunder, accompanied with a great wind, which filled with terror and awe the whole company, and disposed them to receive the gift of heaven with humility and fervour. This noise appears to have been heard over a great part of the city, and

to have gathered together a great crowd, who came to learn the cause. This noise and wind were symbols of the divinity. It was thus also that formerly on Mount Sinai, thunder and lightning, the dark cloud, the smoking mountain, &c. marked the majesty of God. (Calmet) --- Jesus Christ, our Pasch, to answer perfectly the figure, was offered on the day of the great Jewish passover; so fifty days after, for accomplishing the like figure of the law given on Mount Sinai, He sent down the Holy Ghost on the day of their *Pentecost*, which meaneth fifty. But our feasts, as St. Augustine remarks, besides the remembrance of benefits past, contain great mysteries also of the life to come. (Ep. cxix. chap. 16.)

**Ver. 3.** *Tongues ... of fire.* The Hebrews use the name tongue, for almost any thing pointed. Thus they say, a *tongue of the earth*, for a *promontory*. (Josue xv. 5.) A fiery tongue for a flame in shape of a tongue. (Isaias v. 24.) The expression, therefore, in this place, may mean noting more than sparks, or rather flames, which appeared above all who were in the house. --- Sed et Latinis quod extremum et acutum est *lingua* dicitur, quare scopulos summos & invios *linguas* dixit Cæsar. (Pastorini) --- By the fiery tongues is signified the efficacy of the apostles' preaching, and the gift of tongues bestowed upon them. (Menochius)

**Ver. 4.** *Began to speak divers tongues.* Perhaps the apostles spoke only their own tongue, and the miracle consisted in each one's understanding it as if they spoke it in his language. (St. Gregory of Nazianzus, orat. xlv.) --- But St. Augustine and most others, understand the text literally; though the apostles had not this gift on all occasions, nor on all subjects, and therefore sometimes stood in need of interpreters. See St. Augustine, in Psalm xvii.; Expos. 2.; and Serm. 188. --- The same Father observes, that the conversion of all nations to the Church, and their being united in one faith, all having one language or confession, is a perpetuation of the same miracle in the Church.

**Ver. 14.** *But Peter standing up, &c.* A wonderful change which the Holy Ghost, at his coming, in a moment wrought in the apostles, as we see in the person of St. Peter, who before, when questioned by a silly girl, denied his master, now he values not all the Sanhedrim of the Scribes, Pharisees, and magistrates; he boldly and publicly charges them with the murder of Jesus, *their Lord*, and *their Christ*. (ver. 36) (Witham) --- As the prince of the apostolic college, and head of the Church, under Jesus Christ, hence Peter speaks in the name of the other apostles also, gives an account of the miracle, and promulgates the evangelical law. (Menochius) --- Newly replenished with all knowledge and fortitude, and full of the holy Spirit, he her maketh his first sermon. (Bristow)

**Ver. 15.** About nine in the morning. On festival days, the Jews did not eat till the morning devotions were finished, about mid-day. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 17.** *In the last days*, or the latter days, meaning the time of the Messias, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*, that is, all persons. See Joel ii. 28. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *I will shew wonders, &c.* These prodigies are commonly expounded of those that shall forerun the last day; or of the prognostics of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was a figure of the destruction of the world. (Witham) --- *Blood, fire, &c.* These prodigies were accomplished at our Saviour's death, or before the destruction of Jerusalem. We must not expect in these prophecies, where the descriptions are so grand, pathetic, and hyperbolic, to find that the accomplishment of them is literal, and precisely according to terms. The sun shall suffer an eclipse, the moon turn red, like blood, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 22-23.** *Jesus, ... a man*, who suffered as man, though he was both God and man. --- *Delivered by the determinate decree, or counsel*; to wit, by that eternal decree, that the Son of God should become man. He mentions this *decree*, and *foreknowledge* of God, to signify that Christ suffered not by chance, nor unwillingly, but what God, and he as God, had decreed. (Witham) --- *By the determinate, &c.* god delivered up his Son; and his Son delivered up himself, for the love of us, and for the sake of our salvation: and so Christ's being delivered up was holy,

and was God's own determination. But they who betrayed and crucified him, did wickedly, following therein their own malice, and the instigation of the devil; not the will and determination of God, who was by no means the author of their wickedness; though he permitted it; because he could, and did draw out of it so great a good, viz. the salvation of man. (Challoner)

**Ver. 24.** *Having loosed the sorrows[2] of hell, &c.* In the ordinary Greek copies, *of death*. As to the sense of this place, 1. It is certain Christ suffered the pains and pangs of a violent death. 2. That his soul suffered no pains after death, nor in any place called hell. 3. We believe, as in the Apostles' Creed, that his blessed soul descended *into hell*, that is, to that place in the *inferior parts of the earth*, (Ephesians iv. 9.) which we commonly call *Limbus Patrum* [Limbo of the Fathers], not to suffer, but to free the souls of the just from thence. --- *As it was impossible he should be held* there, either by death, or hell, his soul being always united to the divine person: and his rising again being foretold in the Psalms, in the words here cited. (Witham) --- Having overcome the grievous pains of death, and all the power of hell. (Challoner) --- Not that Jesus suffered any thing after his death; that was impossible. But these pains were loosed in his regard, because he was preserved from them, as the bird is preserved from the nets of the fowlers, which are broken before it is taken in them. (St. Augustine, ep. ad. Olimp. xcv.) --- Moreover he loosed others of those pains. (St. Augustine, lib. xii, chap. 13. de Gen. ad lit.)

**Ver. 27.** *Thou wilt not leave[3] my soul in hell.* This is also the Protestant translation; and the manner in which Beza translates it, is both very false and ridiculous, *thou shalt not leave my carcass in the grave*. For allowing that the Latin and Greek word, which is here translated *hell*, may signify sometimes, *the grave*; yet no excuse can be made for putting *carcass*, where the Greek, as well as Latin, signifies the *soul*. And for the doctrine of Christ's *descending into hell*, even the learned Dr. Pearson on the Creed, observes with Catholics, that the article of the creed, wherein we say, *he descended into hell*, cannot be the same as to say, his body *descended into the grave*, because in the foregoing words we profess that he was *dead and buried*. (Witham) --- Beza plainly confesseth that he translateth the text thus: *Thou shalt not leave my carcass in the grave*, against the doctrine of purgatory, and Christ's descending into hell, although he alloweth, that most of the ancient Fathers were in that error. Thus opposing himself to plain Scripture and to the ancient Fathers, perverting the former, and condemning the latter, to overthrow an article of the apostles' creed. (*He descended into hell*. New Test. in 1556.)

**Ver. 31.** *Foreseeing he (David) spoke of the resurrection of Christ.* St. Peter shews them that the prophetic words of the Psalm, agree not to David in person, he being dead, and his body having remained in the grave, without rising from the dead. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *He hath poured forth this, which we see, and hear,* by the effects, by the noise, as it were of thunder, by our speaking languages, &c. (Witham) --- It does not appear that the holy Spirit was visible to the multitude, whom St. Peter addressed. But they perceived sensible marks of his presence, in the great noise, which had called them together, and the divers tongues spoken by illiterate men, who had never studied. (Haydock)

**Ver. 37.** *They had compunction in their heart,* with sorrow for their sins, especially against their Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** *Be baptized:* believing and making profession to believe, and hope for salvation, by the merits of Jesus Christ. Thus *you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*, the grace of God, and perhaps those other gifts of speaking with tongues, working miracles, &c. (Witham) --- *The gift of the Holy Ghost*. That is, justifying grace, which is infused in our hearts by the laver of regeneration. The exterior gifts of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of tongues, of miracles, prophecy, &c. were, in the beginning of the Church, more regularly the consequence of confirmation or imposition of hands. (Calmet)

**Ver. 39.** *The promise is to you.* The good tidings of salvation were first announced to the Jew, then to the Gentile; first to the domestics, then to the strangers, who are far off. It is rather

singular, that St. Peter, after here so clearly shewing that the Gentiles are called to the faith, should afterwards have made such objections to go to baptize Cornelius, because he was a Gentile. This can only be reconciled, by supposing, he did not know distinctly the time nor the manner of their vocation. (Calmet)

**Ver. 40.** *And with a great many other words did he testify and exhort them.* St. Luke only gives an abridgment of those exhortations, which St. Peter, and the apostles frequently gave *to all the people*. St. Peter, as St. John Chrysostom observes, and as we see in these Acts, was *the mouth of all the rest*. And on this first day of Pentecost, *about three thousand were converted*. (Witham)

**Ver. 42.** *In the communication of the breaking of bread,* by which some understand their ordinary meals, and eating together; others, of the celestial bread of the holy Sacrament, *Greek: tou arton, panis illius*, scilicet Eucharistiæ. The Eucharist is called both by St. Luke and St. Paul, the breaking of bread. (Menochius, in ver. 42. and 46.) --- In the Syriac, for *Greek: artou*, is a term that means Eucharist, both here and in Acts xx. as the learned Joannes Harlemius remarks in Indice Bibliorum. --- St. Luke also gives here some account of the manner of living of these first Christians. 1. They were *together*, united in perfect charity. 2. They were frequently in the temple, and praying together. 3. They had all *possessions in common*. 4. they went from *house to house* to convert souls, taking *the food* they found *with joy, and simplicity of heart*, their number daily increasing. 5. St. Luke says they were in *favour*, and esteemed *by all the people*. 6. The apostles did *many prodigies and miracles*, to confirm their doctrine, which struck others with *great terror and horror* for their past lives. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** This living in common is not a precept for all Christians, but a life of perfection and counsel, for such as are called to it by heaven. See St. Augustine in Psalm cxii. and ep. cix. the practice of which is a striking proof of the one true Church, which has come down from the apostles.

**Ver. 46.** *In the temple.* Although by the death of our Saviour, the ceremonies and sacrifices were abrogated, and the new alliance had succeeded to the old, still it was not in the design of God, that the faithful should separated themselves from the rest of the Jews, or entirely give up the observances of the law. They continued to observe them, as long as the utility of the Church required it, but they observed them not as Jews. Thus they avoided giving scandal to the weak, and driving them from submitting to the doctrines of the Church. They disposed of them insensibly to a more pure and spiritual worship. (St. John Chrysostom, in Act. hom. vii.) --- This was burying the synagogue with honour.

**Ver. 47.** More and more he added daily to the Church, as it is clearly expressed in the Greek, *prosetitheî te ekklesia*, that we may see the visible propagation and increase of the same. We may here, and throughout the whole book, observe a visible society of men joined in Christ, which visible society may be traced through ecclesiastical history, down to our days, and which will continue, in virtue of Christ's promise, to the end of time, as the point of union, by which the true disciples of Jesus Christ are to be connected together in one body, and one spirit; "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ephesians iv. 5.) This book can shew the true Church ever visible, and ever speaking with authority to all that do not willingly shut their eyes, as plainly as the gospel doth shew the true Christ. "Every where the Church proclaims the truth; she is the candlestick, with the seven lamps (Exodus xxv.); bearing the light of Christ, *Greek: eptamukos*," says St. Irenæus; which light nothing can obscure. Hence St. John Chrysostom says, "sooner shall the sun be extinguished, than the Church be obscured;" *Greek: eukolioteron ton elion sbesthenai, e ten ekklesian aphanisthenai*.

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[1] Ver. 1. Pariter in eodem loco. *Greek: omothumadon epi to auto*, concorditer.

[2] Ver. 24. Solutis doloribus Inferni. *Greek: lusas tas odinas adou*, though in the common



Greek copies, *Greek: thanatou*. See St. John Chrysostom, hom vi.

[3] Ver. 27. My soul in hell. Animam meam in Inferno, *Greek: ten psuchen mou eis adou*.

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### ACTS 3

**Ver. 1.** *To the temple.* Though the Jewish ceremonies were shortly to cease, yet it was not unlawful to follow them; and they went to the temple as a proper place for prayer. (Witham) --- *The ninth hour*, that is, about three in the afternoon. But we must here observe, that the Hebrews divided the light into twelve hours, and the dark into twelve hours; so that their hours would be of unequal length: longer in summer, shorter in winter. (Menochius) --- The custom of praying three times in the day, is ancient among the Jews. Daniel at Babylon opened his window on the side which looked towards the temple of Jerusalem, and three times a day bent his knees before the Lord. The ancient Fathers of the Church have strongly recommended this established custom of praying three times in the day, morning, noon, and evening. It is indeed not a precept, but a religious observation, to which she invites all her children. See St. Clement of Alexandria, *Constit. lib. vii. chap. 24.*; Tertullian, *de Jejuniis, &c.* --- In Catholic countries, the toll of a bell at morning, noon, and evening, announces the time for the recital of the *Angelus Domini*, a short prayer, in honour of the incarnation. At these moments, all, however employed, whether at labour in the field, or at home, all cease from their employment, till they have recited the prayer. The repetition of this, and similar practices, cannot be too strongly recommended to Catholics of the present day. They are of singular advantage in recalling the soul, which is too easily dissipated and distracted, to God, her first beginning, and her last end. (Haydock)

**Ver. 4.** *Look upon us.* St. Peter said this to raise his attention and expectation, but the poor man thought of nothing but an alms. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *But what I have, I give thee.* Though St. Luke told us, (chap. ii. 43.) that the apostles did *many miracles and prodigies*, yet this is the first specified. *In the name of Jesus of Nazareth*, (known by that name, though of Bethlehem) *arise, and walk*. In the name of Jesus, lately nailed to a cross. (Witham) --- This is not the shadow of a great name, *magni nominis umbra*, but the truth of what it signifies, *a Saviour*. Not without reason is this name in the Canticles compared to oil, in its three-fold properties, of affording light, food, and medicine. When preached, it enlightens; thought on, it feeds us; and called on, it assuages our grief. Whence has such a sudden light of faith spread over the world, but in preaching the name of Jesus? How did this light shine, and attract the eyes of all, when proceeding like lightning from the mouth of Peter, it strengthened the weakness of the lame man's feet, and enlightened the minds of many spiritually blind? Did he not then scatter fire, when he exclaimed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *arise and walk*? This name is food too. Are you not refreshed, as often as you recall it to your mind? What is as powerful in consoling the mind? What so soon repairs our wearied senses, and gives new vigour to our strength; encourages virtues, cherishes chaste affections? All food is dry to me, if not seasoned with this oil; insipid, unless sprinkled with this salt. If you write, I relish it not, unless I read the name of Jesus. If you read, or speak, I take no pleasure in it, unless I hear the name of Jesus. Jesus is honey in the mouth, music to the ear, but ecstasy to the heart. This is also my medicine. Are you sad? let Jesus enter your heart, and thence ascend upon your tongue. And behold, at the rising of this star, every cloud will retire, and serenity return. Do you fall into a crime, or run on the brink of despair: call on this name of life, and you shall be restored to life, &c. (St. Bernard, *Serm. xv. super Cant. prope medium*.)

**Ver. 11.** *As he held Peter and John.* That is, kept close by them, and with them, out of joy and gratitude. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Peter seeing, made answer to the people.* This is the second sermon, that is related,

which, as St. John Chrysostom, observes, was spoken publicly in the temple. --- *Why look you upon us?* St. Peter, at the beginning take care to give the glory to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** Who does not admire, in this second discourse of St. Peter, as well as in his first, the prudence and discretion, with which he blames the Jews? He reproaches them, but with such mildness, as not to offend them, and dispenses to them truths in proportion to their capacity to bear them; after the example of his master and Saviour, he sweetens the bitterness of the truth, by furnishing them with an excuse. They sinned through ignorance. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14-15.** *The just one, and the holy one, even the author of life you killed:* he that is the just one promised, the Messiah, the Son of God, and true God. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *You did it through ignorance,* but such as could not excuse the chief of you. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *The times of refreshment.* The time of eternal rest and happiness, &c. --- These words, *you may be saved,* must be understood, to make the sense complete. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Whom heaven indeed must receive,* as also in the Protestant translation not *contain:* nor can any argument be drawn from hence, that Christ's body cannot be truly at the same time in the holy Sacrament, especially after a different manner. The true sense of these words is, that heaven is the place of Christ's abode, till the day of judgment, and that it was in vain for them to think that he would come to take possession of any temporal kingdom. (Witham) --- *The restitution of all things.* Jesus remains in heaven, till his second coming to judge the living and the dead. That is the great day, when every thing shall be finally settled, and restored to its proper order. He shall avenge the injuries done to God; restore peace to the afflicted just men of the earth, and justice to their persecutors. He shall exalt his Church, and himself receive the homage of adoration, from every tribe of men. (Calmet) --- See 2 Peter iii. 13. which text, together with what we read in this place, joins inseparably the last coming of Jesus Christ, with the universal re-establishment promised in both these passages, and completely excludes the *Millennium*, which some erroneously expect to take place between the accomplishment of the first and second of these events. See Bossuet's reflexions on the 20th chapter of the Apocalypse, where the errors of many Protestant writers, especially of Dodwell, are refuted. To shew that the error of the Millennium cannot be assigned as a general cause which impelled the primitive Christians to martyrdom, it will suffice to produce this decisive passage of St. Justin, who after Papias, was the first supporter of that system: speaking to Tryphon concerning this temporal kingdom, which Christ was to enjoy here below, in the re-established Jerusalem with the saints risen from the dead, for a thousand years, he says: "I have already confessed that many others, with myself, were of this opinion; ... but there are many others, and persons of sound faith, and exemplary conduct, who reject this opinion." (In dialog. cum Tryph. n. 84.) --- Clement of Alexandria, St. Cyprian, and Origen, lay down principles diametrically opposite to this system. It has also been expressly combated by Caius, and St. Denis of Alexandria, one of the greatest luminaries of the third century, as we learn from Eusebius, and St. Jerome.

**Ver. 22.** *Moses said.* He brings them this testimony of Moses concerning the Messiah, to shew the punishment they deserve for not receiving him. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Which will not hear that prophet.* St. Peter's argument is this. If disobedience to the ordinances of God by the voice of Moses, was punishable with death, how much more severe will be the punishment of those, who refuse obedience to the doctrines of Jesus, to whom all the prophets bore testimony, and whom the apostles then preached. How different is this system of submission to the teaching of the prophets, and apostles, from that libertinism, which undermines the whole fabric of religion, by taking away from the Church the power of commanding, and from the disciple the necessity of obeying. By what wonderful and progressive shades of light was the prediction of this great prophet made to man! From the fall of Adam, it was predicted, that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. Many ages after, God manifested that from Abraham's loins the Redeemer should spring, "in whom all nations shall be blessed." The

promise is renewed to Isaac, and that he is to spring from his son, but not from Esau, but from Jacob; and of the twelve sons of Jacob, the posterity of Juda is to have the privilege of bestowing a Messias to the world, and the token of its accomplishment is, "the failure of the sceptre in the posterity of Juda." After a long series of events, and of ages, an humble shepherd is chosen in the tribe of Juda: he is led to the throne; and to this man, David, it is repeated, that from him the Messias shall spring, and that his kingdom shall have no end. The oracle is so explicit in the psalms of that king, and in the writings of successive prophets, that it not only expresses the race, the tribe, the family, but also the character of the mother, the place of his birth, the precise period of the event, the ministry, the power, the dignity, the circumstances of his death, the change of the covenant, and conversion of the world. The particular prophecies, in their accomplishment, were a visible earnest to the Jews of the accomplishment of the prophecies relative to the Messias. Hence Pascal very justly remarks: "The prophets mingle particular prophecies with those of the Messias; that the prophecies regarding the Messias may not be without proof, and that the particular prophecies may not be without effect." (Pensees. xv.) --- These oracles, which during a period of four thousand years, have been delivered to the world, and which have been completely and visibly fulfilled, still exist in books, scrupulously preserved by the greatest enemies of Christ, and of his holy religion, and satisfactorily demonstrate Jesus Christ to be the great prophet, and the Christian religion to be the new covenant, which had been announced so many ages before, in so many different manners.

**Ver. 25-26.** *You are the children ... to you first God raising up his Son.* He gives them encouragement, that not only the promise of sending the Messias was made to them, but that he came, and is to be preached to them: and that the blessings of his coming are first offered to them. (Witham)

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#### ACTS 4

**Ver. 1.** *The officer[1] (of the guard) of the temple: literally, the magistrate of the temple.* But this magistrate, by the Greek, was an officer over soldiers; we may presume, over those who were to guard the temple. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *The resurrection.* This vexed particularly the *Sadducees*, who denied the resurrection: and they had great power among the Jews. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Five thousand.* Not that hereby is meant the whole number of the believers, but five thousand, by this miracle and preaching, were added to those that believed before. (Witham) --- Here again we remark the visible increase of the Catholic Church, by the preaching of the word.

**Ver. 5.** *Their rulers, &c.* The chief of them, *and Annas, the high priest*; perhaps he had lately succeeded Caiphas, high priest of the year before. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** By what authority? Is it by your own authority, or that of some other, you have healed this lame man? They wished to know if it was a true miracle, or the effects of some secret magic or enchantment. The knowledge of this kind of affairs belonged to them. It was their duty to repress the attempts of false prophets, seducers, and magicians. But they might easily discover that the apostles were far removed from any thing of this kind. The simple narration of the fact was enough to acquit them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *Name of our Lord Jesus.* From this, St. John Chrysostom takes occasion to make several pathetic exhortations against swearing and profaning this adorable name. What profit do you propose to yourselves by abusing this name? Is it to gain credit to your discourse? So you will tell me; but, believe me, you are mistaken: if people saw you respected oaths, and were afraid to make free with them, then they would believe you. Not when you give them to

understand that you undervalue them, by your frequent abuse of them. Break then so profane a custom. It will cost you neither money nor labour to do so: you are not required to part with any gratification for this purpose. Use only at the beginning a little diligence, and you will easily overcome so idle a practice. Wish, and it is done. (St. John Chrysostom, super Act. sparsim.) (Haydock) --- *Whom you crucified.* St. Peter, without fear or apprehension, openly and boldly tells them of their heinous crime: *that Christ is the head corner stone, which they had rejected,* as Christ himself had told them, (Matthew xii. 10.) and that *there is no name under heaven given to men to be saved by.* (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *The constancy of Peter and John,* surprised the council very much. They admired their knowledge of the Scriptures, seeing them men without learning or letters,[2] and (as they are called *idiots*) they could not find how to contradict the fact, *the man that was healed,* being there present. (Witham) --- Here, with the Jewish people, you may admire the constancy, wisdom, and learning of the apostles, after the coming of the Holy Ghost, who, before that event, were simple, unlettered, and timorous men. See ver. 19; and again, Chap. v. 29.

**Ver. 16.** *What shall we do to these men?* They were perplexed, says St. John Chrysostom, and in greater fear than the apostles. They saw they could do nothing but threaten and charge them to speak no more of Jesus. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *But Peter and John* stopped their mouths, by asking them, *if it was reasonable for them to hearken to men rather than to God.* For we, they say, (ver. 20.) *cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *We have seen and heard.* From these words, St. John Chrysostom make some important remarks on the conduct of Christians. On returning from the theatre, or any public meeting, each can relate what he has seen and heard. This is the fruit they reap from attending at public places an amusement; and would to God it were merely pleasure unmixed with poison. But on returning from Church, where they have been for instruction, they remember nothing, speak of nothing they have seen or heard. All is silence. Not even a thought is turned on what has been performed. (Hom. x. in Act.) --- It is a curious fact, which the apologists for the innocence of modern plays would do well to attend to, that the theatre has always been avoided by the good and the virtuous of every age. When one of the ancient Fathers was exorcising a female demoniac, who had been possessed at the theatre, and bade the devil to depart; No, replied he, I had a right to take possession of her, for I found her in my own house. (Haydock)

**Ver. 21.** *Threatening them.* Here commences the history of the first persecution of religious opinion, which the passions of men have continued, and swelled to such a frightful length. But on this, as on all other occasions, it has defeated its own purpose, by adding firmness and constancy to the persecuted. Truth is not to be overpowered by violence. In vain have the kings and princes of the earth risen up against the Lord, and against his Christ. --- When will men learn, that charity is the principle of conversion! --- *That* is an unheard-of kind of preaching, said the great Pope, St. Gregory, which exacts belief by stripes. He was on this occasion reprehending the false zeal of certain indiscreet Christians at Rome, who were for compelling the Jews to become converts. (Haydock) --- The amiable Fenelon, in a letter to Prince Charles, the son of our James the Second, says: "No human power can force the impenetrable intrenchments of the human mind. Compulsion never persuades---it only makes hypocrites. When kings interfere in matters of religion, they do not protect it; they enslave it. Give civil liberty to all; not by approving all religions, as indifferent, but, by permitting in others, what God permits."

**Ver. 23.** *Being let go, they came to their own*[3] *company,* relating with simplicity all that had happened.

**Ver. 24.** *With one accord.* With one mind, as in the Greek, and with one voice, being inspired by the Holy Ghost, they fell to prayer. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *That thou stretch forth thy hand.*[4] Literally, *in this that thou stretch forth thy hand to cures, &c.* They pray to God, that he would continue to confirm their faith by miracles. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *The place was shaken.* Much in the same manner, as at the first coming of the Holy Ghost. --- *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* Their hearts were inflamed and excited by a new motion of grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *All things were common.* Happy would it be for society, if the rich of the present day were to imitate, in some degree, this charity of the first disciples, by distributing to those that want. Both would hereby become more happy; nor would the rich derive less pleasure from such actions, than the poor. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xi. in Acts.) --- That cold and fatal word, *mine*, and *thine*, which has caused so many misfortunes and wars, was banished from among them. (Id. hom. de St. Philogon.) --- Some take this to be the origin of a monastic life: but according to the Fathers, it is rather its progress and increase; for it began in the family of Jesus Christ. The apostles, indeed, may be said to institute here that common life, which they led under Christ, our Lord, and of which Peter speaks: *behold, we have left all.* This life, by St. Augustine and others, is called *apostolic*, and there among *all*, wives are particularly specified. Cajetan thinks no vow was required: St. Augustine is of a different sentiment. (Serm. de diversis & alibi.)

**Ver. 33.** *And great grace was in them all.* All of them were present, were replenished with extraordinary graces of charity, zeal, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 36-37.** *Joseph ... surnamed Barnabas, the son of consolation, &c.* He seems to be mentioned as the first that *sold* all he had, and brought the price, and *laid it at the feet of the apostles.* (Witham) --- There was at that time a great number of Jews established in this city. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 37.** *Sold it, &c.* It is probable, that the faithful of Palestine disposed of all their property, because they knew that presently Judea would be delivered up to its enemies, and they would be obliged to fly, to avoid the persecution of their countrymen, as well as of strangers. (St. Thomas Aquinas, ad Galatas. xi.) --- *At the feet of the apostles*, out of respect. Thus, the Sunamitess fell down and embraced Eliseus's feet. Many that asked favours of Christ, fell down at his feet, and Mary kissed his feet. Such are signs of reverence paid both to Christ, and to other sacred persons, prophets, apostles, popes. See in St. Jerome, how the people of Jerusalem flocked together to the venerable bishop Epiphanius, in Cyprus, presenting their children for his blessing, kissing his feet, plucking the hem of his garment, so that he could not move for the throng. (St. Jerome, Ep. lxi. chap. 4. contr. error. Jovin.)

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[1] Ver. 1. An officer of the guard of the temple. Magistratus templi, *Greek: strategos tou ierou.*

[2] Ver. 13. Sine literis, *Greek: agrammateis.* Idiotæ, *Greek: idiotai*, plebeii.

[3] Ver. 23. Ad suos, *Greek: pros tous idious.*

[4] Ver. 30. In eo quod extendas, *Greek: en to ekteinein*, by stretching forth, &c.

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## ACTS 5

**Ver. 1.** It is believed by many of the Fathers, that the resolution which the faithful made of selling their property, and laying the price at the feet of the apostles, implied a vow of reserving nothing for themselves, but giving all to the community; and that the crime of Ananias and Saphira consisted in the violation of this vow; on which account they regarded them as sacrilegious, and

plunderers of sacred things. See St. Basil, Sermon. i. de instit. Monac.; St. Cyprian, lib. i. ad Quir. &c. ---For, without this supposition, we cannot, as Menochius justly remarks, account for the sudden and severe punishment inflicted on the offending parties.

**Ver. 2.** *By fraud kept part.*[1] Ananias, and his wife Saphira, had made a promise or vow, to put into the common stock the price of what they had to sell. When they had sold the field, they resolved by mutual consent to keep for their private use part of the money, and to bring in the rest, as if they had received no more. The whole price being promised, and by that means consecrated to God, St. Augustine calls it a *sacrilegious fraud*, and St. John Chrysostom, a *theft* of what was already made sacred to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Why hath Satan tempted thy heart?*[2] The present Greek copies, *filled thy heart*. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Did it not remain to thee?* That is, no one forced thee to make such a promise. --- *And being sold*, was it not in thy power, and at thy free disposal, before such a promise? but promises and vows must be kept. *Thou hast not lied to men, but to God*, by lying to the Holy Ghost. (Witham) --- *Thou hast not lied to men*, only and principally, but to God also; for he had also lied to Peter, and the other apostles. (Menochius) --- "If it displeased God," says St. Augustine, "to withdraw part of the money they had vowed to God, how is he angry, when chastity is vowed and not performed! ... let not such persons think to be condemned to corporal death, but to everlasting fire." (Serm. x. de diversis.) --- St. Gregory, on the same subject, says: "Ananias had vowed money to God, which afterwards, overcome by diabolical persuasion, he withdrew; but with what death he was punished, thou knowest. See, then, what judgment thou art to expect, for withdrawing, not money, but thyself, from Almighty God." (lib. i. ep. 33.)

**Ver. 5.** *Ananias ... fell down and gave up the ghost.* St. Augustine says,[3] this severe judgment was to strike a terror of such dissembling fraudulent dealings into the new Church. It was also to shew that St. Peter, and the apostles, had the gift of prophecy. (Witham) --- Origen thinks his death was occasioned by the sudden fright and shame, with which he was seized. Pliny relates a similar accident in the sudden death of Diodorus Dialecticus, lib. vii. cap. 53. --- Menochius and Cornelius a Lapide think, that God struck him interiorly, as Peter spoke. ... There are likewise different opinions among the Fathers, respecting the salvation of Ananias and Saphira. Some are of opinion, that as their fault was great, they died, and perished in their sin. but the ideas we are fond to cherish of the infinite mercy of God, would rather incline us to say, with St. Augustine, "I can believe that God spared them after this life, for his mercy is great. ... They were stricken with the scourge of death, that they might not be subject to eternal punishment." (St. Augustine, Serm. cxlviii. olim. 10. et in Parmen.) --- St. Benedict also, in the 57th chapter of his rule, insinuates, that their death was only corporal. (Haydock) --- It is not unreasonable, that the first violators of laws, should be punished with severity. It was thus that the Almighty treated Adam, the adorers of the golden calf, the first who broke the sabbath-day, &c. to prevent the effects of bad example. (Calmet)

**Ver. 7.** *Not knowing.* Because no one durst tell her; so much did they honour, fear, and obey St. Peter. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xii.) --- She came in; Peter did not call her, but waited, to afford her an opportunity of repenting. (Æcumenius)

**Ver. 8.** *Yea, for so much.* That is, for the same sum as Ananias mentioned. This the wife said, not knowing what had happened to her husband. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Solomon's porch.* This was outside the temple, open to all, Jews and Gentiles, pure and impure. They assembled here, because it was a large place, where they could speak to many assembled. Had it been within the temple, the priests would have interrupted them, and not have wanted pretexts to silence them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *Of the rest, no one durst join himself to them.* That is, none of those that did not believe:

yet the people praised them, and the number of the faithful increased. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *On ... couches*, meaner beds for the poorer sort. --- *That Peter's shadow*, &c. Thus was partly fulfilled what Christ had foretold, (John xiv. 12.) that his disciples should do even greater miracles than he had done. (Witham) --- St. Ambrose compares with these miracles wrought by St. Peter's shadow, those which the linen cloths, that had touched the relics of the holy martyrs, also wrought. (Epis. liv.) Si inanis quædam species vacuæ imaginis habere potuit in se vim salutis, quanto plus de corpore meruerunt attrahere salubritatis sacris impressa membris vincula passionis? If the empty appearance of an unsubstantial shadow possessed the power of giving health, how much more efficacy must the chains of the martyrs have drawn from the holy members, which they bound? --- In appendice operum. (St. Augustine, serm. cciii.) --- St. Augustine, speaking of the miracle performed by the saints now reigning in heaven, says: "If the shadow of Peter's body could afford help, how much more now the fulness of his power? And if then a certain little wind of him, passing by, did profit them that humbly asked, how much more grace of him, not being permanent and remaining!" (Serm. xxxix. de sanctis.)

**Ver. 26.** *Then went the magistrate*;[4] which by the Greek was a military officer. But he did not bind them like prisoners, for fear of a tumult, but desired them to go along with them to the sanhedrim. (Witham) --- *Without violence*. They persuaded them to appear willingly before the sanhedrim, thinking, perhaps moreover, that they could not bind them, whom the walls of the prison could not confine. The apostles here, and on all other occasions, shew the most astonishing examples of patience, constancy, and obedience to the laws of the country. (Menochius) --- O Jews! who do you shut your eyes against the light? why so blindly mad? You say the apostles took Christ from the tomb. Tell me, then, who stole the apostles from under your locks and bolts? Who conveyed them from your prison through the midst of your guards, without alarming them? Shall the evidence of the miracle serve only to make you the less open to conviction? (Ven. Bede; Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 28.** *Commanding, we commanded you*. That is, charged you severely. --- *You have a mind to bring the blood of this man upon us*. You will make us pass for guilty of the murder of the Messiah. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** Peter answered boldly, *We ought to obey God, rather than men*. And withal adds, that God had raised from death Jesus, the *Prince and Saviour of mankind*, by whose merits all might find *repentance*, and *forgiveness of their sins*; that they were witness of his resurrection, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *They were cut to the heart*;<sup>[5]</sup> exasperated to fury and madness, and were for killing them. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *Gamaliel*. He that had been St. Paul's master, according to St. John Chrysostom, advised them to forbear, and do nothing rashly. [Ver. 38.] *Meddle not with these men*; literally, *go from them*.<sup>[6]</sup> For, saith he, if this be the *work of men* only, it will soon fall to nothing; but if it be from God, you cannot hinder it, and you will only make yourselves guilty, by resisting the designs of God. They *consented to him*, so far as not to put them to death; but they made them be *scourged*, which they *rejoiced at*; and they dismissed them with reiterated *threats*. (Witham) --- Gamaliel was the master of St. Paul, Barnabas, Stephen, and others, and favoured the Christians. St. Clement and Ven. Bede think he was then a Christian, but concealed his conversion at the instigation of the apostles, that he might have an opportunity of defending Christ in the council. He afterwards professed his faith publicly, and was canonized with his son Abibas. See Baronius, 3d of Aug. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 39.** Time, and the evident success of Christ's Church, prove it to be of God. No violence of the Jews, no persecution of heathen princes, no attempts of domestic adversaries, heretics, schismatics, or evil livers, have been able to prevail against it. Men of superior abilities have made violent attacks against it; their memory, and that of their disciples, has either been buried

and forgotten, or liveth only in malediction and infamy. Let, then no Catholic be dispirited, because modern heresies continue; Arian and other heresies have continued much longer, have been more powerfully supported by temporal power, and yet have come to nothing. The Catholic religion was the first, and it will be the last religion.

**Ver. 41. Rejoicing.** The joy of the apostles on the present occasion, is one of the greatest miracles. Only the yoke of Jesus could make this sweet. But so the faithful servants of God have always found it. In tribulation, they abounded in inward peace and joy, which made them insensible of their exterior sufferings. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 2. Defraudavit, *Greek: enosphisato*. Intervertit aliquid de pretio. St. Augustine, serm. xxvii. de verbis apostoli. Sacrilegii damnatur, & fraudis. See. St. John Chrysostom, hom. xii. in Acta.

[2] Ver. 3. Tentavit. In all Greek copies at present, *Greek: eplerosen*. But St. Epiphanius, Hær. lix. p. 500. reads *Greek: epeirasen*.

[3] Ver. 5. See St. Augustine, lib. iii. cont. Parmen. chap. i. p. 56. tom. 9. nov. Ed.

[4] Ver. 26. Magistratus, *Greek: o strategos*.

[5] Ver. 33. Dissecabantur. *Greek: dieprionto*; which Arias Montanus translates furebant.

[6] Ver. 34. [Ver. 38.] Discedite ab istis. *Greek: apostete*.

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## ACTS 6

**Ver 1. Of the Grecians against the Hebrews.** [1] By the Grecians are many times understood the heathens or pagans, as Acts xiv. 1, xviii. 4., &c., but here by Grecians (which some translate *Hellenists* or *Grecists*) we may understand those new converted Christians, who had been Jews before, but who had been born in places where the Greek tongue was spoken; as by the Hebrews, we may understand those converted to the Christian faith, who were of the Jewish race, born, and bred in those places, where they spoke not Greek, but Syriac, which was then the language of the Jews. This difference is grounded on the Greek text. --- *Their widows were neglected*; that is, they seemed less regarded, or less favoured in the daily distributions, than such as were of the Jewish race, and spoke the language of the Jews, as it was then spoken in Palestine. (Witham) --- They were most probably both of Jewish origin, and received their different appellations according to the language they spoke. The former were also frequently called Hellenists. (Calmet) --- It is not certain in what the Greek widows were despised. Some imagine, that a preference was given to their rivals, in the distribution of offices, that they were appointed to the meaner charges, and oppressed with too much labour. But it is most natural to suppose, that he complaints regarded the alms that were distributed, and that the necessities of both parties were not supplied, without the appearance of partiality. (Menochius) --- For chap. iv. we read *neither was there any one among them that wanted; and distribution was made to every man, according as he had need; and the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul*. But nothing in human institutions is so good, as not to require occasional reform, owing either to the wickedness or negligence of man. (Estius, in different location)

**Ver. 2. And serve tables.** The apostles did not judge it proper for them to be so much employed in managing that common stock, out of which every one, as they stood in need, were supplied, as to meat, and all other necessities: this took up too much of their time, which might be better employed in preaching, &c. (Witham) --- *Word of God*. The most essential duty of an apostle and



bishop, is to announce the word of God. St. Paul would not even baptize, lest it should be a prejudice to the performance of this great duty, for which he had been sent. Many think, that this ministry of the tables, here signifies, not only the distribution of corporal nourishment, but the dispensing of the holy Eucharist. As sacred and divine as was this latter duty, the apostles preferred before it, their obligation of preaching. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *Look ye out among you seven men*, and men of a good repute and character, *full of the Holy Ghost*. (Witham) --- Diverse circumstances prove, that they were chosen to be about the altar also. They were to be full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom: they received the imposition of the apostles' hands, and in them St. Paul requireth, in a manner, the same conditions as in bishops; all which would not have been necessary for any secular stewardship. See Acts xiii. 3. Immediately after their ordination, they preached, baptized, disputed, as we see in St. Stephen, &c. &c. Hence St. Ignatius: "it is ours to please by all means the deacons, who are for the ministry of Jesus Christ; for they are not servitors of meat and drink, but ministers of the Church of God. For what are deacons but imitators or followers of Christ, ministering to bishops, as Christ to his Father, and working unto him a clean and immaculate work, even as St. Stephen to St. James? (Ep. ad Tral.)

**Ver. 5.** By the names of these seven, it would appear, that they were all Greeks. The reason of this, most probably, is to silence more effectually all future murmurs, by giving to the aggrieved party protectors of their own nation. (Tirinus) --- The history of Stephen occurs hereafter. Philip, in the 8th chapter, is call an evangelist, that is, a preacher of the gospel. By Eusebius, Tertullian, and others, he is called an apostle, that is, an apostolic man. See Lives of the Saints, and Roman Martyrology, June 6. --- St. Jerome says, his [Philip's] tomb, and that of his four daughters, the prophetesses, were to be seen at Cæsarea, in Palestine. (Ep. ad Eustoch.) --- Of the rest, except Nicolas, nothing certain is known: their acts have perished. Nicolas, as appears from the text, was a proselyte, first to Judaism, then to Christianity. St. Epiphanius, and many others, accuse him of being, by his incontinency, the author, or at least the occasion of the impure sects of Nicoalites and Gnostics. Clement of Alexandria, and St. Augustine, acquit him of this, and attribute the above heresies to an abuse of some expressions, which he uttered in his simplicity, and which were susceptible of a good and bad sense. See Baronius and Tillemont.

**Ver. 6.** *And they*, that is, the apostles, *laid*, or *imposed hands upon them*. These deacons, therefore, were designed and ordained for a sacred ministry, and not only to manage the common stock, and temporals of the faithful. This is proved, 1. By the qualifications required in such men, who were to be *full of the Holy Ghost*. 2. This is evident from their ecclesiastical functions mentioned in this book of the Acts, and in the epistles of St. Paul, and by the ancient Fathers. St. Stephen and St. Philip immediately preached the gospel, as we find in this, and the 8th chapter; they baptized those that were converted. In the first ages they assisted the bishops and priests at their divine office, and distributed the sacred chalice, or cup of the holy Eucharist. They succeeded as it were, the Levites of the old law. And in the chief Churches, the deacons, or the arch deacons in the first ages, had the chief administration of the ecclesiastical revenues, as we read of St. Laurence, at Rome. (Witham) --- *Imposed hands upon them*. Notwithstanding the opinions of some, that these deacons were only the dispensers of corporal food, and therefore very different from the ministers of the altar, who now bear that name, it must nevertheless be observed, that the most ancient Fathers, Sts. Justin, Irenæus, &c., have acknowledged in them the two-fold character, and always style them the ministers of the mysteries of God. At the commencement of Christianity, the faithful generally received the holy Eucharist after a repast, which they took together, in imitation of our Saviour, who instituted the Sacrament after supper. Now the deacons, who presided over the first tables, after having distributed the corporeal food to the assembly, ministered also the food of life, which they received from the hand of the bishop. Thus were they ministers of both the common and sacred tables. Afterwards, they had assistants called sub-deacons, and as among the Gentile converts, there did not exist that community of goods, as at Jerusalem, their chief employment became to serve the bishop in the oblation of the holy sacrifice. (Calmet)

**Ver. 9.** *Called of the Libertines.* [2] That is, of the synagogue of those, whose fathers had been made slaves under Pompey, and the Romans, but who had again been restored to their *liberty*, and had been made *free*. There were other synagogues for the Jews of Cyrene, of Alexandria, &c. No doubt but St. Stephen had converted many of them; and the chiefs of the synagogues, not being able to dispute with him, or to answer the *spirit of wisdom*, which directed him, they suborned witnesses. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** Who should say, that *they heard him speaking words of blasphemy against Moses, and against God*, against the law and the temple: that *Jesus would destroy the temple*. These accusations were forged; for the apostles themselves still frequented the temple, and Jesus came to fulfil the law, as to its moral precepts. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** It was true that Jesus would destroy the place, and change their traditions, yet they were false witnesses, because they deposed, that Stephen had made these assertions, which he had not, purposely to excite the Jews to rise up against him, and put him to death. Besides, had Stephen spoken what was advanced against him, they still would have been false witnesses, for the words were in fact words of truth, which these suborned men called, *words of blasphemy*. See ver. 11.

**Ver. 15.** *Saw his face, as it were the face of an angel.* All in the council, or sanhedrim, saw an extraordinary and charming brightness in the countenance of Stephen, which struck them with admiration and fear. (Witham) --- *Angel.* His face shone with a wonderful brightness, an emblem of his interior perfection. In this he was like Moses, whose countenance was so bright, that he Jews could not steadfastly behold it. By this the beholders had an opportunity of being converted, had they so wished, or were rendered inexcusable for their neglect. It is also a testimony of the great sanctity of the deacon. This same miracle is not recorded to have happened to any other but Moses, and our Lord at his transfiguration. (Denis the Carthusian) --- Although this appearance, in an inferior degree, has been not unfrequently observed in the constant and cheerful countenance of the martyrs before their persecutors, and of privileged saints, whilst they were happily employed in their intimate communications with heaven.

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[1] Ver. 1. Græcorum, *Greek: elleniston*, not *Greek: ellenon*. See also Acts ix. 29. and xi. ver. 20. See Legh Critica Sacra.

[2] Ver. 9. Libertinorum, *Greek: Libertinon*, which Greek word is taken from the Latin. St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv. says, *Greek: apeleutheroi outo kalountai*, &c.

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## ACTS 7

**Ver. 1.** *Are these things so?* The high priest speaks after this mild manner, being either terrified, or charmed with his angelical countenance. St. Stephen's design in this discourse, was to shew them, first, that he was falsely accused of speaking either against Moses, or the law, for which he shews so great a veneration. 2. He puts them in mind, that the true worship of God may subsist without a temple, as it did in the time of Abraham, and the patriarchs, before the law was given, or the temple built. 3. That as their forefathers had been rebellious to Moses, and disobedient to the prophets, whom they many times persecuted even to death, so they had lately resisted, persecuted, and crucified their Messias. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Not the pace of a foot;* not so much as a foot of land, that is, to dwell in, though he bought there a place to bury in. (Genesis xxiii. 9.) (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *For four hundred years,* counting from the birth of Isaac, which was twenty-five years after

the call and promises made to Abraham. It is certainly the Israelites were not four hundred years in Egypt. (Witham) --- *Four hundred*. These words are taken from the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, in which Moses mentions the same number of years. This calculation is made from the entry of Abraham into Chanaan, to the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt. Strictly, the Israelites did not remain in Egypt more than two hundred and fifteen years.

**Ver. 7.** *The nation which they shall serve, I will judge.* The meaning is, that God would afflict the Egyptians with divers plagues, or visible punishments, before they dismissed the Israelites. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *The covenant, or the testament,*[1] and alliance of circumcision, by which the Israelites should be known to be the elect people of God. (Witham) --- Literally, he gave them the alliance of circumcision; *he made with him an alliance, of which circumcision was the seal.* (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 10.** *Gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh.* Some understand divine graces, and gifts of prophecy, and the like: others, that he made him find favour in the sight of king Pharaoh, who appointed him to be governor of Egypt. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Which Abraham bought ... of the sons of Hemor, the son of Sichem.* This purchase made by Abraham must be different from the purchase of a field made afterwards by Jacob. (Genesis xxxiii. 19.) See a Lapide, the author of the Analysis, dissert. 23. P. Alleman, &c. (Witham) --- *Abraham bought.* There must be an error of the copyist in this verse. Either the word *Abraham* ought to be omitted, or changed into *Jacob*. For it is plain, from Genesis xxxiii. 19. that the latter bought the land from the sons of Hemor. The Hebrew says, he bought it for one hundred *kesitha*, which some translate *pieces of silver*; others, *lambs*. As for Abraham, and Jacob, they were buried in the cavern of Mambre, which Abraham had purchased from the children of Heth. (Genesis xxiii.) (Calmet) --- It is supposed that originally the name of Jacob was given, abridged JAB, and that the first letter having disappeared, the two remaining letters were taken by misprision, for the abridgment of the name of Abraham. Hemor was the father of Sichem, and here the Greek text simply calls him Hemor of Sichem. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 19.** *Dealing craftily,* circumventing craftily, afflicting, and endeavouring to extirpate the race of the Israelites. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Moses ... was acceptable to God.*[2] Greatly favoured both with gifts of nature and grace. Some expound it, was extremely fair or beautiful. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** Philo believes that the princess feigned him to be her own child; Moses denied that he was, and would not take advantage of this adoption. (Hebrews xi. 24.)

**Ver. 22.** *In words and in deeds.* Moses was persuasive and powerful in reasoning; but had an impediment in his speech, as we know from Exodus iv. 10. and iv. 12. He possessed, moreover, strength, energy, and grandeur, in his discourse. Of this we have abundant proofs in his books. He is inimitable in narrating, as often as he writes laws, composes canticles, or makes harangues. He is simple, clear, sublime, vehement, concise, prolix, and rapid, in turns, as the nature of his subject requires. He was likewise powerful in work. All his conduct was wise, virtuous, enlightened, as well in affairs of policy, as in war. He was an able captain, before he put himself at the head of the Israelites. (Calmet) --- Josephus assures us that he became a great conqueror.

**Ver. 29.** *Moses fled upon this word;* because he perceived the murder he had committed was become public, though he thought it to be secret. (Menochius) He fled, to avoid the anger of the king, into Madian, where during his sojourning, he had two sons of Sephora, whom he married there. (Bible de Vence) --- Moses of Moyses, in the Egyptian dialect, means, saved from water. He slew the Egyptian by particular inspiration of God, as a prelude to his delivering the people

from oppression and bondage. (ver. 25. above) --- But such particular and extraordinary examples are not to be imitated. (Challoner) --- He was inspirited to stand up, as the Egyptian law required, in defence of the innocent. (St. Thomas Aquinas, iii. 2. q. 60.)

**Ver. 30.** *In a flame of fire, in a bush.*[3] Literally, *in the fire of a flame of the bush*. The sense must be, that the bush seemed on fire, and in a flame, and yet was not consumed. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *Loose the shoes.* This was a method of testifying respect among the eastern nations. The Mahometans do not wear their shoes in their mosques. The Jewish priests served in the temple with their shoes off. The angel who appeared to Josue ordered him also to take off his shoes. (Josue v. 16.) If the apparition of an angel, or of God himself, could make the place and ground holy so as to deserve external signs of respect, and veneration from Moses; how much more the corporal birth, abode, and miracles of the Son of God in Jewry, and the blessed Sacrament, must make that country, and all Catholic chapels and altars, holy? Is it not then the height of blindness to tax with superstition, the reverence Christians pay to things or places, rendered holy by the presence, or wonderful operations of God.

**Ver. 35.** *Moses, whom they refused.* Literally, *denied*. So have you rejected, and denied Jesus, of whom Moses prophesied, when he said that God would raise up to them a prophet *like to himself*, and commanded them to *hear him*. (Witham) --- *Redeemer*. In the Greek *Lutroten*; Protestant version, *Deliverer*; though the learned Polus, in his Synopsis Criticorum, on this place, says, "that no greater injury is done to God, by calling Moses a *Redeemer*, in this place, than by calling him a *Mediator*, in Galatians iii. 19. He is called a Redeemer, says this learned Protestant commentator, in as much as he led forth, and preserved the people of God safe by the blood of a lamb, and this exhibited a figure of the true redemption, through the blood of Christ." We all own that Jesus Christ, as having paid the ransom of our delivery with his own blood, is, strictly speaking, our only true Redeemer, and Advocate with his Father, who asks and obtains all things immediately by his own merit; but this does not exclude the prayers of the saints, both alive or dead. Did not the apostles pray for the people, and desire the people to pray for them? "Our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedes for us, and all the martyrs that are with him, pray for us: nor will their intercession cease, till we cease our groanings," says St. Augustine, in Ps. lxxxv. in fine.

**Ver. 38.** *This is he who was in the Church*[4] *in the wilderness*, after God had by him delivered their Fathers out of their slavery in Egypt. --- An *angel spoke* to him on *Mount Sinai*. By this St. Stephen owns that the law was given by an angel to Moses: and also shews how falsely he was accused to have spoken against Moses, or against the law.

**Ver. 39.** *Whom our Fathers would not obey*, murmuring, and rebelling from time to time. And *in their hearts turned back into Egypt*, as they shewed, by wishing themselves there again. (Witham)

**Ver. 40.** *Saying to Aaron, make us gods:* forcing him, in a manner, to make them the golden calf, while Moses was receiving the law from God. (Witham)

**Ver. 42.** *And God turned.* Turned as it were from them, punishing them, by permitting them to serve the *host of heaven*, the sun, moon, and stars. (Witham)

**Ver. 43.** *And you*, that is, your forefathers, *took unto you the tabernacle of Moloch*. He reproaches the Jews with their idolatry and worship of different false gods, from time to time, notwithstanding God's comminations by the prophets, of which he puts them in mind by these words, *and I will translate you beyond Babylon*. The prophet Amos, chap. v, ver. 27. out of whom St. Stephen takes this citation, says, *beyond Damascus*, but the sense is the same, being a prediction, that the ten tribes of Israel should be carried away captives beyond Damascus by the Assyrians, and even beyond Babylon into Media, Persia, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *The tabernacle of the testimony*, in which was the ark of the covenant, as they were made by Moses, which were moved from place to place with the Israelites in the wilderness; and

which Jesus, or Josue, brought with the people, into the possessions of the Gentiles, that is, into the land of Chanaan, which had been before possessed by the Gentiles. --- This tabernacle, in which was kept the ark, remained with the Israelites *till* the time of *David*, or rather of *Solomon*, who built the temple. (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** *But the most High dwelleth not in houses made by hands.* God is every where, nor is his presence confined to the temple, which was already once destroyed; and what if it be destroyed again, as Christ foretold? God must still be adored, worshipped and served, as he was before the temple was first built, which was only by Solomon. (Witham) --- *Dwelleth not in houses.* That is, so as to stand in need of earthly dwellings, or to be contained or circumscribed by them. Though otherwise, by his immense divinity, he is in our houses, and every where else; and Christ in his humanity dwelt in houses: and is now on our altars. (Challoner) --- It is not so much for God, as for ourselves, that we build temples, and it is a pure effect of his goodness and mercy, that he permits us to build them to him. Places consecrated in a particular manner to his service, where he gives the most sensible marks of his presence, are of assistance to us, when we render our homage, address our vows, and offer our prayers to the Deity. St. Stephen's design in this part of his discourse, is to prove that the true religion may subsist without the temple; therefore, that he could not be guilty of blasphemy, supposing he had even used the words which the malice of the Jews put into his mouth, *that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this place.* (Chap. vi. 14.)

**Ver. 51.** *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart.* St. Stephen, inspired by the Holy Ghost, knowing he should die a martyr, boldly reproaches them for persecuting the prophets, for putting to death *the just one*, that is, the Messiah, foretold by the prophets. (Witham) --- Observe the holy indignation of St. Stephen at the obduracy of the incredulous Jews!

**Ver. 54.** *They were cut to the heart:* exasperated even to rage and madness. See chap. v, ver. 33. *gnashing* their teeth with indignation. (Witham)

**Ver. 55.** This is the comfort of all martyrs. (Bristow) --- This the support of every Christian under the severest trials of either mind or body: this the sweetener of every burthen and cross.

**Ver. 56.** *Stopped their ears, crying out, blasphemy: and they stoned him to death.* He praying for them, and saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*, in imitation of his Lord and Master, our Saviour Christ. And[5] *reposed in the Lord.* Literally, *slept.* In most Greek copies, are now wanting, *in the Lord*; but it is no doubt the sense. (Witham) --- *Rushed in violently upon him.* This proceeding, without any sentence, or form of law, was altogether irregular; and never used in the better times of the Jewish government. This was called, *judgment of zeal*, and only allowed in one instance, viz. when any one came to draw the people to idolatry. Afterwards, this kind of proceeding was extended to other crimes. See Deuteronomy xiii. 6; Numbers xxiv; 1 Machabees xi. 24; &c.

**Ver. 58.** *Invoking.* See with what arms St. Stephen defended himself against the fury of his enemies. He puts on charity for a breast-place, and by that came off victorious. By his love of God, he resisted the enraged Jews; by the love he bore his neighbour, he prayed for those that stoned him. Through charity, he admonished them of their errors, in order to their amendment; through charity, he besought the divine goodness not to punish their crimes against him. Leaning on charity, he overcame the cruelty of Saul, and merited to have him a companion in heaven, who had been his chief persecutor on earth. (St. Falgentius, Sermon de S. Steph.) --- We here again see the powerful intercession of the saints; "for," says St. Augustine, "if Stephen had not thus prayed, the Church would not have to glory in a St. Paul. Si Stephanus non sic orasset, Ecclesia Paulum non haberet." (Sermon i. de S. Steph.)

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[1] Ver. 8. Testamentum, *Greek: ten diatheken.* See Hebrews ix. 16.

[2] Ver. 20. Gratus Deo, *Greek: asteios to theo*. Acceptable to God. It may also signify, beautiful in the sight of God, that is, in the style of the Scriptures, very beautiful.

[3] Ver. 30. In igne flammæ rubi, *Greek: en phlogi puros batou*. In flamma ignis rubi.

[4] Ver. 38. In the assembly. Literally, in Ecclesia, *Greek: en te ekklesia*.

[5] Ver. 56. [Ver. 60.] Obdormivit in Domino, *Greek: ekoimethe*.

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## ACTS 8

**Ver. 1.** *Were dispersed.* During this great persecution of the Church, those who could not conceal themselves, were dispersed into different countries. Thus did the Almighty make use of the malice of his enemies, to the greater exaltation and glory of his own name. For those who fled, carried with them the light of the gospel, wherever they went. (Tirinus) --- They were burning torches, which communicated of their holy fire to every place, in which they were scattered. (St. Augustine, Sermon. cxvi.) --- Thus was the gospel disseminated from Jerusalem into all Judea and Samaria. --- *And Samaria.* Though our Saviour in his life time had forbid them to preach to the Samaritans, (Matthew x. 5.) they now knew that the time of that precept was past. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Took care.* In an ancient work, which give the history of the finding of St. Stephen's body, generally considered authentic, and printed at the end of the 7th volume of St. Augustine's works, we find the following account. "Stephen having been stoned without the northern gate, lay there without burial one day and a night, according to the order of the Jewish rulers, that his body might become a prey to birds and beasts, but God did not suffer either to touch it." --- "Then I, Gamaliel, compassionating these servants of Jesus Christ, and desiring to have some share in the faith and religion of this holy man, sent among the Jews some Christians who feared God, dwelling at Jerusalem, to take away privately the body, and bring it in my chariot to my country house, where it was deposited in my tomb towards the east, and we mourned over it for forty days," &c. It is an injury to pray for a martyr, who ought to assist us by his prayers. (St. Augustine, Sermon. xvii.) --- We see great devotion used in burying his body, and four centuries afterwards, at the finding and translating thereof. Very many miracles were performed on that occasion, as St. Augustine witnesses in his work de Civitate Dei, lib. xxii. chap. 8, and Sermon. de S. Steph. T. viii.

**Ver. 10.** *This man is the power of God, which is called* (that is, which is truly) *great.* Simon pretended to be God, and the great God. See St. Irenæus, lib. i. chap. 20.

**Ver. 11.** *He had bewitched them with his sorceries,*[1] or magic: he had put them out of their wits, turned their heads, charmed them, stupefied them. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Simon himself believed.* That is, pretended to believe, that he might obtain the power of speaking in tongues, and working miracles, which was frequently imparted to the faithful at baptism. (Menochius) --- He was filled with pride and presumption, says St. Augustine. He wished to imitate the prodigies of the apostles, but loved not their justice, nor the truth they preached. He entered into the Church, and desired baptism, not to obtain the grace of justification, but to have an occasion of extolling himself. He wished to walk in wonders above himself. (In Psalm cxxx.)

**Ver. 15.** *The Holy Ghost,* which the apostles came to give the Samaritan Neophytes, was not the spirit of grace, of justice, and of sanctity, for that they had received at baptism; but the spirit of strength, to confess with confidence and freedom the name of Jesus, and the supernatural and miraculous graces, usually at that time granted to the faithful, by the imposition of hands. Philip did not administer the sacrament, because he could not; he was not a bishop. Hence now in the

Church, we see only the chief pastors do it, *præcipuos et non alios videmus hoc facere*. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xviii. in Acta. --- There is no mention here, it is true, of unction, but the most venerable antiquity clearly specifies it. St. Cyprian, in the third age [third century], says: "it is moreover necessary, that he who has been baptized, should be anointed, that having received the chrism, that is, the unction, he may be the anointed of God." (Ep. lxx.) --- In the next age [fourth century], St. Pacianus writes: "Do you say that this (the power of remitting sins) was granted only to the apostles? Then I say, that they alone could baptize, and give the Holy Spirit, for to them alone was the command of doing it given. If, therefore, the right of conferring baptism, and of anointing, descended to their successors, to them also has come the power of binding and loosing." (Ep. i. ad Sym. Bibl. Max. T. iv. p. 307)

**Ver. 17.** *They received the Holy Ghost.* Not but that they had received the grace of the Holy Ghost at their baptism; but not that plentitude of grace, and those gifts, which they received from bishops in the sacrament of confirmation. This sacrament, as St. John Chrysostom observes,[2] St. Philip, the deacon, had not the power to give. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Simon ... offered them money.* From hence it is called the sin of simony, to but, sell, or give money for benefices, and spiritual things. It was vanity that made Simon desire this power. (Witham) --- Hence to give or receive money in exchange, or as a price for any spiritual good whatever, is justly esteemed sinful. It is called simony, from the name of the person, who was first engaged in this sin. (Haydock) --- Simon acts the part of a tempter to the apostles, and wishes to draw them into prevarication by offering money for what was above all price, and of what they were not the proprietors, but the dispensers. (St. Clement of Rome)

**Ver. 20.** *May thy money perish with thee; or go with thee to perdition.* This was a prophecy, says St. John Chrysostom, of St. Peter who saw him incorrigible, and that he would not repent. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Nor lot in this matter.* Literally, in this saying. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *That perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* The word *perhaps*, as the interpreters commonly observe on this and other places, many times does not imply any doubt or uncertainty. There could be no doubt, says St. John Chrysostom, only as to his repenting: if he repented, it is certain he would find remission of his sins. (Witham) --- St. Augustine (ep. cviii.) understands the text, *Greek: metanoeson apo*, &c. of penance done for heinous offences in the primitive Church, and teaches us to translate it thus, as it is in the Vulgate, both here and 2 Corinthians xii. 21. and Apocalypse ix. 21, and adds that very good men do daily penance for venial sins, by fasting, prayer, and alms.

**Ver. 23.** *In the gall of bitterness.* In the bitter gall of hypocrisy, in the bonds, fetters, and chains of sin and iniquity. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Pray ... for me.* Instead of following the advice of St. Peter, he begs them to pray, not that God would touch his heart, and give him repentance; but that the evils might not fall upon him. In this he is a true model of false penitents, who hate not the sin, but fear the punishment, which is the consequence of it. He afterwards left the East, and went to Rome, under the reign of Claudius. Sts. Justin, Irenæus, and others say, the senate adored him as a divinity. Having undertaken to fly in the air, in the presence of the emperor and senate, when he had raised himself to a certain height, he was brought down by the prayers of Sts. Peter and Paul, and died a few days after, of the wounds he received by the fall. (Calmet) --- See also Eusebius, Theod., St. Augustine, &c.

**Ver. 26.** *This is desert.* In construction, whether we regard the Latin or Greek, to be *desert*, may either agree to the way leading to Gaza, or the city itself, which formerly had been almost destroyed. (Witham) --- To the site of old Gaza, which was then a desert; above which was built the new Gaza, nearer the sea. (Bible de Vence) --- Beza frequently makes very free with St.

Luke, and in his annotations, an. 1556, says the text is wrong; it cannot be so.

**Ver. 27.** *An eunuch.* It is likely a proselyte converted to the Jewish religion. He shews his zeal and devotion, says St. John Chrysostom, not only by coming to Jerusalem, but by reading the prophets in his chariot. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *How can I, unless some one shew me,*[3] or be a guide to me, as in the Greek. Let every one, and especially the unlearned, take good notice of these words, not to wrest the Scriptures to his own perdition. To follow his own private judgment, or his private spirit, is to make choice of a blind and incompetent guide, as to the sense of the Scriptures, and the mysteries of faith. See the preface to the gospel of St. John. (Witham) --- It appears this eunuch was not one of those, who are now so commonly seen, who think the Scripture is every where plain, and the sense open to every body. Such would do much better to acknowledge, that they stand in need of a guide. (Grotius, hic.) --- St. Jerome, in his letter to Paulinus, printed at the head of the Latin Bibles, shews the necessity of an interpreter. The apostles themselves could not understand the Scriptures till Christ gave them the knowledge; tunc aperuit illis sensum ut intelligerent scripturas. (Luke xxiv. 45.)

**Ver. 32-33.** *As a sheep, or a lamb, &c.* The eunuch, by divine Providence, was now reading the 53d chap. of Isaiahs, which is of Christ, and his sufferings. --- *In humility his judgment was taken away.* The sense seems to be, that Christ having humbled himself, so as to undergo an unjust judgment, or condemnation to die on the cross, hath been again raised from the dead, and delivered from that judgment by his glorious resurrection and ascension. (Witham)

**Ver. 36.** *Here is water.* This shews, that baptism is to be given with water. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *If thou believest, &c.* The Scripture many times mentions one disposition, when others no less necessary are supposed, as here a sorrow for sins, a firm hope, love of God, &c. (Witham) --- Faith is thus seen to be a necessary predisposition in the adult, for the reception of baptism. They must answer for themselves; but infants are baptized in the faith of the Church. Their sponsors, who receive them from the font, answer for them. (Denis the Carthusian) --- And as the defilement was not personal, but that of others, so are they purified by the faith of others.

**Ver. 38.** We are not to suppose that in the administration of the sacraments in the primitive Church, nothing more was done than what we read, totidem litteris, in the Scripture. St. Augustine answers this, when he says: "insomuch that he saith, Philip baptized him, he would have it understood, that all things were done, which though in the Scripture, for brevity sake, they are not mentioned, yet by order of tradition we know were to be done."

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[1] Ver. 11. Dementasset, *Greek: exestakenai autous.* So ver. 13. Stupens admirabatur, the same word, *Greek: existato.*

[2] Ver. 17. St. John Chrysostom, hom. xviii. *Greek: oude gar eichen exousian.*

[3] Ver. 31. Et quomodo possum, nisi aliquis ostenderit mihi? *Greek: ean me tis odegeese me.*

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## ACTS 9

**Ver. 4.** *Why dost thou persecute me?* My disciples, my brothers, and my friends. The head speaks for the members, and by a figure of speech, calls them itself. (St. Augustine, in Ps. xxx.) --- Here Jesus Christ identifies himself with his Church, as on a former occasion, when he said: *he that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.* (Luke x. 16.)



**Ver. 5.** *To kick against the goad.* Others translate against the *pricks*; others, against the *sting*. The metaphor is taken from oxen kicking, when pricked to go forward. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *There it shall be told thee, &c.* The Almighty having established a Church, and ministry, the depositories of his doctrines, does not, even on this extraordinary occasion, transgress his own laws; but sends him to the ministers of religion, that instruction may be imparted through them, as through its proper channel. This observation is worthy the notice of the self-inspired of the present day, who pretend to receive their light direct from heaven. Nothing can be more opposite to the spirit of the gospel than such delusion. (Haydock) --- Hear the great St. Augustine: "Paul, though with the divine and heavenly voice prostrated and instructed, yet was sent to a man to receive the sacraments, and to be joined to the Church." (De Doct. Chris. lib. i. in præm. --- *Hearing, &c.* This may be reconciled with what is said in the 22nd chapter by supposing they heard only St. Paul speak, or heard only a confused noise, which they could not understand. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8.** *And his eyes being open, either by himself, or by others, he saw nothing.* See the circumstances related again, chap. xxii. and xxvi. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Three days.* During the time, he neither eat nor drank, to testify his sorrow for his past conduct. He likewise spent the time in prayer, to prepare himself for the reception of grace. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xix.)

**Ver. 12.** *And he saw a man, &c.* This verse, which is by way of a parenthesis, contains the words of the historian, St. Luke, telling us what St. Paul saw in a vision, and what the Spirit at the same time revealed to Ananias. (Witham) --- This verse is a parenthesis. It contains not the words of Christ to Ananias, but St. Luke here relates what was shewn to Paul, at the time Ananias entered. This vision was shewn to him, that he might know Ananias was sent by God. (Menochius)

**Ver. 15.** *A vessel of election.* A chosen elect vessel, and minister of the gospel. (Witham) --- *Greek: Skeous ekloges*, an organ, or instrument. Thus Polybius uses the word, speaking of Damocles, *Greek: ode en uperetikon skeuos*, he was an excellent and choice character.

**Ver. 17.** *Laying his hands on him.* This imposition of hands, made use of on different occasions, was to pray that he might receive his sight, as well as the grace of the Holy Ghost, which God sometimes gave to persons not yet baptized, as to Cornelius. (Acts x. 44.) (Witham) --- This imposition of hands, was not the same as that, by which the faithful were confirmed, or ordained ministers, but a ceremony commonly used by the apostles to restore health to the sick. If Saul, in consequence, receives the Holy Ghost, it was an extraordinary miraculous event, which was not an unfrequent circumstance in the infancy of Christianity. The Almighty, who establishes the laws of grace, can dispense with them himself whenever he pleases. (Calmet)

**Ver. 23.** *When many days were passed.* By the account St. Paul gives of himself, (Galatians chap. i.) soon after his conversion he went into Arabia, and about three years after he might come to Damascus. Then it seems to have happened that they were for killing him, for becoming a Christian; and the brethren saved his life, by conveying him down the walls of the town in a basket. After this, he went to Jerusalem, where the disciples knew little of him, and were afraid of him, till St. Barnabas introduced him to the apostles, and gave an account of his conversion. (Witham) --- *Many days.* That is, three years. For Saul went for a time from Damascus to Arabia. (Galatians i. 17. and 18.) It was on his return from thence, that he Jews conspired against his life, as is here related. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 27.** Brought him to the apostles Peter and James. See Galatians i. 18. and 19.

**Ver. 29.** *He spoke also to the Gentiles,[1] and disputed with the Grecians,* or Hellenists. See

chap. vi. ver. 1. By the Gentiles, many understand those who had been Gentiles, and were become proselytes or converts to the Jewish religion, and not those who still remained Gentiles. And by the Greeks, or Hellenists, they understand Jews, who had lived in places where they spoke Greek, or Hellenists, they understand Jews, who had lived in places where they spoke Greek, not Syriac, whom St. Paul endeavoured to convert to the Christian faith. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** The Church visibly proceedeth still with much comfort and patience; she is perfected by persecution, and by means of the promised infallible protection, she has ever proved herself invulnerable to all the envenomed shafts of her adversaries.

**Ver. 35.** Saron, or Assaron, is a mountain and city mentioned by Josue, xii. 18. From it all the plain from Cæsarea of Palestine to Joppe, is called Saron. It is a rich fertile country. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 36.** Tabitha, in Syriac, means the same as Dorcas in Greek, that is, a wild goat. (Bible de Vence) --- See here the powerful effects of good works, and alms-deeds; they reach even to the next life. (Bristow) --- Hence that of the wise man, *alms free from death*.

**Ver. 37. Washed.** This custom of washing the dead was observed among the Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, and most other nations. It is still practised in monasteries, and formerly was observed with much ceremony. St. John Chrysostom observes, that our Saviour's body was washed and embalmed. The same custom is mentioned in Homer and Virgil:

Corpusque lavant frigentis, et unguunt. --- And again,  
Date, vulnera lymphis abluam. --- Æneid. iv.

--- Tertullian, in his Apology, testifies, that the Christians performed that office to the dead. It was a proof of their respect for the image of God impressed upon his creature, and for the character of Christian, which these persons have borne during their lives. It was likewise a sign of the confidence they had in a future resurrection.

**Ver. 39.** *Greek: Chiton* was the under garment, *Greek: Imation* the upper.

**Ver. 40.** *And having put them all out*, not to disturb him while he prayed. --- *Sat up*, raised herself a little: and Peter taking her by the hand, lifted her quite up, and calling in the company, presented her to them alive and well. (Witham)

**Ver. 41.** Raising the dead to life can only be the work of God. This woman was raised to life for the comfort of the faithful, and the conversion of others. She herself might likewise have an opportunity of acquiring greater merit, otherwise the repose of another life is preferable to a return to the miseries of this world. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 43.** In the Greek is added: *instructing the new converts, and fortifying them in the faith they had just embraced*.

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[1] Ver. 29. Loquebatur quoque Gentibus, & disputabat cum Græcis. In almost all Greek copies, there is nothing for *Gentibus*, and we only read, he spoke and disputed with the Grecians, or Hellenists; *Greek: pros tous Ellenistas*. See chap. vi. ver. 1.

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## ACTS 10

**Ver. 1.** A cohort, with the Romans, was a body of infantry 500 strong. There were ten cohorts in each legion. There were, generally speaking, two centurions appointed to the command of each cohort. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** *A religious man, and one that feared God. He was not a Jew, yet believed in one God. --- Always, that is, frequently praying, and giving alms.* In the Rheims Testament we find this note: "Hereby it appeareth, that such works are done before justification, though they suffice not to salvation, yet are acceptable preparatives for the grace of justification, and such as move God to mercy. ... though all such preparative works come also of grace." These Douay divines did not hold with the Quenellists that a true faith, or the habit of faith, must needs be the first grace. (Witham) --- Cornelius religiously observed the law of nature, and the principal points of the Jewish moral law, though he did not profess Judaism. (Calmet) --- He was an admirable example of virtue before his knowledge of Christianity. He feared God, and brought up his family in the same holy fear. He was leader of the first band, and consequently had the eagle, the Roman ensign, carried before him. Four hundred men were under his command. (Tirinus) --- "His former goodness could no longer avail him, unless he were, by the bond of Christian society and peace, incorporated with the Church; he is therefore ordered to send unto Peter, that by him he may learn Christ, by him he may be baptized." (St. Augustine, lib. i. de bap. chap. 8.) --- *Alms.* Nothing is more efficacious than the alms of a man, whose hands have not been defiled by injustice. It is a clear stream, refreshing in the heat of day, and imparting verdure to every plant that is near it. It is a fountain springing to eternal life. It is a tree, whose branches reach even to heaven, and which produces its eternal fruit in abundance, when death has removed from you all that is temporal. Waste not, then, your treasures in selfish gratifications, the fruit of which is sorrow; but feed the poor, and the hungry. Plant and sow in their hands, and your produce will be great; no soil is more fertile. (St. John Chrysostom, hic. hom. xxii.)

**Ver. 3.** *He saw in a vision manifestly.* An angel appearing visibly to him. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** Stated hours for prayer were appointed both in the old and new law. Of this St. Cyprian writes: "In celebrating their prayers, we find that the three children of Daniel observed the third, sixth, and ninth hour. Thus afterwards, at the third hour, the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles, fulfilling the grace of our Lord's promise: at the sixth hour, Peter going up to the higher room of the house, was both by voice and sign from God instructed, that all nations should be admitted to the grace of salvation, of which he before doubted; and our Lord being crucified at the sixth hour, at the ninth hour washed away our sins by his blood. But to us, besides the seasons observed of old, the set times of praying are increased; for we must pray in the morning early, that the resurrection of our Lord may be celebrated by morning prayer; *in the morning early will I stand before Thee, early in the morning wilt thou hear my voice.* (Psalm v.) Towards the evening also, when the sun departeth, we must of necessity pray again." (De Orat. Dom. No. 15) St. Jerome, writing to Eustochia, a virgin, and a religious, (ep. 22.) says, "though the apostles bid us to pray always, and, to holy persons, their very sleep is prayer; yet we must have distinct hours for prayer, that if perhaps we be otherwise occupied, the very time may admonish us of our duty. The third, sixth, ninth hour, morning early, and evening, no man can be ignorant of."

**Ver. 10.** *There came upon him an ecstasy[1] of mind.* This is the true sense by the Greek. *I have never yet eaten any unclean thing.* This seems to have happened, an. 35 [A.D. 35]. Till then the apostles followed the ceremonies of the law of Moses. It may seem strange that even St. Peter should not know that the ceremonial precepts of the law were to be abolished. It may be answered, that St. Peter and they, were only ignorant of the time, when they were to be laid aside; and so St. John Chrysostom says, that the conversion of Cornelius, with all its circumstances, was to convince the Jews, rather than the apostles, that those ceremonies were no longer obligatory. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *God hath purified.* Not that the Almighty had already sanctified the Gentiles; but he had called them, that they might become so. He had thrown down the wall of separation, which had stood between Jew and Gentile; he had made one fold to contain all the sheep under one shepherd. Jesus Christ, by his blood, had generally reconciled all mankind to his Father. In this sense all were pure; that is, all had a right, as all were called, to partake of the merits of the Son of God. All had a right to communicate in the truths of the gospel, and in the sacraments, which were the appointed channels, through which the graces and merits of Jesus Christ were applied.

(Calmet) --- Here, then, God first announced to Peter, that the time was come to preach to the Gentiles unto salvation, no less than to the Jews; with full freedom to eat all meats, without respect to the prohibition of some made in the old law. (Bristow)

**Ver. 25.** *Cornelius ... worshipped.*[2] Some think Cornelius might look upon St. Peter as more than a man, and offer to him divine worship: by prostrating, he might only intend to pay such honour to him, as is paid to persons eminent in dignity, especially according to the custom of the eastern people. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** St. John Chrysostom (hom. xxi in Act.) thinketh Peter refused this homage through humility, because this falling down, *Greek: proskunein*, is frequently used in Scripture towards men. St. Jerome (adv. Vigil. chap. ii.) holds the contrary sentiment.

**Ver. 28.** *Abominable a thing.* The Jews extended their aversion to the Gentiles to an unnatural length; hence the frequent accusations of the latter, that they were a nation the enemies of mankind. Josephus defends his nation against the imputation. He allows that Moses forbids them to admit strangers into their solemnities, and exercises of religion, but not to refuse any thing which common humanity demands of all. (Josephus, lib. ii. contra Apion)

**Ver. 35.** *In every nation, &c.* That is to say, not only Jews, but Gentiles also, of what nation soever, are acceptable to God, if they fear him, and work justice. But then true faith is always to be presupposed, *without which*, (saith St. Paul, Hebrews xi. 6.) *it is impossible to please God.* Beware then of the error of those, who would infer from this passage, that men of all religions may be pleasing to God. For since none but the true religion can be from God, all other religions must be from the father of lies; and therefore highly displeasing to the God of truth. (Challoner) --- *He that feareth him, and worketh justice.* So he call the prayers, alms-deeds, and charitable works of this Gentile Cornelius. (Witham)

**Ver. 36.** *God sent the word.*[3] By this *word*, some understand the eternal Word, the Son of God; but by the next verse, we may rather expound it of the word of the gospel preached. Jesus Christ ... *he is Lord of all things.* A proof of Christ's divinity. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *For it began,* or its beginning was, &c.

**Ver. 39.** *Whom they killed.* At the very first, says[4] St. John Chrysostom, the apostles preached Christ crucified, and tell them they had put to death on a cross the Lord of all things, the *judge of the living and the dead.* (Witham) --- We may here admire how wonderfully Peter adapts his discourse to the capacity of his hearers. When speaking to the Jews, he proves Jesus to be their Messiah, from the testimony of their prophets. On the present occasion, he only just alludes to the prophets, but confirms his discourse by the testimony of the miracles which Jesus had wrought in public, and were known to all the world. (Calmet)

**Ver. 40.** Jesus Christ did not announce his resurrection, and other mysteries, to all at once, but to a chose few, who were to be governors of the rest; teaching us thereby, that we have to learn our religion, and every thing necessary to salvation, from the Church of God, speaking to us by her ministers.

**Ver. 42.** *The living and of the dead.* This may be understood of the elect, who live by grace, and the reprobate, who are spiritually dead; or perhaps more literally, of those who shall be found living upon earth at the second coming of Christ, and of all who have died from the commencement of the world to the end of time. (St. Augustine, Enchirid[.] )

**Ver. 44.** *The Holy Ghost fell upon all them,* and made his coming known in some visible manner and exterior signs, as on the day of Pentecost. The Christians who had come with St. Peter, who before had been Jews, were *astonished* to see that such extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were given to uncircumcised Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 47.** *Can any man forbid water? &c.* or doubt that these, on whom the Holy Ghost hath descended, may be made members of the Christian Church, by baptism, as Christ ordained? (Witham) --- Such may be the grace of God occasionally towards men, and such their great charity and contrition, that they may have remission, justification, and sanctification, before the external sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and penance be received; as we see in this example: where, at Peter's preaching, they all received the Holy Ghost before any sacrament. But here we also learn one necessary lesson, that such, notwithstanding, must needs receive the sacraments appointed by Christ, which whosoever contemneth, can never be justified. (St. Augustine, sup. Levit. q. 84. T. 4.)

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[1] Ver. 10. *Mentis excessus*, *Greek: epepesen ep auton ekstasis*.

[2] Ver. 25. *Procidens ad pedes ejus adoravit*, *Greek: peson epi tous podas prosekunesen*. The same word, is often used for a civil worship.

[3] Ver. 36. *Greek: ton logon*, verbum, but in the next verse for verbum, *Greek: rema*.

[4] Ver. 39. St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiii, *vides eos nunquam occultare crucem*, *Greek: oras autous oudamou kruptontas ton stauron*.

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## ACTS 11

**Ver. 2.** Disputed against him. St. Epiphanius makes Cerintbus, who was the next heresiarch to Simon Magus, the author of this dispute. He likewise says it was he, who excited the Jews against St. Paul, (Acts xxi.) and that the first Council of Jerusalem was convened to condemn him. (St. Epiphanius, hæres. 28. chap. ii)

**Ver. 3.** *And didst eat with them.* The Jews looked upon it as a thing altogether abominable, for them to eat with uncircumcised Gentiles; but St. Peter satisfied them, or silenced them by a plain and sincere recital of his vision, and of what happened at the house of Cornelius. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *They held their peace, and glorified God*, that the gate of salvation was also opened to the Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Some of them, at Antioch, spoke also to the Grecians:*[1] by which many understand, *to the Gentiles*, though in most Greek copies we read, *to the Hellenists*. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Multitude was added*, as before, (chap. x.) a few were added to the visible Church. Ever since Christ's ascension, this Church has been notoriously seen. Of her ministers, their preaching has been open, their sacraments visible, their discipline visible, their persecutions visible, their wonderful increase visible, and their manifestly divine protection visible, and known to all the world. Whilst all that have separated themselves by schism from this venerable body, have fallen into discredit, and most into complete oblivion. The Catholic Church was the first, and it will be the last.

**Ver. 25.** *To seek Saul*, who had retired for a while, to his native city, Tarsus. These two remained in Antioch about a year, during which time they reaped a plentiful harvest.

**Ver. 26.** *At Antioch the disciples were first named Christians*, when St. Paul and St. Barnabas were preaching there. Before that, they were called the *disciples* of Jesus, and sometimes *Nazarenes*, (see Acts xxiv. 5.) or perhaps *Galileans*. This honourable name of *Christians*,

distinguished them from Gentiles and Jews, and from all heretical sects, who generally had some name from the authors of such sects, as *Simonites*, *Cerinthians*, *Nicolaites*, &c. Of which see St. Epiphanius. The faithful had also after some time the name of *Catholics*, being taught in the apostles' creed to *believe in the Catholic Church*. And St. Augustine, in several places, takes notice, that no heretics could ever get themselves called by this name; nor can they to this present. See St. Augustine, de util. credendi. chap. viii.; de vera relig. chap. vii.; cont. epis. fundam. chap. iv. Whosoever is of the true faith of Christ, may justly say, *Christian* is my name, *Catholic* my surname: a greater honour, and a greater advantage, than to be of any royal family. (Witham) --- The faithful disciples, believers, &c. as before they were called, now received the name of Christians. It is not certain whether they took the name themselves, or it was given them out of disrespect, by the pagans. Galileans were a term of reproach likewise given to the Christians. St. Peter, in his first epistle, uses the appellation of Christians; but it does not appear that St. Paul ever did in any of his writings. (Calmet, Tirinus, &c.) --- The name of Christian should be common to all the faithful, and all other new names of sectaries abhorred. "If you hear," says St. Jerome, any where such as are said to be of Christ, "not to have their name from Christ, but from some other, as Marcionites, Valentinians, (as now also Lutherans, Calvinists, &c. &c. &c.) know that they belong not to the Church of Christ, but to the synagogue of Antichrist." St. Pacianus, in his letter to Sympronian, says, when heresies had arisen, and endeavoured by diverse names to tear the dove of the Lord and Queen in pieces, that faithful required their surname: hence they who before were called *Christians*, are now surnamed also *Catholics*. Christian is my name and Catholic my surname. By this term *Catholic*, the apostles, in their creed, have distinguished the one true visible Church from all and every other congregation, sect, or party. This mark is so self-evident, that St. Augustine hesitates not to say: "In the lap of the Church the very name *Catholic* keepeth me." (Cont. ep. fund. chap. iv.) --- Again, in his book on the utility of believing, he says: "if after these troubles of mind you still are tossed and vexed, and wish for peace, follow the way of Catholic discipline, which from Christ himself, by the apostles, hath proceeded even unto us, and shall proceed from hence to the latest posterity." (1 Timothy iii. 15.)

**Ver. 29.** *Who dwell in Judea.* Most of the faithful in Jerusalem, who wished to live perfect lives, had sold their possessions, and placed the price in the hands of the apostles; and many others, who had not voluntarily relinquished their property, had probably lost most of it in the persecutions. Hence arose the particular distress of the brethren in Jerusalem, to relieve which the Gentiles made collections. It was meet, that they who had been made partakers of their spiritual goods, should now in time of need administer to them of their temporal substance. (Denis the Carthusian) --- Imitate the alms of these primitive Christians, and make to yourselves provision against another life. Oh how many are now clothed in silks, and abound in pleasures, but are naked and void of every thing, that will bear examination on the day of judgment! (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi. in Act.)

**Ver. 30.** *Sending it to the ancients;*[2] elders, &c. In this and diverse other places, are not to be understood such as were elder in age, but such as had offices and dignities, and by divine authority, and who with a due subordination were to govern the Church: so that by this word, were signified apostles, bishops, and priests. But of this more hereafter. (Witham) --- The ancients or priests, seniors, *Greek: presbuterous*. This is the first place in the New Testament, where *priests* are mentioned. Some interpreters think, that by this word, *ancients*, are meant the apostles; but this is not likely. The apostles must at that time have been dispersed over all the world. Others think it was some of the older deacons, who had charge of the alms. We like the opinion of those who think it means *priests*, subordinate to the apostles, who had the charge of governing the faithful, in their absence. Thus the Christian Church will appear modelled after the form of the synagogue. First, the bishop, who presides, corresponding to the head of the synagogue; the priests, to the ancients, who sat on the right and left of the chief; and the deacons, to the disciples of the Scribes, who studied the law. It must be allowed that many passages occur in Scripture, which it seems necessary to explain of priests of the second rank. St. Paul, (1 Timothy v. 1. 17. 19.) St. James (v. 14) orders the priests to be called to anoint the sick man, which cannot be explained of bishops, as there was only one in each town. It must nevertheless be observed, that

this same word *ancient*, or *priest*, is often used in Scripture, and primitive writings, to designate a bishop. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 20. Ad Græcos, *Greek: pros tous ellenistas*, and in some manuscripts *Greek: ellenas*.

[2] Ver. 30. Ad seniores, *Greek: pros tous presbuterous*. This Greek word *presbuterous*, in our Latin Vulgate is sometimes translated presbyter, sometimes senior, sometimes major natu, and is commonly put to signify bishops, or priests, as shall be seen hereafter.

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## ACTS 12

**Ver. 1.** *Herod.* Agrippa, made king by the emperor Caius. See Josephus vi. 18. Jewish Antiquities, chap. viii. and lib. xix. chap. 5. *put to death James the great, brother to John.* (Witham) --- This man was the same as Agrippa, by which name he is most commonly known. He was brother to the famous Herodias, who was the cause of St. John the Baptists decollation, (Calmet) and son-in-law of Herod the Great, by his father Aristobulus. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** St. James the elder, brother of St. John the evangelist.

**Ver. 3.** *The days of the azymes.* By this we may know about the time when St. James was executed. Peter was to be reserved till after the Pasch, because it was not usual for the Jews to put any one to a violent death on a festival day. They would not damp the joy of the solemnity by such actions. (Menochius) --- Nothing can be more illiberal, nothing more unfounded, and unjust, than the accusation advanced by the translators of the Bible dedicated to King James. In their preface they say, that the Catholics keep the words, *azymes, holocaust, pasch*, &c. in their version, purposely "to darken the sense, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof, it may be kept from being understood." See the splendid Oxford edit. an. 1770. --- So far from this, we open the window, to let in the light; we bread the shell, that the kernel may be eaten: we put aside the curtain, that a sight may be had into the holy place; we remove the cover of the well, that the good and humble may get to the water of life. If we retain certain words in the original tongue, it is for the same reason as our adversaries retain others, such as Amen, Sabaoth, Alleluia, Jehova, &c.

**Ver. 4.** *To four files of soldiers.*[1] To four times four soldiers, or to sixteen soldiers, each band or file consisting of four.

**Ver. 6.** With these two chains, according to the Roman custom, St. Peter must have been fastened to the two soldiers, that guarded him. Yet Peter slept secure, trusting in that Providence which sleepeth not.

**Ver. 7.** *An Angel.* This was probably his Angel guardian. It has always been the constant belief of the Church, that each individual is put under the protection of a tutelar Angel. (Haydock) --- St. Bernard, on these words of the psalm, *he has given his Angels charge over thee*, thus expresses himself: Wonderful condescension! and truly great love! He has given his Angels charge over thee, to guard thee in all thy ways. What is man, O God, that thou shouldst thus be mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldst look upon him! What reverence, devotion, and confidence, should this word inspire in us! Reverence their presence, be grateful for their good will; have confidence in their protection; walk with circumspection; your Angel is present. In every abode, in every place, respect his presence. Let us love them too, destined to be in future our co-heirs; in the mean time, our guardians and patrons. What have we to fear under such guides? They cannot be overcome nor seduced; much less can they lead us astray. They are faithful, they are prudent, they are powerful. Why do we fear? Let us follow them; let us stick close to

them; and we shall dwell under the protection of the God of heaven. If a grievous temptation urges; if great tribulation hangs over you; call upon your leader your helper in opportunities, in tribulations; call upon him, and say, save us, or we perish, &c. (St. Bernard, Sermon in Psalm. Qui habitat.) --- *A light shined in the room.* To Peter only; not to the rest. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Peter coming to himself.* Being now sensible that all was true. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *And considering or reflecting,* what was best to be done. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Thou art mad, or talkest idly.* --- *Then said they, it is his Angel.* It seems ridiculous to translate here a *messenger*. Does a messenger speak with the very voice of him that sends him? St. John Chrysostom[2] and others on this place observe, that they believed that every one, at least of the faithful, hath a good Angel. (Witham) --- "If proper Angels," saith St. John Chrysostom, (T. iii. hom. 7. in laud. Paul.) "be deputed by our Lord to such as have only charge of their own existence, (as Israel said, Genesis xlviii. 16. *the Angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys*) much more are super-human spirits at hand to help those unto whom the charge and burden of the world is committed." Such persons as can believe that God permits evil spirits to tempt us, can find no difficulty surely in believing that the same good, just, and merciful Creator will permit good spirits to guide, protect, and assist us. Repeated proofs of both are found in holy writ. The learned Protestant commentator, Polus, on this text, says: *Hujusmodi visis assueverat eo tempore Ecclesia, quæ etiam novit fideles præsidio angelorum esse circumseptos.* The Church at that period had been accustomed to similar apparitions, nor is she ignorant that the faithful are secured by the protection of Angels. (T. iv. p. 1494.)

**Ver. 17.** *He went into another place.* Did not think fit to stay in the city of Jerusalem. St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that upon another occasion, when he was delivered by an Angel out of prison, he went boldly the next day, and preached in the temple. (chap. v. 19.) but there he was ordered by an Angel so to do; now to stay without such orders, would have been rashly to expose himself, and in a manner tempting God. (Witham) --- Peter retired to another place, that he might not rashly expose himself to future danger. It is not just to depend on supernatural assistance, when human means are adequate to the effect. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi.) --- St. Peter desires they will announce his miraculous deliverance to James, the then bishop of Jerusalem, and to the Christians, that they might see the effect of their prayers for him. St. James had, beyond a doubt, ordered general supplications to be made by all the brethren for St. Peter. (Bristow)

**Ver. 19.** *Should be led*[3] away to punishment or death, according to the sense both of the Latin and Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** In the Greek, he was preparing to make war against them. These applied not to agriculture, but drew their support from Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 23.** *Struck him.* Josephus relates, that when Herod saw he must die, he replied to the flatteries of the people, "See, he whom you call a god, is snatched out of life, in spite of himself. The necessity of suffering death proves the falsity of your words; but we must submit to the will of God." (Jewish Antiquities, lib. xvii. chap. 9. and The Jewish War, lib. i. chap. 21.) --- Princes may take warning from this example, not to take delight in the praises and flatteries of their subjects, so as to forget themselves to be men, and the God of heaven to be the supreme Lord of all, to whose just tribunal princes and subjects are equally amenable. (Haydock) --- *Eaten up by worms.* A visible judgment of God, for his pride and vanity. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *Returned from Jerusalem,* to Antioch, the capital of Syria. (Witham) --- This John Mark, the companion of Sts. Paul and Barnabas, was not the evangelist who bore that name; but a cousin of Barnabas, son of Mary, in whose house the apostles generally assembled at Jerusalem. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 4. Quatuor quaternionibus, *Greek: tessarsi tetradiois stratioton.*

[2] Ver. 15. It is his Angel. St. John Chrysostom on these words, hom. xxvi. Ex hoc verum est quod unusquisque Angelum habet; *Greek: alethes oti ekastos Aggelon echei.*

[3] Ver. 19. Jussit eos duci, *Greek: apachthenai.*

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## ACTS 13

**Ver. 1.** *Manahen ... foster-brother to Herod*, or nursed with the same milk. (Witham) --- It would appear from his having been brought up with Herod, that he was of noble parentage. He is likewise believed to have been one of the seventy-two disciples. The Latins keep his feast on the 24th of May. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *As they were ministering to the Lord.*[1] Mr. N. and some others translate, *offering up sacrifice*. There are indeed good grounds to take this to be the true sense, as the Rhemish translators observed, who notwithstanding only put *ministering*, lest, (said they) we should seem to turn it in favour of our own cause, since neither the Latin nor Greek word signifies of itself to *sacrifice*, but any public ministry in the service of God; so the St. John Chrysostom says, *when they were preaching*. (Witham) --- *Separate me*. Though Paul and Barnabas are here chosen by the Holy Ghost for the ministry, yet they were to be ordained, consecrated, and admitted by men; which loudly condemns all those modish and disordered spirits, that challenge and usurp the office of preaching, and other sacred and ecclesiastical functions, without any appointment from the Church. (Bristow) --- Consider, says St. John Chrysostom, by whom they are ordained: by Lucius, of Cyrene, and Manahen, rather than by the Spirit. The less honourable these persons are, the more signal is the grace of God."

**Ver. 3.** *Fasting and prayer, imposing their hands upon them.* By which is clearly expressed, the manner in which the ministers of God were, and are still ordained bishops, priests, deacons in the Church. (Witham) --- Interpreters are much divided in opinion, whether this imposition of hands be a mere deputation to a certain employment, or the sacramental ceremony, by which orders are conferred. Sts. Chrysostom, Leo, &c. are of the latter opinion; nor does it any where appear that St. Paul was bishop before this. Arator, sub-deacon of the Church of Rome, who dedicated in the year 544 his version of *the Acts of the Apostles* into heroic verse to Pope Virgilius, attributes this imposition of hands to St. Peter:

-----Quem mox sacravit euntem  
Imposita Petrus ille manu, cui sermo magistri  
Omnia posse dedit.-----

--- See his printed poems in 4to. Venice, an. 1502. Arator was sent in quality of ambassador from Athalaric to the emperor Justinian. --- Following the practice of the apostles, the Church of God ordains a solemn and general fast on the four public times for ordination, the ember days, as a necessary preparation for so great a work, and this St. Leo calls also an apostolical tradition. See St. Leo, serm. ix. de jejun. and ep. lxxxi. chap. 1. and serm. iii. and iv. de jejun. 7. mensis.--- Nor was this fasting a fasting from sin, as some ridiculously affirm, for such fasting was a universal obligatin: nor was it left to each one's discretion, as certain heretics maintained. See St. Augustine, hæres. iii.

**Ver. 5.** *In the synagogues of the Jews*, preaching first the gospel ot them. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *A magician ... whose name was Bar-jesu*, son of Jesus, or Josue. In Arabic, *Elymas* is the same as magician. This man did all he could to dissuade the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, from embracing the Christian faith. (Witham) --- Salamina was the capital of the island of Cyprus, and

at the eastern extremity, as Paphos was at the western. A. D. 45. [the year A.D. 45.]

**Ver. 9.** *Then Saul, who also is Paul.* This is the first time we find the apostle called Paul. Some, therefore, think it was given him when he converted this proconsul, Sergius Paulus. Others, that Saul being a Hebrew word, the Greeks, or rather the Romans, turned it into Paul. (Witham) --- This is the first place in which this apostle is called Paul. He took this name out of respect to the illustrious convert he had made in the person of the proconsul, the governor of the island. (Menochius) --- Or, more probably, his former name, by a small change, was modelled into *Paulus*, which was a sound more adapted to a Roman ear. He begins to bear this name only, when he enters on his mission to the Gentiles. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *Son of the devil.* Sharp language, when grounded on truth, may be used against those who hinder the conversion of others. St. John Chrysostom says, he was struck with this blindness only for a time, to make him enter into himself, and be converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Antioch.* Many cities in Asia Minor bore this name. It is related that Seleucus Nicanor built many, and called them by this name, in honour of his father Antiochus. (Tirinus) --- Pamphylia and Pisidia were two provinces in Asia Minor. --- *The sabbath-day.* Some not only understand, but even translate, the *first day of the week*: but here is rather meant the Jewish sabbath, as St. Paul went into their synagogues. And in this his first sermon to them, which St. Luke has set down, he speaks nothing that could offend or exasperate the Jews, but honourably of them, to gain them to the Christian faith; he commends in particular David, whose Son they knew the Messiah was to be: and of whom he tells them, that God had given them their *Saviour, Jesus*. He mentions this high eulogium, which God gave of David, Psalm lxxxviii. 21. that he was a man *according to God's heart, who in all things should fulfil his will*, that is, as to the true worship of God; though he fell into some sins, of which he repented, and did penance. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** These seven nations are the Chanaanites, the Hethites, the Hevites, the Pherezites, the Gergesites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorrites. (Josue iii. 10. and elsewhere)

**Ver. 20.** Chronology only gives about 350 years from the entrance into the land of promise to the end of Samuel's judicial government, who was the last of the judges. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 24, &c.** He then brings the testimony, which John the Baptist gave of Jesus, as it is likely many of them had heard of John, and of the great esteem that all the people had of his virtue and sanctity. He tells them that salvation was offered and sent them by Jesus, against whom the chief of the Jews at Jerusalem obtained of Pilate a sentence, that he should be crucified; but that God *raised him up from the dead the third day*. And we, says he, *publish to you this promise*, the Messiah, promised to our forefathers.

**Ver. 33.** He then shews them that Jesus was their Messiah, and the Son of God, begotten of his Father from eternity, who rose from the dead, and he applies these words, (Psalm ii. 7.) to prove Christ's resurrection, *thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*. It is true, these words regard chiefly the eternal generation of Christ, as they are applied by St. Paul, (Hebrews v. 5.) but the resurrection was a necessary consequence of his divinity, since death could have no power over him. St. Paul here also proves Christ's resurrection by the following predictions. (Witham) --- *Second psalm.* The oldest copy reads, first psalm. The difference is merely in words; for the division of the psalter at present is very different from what it formerly was: sometimes a single psalm of ours being divided into many, and many of our divisions making only one, according to the Hebrews. The latter are not even now agreed among themselves on the same division of the psalms. (Calmet) --- Some suppose, that what we call the first psalm was originally looked upon as a preface to the psalter; others, that our first and second psalms united in one. (Mat. Polus.)

**Ver. 34.** *I will give you the holy things of David sure.* These are the words of the prophet Isaias, lv. ver. 3. According to the Septuagint the sense is, I will faithfully fulfil the promises I made to David. (Challoner)

**Ver. 35.** *In another place also he saith, (Psalm xv. 10.) thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption.* That is, Christ's body to be corrupted in the grave. See the words of St. Peter, Acts chap. ii. 27. (Witham)

**Ver. 36.** *After he had served in his generation.* That is, in his life-time, *saw corruption*, or was corrupted in the grave. (Witham)

**Ver. 37-38.** *Justified.* That your sins being forgiven by the merits of Christ, you may be truly just in the sight of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** The law of Moses was then imperfect. I shew you its completion, by preaching to you Christ, whom it foretold. You would violate the law of Moses by opposing the new law, to which he leads you. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 40.** See then that you reject not this divine Saviour, lest what has been denounced by the prophets fall upon your incredulous heads: *I will abandon the holy place which I entrusted to you; I will cease to look upon you as my people; I will transfer my kingdom to the Gentiles.* (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 41.** *Ye despisers*[2] of the favours offered you, *behold, wonder, &c.* This citation is out of Habacuc, (chap. i. ver. 5.) according to the Septuagint. The prophet, by these words, foretold to the Jews in his time the evils that would come upon them in their captivity in Chaldea, but St. Paul here applies them at least to the miseries that the incredulous Jews would incur, if they obstinately refused to believe in Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *The whole city.* Not only Jews, but a great many Gentiles, which exasperated the envious Jews. (Witham)

**Ver. 48.** *As many as were pre-ordained to eternal life*,[3] by the free election, and special mercies, and providence of God. (Witham) --- Some understand this as if it meant, predisposed by their docility, to receive the word of life. But the Fathers unanimously understand it literally of predestination, which is defined by St. Thomas Aquinas, serm. i. qu. 23. a. 1. "The disposition of God, by which he prepares, what he will himself perform, according to his infallible foreknowledge." In other words, it is the manner in which God conducts a reasonable creature to its proper destiny, which is eternal life. In this mystery of the Catholic faith, which cannot be clearly explained to human understanding, because it is a mystery, there are nevertheless several points, which we know for certain. 1st. Though it is certain, that this decree of the Almighty is infallible, and must have its effect, yet it is far removed from the blasphemy of Calvinists, who pretend that it destroys free-will, and therefore removes all motives of exertion to good works. 2nd. For it is a point of Catholic faith, that this foreknowledge of the Almighty no ways interferes with man's liberty, but leaves him still a perfectly free agent, and therefore responsible for his actions. 3rd. It is likewise decreed by the Council of Trent, that no one can certainly know that he is of the number of the predestined, without a special revelation to that effect. These are the most essential points, which it concerns us to know of this doctrine. As to the consequences which may be drawn from these positions, it were better for us to submit our understandings to the obedience of faith, than entangle ourselves in a maze of abstruse errors, far removed from our comprehension. Would that this sober line of conduct were pursued by many moderns, who at present talk and write so much on this subject, and to such little purpose. How excellently well does the great genius of the Latin Church, St. Augustine, say: *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de occultis!* How much wiser and better is it to confess our ignorance on mysteries, than idly to dispute on mysteries! (lib. viii. de Gen. ad litt. chap. 5.)

**Ver. 51.** *Shaking off the dust, &c.* See the Annotations, Matthew x. 14.

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[1] Ver. 2. Ministrantibus illis, *Greek: leitourgounton de auton.*

[2] Ver. 41. Habacuc i. 5. In the Latin text, and according to the Hebrew, aspice in Gentibus: but in the Septuagint and Greek here, *Greek: idete kataphronetai.*

[3] Ver. 48. Præordinati, *Greek: tetagmenoi*, on which St. John Chrysostom says, *Greek: toutesti aphorismenoi*, prædefiniti.

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## ACTS 14

**Ver. 1.** *And of the Greeks.* Which is here put for the Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *The unbelieving Jews stirred up, &c.* It would hence appear, that the former were not very scrupulous in the means they took to oppose the gospel. They, who would have been dreadfully scandalized to have spoken to a Gentile for any good purpose, are not very nice in having intercourse with them to irritate them against the apostles. Such is the general conduct of men whose religion is vain. That sacred name is used for a pretext to authorize the most unwarrantable actions. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** *To the word of his grace.* That is, of the gospel, and the law of grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Perceiving that he had.* It does not appear that St. Paul had any previous conversation with the man he healed on this occasion, or demanded from him any testimony of his faith. But he saw that he had faith, perhaps by inspiration, or by the confidence and eagerness the lame man may have shewn in his countenance and actions. (Calmet, &c.)

**Ver. 11.** *And they called Barnabas, Jupiter.* Perhaps because he was of taller and finer stature; for, according to Nicephorus (hist. ii. 37.) St. Paul was very low in size, and much bent; hence St. John Chrysostom says of him, tricubitalis est, & cœlos transcendit, though not more than three cubits high, he yet transcends the heavens, and hence for his eloquence, he was called Mercury. Jupiter was said to take Mercury with him, as may be seen in Amphitryone Plauti.

**Ver. 12.** *Garlands.* These might be for the victims, as they generally were crowned, or had gilded horns.

Victima labe carens, præstantissima forma,  
Sistitur ante aras, vittis præsignis et auro.---Ovid.

--- Or they might be for the two pretended gods, as it was usual to crown their statues. (Pliny, lib. xvi. chap. 4.) --- The priests likewise themselves, who sacrificed, wore crowns. (Virgil, Æneid ii.)

**Ver. 14.** *We also are mortals.* The enraptured people wished to pay divine homage, *Greek: thoein*, to the apostles, and therefore they indignantly reject the proffered honours. The Catholic Church has but one external sacrifice, and this she offereth to God only, and "neither to Peter nor to Paul, saith St. Augustine, though the priest that sacrificeth, standeth over their bodies, and offereth in their memories." (lib. viii. de Civit. Dei. chap. 27.)

**Ver. 15.** *Suffered all nations to walk in their own way.* Literally, *dismissed* all nations, suffering them to run on in their idolatry, and other sins, not favouring them with a written law, as he did the Jews, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *He left not himself without testimony.* Inasmuch as the Gentiles had always the light of reason, and such lights, that the created things of this world, and from the visible effects of God's providence, they might have come to the knowledge of the true God, the creator of all things. See Romans chap. i. (Witham) --- God did not leave himself without testimony among the

Gentiles. He did not leave them without the means of discovering the way which led to him. They had the law of nature engraved in their hearts, the knowledge of good and evil, &c. (Menochius) --- Therefore they were inexcusable, if they did not know him. The invisible things of God, his eternal divinity might have been known to them from the consideration of the visible creation. (Romans i. 20.)

**Ver. 21.** *Through many tribulations.* Our daily offences required the paternal chastisement of the Almighty. The concupiscence of the flesh too, which wills against the spirit, must be subdued by punishment. Woe then to you, lovers of this world, who wish to pass your lives without tribulation, enemies of the cross. Senseless creatures, is the disciple above his master? Did it not become Christ first to suffer, and thus to enter into his glory? and shall we pretend to enter by any other means? &c. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 22.** *When they had ordained for them priests.* [1] The Protestant translation, following the grammatical etymology of the Greek word *presbyter*, always puts *elders*. Yet they of the Church of England allow, and maintain, that by this Greek word in this, and many other places, are signified the ministers of God, known by the name of *bishops* or priests, according to the ecclesiastical use of the same word. It is evident that here are not meant elders, as to age and years. Nay, though we adhere to the grammatical signification, we should rather translate priests, since the English word *priest*, as well as the French word *pretre*, come from *presbyter*. But of this word more hereafter. We may also take notice, that the Calvinists here translate, *ordained by election*, pretending by the derivation of the Greek word, that church ministers were only chosen, and deputed by the votes and suffrages of people; and not by any ordination, or consecration by a bishop; nor by any character or sacrament of order. But their argument from this Greek word is frivolous, and groundless, as hath been shewn by Mr. Bois on this verse, by Mr. Legh in his *Critica Sacra*, &c. (Witham) --- We see from this text, 1st, that Sts. Paul and Barnabas were bishops, having authority to confer holy orders: 2nd. that there was even then a difference betwixt bishops and priests, though the name in the primitive Church was often used indifferently; 3rd. that fasting and praying were constant preparatives for holy orders. (Bristow)

**Ver. 24.** This Antioch was a sea-port in Pamphylia. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 25.** *From whence they had been delivered,* up to their ministry, and their apostolical *mission by the grace of God*; that is, where they had been first chosen by the direction of the Spirit of God, ordained priests and bishops, and had received power, and graces to discharge their offices of apostles. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *No little time.* It is not precisely known how long he remained there, nor what he did. St. Luke relates nothing of what happened from the 46th year of Christ to the 51st [from A.D. 46 to A.D. 51], in which the Council of Jerusalem was held. It is probable St. Paul spent that time carrying the gospel among the neighbouring provinces. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 22. Cum constituissent presbyteros, *Greek: cheirotonesantes presbuterous*. Mr. Bois on this verse: Si usum loquendi potius quam syllabas ipsas, quibus inhærere sæpe parum tutum est, respicias, *Greek: cheirotonein*, nihil aliud declarat, quam constituere, creare, ordinare. See Mr. Legh, in thesauro linguæ græcæ.

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## ACTS 15

**Ver. 1.** *Unless you be circumcised.* Many who had been converted from Judaism, held that none, not even converted from paganism, could be saved, unless they were circumcised, and observed the other ceremonies of the law of Moses. (Witham) --- See Galatians v. 2.

**Ver. 2.** *To the apostles and priests*, [1] where we find again *presbyters* in Greek, meaning bishops and priests. (Witham) --- *Paul...should go to...Jerusalem.* We learn from Galatians ii. 2. 4. that St. Paul undertook this journey in consequence of a divine revelation, and was accompanied by Barnabas and Titus, the latter of whom he would not suffer to be circumcised. Such confidence had he in the rectitude of the opinion he defended. From the example of St. Paul and St. Barnabas, apostles, and men full of the Spirit of God, we learn, that as often as any contest arises about faith, recourse should be had to the supreme visible authority established by Jesus Christ, to have all differences adjusted. This is the order of divine Providence with regard to the Church; without it truth and unity could not be preserved; without it, the Church of God would be more defective and inefficient than any human government. *Tell the Church: and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.* (Matthew xviii. 17.)

**Ver. 7.** *Former days.* Literally, *in the days of old*; that is, at the conversion of Cornelius, many years ago, about the year 35; and it was now 51. (Witham) --- St. Peter at the head of the Council, spoke first; St. James as Bishop of Jerusalem, spoke next, and all, as St. Jerome says, came into the sentence of Peter. (Ep. lxxxix. ad. S. Aug. chap. 2.)

**Ver. 10.** *Why tempt you God*, by calling in question what he hath sufficiently attested, and approved, and by being incredulous to his promises of giving salvation to the Gentiles, and to all nations. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** In the historical sense he is speaking of the prosperity of the house of Juda, in the reign of Ezechias, or their return from captivity. But in this respect, it is certain that the prophecy never had its entire accomplishment. The passage in the text is cited from the Septuagint. The Hebrew is, "I will raise up the house of David...that it may possess all the nations," &c. Now it is true that the nations never were subject to the house of David, or known by the name of the people of God; but by their vocation to the gospel, as St. James explains it. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *To the Lord was known his own work.* He bringeth it to pass, as he hath decreed, though his decrees are to us unknown. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Wherefore I judge*, and join my judgment with Peter. St. John Chrysostom thinks that James had a special authority in the Council, as bishop of Jerusalem, and because of the great veneration, which those zealous for the Jewish law had for him: but his power was certainly inferior to that of St. Peter, who was head of all, as St. John Chrysostom teacheth, hom. iii. on the Acts.

**Ver. 20.** *Things strangled and from blood.* In these prohibitions, the Church indulged the particular feelings of the Jews, that the bond of union between them and the Gentiles might be more closely united; the latter in these two instances giving way to the prejudices of the former, who in their turn gave up much, by submitting to the abolition of the ceremonial law of Moses. This prohibition was of course only temporary, and to cease with the reasons, which gave rise to it. (Menochius) --- The Jews had such a horror of blood, that they considered those who eat it as defiled, and violators of the law of nature. The Lord had in effect from the beginning forbidden the use of blood to Noe [Noah], (Genesis ix. 4.) which he likewise reported in the strongest terms in Leviticus viii. 26. By this we see the great authority of God's Church, and Councils which may make permanent or temporary decrees, such as are fitting for the state of the times or peoples, without any express Scripture at all, and by this authoritative exaction, things become of strict obligation, which previous to it, were in themselves indifferent. (Bristow)

**Ver. 21.** *For Moses...hath in every city.* Not only the Jews, but the Christians converted from Judaism, still followed the ceremonies of the law of Moses. (Witham) --- Let not the Jews complain, that we abandon Moses, and destroy the law by this regulation. No: it shall subsist for ever in a more perfect state, read in the synagogue, and revered by the Church. (Calmet) --- Others give a different explanation of this verse. Let the Jews, say they, follow Moses, and hear

him in their assemblies; we have other laws, and enjoy other privileges. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 23.** *The brethren of the Gentiles.* Hence we see, that he letter, with the decree of the Council, only regarded those converts, who had been Gentiles; neither are they forbidden to use the Jewish ceremonies, but a declaration is made, that they have no obligation to follow the said ceremonies and precepts, as it will appear by other places. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Some who went out from us,* from Jerusalem, and pretended to speak our mind, and in our name, but we gave them no such commission. (Witham) --- A proper description of heretics, schismatics, and seditious preachers, who go out from their own superiors, and pretend to teach and preach without any mission, *et quomodo prædicabunt nisi mittantur*; how can they preach, unless they are sent? (Romans x. 15.)

**Ver. 28.** *It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.* To us in these matters, wherein by the promises of Christ, we are directed by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, &c. --- *Than these necessary things.* Necessary at this juncture, and always, if we except that order of *abstaining from blood, and things strangled*, which was not a perpetual, unchangeable precept, but to last only for a time, as St. John Chrysostom observes. (Witham) --- This is the first general council held in the Church, and the model of all succeeding ones. In it the apostles, in a commanding and authoritative manner, laid down the law, which was to be the guide of the faithful, knowing they had a right to impose any regulations in the Church, and that they could not employ this authority but to good purposes, directed as they were by the unerring spirit of truth, which Christ had promised (Matthew xxviii. 20.) should remain with his Church for ever. Hence it would appear that we have no more ground refusing obedience to the voice of the Church at present, than at her first establishment: and that those who will not hear the Church now, speaking in her Councils, would with as little ceremony have opposed the apostles on this occasion, had they lived at the time. By what spirit of seduction has been introduced, and spread, to such an alarming extent, the opinion, that Christianity (the very leading feature of which is to hear and to obey) authorizes unrestricted liberty? Is then authority an unmeaning word? (Haydock)

**Ver. 29.** *From blood, and from things strangled.* The use of these things, though of their own nature indifferent, were here prohibited, to bring the Jews more easily to admit of the society of the Gentiles; and to exercise the latter in obedience. But this prohibition was but temporary, and has long since ceased to oblige; more especially in the western churches. (Challoner) --- See note on ver. 20, above.

**Ver. 31.** We may here briefly remark, that the controversy was finally adjusted by the decree of the Council. 2ndly, That all, not only the Gentiles, but the abettors and masters of the former dissension, experienced great consolation in the promulgation of the decision, receiving it as the resolve not of mere mortal men, but of the Holy Ghost. *It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.*

**Ver. 32.** *Judas and Silas, being prophets,* that is, preachers, as the word *prophet*, is divers times taken. (Witham) --- Not only such were called prophets, as had the gift of predicting future events, but such moreover as had the gift of interpreting Scripture, and of speaking of the things of God. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 39.** *There was a dissension,[2] or dispute,* with reasoning, and arguing upon the matter. St. Paul represented to St. Barnabas, that he was not for having John Mark to be their companion, because he had before left them, but St. Barnabas was for having with them his kinsman Mark; and the dispute was such, that upon is St. Paul and Barnabas separated; which gave occasion to the preaching of the gospel in more places. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxiii. --- The fault in this contention lay with St. Barnabas; *Greek: o Paulos to dikaion, o Barnabas to philanthronon*: Paul sought what was just; Barnabas what was pleasing to nature. The Greeks, moreover remark, that this severity of Paul was of service in strengthening the to pliant character of Mark, and as such he is saluted by Paul. (Colossians iv. 10.) They separated, as formerly Abraham and

Lot, without prejudice to their friendship. (Genesis xiii. 9.) (Mat. Polus, synop. criticorum, fol. 4. p. 1528.)

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[1] Ver. 2. *Greek: presbuteros*; *presbyteros*. For the same Greek word we sometimes find in the vulgar Latin, *presbyteros*, sometimes *seniores*, sometimes *maiores natu*: yet it is generally a word of dignity in the ministry of Christ, signifying those who were afterwards known by the name of bishops or priests. When mention is made of *Greek: presbuteros*, or *seniores*, of the old law, I have translated *elders*: but where the ministers of the new law are understood, when in the Latin we have *presbyteri*, I have put *priests*; when *maiores natu* or *seniores*, I have put in English *seniors*, bishops or priests, being understood.

[2] Ver. 39. *Dissentio*, *Greek: paroxusmos*, *acris disceptatio*. See. St. John Chrysostom.

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## ACTS 16

**Ver. 3.** *Circumcised him*. Not to obstruct the conversion of the Jews; and because it was still lawful to observe the Jewish ceremonies, though the obligation of keeping the old law had ceased. (Witham) --- This St. Paul did in order to gain the Jews, and make Timothy acceptable to them. (Tirinus) --- To the Jew, says he, (1 Corinthians ix. 20.) I became a Jew, that I might gain the Jews. If he refused to circumcise Titus, in order to vindicate the Christian's independence of the Mosaic ceremonies; he now submits to the observance of them, to shew there is nothing of itself bad in them, and that they might without crime be practised, till time by degrees had abolished them. (St. Augustine, ep. lxxxii. ad S. Hieronymum. [to St. Jerome.])

**Ver. 4.** Here, as well as in the last verse of the former chapter, we see St. Paul ordering the new converts, wherever he went, to receive, as their rule of conduct, the ordinances of the apostles and priests assembled in Jerusalem.

**Ver. 6.** *They were forbidden by the Holy Ghost*, to go, and preach at that time in the Lesser Asia [Asia Minor], perhaps because their preaching in Macedonia was more necessary; or because St. John was to be sent into Asia [Asia Minor]. (Witham) --- *Forbidden*. Why? Because they were not yet prepared to receive the gospel; or, perhaps, these provinces were reserved for St. John, as Bithynia was for St. Luke. (Menochius) --- St. Leo compares this question to many others respecting the inscrutable judgments of God. Why did not the Son of God come into the world many ages before? Why did he suffer so many to die in ignorance? Why are there yet so many in infidelity? Why, in one family, does one believe and is converted, while another remains in darkness, and crime? Who shall account for the exercise he pleases to make of his rigour, or his mercy, when all were justly victims of the former? (St. Leo, de vocat. Gentium. lib. ii. chap. 2)

**Ver. 7.** *The spirit of Jesus permitted them not*. It is the same spirit, which just before was called the Holy Ghost: for the Holy Ghost is the spirit of Jesus, as proceeding from the Son as well as from the Father. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *A vision*, &c. The tutelar angel of the province, according to most interpreters, under the form of a Macedonian, who implored St. Paul in behalf of the province he guarded.

**Ver. 10.** *We*. This change in the narration from the third, to the first person, *we sought*, &c. is remarkable. It is hence inferred, that St. Luke, the author of this book, joined St. Paul at Troas, and became his inseparable companion. (Calmet) --- It is, however, probable, that as the narrative in the first person changes again at the end of this chapter, and is not resumed, till the fifth verse of the 20th chapter, that St. Luke was absent on some mission during the time that elapsed between this and their sailing from Philippi, as mentioned hereafter. (Chap. xx. ver. 6)



(Tirinus)

**Ver. 13.** *There was prayer.*[1] The Greek word signifies either prayer itself, or an oratory, or place to pray in. (Witham) --- Not every prayer is here understood, but that which was joined in the celebration of the sacred mysteries. (Estius, in different location.) See 1 Corinthians vii. and Acts vi.

**Ver. 16.** *A pythonical spirit.* A spirit pretending to divination, to tell secrets, and things to come. See 2 Kings xxviii; Isaias viii. 19. (Witham) --- A divining spirit, which pretended to foretell things to come. It is strictly forbidden every where throughout the old law to have any dealings with persons of this description. (Deuteronomy xviii. 10; Leviticus xx. 27; &c.) Hence it would appear that these superstitions were of early practice among mankind. It is lamentable that the present age is still credulous enough to believe in such impostures. The ignorance of mankind, it appears, has always been made a source of emolument to the designing. (Haydock)

**Ver. 17.** *These men are the servants of the most high God.* Evil spirits in possessed people, are sometimes forced to tell the truth. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** Observe here that the servants of God have a power granted them of controlling wicked spirits, according to the promise of our Lord, Luke ix. and x. Hence the seventy disciples, returning, said: *Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name.* (Estius, in different location)

**Ver. 20.** *Jews.* this was the name the first Christians went by among the pagans. Indeed our Saviour's being born of that nation, and his disciples adoring the same God, and following the same morality and Scriptures as the Jews, were sufficient reasons to make them confounded. When Suetonius relates that Claudius banished the Jews from Rome, he means the Christians. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** There was a standing decree of the senate, which forbade the introduction of any new divinity, without the formal consent of the senate. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 24.** *Made their feet fast in the stocks.* By the Latin and Greek text, they made them fast with wood. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *All the doors were opened.* This made the jailer conclude the prisoners had made their escape. And he being answerable for them, and expecting to be put to death, was for stabbing himself. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *Was baptized,* being first told what he was to believe, and do. (Witham) --- Hence Catholics draw a very plausible argument for the baptism of infants, as it is very probable there were some infants in the family. See Estius, in different location.

**Ver. 35.** *Sent the serjeants,*[2] vergers, or such like officers. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *Romans.* St. Paul inherited his right of citizenship from his father; it does not appear how Silas obtained it, perhaps by purchase. There is no proof that Silas was a freeman of Rome. (Denis the Carthusian) --- It was forbidden by the Porcian and Sempronian laws, for a Roman citizen to be scourged, unless he was likewise convicted of a capital crime. Cicero pro Rabirio. Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum: scelus verberari. Id. cont. Verrem. The Romans were always very jealous of the dignity of their city. We cannot but admire St. Paul's astonishing desire of suffering for the name of Jesus, in concealing a circumstance, the very naming of which would have saved him the cruel scourging he suffered. If he now refuses to go out of the prison privately, it is to vindicate his honour, and to avert the scandal, which the new converts would naturally feel, in seeing their master treated as a criminal. He exemplified in this instance St. Augustine's principal; "Our lives are necessary for ourselves, but our reputation for others." (Haydock) --- Estius declares, that Silas was also a Roman citizen, and that from this

circumstance he probably received a Roman name, as Paul did. For in other parts of Scripture we find him styled Silvanus. (2 Corinthians i. 19.) and at the commencement of both the epistles to the Thessalonians. --- *Not so; but let them come, &c.* St. Paul patiently submitted himself to be whipped in a most disgraceful and cruel manner, which he could easily have prevented or put a stop to, by saying, I am a Roman citizen. Afterwards, when they were for setting him at liberty, he claims his privilege, he puts all the magistrates in a fright; they run to ask him pardon, and entreat him with all civility to leave the town, which he does not think fit to do, till he visited his brethren and friends. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 13. Oratio, *Greek: proseuche*, preces, oratio & Oratorium.

[2] Ver. 35. Lictores, *Greek: rabduchous*, vergers, rod-bearers.

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## ACTS 17

**Ver. 2.** It was customary with St. Paul to open the Scriptures first to the Jews, (Acts xiii. 46.) and to argue with them from the law and the prophets. (Acts xxviii. 23.) St. Paul made use of the same passages of Scripture to convince the Jews, as Jesus Christ did on a similar occasion. (Mat. Polus.)

**Ver. 3.** *That the Christ was to suffer.* The suffering of Christ was the great stumbling-block to the Jews, which St. Paul now attempted to remove, by shewing them from the Scripture, that this was one of the necessary characters of the Messiah, contained in the prophets. All the other marks were likewise accomplished in Christ. (Denis the Carthusian) --- *And that this is Jesus Christ, whom I preach to you.* The transition from an oblique to a direct mode of speech is very common, especially in the holy Scriptures.

**Ver. 4.** *And some of them*, that is, of the Jews, in whose synagogue he preached, *believed*, and *of those that*[1] *worshipped* God, that is, of those who adored the only true God, though they had not submitted themselves to circumcision, and to the ceremonies of the Jewish law, and *of the Gentiles*, that is, of such as till that time had been heathens, and idolaters; so that here three sorts of persons were converted by St. Paul: 1. *Jews*; 2. *worshippers* of the true God that were not Jews; and 3. *Gentiles*. In this book of the Acts, mention is several times made of *worshippers*, to wit, of God, by which many understand Jewish *proselytes*: but as they neither were Jews already, nor perhaps ever designed to become Jews, we may distinguish two sorts of the Jewish *proselytes*. Some were *proselytes to the Jewish religion*, by a submission to circumcision, and to all the precepts and ceremonies of the Mosaic laws. These are also by some called *proselytes of the covenant*, being as much Jews as they who had been always so. Others are called *proselytes of the gate*, or *proselytes to the God of the Jews*, but not to the religion of the Jews. Of such seems to have been Cornelius, the centurion, (Acts x.) Lydia, (Acts xvi. 14.) and Titus Justus (Acts xviii. 7.) Such also seems to have been the eunuch of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, (Acts viii.) Naaman, the Syrian, after he was cured of his leprosy, (4 Kings vi. 17.) and many others, that lived in Judea, and in other countries. These, therefore, are called *worshippers*, meaning of the true God, though they embraced not the legal precepts and ceremonies of the Jews. See. Monsr. Heur's Dictionary. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Who disturb the city*,[2] put it in an uproar. In the ordinary Greek copies, for the *city*, we read the whole *world*. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Another king.* These Jews suppress, with great artifice, their true cause of vexation against the apostles, and change a mere question of religion into one of temporal policy. The accusation of raising up a new power in opposition to Cæsar's, had been sufficiently refuted and

disavowed before Pilate by the author of our religion, and was therefore too gross to be repeated now. My kingdom, says our blessed Saviour, is not of this world. There is no necessary connection between spiritual and temporal power. It is thus that the abettors of persecution are never at a loss for pretexts, when necessary. Mad zeal is not scrupulously nice in the choice of arguments. (Haydock)

**Ver. 10. *Synagogue.*** In flying from the face of persecution in due season, St. Paul imitated the instruction and example of his master. When his labours are unsuccessful in one place, he renews them in another, and wherever he is, his object is always the same, to announce the truth to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 11. *These were more noble than those of Thessalonica.*** According to the common exposition, the sense is, that these of Berœa, were of a more noble and generous disposition of mind, not carried away with envy and malice, like those of Thessalonica. --- *Searching the Scriptures*, or those places of the prophets by which St. Paul proved that Jesus was the Messias, who was to suffer death, &c. (Witham) --- *Daily searching the Scriptures*, &c. The sheep are not hereby made judges of their pastors, the people of the priests, and lay men and women of St. Paul's doctrine. The Berœans did not read the Old Testament (and the New was not then published) to dispute with the apostles, or to sanction his doctrines: but it was a great comfort and confirmation to the Jews that had the Scriptures, to find, even as St. Paul said, that Christ was God, crucified, risen, and ascended to heaven; which by his expounding they understood, and never before, though they read them, and heard them read every sabbath. So it is a great comfort to a Catholic to see in the Scriptures the clear passages that prove the truth of his tenets, and shew the grounds for his hopes. But this by no means authorizes him to be judge of the true pastors of the Church, whom he is commanded by Jesus Christ to hear and obey, and from whom they are to learn the genuine sense of the Scriptures.

**Ver. 16.** Lactanius ridicules the folly of idolatry in a neat strain of irony, which he introduces by the following verses from Lucilius:

Ut pueri infantes credunt signa omnia athena  
Vivere et esse homines; sic isti omnia ficta  
Vera putant, &c.

--- The poet compares these fools to children. I think them worse; for the latter only take the statues for men, they for gods. Age causes the error of the one, folly of the other. These soon cease to be deceived, but the folly of those lasts and increases always. (Lactanius, de fals. Relig. lib. i.)

**Ver. 18. *Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.*** The former of these philosophers held as their doctrine, that the Almighty did not interfere by his providence in the government of the world; that the soul did not subsist after the body; and consequently, that there was no future state of retribution. The latter denied that man had liberty of action, and maintained, that all things happened by destiny and fatal necessity. These were the two opposite sects St. Paul had to contend with. (Calmet) --- The Stoics believed in the immortality of the soul, and came the nearest to the Christian religion: but both Stoics and Epicureans, with all pagan philosophers, denied the resurrection of bodies; hence St. Augustine says, the faith of a resurrection is peculiar to Christians. (Estius) --- *What is it that this babbler[3] would say?* A word of contempt, which some translate, *this prattler*. It is thought to be a metaphor from birds picking up little seeds, or the like, for their food; and to signify, that St. Paul had picked up words and sentences without any solid meaning. (Witham)

**Ver. 19. *To the Areopagus.*** In this place sat the Athenian judges: but some think that by this word may be here signified, some large hall or court, joining to the Areopagus, where all sorts of people met. (Witham) --- The Areopagus was the supreme and most famous tribunal of all Greece, before which all great causes were tried. The persons who composed it were much renowned for their wisdom. Cicero, and many other Romans, were ambitious of the honour of being an Areopagite; but the power of Athens being now much diminished, this court had sunk in

importance, and was now not much more than the shadow of a great name. (Calmet)

**Ver. 22.** *Over-religious.*[4] Or very superstitious. To be *superstitious*, or given to *superstition*, is commonly taken for a vain and groundless religious worship, but it is also sometimes used in a good sense. And perhaps St. Paul, in the beginning of his speech to so many men of learning, does not so openly blame them for being vainly and foolishly superstitious, but by their inscription, *to the unknown*[5] *God*, he take notice how nice and exact they pretended to be, in not omitting to pay some kind of homage to any god, or gods of all other nations, whom they might not know. For some interpreters think, that by this altar they designed to worship every god of any nation, who was not come to their knowledge: or to worship that great God hinted at in the writings of Plato: or as others conjecture, that God of the Jews, of whom they might have heard such wonders, and whose name the Jews themselves said to be unknown and ineffable. However, from this inscription St. Paul takes an occasion, with wonderful dexterity, with sublime reflections, and with that solid eloquence, of which he was master, and which he employed, as often as it was necessary, to inform them, and instruct them, concerning the works of the one true God, of whom they had little knowledge, by their own fault: that this one true God *made the world, and all things in it*: that from *one* man he raised all mankind: that his presence is not confined to temples made *by the hands of men*, being every where, and in all creatures, preserving them every moment: that in him *we live, move, and have our being*, or subsist: that it is he, who hath *determined the time, limits*, or bounds of every empire, and kingdom, and of every man's life: that this true God, who made, preserves, and governs all things in *heaven and on earth*, cannot be like to gold, silver, or any thing made by the art, or fancy of men. He puts them in mind that according even to one of their own heathen poets, Aratus, men themselves are the *offspring of God*, being blessed with a being and knowledge above all other creatures in this world: who by the light of reason ought to *seek God*, and by considering the visible effects of Providence over the world, and the creatures in it, might come to the knowledge of this one God, the author of all, at least to an imperfect knowledge of him, as men *find* out things *by feeling*, or as it were, groping in the dark. He then adds, (ver. 30.) that having, as it were, *overlooked*, and permitted men for many ages to run on in this ignorance and blindness, in punishment of their sins, (this their ignorance of one true God, the author of all things, being wilful and inexcusable) now the same true God hath been pleased to *announce to all men*, that henceforward they acknowledge, and worship him, that they repent, and *do penance* for their sins. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** It may be asked, why they had not implicit faith, worshipping the true, though unknown, God?[5] 1st. because the worship of the true God can never exist with the worship of idols; 2nd. because an *explicit* faith in God is required of all; 3rd. because it is repugnant to *implicit* faith, to admit any thing contrary to it, as comparing this unknown God with the pagan idols; for God to be at all, must be one. Lucan towards the end of his 2nd book, hath these words:

-----Et dedita sacris

Incerti Judæa Dei.

--- What, therefore, you improperly worship, that I preach to you, and instruct you in the true worship, far different from what you pay to your strange gods.

**Ver. 24.** *God...dwelleth not in temples.* He who is infinite cannot be confined to space; nor stand in need of what human hands can furnish. Temples are not for God, but for man. It is the latter who derives assistance from them. The same may be observed of all exterior acts of worship. They are serviceable, inasmuch as they proceed from, or powerfully assist, interior devotion, by the impressions which exterior objects leave upon the soul. The reciprocal action of one upon the other, in our present state of existence, is great and inevitable. (Haydock) See chap. vii. above, ver. 48. --- God, indeed, dwelleth in the temple, yes, and in the soul of the just man, but his is not confined there, as the idols were to their temples. Hence the prayer of Solomon at the consecration of the temple: if heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thy immensity, how much less this house, which I have erected? God dwelleth there, then, to receive the prayers and sacrifices of the faithful, but not as *though he needed any thing*. See ver. 25. --- God is not contained in temples; so as to need them for his dwelling, or any other uses, as the heathens imagined. Yet by his omnipresence, he is both there and every where. (Challoner)

**Ver. 27.** *Feel after him. Si forte attrectent eum, Greek: ei arage pselapheseian.* It signifies *palpare quasi in tenebris.* (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** St. Paul here cites Aratus, a Greek poet, and his own countryman, a native of Cilicia.

**Ver. 29.** Cherubim, which extended wings, were ordered by God to be made, and placed over the propitiatory; (Exodus xxxvii. 7.) the brazen serpent is declared by Jesus Christ himself to have been a figure of him; therefore to blame the universally received practice of the Catholic Church, with regard to pictures and images, betrays either great prevention, or great ignorance. St. Gregory says: "What writing does for readers, that a picture does for the ignorant; for in it they see what they ought to follow, and in it they read, who know no letters." And he sharply rebukes Serenus's indiscreet zeal for removing pictures, instead of teaching the people what use may be made of them. (lib. ix. ep. 9.)

**Ver. 30.** *Overlooked.* Despicens, *Greek: uperidon.* It may either signify looking down on the ignorant world, and so taking pity of it; or rather that God having overlooked, and permitted mankind to go on so long in their sins, now invites them to repentance, by sending Jesus, their Saviour and Redeemer. See the Analysis, dissert. xxxiv. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Because he hath appointed* a day for judging all men with equity, by *the man*, to wit, Christ Jesus, a man, and also his true Son, whom he has appointed to be their judge; and by raising him (Jesus) from the dead, he hath *made it credible*, and given sufficient proofs of this truth, that every one shall rise from death. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *When they heard of the resurrection of the dead.* This seemed so impossible, even to the philosophers among them, that *some of them* presently laughed, and made a jest of it. Others said, we will hear thee on this another time, and some believed. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *Dionysius the Areopagite.* This illustrious convert was made the first bishop of Athens. They martyrologies say, St. Paul raised him to that dignity. It is the same person, who, observing the convulsions of nature, which paid homage, as it were, to its God, expiring upon the cross, and not knowing the cause, is said to have exclaimed: Either the universe is falling to ruin, or the God of nature must be suffering. It appears from his writings, that he was, previous to his conversion, of the Platonic school. Ven. Bede was mistaken in supposing that he was afterwards the bishop of Corinth, of that name, who so successfully employed his pen for the good of the Church. This Dionysius lived a whole century after the Areopagite. (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 4. *De colentibus Gentilibusque.* In the common Greek copies, there is no *and*, but only of the worshipping Gentiles, *Greek: ton de sebomenon elleuon*, but in other copies, *Greek: kai ellenon*.

[2] Ver. 6. *Qui urbem concitant*, in the common Greek copies, *Greek: oikoumenen*, orbem: so that this difference might happen in the Latin, by the change of one letter only of urbem, for orbem: but some Greek manuscripts have *Greek: ten polin*, civitatem.

[3] Ver. 18. *Semini-verbius*, *Greek: o spermologos*, the critics derive it from *Greek: legein spermata*, colligere semina.

[4] Ver. 22. *Superstitiosiores*, *Greek: deisidaimonosteros*, from *Greek: deido*, timeo, and *Greek: daimon*. *Greek: Deisidaimonia* is sometimes taken in a good sense for religio, as also superstitio in Latin. See Budæus, and Plutarch apud Scapulam. See also Suidas.

[5] Ver. 23. *Ignoto Deo*, *Greek: agnosto theo*. See Corn. a Lapide.

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## ACTS 18

**Ver. 3.** Critics are divided in their opinion about the nature of St. Paul's employment: but it is generally supposed to be making tents of skins, such as were formerly used by travellers and soldiers. (Tirinus) --- Hence the expression, *esse sub pellibus*. The apostle submitted to this labour, that he might be no burden to those whom he preached the gospel. (St. Augustine, tract. in Joan.) --- The Jews, with their characteristic good sense, in matters of this kind, made it the first duty of parents, to teach their children some trade, by which they might gain their livelihood. To neglect this was supposed to be equivalent to teaching them to steal. Hence their learned men were likewise practitioners in some laborious trade. They were ignorant of the distinction between low, and honourable professions, which refinement and vanity have introduced among us. Every employment was honourable, which was conducive to the good of their neighbour, and compatible with virtue and modesty; and the more so, in proportion as the wants of mankind made it more necessary. See Fleury's Manners of the Israelites. (Passim.)

**Ver. 4.** *Introducing the name of the Lord Jesus.* These words are found in few Greek copies, and so are omitted in the Protestant translation. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** No further mention is made of Silas in these Acts. Some martyrologists think he died in Macedonia by martyrdom. He is honoured in the Church as a saint, and sometimes, as well as St. Barnabas, obtains the title of apostle. (Calmet) See annotation, chap. xvi. ver. 37.

**Ver. 6.** *Shaking his garments.* See Matthew x. 14. *Your blood be upon your own heads:* that is, you are guilty of your own perdition: we have discharged our duty by preaching to you. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** This Gallio was brother to the great Seneca, Nero's preceptor, as that author himself assures us. (Præf. lib. v. Quæst. Natur.) He was called Annæus Novatus, but took the name of Gallio by adoption, and was made proconsul by his brother's interest, whose honours and disgraces he equally participated. Being condemned to death by Nero, he laid violent hands upon himself. It is probable St. Paul became acquainted with Seneca. St. Jerome and St. Augustine say, many letters passed between them, which are not now extant. (Tirinus) See also Eusebius. An. Christi 66. [The year A.D. 66.]

**Ver 17.** *Beat him.* It is uncertain whether the Jews themselves beat Sosthenes, being vexed at him, for not managing well the cause; or whether he was struck by the attendants of the proconsul, to force him away, when he would not desist, nor retire. See the Analysis, dissert. xxxv. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Shorn, &c.* It was customary among the Jews to make vows of abstaining from all inebriating liquor, not to cut their hair for a limited time, &c. This was the vow of the Nazarites, mentioned in Numbers vi. 18; Acts xxii. 24. St. Paul had probably taken upon himself some obligation of this kind; perhaps in condescension to the Jews, who were yet weak in faith. The time being now expired, he cut his hair as before. It was lawful for converts to observe these legal ceremonies, till the gospel was perfectly established, provided they did not place their hopes of salvation in them, or believe that the faith and grace of Christ were ineffectual without them. (Denis the Carthusian) --- *For he had a vow,* that is, Paul, not Aquila. This seems to have been such a vow, as those called Nazarenes, used to make, of abstaining from wine for a time, of not cutting their hair, and of making some offerings in the temple at Jerusalem. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *He went up.* To Jerusalem is most probably understood, that being the chief object of St. Paul's journey. It seems rather extraordinary that St. Luke should have omitted the express mention of the city. But having told us his object was to be at Jerusalem, he perhaps thought it was enough to say, *he went up.* (Calmet) --- In Palestine, the expression, *to go up,* was

sometimes taken for going up to Jerusalem. (John vii. 8. 10; John xii. 20; Acts xxiv. 11) And reciprocally in Acts chap. xxiv. 1. *to go down*, is taken for going down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea. (Bible de Vence) --- *He went up*. In the Scripture, when Antioch and Cæsarea are simply mentioned, Antioch, in Syria, and Cæsarea, in Palestine, are uniformly designated. --- *To Cæsarea*, not in Cappadocia, but in Palestine, from whence he went up to Jerusalem, and then down to Antioch, in Syria. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Apollo...one mighty in the Scripture.* Literally, powerful in the Scripture, yet knew no baptism, but that of John. (Witham) --- When we consider the great harvest, and few labourers, and the small time that the apostles could give to any one place for instructions, we shall not be so much surprised, that this zealous convert should not yet be perfectly instructed in every doctrine of Christianity. This happened about twenty years after our Lord's ascension. He is the same person as is mentioned 1 Corinthians iii. 7. (Haydock)

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## ACTS 19

**Ver. 1.** *Disciples.* These were apparently disciples of St. John the Baptist, who believed in Christ from his testimony, and had received no farther instruction, nor any baptism but John's. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** St. Paul first inquires of them, if they have received the Holy Ghost by confirmation. Their answer is probably not to be interpreted with rigour; since they must have heard something of the holy Spirit, so often mentioned in the Old Testament, by whom the prophets are said to speak, &c. They meant, they did not know there was in the Church, any means of communicating this Spirit to the faithful. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, so called to distinguish it from the baptism of John; and that of Christ was given in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, according to the command of Christ himself. [Matthew xxviii. 19.] (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Imposed his hands on them*, by which imposition of hands, was given the Holy Ghost in the sacrament of confirmation. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Aprons.* It is likely such as he used in working, *cured diseases*, and *cast out devils*. What wonder, then, if God work miracles by the relics of martyrs and saints, to testify the sanctity of his servants, and to encourage others both to give them a reasonable honour, and to imitate their lives? (Witham) --- Thus was fulfilled the promise which Christ had made his disciples, viz. that they should perform greater miracles than he himself had done. St. John Chrysostom repeats more than once, that these clothes raised the dead, and that the apostles' shadow chased away all maladies, and triumphed over death. Perhaps the unprejudiced reader may observe in this verse some reason for paying due regard to the relics, or whatever has belonged to the saints.

**Ver. 13.** *The Jewish exorcists.* Among the Jews were some, who by calling upon the name of the true God, sometimes cast out evil spirits. But these sons of Sceva seeing St. Paul cast out devils, by calling upon the name of Jesus, thought fit to do the same, though they did not believe in Jesus Christ. And God punished them in this manner, as it is here related, at least two of them. (Witham) --- It is uncertain whether the Jews really possessed the power of exorcising demoniacs. From the 12th chapter of St. Matthew, one would be inclined to the affirmative opinion, as our Saviour seems to mention it as a thing well attested. The Jews pretended they received their exorcisms from Solomon. On the other hand, neither the Old nor New Testament ever approve of this power in them nor is it any where mentioned in Scripture that Solomon was the author of any such things. The old law was particularly severe in condemning every kind of enchantment. It is certain, that they, in the time here spoken of, added much superstition and

magic to these rites. (Tirinus and others.) --- Josephus mentions remarkable instances of their power in exorcisms performed in his own presence, and in that of the emperor Vespasian, and his whole army. (Lib. ii. chap. 25. The Jewish War) --- Extraordinary things might possibly be performed by magic and collusion between these impostors and the demons. That this power of expelling devils, resides in the Church, every page of primitive ecclesiastical history, testifies. Scripture is also equally explicit on this subject. The exorcisms, says St. Cyprian, are the spiritual torments and scourges of the demons. (Ep. ad Demetrium.) --- It was for this reason the Jews, on this occasion, used the name of Jesus; a name terrible to the infernal spirits, to add power to their imprecations. Tertullian urges facts of this power in the Christians, with much energy and eloquence, in his Apology. Prudentius has recorded the same, with equal elegance, in his verse ---

-----Torquetur Apollo  
 Nomine percussus Christi, nec fulmina verbi  
 Ferre potest. Agitant miserum verbera linguæ.

**Ver. 18.** *Confessing and declaring their deeds*, as penitents do in the sacrament of penance, and not only in general declaring or confessing themselves sinners. See Matthew iii. 6. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Curious arts.* By which are here meant books of divination and magic art, to which study the Ephesians were much addicted. The price of the books burnt, amounting to a great sum, even computing the 50,000 denarii, each of them at sevenpence half-penny English money. (Witham) --- The value of the books here destroyed might have amounted to £1000 sterling. The Christian emperors, Constantine the Great, Valentinian, Theodosius, Marcian, and Justinian, have made laws not less strict for destroying, than those the Church for proscribing, the use of wicked books, where danger is likely to ensue. The danger of reading them is set forth by Eusebius, lib. vii. chap. 6; by St. Augustine, lib. iii. de bap. chap. 14; by St. Gregory, lib. v. ep. 64. --- Such baneful productions should be destroyed; for although they may possibly produce no bad effect during the life of the present possessors, no one can pretend to say into what hands they will afterwards fall, nor what evil they may hereafter occasion.

**Ver. 21.** *I must also see Rome.* It is what St. Paul earnestly desired, and what the Spirit now revealed to him. See Romans i. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *About the way of the Lord;* that is, about Christian faith, and religion. (Witham) --- A great source of these troubles that ensued, was the preaching the gospel.

**Ver. 24.** *Who made silver temples for Diana.*[1] Perhaps figures of Diana's temple in silver; or boxes and shrines, in which was the statue or figure of Diana. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *In danger of being vilified*, and Diana of losing her reputation. They ought to have reflected, says St. John Chrysostom, (hom. xlii.) that if such a poor man, as Paul, could destroy the worship, and the majesty of this great goddess, whom, as they say, all the *world adored*, how much greater and worthy of adoration must the God be, by whose power Paul could do this? (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *Great is Diana of the Ephesians.* This they shouted out without intermission for about two hours, though the greatest part knew not why they had met together. A true representation of an unthinking rash mob. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Some also of the rulers of Asia.* They are called *friends* to St. Paul, but it is uncertain whether they were Christians, or others, who favoured him, and wished him well. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *The town-clerk, &c.* Literally, the scribe, or the recorder of the city. --- *Jupiter's offspring.* [2] His daughter, according to the poets. The Greek text seems to signify a statue, or figure of Diana, which was pretended to have fallen from heaven, and from Jupiter. (Witham) --- *Is a worshipper.* Greek: *Neokoron ousan*; the word Greek: *Neokoros* is found in this sense in the



Arundelian marbles, and more frequently on ancient coins and inscriptions. Its derivation is from *Greek: neos*, a temple, and *Greek: kore*, a virgin, or rather *Greek: korein*, to cleanse and decorate; as if this city were especially destined to ornament the Diana of Ephesus, which the people supposed came to them not by the work of man, but a present from heaven.

**Ver. 37.** *Nor of blasphemy against your goddess.* St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that to calm the people, he says more than was true. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 24. *Ædes argenteas, Greek: naous argurous.*

[2] Ver. 35. *Jovisque prolis, Greek: kai tou diopetous.* Simulachri a cælo dilapsi. See Suidas.

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## ACTS 20

**Ver. 6.** *We.* From the change of the narration to the first person again, it would appear St. Luke had rejoined the apostle. This writer modestly omits the reason of his accompanying St. Paul, who tells us it was at his own request, (2 Corinthians viii. 19.) that no suspicion might be entertained that he applied improperly the money, which he was commissioned to carry to the distressed brethren in Jerusalem. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 7.** *On the first day of the week.* [1] The interpreters generally take notice with St. John Chrysostom, that the Christians, even at this time, must have changed the sabbath into the first day of the week, as all Christians now keep it. Which change (even as to the manner of keeping one of God's ten commandments) was made by the Church. --- *To break bread*, meaning the blessed sacrament, as it is commonly expounded. (Witham) --- St. Paul did here break bread on a Sunday, as it is broken in the sacrament of the body of Christ, and delivered a discourse to the people, both before and after the celebration of the divine mysteries. (St. Augustine, ep. lxxxvi. ad Casulanum.; Ven. Bede, in xx. Act.)

**Ver. 10.** *His soul is in him.* He was *taken up dead.* (ver. 9.) These words then of St. Paul, may either signify that now he is again alive, or will be in a very short time, as when Christ said, (Matthew ix. 24.) *The girl is not dead, but asleep.* (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Alive.* This accident, which gave occasion to a great miracle, was ordained by the particular providence of God, in order to confirm the preaching of St. Paul, and to fix more deeply in the hearts of his disciples the words of their dear Master, who was just going to leave them. Admire likewise the apostle's solicitude for his neighbour's salvation, in prolonging his instructions through the whole night, which preceded his departure. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 17.** *He called the ancients of the Church.* We might translate *the bishops*, as the very same persons in the 28th verse are called *bishops*. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *With all humility;* that is, of heart, or mind, as the Greek word signifies. He knew, says St. John Chrysostom, how necessary this virtue of humility was for the ministers of the gospel. --- *With tears* of charity and compassion, *under temptations*, trials, and persecutions. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *I have kept back, &c.* I have discovered to you every thing which can be useful to your salvation. Neither fear, nor any human considerations, have prevailed over me to disguise or suppress the truths, which might be serviceable to you. This is the model of a good pastor. Full of doctrine, and of zeal, he communicates what God puts into his heart, and charity inspires him to speak, with abundance, with discretion, and without jealousy, without fear. A good shepherd, St. Bernard used to say, has always bread in his scrip, and his dog in his keeping. The dog is his

zeal, which must be chained, governed and moderated. His scrip, full of bread, is his mind, filled with all knowledge, which he is always in the state of dispensing as food to his flock.

**Ver. 22.** *Bound in the spirit*, lead by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. (Witham) --- Chained, and forced, as it were, by the Holy Spirit, who offers me a sweet violence; or I am so strongly persuaded of the chains, which await me at Jerusalem, that I already feel myself bound in idea. (Calmet) --- I no go to Jerusalem for the fourth time, attracted by the Holy Ghost, who is the author and governor of all my actions, that where I have shown myself the greatest enemy of the Church, there I may suffer tribulations in defence of the same Church, and for Christ, her divine spouse. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 23.** *In every city*. There were in every city Christian prophets, who foretold to Paul the tribulations which awaited him. It appears, then, that the apostle did not know these things by immediate revelation made to himself, but by that made to the prophets. Of this we have a proof in the next chapter.

**Ver. 24.** *Neither do I count my life (literally, my soul ) more precious than myself*, having consecrated all my endeavours, my thoughts, my life, my whole self, body and soul, to God's service. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *I know*, &c. It appears sufficiently evident, from many parts of St. Paul's epistles, that he not only designed, but likewise, according to the opinion of most able critics, actually did revisit the churches of Asia. Of this occasion, then, he only expresses his belief, his conviction, that he should see them no more, judging it impossible for him to escape the dangers that were prepared for him. (Calmet) --- *All you*. Although St. Paul might return again to the same place, he might truly say of so great an assembly, that all of them should not see him again. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock*. The ministers of the gospel must in the first place take care of the salvation of their own souls: and in the next place of the salvation of their flock, of the souls committed to their care, and *to the Church*; especially such ministers of God as are *bishops*, [2] *placed*, by divine institution, to *govern the Church*, or the churches under them. The word *bishop*, by its derivation, signifies *overseers*, or *superintendants*; but the signification is to be taken and expressed by the custom and ecclesiastical use of words. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *To the word of his grace*, to the protection of God's grace, given to those that preach the gospel, and administer the sacraments instituted by Christ. --- *Who is able to build up*, to finish that building, of which the foundation is laid by my preaching. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *These hands have furnished*, by labouring to maintain myself, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. We find not these words of Christ in the gospels. St. Paul might have them from the apostles. (Witham) --- Among the many excellent examples of good things our dear Lord said, and which are not mentioned in the gospel, this is one: "it is a more blessed thing to give, than to receive;" which did men justly weigh, they would be more ready to give alms, were it only for their own account. Thrice happy then are they who assist their indigent neighbour to the utmost of their power, and for the pure love of God! (Haydock)

**Ver. 37.** *They kissed him*. These marks of tenderness are dictated by nature, and have always been used between friends, who were separating from each other, or who meet after a long absence. The Scripture furnishes us with numberless examples of it. (Calmet) --- He likewise *prayed*, as he usually did, when he bade his last farewell. See his last adieus with the Tyrians, (chap. xxi. 5. 6.) were they all kneeled down to pray on the shore. This is also reasonable, and becoming a Christian. It is a sign of communion and mutual charity, and implores a prosperous voyage for those who were departing, whilst those who remained, cherish in their mind the

remembrance of the virtues of their absent friend. (Menochius) --- The mind of man cannot conceive a finer subject for the painter than this melting separation. After the discourse, we see St. Paul falling on his knees, and praying with them all for the last time; an general burst of tears takes place, when they are told that they are to see their father's face no more; they fall upon his neck and kiss him; and with hearts full of grief and gratitude, they accompany him on his way to the very ship which is to transport their father, friend, and benefactor, to other souls, who wanted the charitable assistance of the man of God.

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[1] Ver. 7. Una Sabbati; that is prima sabbati, *Greek: en te mia ton sabbaton*. St. John Chrysostom says, (hom. *Greek: mg.*) *Greek: kuriake en, erat dies Dominica*.

[2] Ver. 28. Episcopos, *Greek: episkopous*, from *Greek: episkopein*, or *Greek: episkeptesthai*, diligenter inspicere, &c.

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## ACTS 21

**Ver. 1.** Coos and Rhodes are islands in the Archipelago.

**Ver. 3.** *Cyprus*, an island in the Mediterranean, to the east of Patara and Rhodes.

**Ver. 4.** *Not go up to Jerusalem*. St. Paul says in the foregoing chapter that he was pressed by the Holy Ghost to go to Jerusalem; and do these prophets now advise him to stay away, and disobey the inspiration? No: their dissuasion was not the effect of inspiration, but the expression of their tenderness and affection for him, which made them fear what they saw he was going to endure. (Denis the Carthusian) --- Hence St. Paul disregarded their entreaties, as well as the imminent dangers that every where stared him in the face. See his heroic answer to the melting entreaties of the faithful of Cæsarea, and their final acquiescence: "The will of the Lord be done." (below, ver. 14)

**Ver. 8.** *Philip, the evangelist*, so called from his preaching the gospel, though he was one of the seven, that is, of the seven deacons. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Prophecy*. It is supposed that these daughters of St. Philip had made a vow of virginity, or at least remained in that state out of a motive of religion. St. Jerome thinks in reward of this they were gifted with a prophetic spirit. (Lib. i. chap. 24. cont. Jov.) --- Others think that by prophesying is meant interpreting the Scriptures, or singing the praises of God. (Estius)

**Ver. 18.** *To James*, the bishop of Jerusalem, where all the seniors, that is, the bishops and priests, had assembled. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *How many thousands*. In the Greek, how many ten thousands. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *To forsake Moses*. In the Greek, to depart or apostatize from Moses and the law. This is more than was true. For St. Paul circumcised Timothy, (chap. xvi.) and did not absolutely hinder converts who had been Jews, from practising the Jewish ceremonies. (Witham) --- There is a manifest falsity in this accusation against St. Paul. He had never commanded or advised the Jews, to whom he had preached, to renounce the law, abandon the ceremonies of Moses, or reject the ancient customs of the nation. He had never hindered any one from following in this respect the bias of his inclinations. He had indeed defended the liberty of the converts from these ceremonies; he had taught that Christ had taken away the necessity of this yoke; but he left them at liberty still to carry it if they pleased. (Calmet) --- For these things were not then to be sought after as necessary, nor yet to be condemned as sacrilegious. The law of Moses at that time was

dead, but not deadly. (St. Augustine, ep. lxxxii.) --- These considerations will sufficiently explain the apostle's motive for submitting on this occasion to one of their ceremonies. He became all to all, that he might gain all to Christ. (Haydock)

**Ver. 23.** *Who have a vow upon them.* On which account they will have sacrifices offered for them in the temple. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Bestow on them.* It was thought a merit among the Jews to bear the expenses of any vow which another had made. They thus became partakers of it; in the same manner as at present those, who have not the courage to forsake the world by solemn vows, seek to have some share in the merits of those who do forsake it, by contributing part of their substance to their support. (Calmet)

**Ver. 30.** *The doors were shut,* lest the temple should be profaned by Gentiles entering into it. (Witham) --- The temple was an asylum, but not for those men who were justly pursued. Hence the Jews looking upon Paul as a blasphemer, they did not think they violated this asylum by forcibly removing Paul from the temple; but lest he might return, they fastened the entrance-gates.

**Ver. 33.** *Two chains,* for his hands and feet; or perhaps one chain was put on each hand, which was likewise tied to a soldier on each side of him, who led him. This was the Roman custom of binding prisoners. See Seneca, ep. v. et lib. de tranquill. animi. x. See Acts xii. 6, 7.

**Ver. 34.** *Into the castle.*[1] Neither the Latin nor the Greek word signifies a castle, but rather a camp, or a place walled, or with a trench about it. It is true, we may here understand the tower, called Antonia; but within its court might be tents for soldiers, where there was so great a number: for we see that Lysias could send away 470 with St. Paul, besides those that might stay behind. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *Canst thou speak Greek?* We cannot doubt but St. Paul had in Greek spoke already to the tribune: upon which he said, dost thou speak Greek? and then asked him, if he were not that seditious Egyptian, who had headed so many murderers? (Witham)

**Ver. 38.** This Egyptian coming to Jerusalem, and professing himself to be a prophet, had persuaded the people to accompany him to Mount Olivet, pretending he would throw down the walls of the city only by a word. Felix, the Roman governor, attacked the deluded multitude, and killed 400. The leader escaped, and was heard of no more. This was in the 13th year of Claudius, about three years before St. Paul's apprehension. (Menochius) --- These rebels are called murderers, *Greek: Sikarioi*, Sicarii, from *Sica*, a small dagger, which they concealed under their cloak. Some of them were the retainers of Judas Galilæus; other Hessæans, who fought with the greatest animosity against the Romans, and suffered the most cruel death, sooner than to acknowledge Cæsar for lord and master. Some again suppose that the word *Greek: sikarioi* is only a corruption of the words, *Greek: oi karioi*, Scriptuarii, a name given to the Esseni. Consult Josephus, Jewish Antiquities xx. 7.

**Ver. 39.** *I am indeed a Jew,* by birth and education. (Witham)

**Ver. 40.** He spoke in the dialect of the country, which was partly Hebrew and partly Syriac, but the Syriac greatly prevailed; and from the steps, *Greek: epi tous anastathmous*, which led to the fortress of Antonia. Here a Roman cohort was lodged; it was situated to the north-west, and joined the temple. The flight of steps was occupied by the lowest orders of the people. Thus Cicero ad Atticum: *Gradus templorum ab infima plebe completi erant*; and again, pro Cluentio: *gradus concitatis hominibus narrat*.

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[1] Ver. 34. In castra, which in the plural number, is not a castle: neither doth *Greek: parembole*,

which is in the Greek, signify a castle.

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## ACTS 22

**Ver. 1.** *Hear ye the account.*[1] In the Greek, to the apology, or defence. (Witham) --- St. Paul, in this exordium, as also in Acts vii. 2. shews himself not ignorant of the art of pleading. He adds the name of *Fathers*, supposing there may be some of his hearers of senatorial dignity, and others deserving the title for their rank and age. (Mat. Pol.)

**Ver. 3.** The scholars sat much below their master; and the nearest the master were such as had made the greatest proficiency. (Philo de Essenis)

**Ver. 4.** *This way.* That is, the Christian faith, which now I profess. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *As the high priest doth bear me witness.* That is, as the letters which he gave me, bear witness. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Heard not the voice.* To reconcile this with chap. ix. ver. 7. where it is said that they *heard the voice*; it may be answered that they heard a noise, and a voice, but heard it not distinctly, nor so as to understand the words. (Witham) --- They heard not the voice of him who spoke to the apostle, but they heard the latter speak; (Acts ix. 7.) or perhaps they heard a noise, which they could not understand. They perhaps heard the voice of Paul answering, but not that of Christ complaining.

**Ver. 14.** *Shouldst...see the Just One.* Our Saviour appeared to St. Paul, as it is said; (chap. ix. 7.) and he is divers times, both in the Prophets and in the Testament, called the *Just One*. (Witham) --- To see and hear the Just One; Him, who is just by excellence, that you also may prove a witness of his resurrection from the dead.

**Ver. 16.** *Wash, &c.* The contrition and charity of St. Paul had, no doubt, merited for him the remission of his sins at the moment of his conversion. Still were these effects to be attributed to the desire of the sacrament of baptism, without which the council of Trent defines that the forgiveness of sins, and the punishment due to them, are not obtained. It likewise added a new degree of lustre to his innocence and purity. (Tirinus) --- *Calling upon his name.* In such manner, says St. John Chrysostom, (hom. xlvii.) as we invoke the only true God; and as we invoke the saints, and pray to them, that they may pray for us. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *To Jerusalem...that I was in a trance.* This might be when he went to Jerusalem, three years after his conversion, or at some other time. It might be in this ecstasy that he was wrapt to the third *heaven*, as he tells the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians xv. 9. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Of Stephen, thy witness.* Or thy *martyr*, as the Greek word signifies. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** Hence we see that not only principals, but all that consent to the persecution of God's servants for the cause of religion, do highly offend; and this St. Paul mentions here, that the mercy of God may be more remarkably glorified in him hereby. (Bristow)

**Ver. 22.** *This word.* That is, until he told them that God had sent him to preach to the Gentiles, whom they could not bear to hear preferred before themselves. Not that the Jews forbid preaching to the Gentiles; on the contrary, our Saviour reproached the Pharisees, that they would go over land and sea for the sake of making one proselyte. They were likewise enraged that St. Paul had not laid on the Gentiles the heavy yoke of the law. (Calmet) --- Hence they exclaim: take away this wicked man from amongst us, for it is a sin to let him live. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 23.** *Threw off their garments.* Or pulling them open to shew themselves ready to stone him. (Witham) --- This is nicely descriptive of the fury of a populace, who, when unable to vent their rage in some more effectual way, indignantly throw into the air, and against the object of their indignation, such harmless trifles as dust, clothes, &c. (Menochius)

**Ver. 25.** *A Roman.* That is, a Roman citizen, a freeman of Rome. (Witham) --- The apostle, on this occasion, not to injure the faith of some weak Christians, who might be scandalized at his public disgrace, prevents the scourging, which on another occasion he patiently submitted to. By the thongs he was probably bound to a pillar; (Tirinus) or being tied hand and foot, was stretched on the ground, with his face downwards. This was frequently done among the Romans. (Calmet) --- See also Gretser de cruce, lib. i. chap. 10; who declares that it was the Roman custom to bind to a stake or pillar, such as were condemned to be flogged.

**Ver. 28.** *Civilitatem;* that is, Civitatem, Græce, *Greek: politeian*, the rights of citizenship. These privileges were granted by Antonius to the city of Tarsus. (Appianus civilium 5.)

**Ver. 29.** The same law which forbade a Roman citizen to be scourged, forbade him also to be bound. (St. Augustine, lib. i. de Serm. Dni. chap. 29.) --- It was under Claudius that the abuse of buying the freedom of Rome was introduced. At first the name of a Roman was esteemed much, and bought at a great price. Now (such is the emptiness and vanity of titles) it is refused, and despised; nay, it is fled from, and reckoned disgraceful. (Silvian. De Gubern. Dei, lib. v.) --- If St. Paul, on this occasion, makes use of his privilege, it is not that he was unprepared, or afraid to die for Christ; but because it was lawful to use ordinary means to extricate himself from difficulties, and preserve himself for future services to religion. (Denis the Carthusian)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Quam reddo rationem*, *Greek: akousate...tes apologias*.

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## ACTS 23

**Ver. 1.** *With an entire good conscience.* With an upright sincerity. But St. Paul is far from excusing himself from all sin. He laments elsewhere his blind zeal in persecuting the Christians. See 1 Corinthians xv. 9. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *God will strike thee, thou whited wall.* [1] These words are rather by way of a prophecy. (Witham) --- *Whited wall.* That is, hypocrite, for pretending to judge me according to law; whereas, against all sense of justice, thou strikest me before my condemnation; nay, even without giving me a hearing. The Fathers admire, on this occasion, the greatness of mind and freedom St. Paul exhibited, in reproving the great. (Tirinus) --- This expression was not the angry words of an irritated man, nor the effect of personal resentment, but the just freedom which insulted innocence may lawfully use in its own defence. (Haydock) --- It was likewise a prophecy of what was going to happen. To those who do not consider it, it may seem a curse; but to others a prophecy, as it really was. (St. Augustine, lib. i. cap. 19. de Verb. Dni.) --- For St. John Chrysostom relates that the high priest, being thunderstruck by this answer, became speechless and half deaf; so that not being able to reply a single word, the bystanders did it for him. (Tirinus) --- It was also, as Ven. Bede says, to shew that the Jewish priesthood was to be destroyed, as now the true priesthood of Christ was come and established. (Bede in hunc locum. [Ven. Bede in this place.])

**Ver. 5.** *I knew not*, &c. Some think St. Paul here speaks ironically, or to signify that now he could be no longer high priest since the Mosaic law, with its rites and ceremonies, was abolished. But St. John Chrysostom rather judges that St. Paul having been long absent from Jerusalem, might

not know the person of the high priest, who was not in the sanhedrim but in the place whither the tribune had called the council, and who did not appear with that habit, and those marks which distinguished him from others. (Witham) --- It seems rather surprising that St. Paul did not know that he was the high priest. The place which he held in the council, one would suppose, would have been sufficient to have pointed him out. The apostle's absence from Jerusalem is perhaps a sufficient reason to account for his not knowing this circumstance; especially, as the order of succession to the priesthood was at that time much confused and irregular, determined by favour of the Roman emperor, or by purchase. (Calmet) --- At all events, any difficulties we may now find in assigning a probable or true reason, are merely negative arguments; and therefore too futile to be an impeachment of the apostle's veracity. (Haydock) --- St. Cyprian supposes that St. Paul, considering the mere shadow of the name of priest, which Ananias then held, said: I knew not, brethren, that he is high priest. (Ep. lxxv. 69. nu. 2.) St. John Chrysostom says, that the apostle here shews the wisdom of the serpent; but that in his preaching, teaching, and patience, he used the simplicity of the dove.

**Ver. 6.** *I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees.*[2] It may signify only a disciple of the Pharisees, though the common Greek copies have *of a Pharisee*. (Witham) --- The address of the apostle in this is great. Knowing the different dispositions of his judges, he throws disunion into their councils, in order to draw himself from danger. Such innocent artifices are allowed in the defence of a just cause. It is one of our Saviour's counsels, to use the prudence of the serpent. St. Gregory, in his Morality, (lib. xxxiv. cap. 3. and 4.) and St. Thomas Aquinas in his Sum. Theol. (2. 2. quæst. 37. art. 2.) observe, that on similar occasions you may, without sin, cause divisions among the wicked; because their union being an evil, it is consequently a good thing that the enemies of peace and righteousness should be divided in sentiments and interests. It must, however, be acknowledged that this principle is very easily stretched beyond its proper limits, and therefore ought not to be acted upon but with the greatest caution and prudence. (Calmet) --- St. Paul knew from divine revelation that he was to go to Rome; but this did not hinder the apostle from taking every prudent care of his own life; as we may see from the following chapter.

**Ver. 7.** *There arose a dissension.* By the Greek, a division, or schism among them, occasioned by St. Paul's declaring himself for the resurrection, which made the Pharisees favour him, and incensed the Sadducees. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Be constant...so must thou bear witness also at Rome;* and so needest not fear to be killed by them. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Bound themselves.* The Greek is, *anathematized*, that is, submitted themselves to a curse, if they did not kill Paul. It was a great imprecation, the violation of which would have been equivalent to renouncing their belief in God. See to what degree of iniquity this nation is come. When any good is in contemplation, none are found to undertake it; whilst all, even the priests too, are ready to concur in any wicked design. (St. John Chrysostom, in Act. hom. xlix.) --- To take an unlawful oath is one sin; but to keep it, is another and greater sin: as when Herod, to keep his oath, put to death John the Baptist. (Matthew iv. 9.)

**Ver. 13.** *Forty men that had made this conspiracy,*[3] and bound themselves with an impious curse, or imprecation upon themselves, if they did not kill him. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Taking him by the hand,* with marks of affection and tenderness. It is probable that the tribune expected this young man was come to offer some ransom for Paul's liberty. (Menochius)

**Ver. 23.** *From the third hour of the night.* If the tribune spoke with a regard to the twelve hours of the night, the third hour was three hours after sunset, and was about our nine o'clock at night; but if he meant the third watch of the night, that began at midnight. See Matthew xiv. 35. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Felix.* This man had been a slave of the emperor Claudius. The high priest, Jonathan, had procured him to be made governor of Judea. He governed the country with great cruelty and

outrage; exercising the power of a king, says Tacitus, with all the insolence and meanness of a slave, who is neither restrained by fear nor shame. (Tacitus, Hist. lib. v.)

**Ver. 25.** This verse is omitted in the Greek. Antipatris was a pleasant city on the Mediterranean sea, situated at equal distance, about 24 miles, between Joppe and Cæsarea, on the way from Jerusalem to this latter city. (Matt. Polus)

**Ver. 27.** *I rescued...having understood that he is a Roman.* This was not true, if we understand it of the first time he rescued him; but may be true, if meant of the second time. (Witham)

**Ver. 35.** This was a palace erected by Herod the Great; in which the governors had taken up their habitation. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 3. Pecutiet, *Greek: tuptein se mellei*, futurum erit ut te percutiat.

[2] Ver. 6. Filius Parisæorum; and so divers of the best Greek manuscripts *Greek: pharisaion*; but the common Greek, *Greek: uios pharisaïou*.

[3] Ver. 13. Devoverunt se, *Greek: anathematisan*. [ver. 14, bind under a great curse.]

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## ACTS 24

**Ver. 1.** Ananias went down to Cæsarea, where Paul was then confined. This is the sense of the Greek.

**Ver. 2.** *By thy provision*. [1] Literally, thy providence, by thy prudence. (Witham) --- Though Felix governed Judea in the arbitrary manner mentioned in the note on the last chapter, he had nevertheless done some good, which is recorded to his honour. See Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, xx. 6. 11. and The Jew War, xii. But had this not been the case, a public orator seldom scruples to gain over the man by praises, whose judgment he seeks. St. Paul was not ignorant of this rule of rhetoric, though he refuses to imitate Tertullus by pressing flattery into his service, as we observe below, ver. 10 and Acts xxii. 1. and 3. See also the exordiums of Cicero pro Roscio, pro Milone, &c. &c.

**Ver. 5.** *A pestilent*, [2] or pernicious, and pestiferous man; Greek, one that is a plague. --- *Author*, or ringleader of the seditious sect, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *From him thou...mayest know.* By the construction it is doubtful whether from Lysias, or from St. Paul. (Witham) --- Behold them here ready to support the heads of accusation I have brought forward, and which are moreover so self-evident, that the party accused will not dare to deny them. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 10.** In the apostle's speech we observe nothing of the flattery, which characterized the opposite party. It would have been unworthy of his just cause. (Calmet) --- He observes he had been governor of the province many (eight or nine) years, to insinuate, that had he been a seditious man, as he was accused, Felix would not have failed to have heard of his misdeeds before. (Menochius)

**Ver. 11.** Since I went up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, not to profane the temple, or excite sedition, but to adore the one true God.

**Ver. 12.** In Jerusalem there was only one temple, nor could there, by an express command of the



Almighty, be any more throughout the whole kingdom. (Perhaps the Almighty may have wished by this singular circumstance to have impressed more forcibly on their minds the absolute necessity of *unity* in religion. (Haydock)) But there were many synagogues, which were a kind of schools, in which the law was publicly taught, and the people assembled to read the Scriptures, and to pray. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14.** *The Father,[3] and my God.* In the Greek, the Lord of our fathers. (Witham) --- *According to the way.* The Protestant version has *sect* for *way*; but in the, as well as in many other points, the original is not attended to, in which we read *Greek: kata ten odon*, as in our translation.

**Ver. 22.** *Felix...knowing most certainly of this way.* That is, knew even by Lysias's letter, that Paul and the Christians were not guilty of any thing against Cæsar, but only accused of disputes relating to the Jewish law. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *Felix being terrified, &c.* When St. Paul spoke of God's judgments, and hinted at such sins as his conscience reproached him with. (Witham) --- Whoever knows the infamous character of Felix and Drusilla, will not fail to admire the apostle's fortitude, that he durst speak (as formerly John the Baptist did to Herod,) to them on the subject of justice and chastity. Suetonius says of the former, that he married three queens. Drusilla, one of the three, was Herod's daughter, and wife of Aziz, king of Emesa, whom he had seduced by the enchantments of a Jew of Cyprus. Hence it is not surprising he was terrified at the thoughts of a future judgment, when expounded by a St. Paul, whose zeal to make these wicked people enter into themselves, hurried him beyond the bounds of worldly prudence, but made such impression on his hearers, as to disarm the indignation his discourse was calculated to produce. See Josephus, *ut supra*; Tirinus; Calmet; and others. Next to the worship of God, the Christian religion requires of its followers, in the first instance, justice and chastity. Felix was unjust, avaricious, cruel; and both Felix and Drusilla were guilty of adultery. Such was the wickedness of the Gentiles in those degenerate days, that fornication was not looked upon as a crime. How much had they deviated from the excellent maxim we read and admire, *inter Socraticas disputationes! omnem virtutem niti continentia, et incontinentem nihil a bellua brutissima differre*; that all virtue was built upon continency, and that the incontinent man differed in nothing from the most brute beast. --- *At a convenient time I will send for thee.* Such is the expedient Felix has recourse to, to silence the voice of conscience: and in this how often is he not imitated by the sinner, who dreads nothing so much as to enter into himself. Why put that off to another time, which will never arrive? Or why delay till death a repentance, which like the remorse of the damned, will then be as unavailing, as it will be eternal?

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[1] Ver. 2. Per tuam providentiam, *Greek: pronoias*, a prudent foreseeing.

[2] Ver. 5. Hominem pestiferum, *Greek: loimon*, pestem.

[3] Ver. 14. Patri & Deo. *Greek: to patroo theo.*

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## ACTS 25

**Ver. 1.** Festus having arrived at his province, goes to Jerusalem to be inaugurated. The Jews took this opportunity of requesting St. Paul might be sent to Jerusalem, that they might accomplish the iniquitous purport of their vow. Such consequence did they attribute to the death of this one man, that they had no greater favour to ask of their new governor at his auspicious entry among them. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 4.** It would appear, from their first request being peremptorily denied them, how little solicitous their governors were to please them. The successors of Felix and Festus were not better disposed than their predecessors. Their extortions and oppressions were pushed so far, that the Jews attempted at last to deliver themselves by rebellion, which proved their utter ruin and extripation. Indeed it was in vain to resist, for they already began to feel the truth of our Saviour's prediction, in their subjugation to the Gentiles. Josephus bears ample testimony to the fulfilment of the prophecy. (The Jewish War, lib. ii. chap 16. &c.) (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** *Among you that are able.*[1] It may signify, such as are powerful among you, or such as are able by health, and willing. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Paul making answer,*[2] or his apology, by the Greek. In the Latin, *giving an account.* In like manner, (ver. 16.) *have liberty given to defend himself;* in the Greek, to make *his apology.* In the Latin, *till he take a place of defending himself.*

**Ver. 10.** St. Paul, seeing Festus only sought a plea to get rid of his cause, by putting it into the hands of the Sanhedrim, appeals to Cæsar. According to the ordinary rules of jurisprudence, appeals are only made after sentence is pronounced; but Roman citizens had a privilege of anticipating the sentence, when the judge did any thing contrary to justice; as Festus evidently did in this case, by wishing to deliver Paul, a Roman citizen, to the tribunal of his declared enemies, the Jews. The apostle knew he was secured by making this appeal: as the Roman law declared provincial governors violators of the public peace, who should either strike, or imprison, or put to death a Roman citizen, that appealed to the emperor. (Calmet) --- Hence Pliny sent some Christians to Rome for this same reason, as he writes himself in his epistles. (Lib. x. ep. 97.) *Fuerunt alii similis amentia, quos, quia cives Romani erant, annotavi in urbem remittendos.*

**Ver. 13.** *Agrippa.* This was son of the king of the same name, who imprisoned St. Peter, and put St. James to death. Bernice was his sister, and one of the most infamous of women. Her character has merited her a place in one of Juvenal's satires, 5th.

**Ver. 19.** *Their own superstition.*[3] Their particular religion, and manner of worshipping their God. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** Augustus Nero, who was then the Roman emperor.

**Ver. 22.** Agrippa has the same curiosity of hearing Paul, as Herod formerly had of seeing Jesus. The apostle's name had, no doubt, become famous enough to reach the ears, and arrest the attention of Agrippa. Curiosity is certainly not the best motive a person can bring with him to the investigation of religious truth: still it may occasionally become productive of good. The king was half persuaded to embrace the Christian faith. A better motive, or more serious attention, may induce some to embrace the truth, which accident may first have discovered to them. (Haydock)

**Ver. 26.** *To my lord.* This was a title the emperors afterwards took, but which Augustus and Tiberius are said by Pliny, in his epistle to Trajan, and by Tertullian, to have refused, as too assuming and too high, ut nimis sublimem atque gloriosum. This was perhaps done, that none might hear the title at a time when the Lord of lords was to appear on the earth. (Tirinus) --- Whilst we can approve and admire the motives which actuated the emperors in refusing this title, we cannot go the lengths which some modern enthusiasts do, (mostly Americans, Quakers, &c.) who pretend it is *blasphemy* to call a mortal man a *lord*, as if that name were incommunicable to any but the Creator of the universe. Whence they derive this article of faith it will not be easy for us to guess; certainly not from Scripture, in which the word Dominus or Lord, applied to man, occurs almost as frequently as King. Certainly not from our Saviour's words, who give both himself and others this title, (Mark xiv. 14. and other places.) nor from St. Paul's doctrine, who also uses this word indiscriminately through his epistles, Galatians iv. 1; Ephesians vi. v.; &c. Hence we are justified in retaining this practice, in opposition to their cavils; and in treating that opinion as superstitious and void of foundation, which makes it a necessary part of religion to use no titles.

(Haydock)

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[1] Ver 5. Qui potentes estis, *Greek: oi dunatoi en umin.*

[2] Ver 8. Paulo rationem reddente, *Greek: apologoumenou.* Ver. 16. Locum defendendi accipiat, *Greek: topon apologias laboi.*

[3] Ver. 19. De sua superstitione, *Greek: peri tes idias deisidaimonias.*

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## ACTS 26

**Ver. 1.** St. Paul having obtained liberty of speaking, stretches out his right hand, disengaging from his cloak. We must recollect that St. Paul still bore his chains about him, those chains in which he gloried; (ver. 26.) it is therefore necessary to suppose that his left hand only was tied; or, what is less likely, that these chains were not so tight nor heavy as to hinder the easy motion of the right. It is observed by Apuleius, that orators in this action closed the two shorter fingers, and had the others extended. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *According to the most sure sect.*[1] In the Greek, the most exact or approved: for such was esteemed that of the Pharisees. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *For the hope of the promise.* That is, of the promised Messiah, and of salvation by him. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** He speaks now to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection. Can you say it is impossible for Him, whom you all allow to be omnipotent, to raise any of the dead to life? Is it not easier to reanimate a body, whose parts are dissolved by death, than create what had no existence? "And why should He, who daily from the corrupted seed brings forth plants, leaves, wood, not be able to call back into their primitive state the flesh and bones from the dust into which they have been dissolved." (St. Gregory, hom. xxvi. in Evang.)

**Ver. 10.** *I brought the sentence.*[2] That is, from those who in the great council were judges of life and death, to those officers who were to put the sentence in execution. This seems to be the sense of these words, rather than, I voted, or gave my voice in condemning them; for we have no grounds to think St. Paul was one of the council, or of the judges. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** It is generally supposed that St. Paul addresses king Agrippa in the Greek language, which was the common tongue of a great part of the East. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** *Wherein I will appear to thee.* From whence interpreters take notice, that Christ divers times appeared to St. Paul to reveal things to him. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Delivering thee, &c.* That is, from many attempts, both of the Jews and Gentiles, against thee. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** That they may be converted from the darkness of error to the light of the gospel, and from the power of Satan to the liberty of the children of God.

**Ver. 23.** *That Christ should suffer, &c.* Literally, *if Christ be passible.* If, here is expounded not as implying a condition, but as an affirmation; so that the sense is, that Christ, according to the predictions of the prophets, was *to suffer*, was to be the first that should rise from the dead, &c. (Witham) --- *First, &c.* Many had been raised from the dead before Jesus; the child of the widow

of Sarepta, Lazarus, and others. How, then, is Jesus *first*? He is the first who rises not to die again; and as such the Messiah is always represented by the prophets. Others were raised from the dead, but returned again to their graves. Jesus dies no more. He is the first too who raises himself. (Calmet)

**Ver. 24.** It is not surprising that Festus should have taken St. Paul for a madman. The resurrection of the dead, remission of sins, receiving baptism, and faith, announcing light to the nations, &c. were subjects completely unintelligible to a Roman. To a Jew the terms were customary and common. The eloquence and manner in which he spoke on these subjects, might shew him to be a man of great learning.

**Ver. 28.** *In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian.* According to the common exposition, Agrippa speaks in a jest, and ironically; and as for the words, they are the same as, thou almost persuadest me, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *Except these chains.* That is, I heartily wish all men in the same condition as myself, not only to be prisoners as I am, but to be Christians, as I am. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 5. *Certissimam, Greek: akribestaten, accuratissimam.*

[2] Ver. 10. *Ego sententiam detuli, Greek: katenegka psephon, calculum, suffragium.* It was the custom for judges to give their votes either by taking up a white or a black stone: that is, a white stone, if the persons judged were found not guilty, and a black stone, if guilty: so Ovid,

*Mos erat antiquis niveis, atrisque lapillis,  
His damnare reos, illis absolvere culpa.*

--- So that *Greek: psephos* was a lapillus, or a little stone made use of in giving sentence, and from thence taken for the sentence itself.

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## ACTS 27

**Ver. 2.** *Adrumetum.* In the Greek, Adrametum, which seems to be the best reading: the former was in Africa, the latter in Asia; and the ship was to make for the coasts of Asia and not those of Africa. --- *Being about to sail [1] by the coast of Asia.* Literally, beginning to sail; the sense can only be designing to sail that way, as appears also by the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *We sailed under Cyprus.* That is, north of Cyprus, betwixt the coasts of Cilicia and Cyprus, leaving it on our left, instead of leaving it on our right hand. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *We sailed hard by Crete, now Cadia, near by Salmone, sailing betwixt them.* (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Called Good-havens,* a port on the east part of Crete, near the city of *Thalassa*, in the Greek text *Lasea*. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *The fast was now past.* [2] An annual fast. Some take it for the fast of the Ember-days, which Christians keep in December: but St. John Chrysostom and others expound it of the Jewish fast of expiation, in their seventh month, Tisri, answering to our September or October. (Witham) --- Most interpreters understand this of the solemn fast of expiation, mentioned in Leviticus (xvi. 29. and xxiii. 27.) which fell about the end of September and beginning of October. At this time sailing on the Mediterranean is dangerous. Though this phrase is at present obscure to us, we must recollect that St. Luke was writing for Christians, who being for the most part converted Jews, easily understood the expression. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *Ye men, I see, &c.* This St. Paul foretells as a prophet. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Phœnice*, on the south part of Crete, a convenient haven to ride safe in, lying by south-west and north-west. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Called Euroaquilo*.<sup>[3]</sup> In the Protestant translation, *Euroclydon*, as in many Greek copies. In others *Euraculon*, which Dr. Wells prefers. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *An island that is called Cauda*. In some Greek copies *Clauda*, which the Protestants have followed; in others *Caudos*. --- *We had much work to come by the boat*, or to hoist up the skiff belonging to the ship; which we did, lest it should be broken to pieces by the wind against the ship, or separated from it. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The used helps, under-girding the ship*.<sup>[4]</sup> Perhaps bracing or binding about the vessel with ropes or chains, lest she should be torn asunder. --- *Into the quick-sands*. Literally, into a *syritis*, such as are on the coasts of Africa, whither now they were almost driven. --- *The let down the sail-yard*.<sup>[5]</sup> This seems to be the sense of these words *letting down the vessel*. Some translate striking the sail; but others think they were in apprehension for the mainmast. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *The lightened the ship* by throwing overboard part of their loading and goods. Some call it, they made the jetsam. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The tacking*, or furniture of the ship that they could spare; others express it, they threw out the lagam. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Not...have save this harm and loss*, which you have brought upon you by not following my advice. (Witham) --- All the company being in consternation and hourly expectation of death, did not think of taking meat. For it appears they did not want provisions, and nothing else forced them to fast. (Calmet) --- The mildness of St. Paul's address to them on this occasion is admirable. He mixes no severe rebuke for their past want of confidence in his words, but seems only solicitous for their future belief. In telling them that none of them should perish, he does not utter a mere conjecture, but speaks with prophetic knowledge; and, if he says they were all given to him, it was not to enhance his own merit, but to engage their faith and confidence in his veracity. (St. John Chrysostom, Act. hom. lii.)

**Ver. 23.** *An Angel of God*. Literally, *of the God whose I am*; that is, whose servant I am. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *God hath given thee all them*; that is, the true God, maker and master of all things. It is sometimes a great happiness to be in the company of the saints, who by their prayers to God, help us. (Witham) --- St. Paul prayed that all in the vessel with him might be saved; and an angel was sent to assure him his prayer was heard. If such was the merit of the apostle whilst yet in this mortal body, that the Almighty, in consideration of it, granted the lives of 276 persons, what do you think, will be his interest before God, now that he is glorious in heaven? (St. Jerome, contra Vigilant.)

**Ver. 27.** *In the Adria*. Not in what we call the Adriatic gulf, or sea of Venice, but that which lies betwixt Peloponnesus, Sicily, and Italy. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *The ship-men...having let down the boat into the sea*; that is, had begun to let it down with ropes, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Paul said...unless these stay*. Providence had ordered that all should escape, but by helping one another. (Witham)

**Ver. 33.** *Taking nothing*. That is, without taking a full meal, but only a morsel now and then, and nothing to speak of. (Witham) --- Though St. John Chrysostom understands these words in their

full rigour, and therefore supposes them to have been supported by a miracle; yet is is not requisite to adhere to the severity of these words in the interpretation of them. Not having had time to prepare any regular meal during that time, they may justly be said to have taken nothing, though they had occasionally eaten a little now and then to support nature. Such exaggerations in discourse are common. *Interpretes passim*.

**Ver. 40.** *Loosing also the rudderbands.* Some ships are said heretofore to have had two rudders: and this ship perhaps had tow, unless here the plural number be put for the singular, which is not uncommon in the style of the Scriptures. --- *And hoisting up the main-sail.* The word in the text may signify any sail, either the main, or mizen-sail, which latter by the event was more than sufficient. (Witham)

**Ver. 41.** *Into a place where two seas met.* [6] It happened that there was a neck or tongue of land, which being covered with the waves, they who were strangers to the coast did not discover: this stranded the ship, the prow sticking fast, and the poop being torn from it, so that the vessel split by the violence of the winds and sea. (Witham)

**Ver. 44.** *The rest...they carried on planks.* That is, let them be carried on planks; and *all got safe to land*, in the number *two hundred and seventy-six souls*, or persons. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Incipientes navigare, *Greek: mellontes plein*, navigaturi.

[2] Ver. 9. Jejuniū præteriisset. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om ig. nesteian ten ioudaion*.

[3] Ver. 14. Euroaquilo, *Greek: eurokludon*. Dr. Wells prefers the reading of *Greek: eurakulon*.

[4] Ver. 17. Accingentes navem, *Greek: upozonuntes to ploion*, bracing the ship with something.

[5] Ver. 17. Submisso vase, *Greek: chalasantes to skeuos*. The word *Greek: skeuos*, has many significations, and may be taken for the ship, or any part of it: here it may signify the main-mast, which they might take down, lest it should be torn away.

[6] Ver. 41. In locum dithalassum, *Greek: eis topon dithalasson*.

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## ACTS 28

**Ver. 1.** *Melita*, now called Malta, famous for being the residence of, and giving the title to, the military order of Knights, who strenuously resisted the Turks, when they threatened to overrun Christendom. The inhabitants are called *Barbarians*, not as a term of reproach, for the manner he speaks of their humanity testifies the contrary; but in the classical sense of the word, it was applied by Greeks and Romans to all who did not speak either of those languages. Their hospitality was rewarded by the light of faith, which they still maintain, although infidels have sometimes for a century had dominion over this island. (Tirinus, &c.)

**Ver. 4.** *Murderer.* In this instance we see how unfounded are the judgments of men. As if the misfortune itself were not sufficient to endure, the man upon whom any temporal calamity falls, must be also judged to be an object of divine vengeance. How cruel and preposterous, yet how common are such proceedings! Whence can it happen that man is so forward to think evil, so slow to suspect good in his neighbour? (Haydock) --- *Not to live.* The inhabitants of the island, called *Barbarians*, had a notion of a Deity, and also that murder was against the law of God and nature. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *That he would suddenly fall down and die.* It is not then by the natural situation and temper of the air, that this island has no venomous creature. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *To dwell by himself, with a soldier that guarded him.* St. Paul was *chained*, as it appears by the 20th verse: and it was the custom to fasten one end of the chain by a lock of the prisoner's wrist, and the other end of the chain to the wrist of the soldier who was to guard him. In most Greek copies we read: *the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guards*: as it is in the Protestant translation, and very probable; but these words are not found in divers Greek manuscripts nor were read by the ancient interpreter of the Latin Vulgate. (Witham) --- St. John Chrysostom attributes this liberty St. Paul enjoyed at Rome of going whither he liked, to their admiration of him. (Hom. liv. in Acts.) --- Others to the moderation of Afranius Burrus, who was prefect of the Prætorium in the year 61, and who used his authority, as long as he possessed any over Nero's mind, to repress that emperor's bad inclinations, and direct his councils with wisdom. (Calmet)

**Ver. 17.** *Chief of the Jews.* We have seen before, that the emperor Claudius banished all Jews from Rome. It would appear from this verse, that many of the principal Jews returned at his death, which happened five years before St. Paul's arrival. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20.** *Because that for the hope of Israel.* That is, of the Messiah, so long expected and hoped for by the Israelites. (Witham) --- According to the Roman custom, St. Paul must have been fastened by the right hand to one end of a chain, the other end of which chain held to the left hand of the soldier who guarded him. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 22.** *It is every where gainsayed.* Here we observe one of the characters of the true religion. It is contradicted and spoken against. As singular as this may appear, it is however true. Jesus, the author of that religion, had foretold it should be so. If the world hateth me, it will hate you also. The situation of the Catholic religion in this country [the United Kingdom], at present, is something similar to what is related here of Christianity: and those who have the candour to inquire seriously into its merits, have generally the reward of being convinced and of believing in it. Christianity, like some plants, grows the better for being trodden upon. (Haydock)

**Ver. 30.** *Two whole years in his own hired lodging.* That is, in the lodgings which St. Paul was permitted to hire for himself, and to live there, with a soldier chained to him for his guard. Happy soldier, if he knew how to make use of such a favourable opportunity! We may take notice by all this narration of St. Luke, (as when he says here, ver. 16, *when we arrived at Rome*, &c.) that he was all the way in the ship with St. Paul. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** Here terminates the history of St. Paul, as contained in the Acts of the Apostles. The other actions of this great apostle, for want of being recorded, are involved in much obscurity. That he obtained his liberty again, and made many voyages to carry the light of the gospel into many countries, is certain: but nothing is known as to the manner or time. He finished his labours by martyrdom, being beheaded at Rome in the 66th of the Christian æra [the year A.D. 66], and the 13th of Nero. What a degree of virtue might we not attain, were we animated by the spirit and courage of a St. Paul. Let us at least try to imitate his example; and, if in dangers and difficulties we cannot clothe our souls in adamant, as he did, we may certainly avoid yielding ingloriously to every light impression. Let us at an humble distance tread in his footsteps and live so that we may navigate in safety the boisterous ocean of life, and by the grace of Jesus Christ arrive at the port, where danger is no more to be apprehended. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. lv. in Act. at the end.)

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## ROMANS

THE  
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE,  
TO THE ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION.

After the *Gospels*, which contain the history of Christ, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, which contain the history of the infant Church, we have the *Epistles of the Apostles*. Of these fourteen have been penned on particular occasions, and addressed to particular persons, by St. Paul; the others of St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude, are called *Catholic Epistles*, because they are addressed to all Christians in general, if we except the two latter short epistles of St. John. --- The epistles of St. Paul contain admirable advice, and explain fully several tenets of Christianity: but an humble and teachable mind and heart are essentially requisite to draw good from this inexhaustible source. If we prepare our minds by prayer, and go to these sacred oracles with proper dispositions, as to Jesus Christ himself, not preferring our own weak judgment to that of the Catholic Church divinely inspired, and which he has commanded us to hear, and which he has promised to lead in all truth unto the end of the world, we shall improve both our mind and heart by a frequent and pious perusal. We shall learn there that faith is essentially necessary to please God; that this faith is but *one*, as God is but *one*; and that faith which shews itself not by good works, is dead. Hence, when St. Paul speaks of works that are incapable of justifying us, he speaks not of the works of moral righteousness, but of the ceremonial works of the Mosaic law, on which the Jews laid such great stress as necessary to salvation. --- St. Peter (in his 2nd Epistle, chap. iii.) assures us that there were some in his time, as there are found some now in our days, who misconstrue St. Paul's epistles, as if he required no good works any more after baptism than before baptism, and maintaining that faith alone would justify and save a man. Hence the other apostles wrote their epistles, as St. Augustine remarks in these words; "therefore because this opinion, *that faith only was necessary to salvation*, was started, the other apostolical epistles do most pointedly refute it, forcibly contending *that faith without works profiteth nothing*." Indeed St. Paul himself, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, (Chap. xiii. 2.) positively asserts: *if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing*. --- This epistle, like most of the following, is divided into two parts: the first treats of points of doctrine, and extends to the eleventh chapter inclusively; the second treats of morality, and is contained in the last five chapters: but to be able to understand the former, and to practise the latter, humble prayer and a firm adherence to the Catholic Church, which St. Paul (1 Timothy chap. iii.) styles, *the pillar and ground of truth*, are undoubtedly necessary. Nor should we ever forget what St. Peter affirms, that in St. Paul's epistles *there are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction*. (2 Peter chap. iii. ver. 16.) (Haydock) --- St. Paul had not been at Rome when he wrote this epistle, which was in the year fifty-seven or fifty-eight, when he was preparing to go to Jerusalem with the charitable contributions and alms, collected in Achaia and Macedonia, for the benefit and relief of the poor Christians in Judea, and at Jerusalem; and after he had preached in almost all places from Jerusalem even to *Illyris, Illyrium, or Illyricum*. See this Epistle, chap. xv. It was written in Greek. It is not the first in order of time, though placed first, either because of the dignity of the chief Christian Church, or of its sublime contents. --- The apostle's chief design was not only to unite all the new Christian converts, whether they had been Gentiles or Jews, in the same faith, but also to bring them to a union in charity, love, and peace; to put an end to those disputes and contentions among them, which were particularly occasioned by those zealous Jewish converts, who were for obliging all Christians to the observance of the Mosaic precepts and ceremonies. They who had been Jews, boasted that they were the elect people of God, preferred before all other nations, to whom he had given this written law, precepts, and ceremonies by Moses, to whom he had sent his prophets, and had performed so many miracles in their favour, while the Gentiles were left in their ignorance and idolatry. The Gentiles, now converted, were apt to brag of the learning of their great philosophers, and that sciences had flourished among them: they reproached the Jews with the disobedience of their forefathers to God, and the laws he had given them; that they had frequently returned to idolatry; that they had persecuted and put to death the prophets, and even their Messias, the true Son of God. St. Paul



shews that neither the Jew nor the Gentile had reason to boast, but to humble themselves under the hand of God, the author of their salvation. He puts the Jews in mind, that they could not expect to be justified and saved merely by the ceremonies and works of their law, thought good in themselves; that the Gentiles, as well as they, were now called by the pure mercy of God: that they were all to be saved by believing in Christ, and complying with his doctrine; that *sanctification* and *salvation* can only be had by the Christian faith. He does not mean by faith only, as it is one particular virtue, different from charity, hope, and other Christian virtues; but he means by faith, the Christian religion, and worship, taken in opposition to the *law of Moses* and to the *moral virtues of heathens*. The design of the Epistle to the Galatians is much the same. From the 12th chapter he exhorts them to the practice of Christian virtues. (Witham)

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## ROMANS 1

**Ver. 1.** *Called to be an apostle,[1] or a called apostle.* That is, not only having the name of an apostle, but having a his call to this high function, and his mission from God. --- *Separated unto the gospel of God.* He means that he was separated from others, and appointed by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel, as we read Acts xiii. 2. when the Holy Ghost to those of the Church at Antioch, said, *Separate me Saul and Barnabas, for the work unto which I have taken them.* (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Which he had promised before, &c.* That is, God before, in the Scriptures, promised the blessings, which are not come by the preaching of the gospel, and that they should come by *his Son*. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Who was made to him of the seed of David, according to the flesh.* The sense is, that God promised, that he who was his true and only Son from eternity, should also become his son, as man; that the same son should be man, as well as God, when the *word was made flesh*, or when that divine person should be united to our human nature. Thus the same person, who was his only begotten Son from eternity, being made man, and of the *seed of David*, by his incarnation, was still his Son, both as God, and also as man. (Witham) --- The Greek text has not the particle *ei*, (to him) but only *Greek: tou genomenou ek spermatis David*. But St. Irenæus, (lib. iii. chap. 18.) St. Ambrose, St. Jerome read, Qui factus est ei. And also St. Augustine in his unfinished exposition of the epistle to the Romans; though before in his book against Faustus, (lib. xi. chap. 14.) he reads it otherwise. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *Who was predestined [2] the Son of God.* The learned bishop of Meaux, Bossuet, in his second Pastoral Instruction, in which he condemned the French translation of Mons. Simon, (p. 127.) takes notice, that according to St. Paul, and the constant doctrine of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, Christ as man, or the human nature of Christ united to his divine person, was predestined without any precedent merits, by a free and liberal predestination of God's goodness. (Witham) --- Christ, as man, was predestined to be the Son of God; and declared to be so (as the apostle here signifies) *first by power*, that is, by his working stupendous miracles; *secondly*, by the *spirit of sanctification*, that is, by his infinite sanctity; *thirdly*, by his *resurrection*, or raising himself from the dead. (Challoner)

**Ver. 5.** *By whom*, i.e. by this same Jesus Christ, God and man, *we*, I and the rest of the apostles, *have received this grace and apostleship*, this mission and commission from him, of preaching his gospel, and teaching his doctrine. --- *For obedience to the faith in all nations*; that is, to bring all nations to the obedience and profession of his new law and doctrine. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Among whom are you also the called of Jesus.* That is, you also are a part of those, who by his mercy, are called to this faith and belief in him. All beginning from those words in the third verse, *who was made to him*, &c. till the end of the sixth verse, are to be taken as within a

parenthesis, which is not unusual in the style of St. Paul. Then he goes on after this long parenthesis. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *To all that are at Rome...called to be saints.* That is, who not only are named saints, but who by such a call from God, are to be sanctified by his grace, and to become holy, or saints. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *In the whole world.* That is, to all, or almost all the Roman empire. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *God is my witness.* I call God to witness. It is an oath. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *I am a debtor.* That is, I am bound to preach the word of God to all. (Witham) --- by Greeks, in this place, are understood the Romans also, and by Barbarians, all other people who were neither Greeks nor Romans. The Greeks called all barbarians, who did not speak the Greek language, even the Latins themselves. But after the Roman became masters of the world, they were excepted, through policy, from the number of barbarians, and particularly after they began to cultivate the science of the Greeks.

Græcia victa ferum victorem cepit, et artes  
Intulit agresti Latio.

--- St. Paul says, that he is a debtor both to Greeks and barbarians, to the wise, the philosophers, those who pass for sages amongst the pagans, and to the simple, ignorant, unlettered class of mankind: not that he had received any thing at their hands, but because it was his duty, in quality of apostle, to address himself to the whole world, and preach to the great and to the small, to the learned and the unlearned. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** St. Paul was even anxious to go and deliver the word to the Romans. Hence Mat. Polus, in his reflections on this verse, puts the following words into the mouth of the Apostle: Lucifuga non sum: ostendi id Antiochiæ, Athenis, Ephesi et Corinthi: paratus sum & in illa splendidissima urbe Roma ostendere.

**Ver. 16.** *For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one;* that is, it brings powerful helps to all, both Gentiles and Jews, in order to their salvation. --- *To the Jew first,* inasmuch as the gospel is to be first preached to the Jews. (Witham) --- The promises of salvation were first made to the Jews. Jesus Christ preached to the Jews only, and forbade his disciples, during his life-time, to preach to any other nation. And after his resurrection, when they had full powers to preach every where, they did not turn to the Gentiles, till the Jews had refused to hear them. A miracle was necessary to determine St. Peter to communicate the gospel to the uncircumcised; and St. Paul, in every place, first addressed himself to the Jew, and then to the Gentile. The apostle here sweetly endeavours, in an indirect manner, to silence the presumption of the Romans, who seemed to raise themselves above the Jews, and believed they had merited the grace of vocation to the faith. (Calmet)

**Ver. 17.** *For the justice of God.* He does not here mean that justice, by which God is just in himself, but that justice, or sanctification, which he communicates to men, and by which they are justified and sanctified. --- *From faith to faith.* That is, by faith, and an increase in faith, inasmuch as, by increasing in faith, we advance in virtues; as it is written, (Habacuc ii. 4.) *the just man liveth by faith;* including the love of God, hope, and other virtues. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *For the wrath of God is revealed, &c.* He begins to speak of the heathens, and of the wicked world, whose sins God punisheth from time to time with visible chastisements of plagues, famines, wars, &c. and that because they *detain the truth of God in injustice, or in iniquity*, that is, because they have not honoured God, even according to the knowledge which he has given them of him, especially their philosophers. (Witham)

**Ver. 19-20.** *That which is known of God.* Or may be easily known of God, *is manifest in them.* The light of reason demonstrates to them the existence of one God, the maker and preserver of

all things. This is made known to them from *the creation of the world*, or from the *creatures* in the world: the Creator may be discovered by the creatures, and as St. John Chrysostom here says, every Scythian, every barbarian, may come to the knowledge of God by the wonderful *harmony* [3] *of all things, which proclaims the existence of God louder than any trumpet*: but having known him, they did not glorify him; they acted contrary to their knowledge, abandoning themselves to idolatry, and the vain worship of many gods, and to all manner of vices and abominations against the light of reason. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Wherefore God gave them* [4] *up, &c.* That is, as St. John Chrysostom says, permitted them, in punishment of their wilful blindness, to fall into the foulest, most shameful, and unnatural sins of uncleanness here described. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *God delivered them up.* Not by being author of their sins, but by withdrawing his grace, and so permitting them, in punishment of their pride, to fall into those shameful sins. (Challoner)

**Ver. 27.** *Receiving in themselves the recompense...due to their error.* That is, were justly punished for their wilful blindness and error, by which they had worshipped and adored creatures, instead of the Creator, idols instead of the one true God. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *Being filled with all iniquity.* He passeth to many other sins and crimes of the heathens. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *Hateful* [5] *to God.* The Greek may also signify, *haters of God.* (Witham) --- *Greek: theostugeis* means either haters of God, or hated by God. (Menochius) --- *Disobedient to parents.* The Greek literally signifies, Not listening to the advice of their parents; who rise up against them, and refuse to obey. (Calmet)

**Ver. 31.** *Dissolute, rude* [6] *in their manners, and behaviour.* Some, from the Greek, understand breakers of their word; but this would be the same as *without fidelity*, which we find afterwards in the same verse. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** This passage in the present Greek versions is rather different from the Vulgate: but the text of the Vulgate is conformable to the most ancient Greek manuscripts, of which some are more than twelve hundred years old. *Greek: Oitines to dikaïoma tou theou epignontes ouk enoesan oti oi ta toiauta prassontes azioi thanatou eisin, ou monon de oi poiountes auta, alla kai oi suneudokountes tois prassousin.* See Var. Lect. Mill. in hunc locum et Prolegom. 41. 42.

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[1] Ver. 1. Vocatus, *Greek: kletos Apostolos.* Also ver. 6. and 7. *Greek: kletoi.*

[2] Ver. 4. Qui prædestinatus est. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. a.* p. 7. Ed. Sau. *Greek: ti oun estin oristhentos; deichthentos, apophanthentos.*

[3] Ver. 20. St. John Chrysostom, hom. ii. p. 20. *Greek: tes panton armonias salpiggos, lamproteron booses.*

[4] Ver. 24. *Greek: to de paredoken, entautha eiasen esti.*

[5] Ver. 30. Deo odibiles. *Greek: theostugeis.*

[6] Ver. 31. *Greek: asunthetous.* See 2 Timothy iii. 3. *Greek: aspondous, sine fœdere.*

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**Ver. 1.** *Wherefore thou art inexcusable, &c.* He seems to give a general admonition to every one, both Jews and Gentiles, not to blame, judge, or condemn others, when perhaps he, or those of his religion, may be guilty of the like sins. Let him rather call to mind the just judgment of God, which, they that are sinners, cannot escape. Let him also reflect, that if God hath hitherto deferred to punish him, it hat been through *the riches* and abundance of *his goodness, patience, and long-forbearance, or longanimity*: that he must take care not to *harden* his heart any longer, lest he *heap* up to himself a fatal treasure at the day of judgment, when God will render to every one *according to his works*, and not according to his faith only, says St. John Chrysostom, hom. v. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** The apostle is evidently speaking to the converted Jews, and not to the Gentiles. For the Gentiles believed in certain judges in hell, who passed sentence on every one as soon as he departed out of life. This is what the learned call poetical theology, and considered as fabulous. But besides a particular judgment at the hour of death, the Hebrews believed in a general judgment of all men, or at least of all the just, in the valley of Jehosaphat; as may be seen in the prophets, and the books of Wisdom and Machabees. (Calmet)

**Ver. 9-10.** *Of the Jew first, and also the Greek.* That is, God, as a just judge, will not have any *respect to their persons*, but punish or reward both Jews and Gentiles, according to their good or bad works. And salvation is now offered to both. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Whosoever have sinned without the law.* That is, without the written law of Moses, against their reason and conscience, &c. And also those who being Jews, have sinned *under this* written law, shall *be judged*, even with greater severity, for having transgressed against the known law. (Witham)

**Ver. 14-15.** *When the Gentiles...do by nature, or naturally,* that is, without having received any written law, *these men are a law to themselves*, and have it *written in their hearts*, as to the existence of a God, and their reason tells them, that many sins are unlawful: they may also do some actions that are morally good, as by giving alms to relieve the poor, honouring their parents, &c. not that these actions, morally good, will suffice for their justification of themselves, or make them deserve a supernatural reward in the kingdom of heaven; but God, out of his infinite mercy, will give them some supernatural graces, by which they come to know, and believe, that he will reward their souls for eternity. Such, says St. John Chrysostom, were the dispositions of Melchisedech, Job, Cornelius the Centurion, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *But if thou art called a Jew.* In the common Greek copies, we read, *behold, thou art a Jew*, &c. St. Paul here turns his discourse particularly to the Jews, who valued themselves so much upon their law, their temple, and their ceremonies; and therefore are said to *rest on the law*, as if it were enough to be by profession a Jew. (Witham) --- But many manuscripts, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, St. Ambrose, Sedul., Theophylactus, &c. read it as in the Vulgate, *Greek: ei su Ioudaios*. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** *Thou, therefore, that teachest another, teachest not thyself, &c.* St. John Chrysostom (hom. vi.) takes these sentences as so many interrogations; dost thou teach thyself? dost thou not steal? dost thou not commit adultery? &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Idols, &c.* The Jews, at the time of our Saviour, were free from idolatry, to which their ancestors had been so prone for so long a time. But to this evil had succeeded another, scarcely less heinous, viz. sacrilege, and a profanation of holy things. The greater part of the high priests bought their office. The priests permitted in the temple itself a kind of traffic, which caused our Saviour to declare to them, that hey had made the house of his Father a den of thieves. And to favour their own avarice, they taught that it was lawful to defraud their creditors, and refuse to their parents the necessary succour, in the case of vows to give to the temple. St. Paul does not here reproach them for the profanations of the temple which they committed in the last siege of

Jerusalem, for it had not then take place; but he knew full well the dispositions of their hearts, and the little regard they had for the most sacred things. (Calmet)

**Ver. 24.** The apostle here only repeats the reproaches which the prophets had repeated so often before, that the Jews, by the contrast between their lives and the sanctity of their religion, had been the cause of that religion and worship being the ridicule and laughing-stock of the Gentile world. (Calmet) --- A reproach this, which also bears very heavy upon many Christians of the present day; who by their profession believe the truth of the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic faith, and by their conduct belie the same, leading lives unworthy of pagans. (Haydock)

**Ver. 25.** *Circumcision profiteth indeed*, inasmuch as it was ordained by Almighty God, as were also the precepts of the law, which were to be observed before the publishing of the new law of Christ. See Galatians v. 6. But it was never profitable to the *transgressors of the law*. Nay, the uncircumcised Gentiles, who have complied with those natural precepts, which are also commanded by the law of Moses, shall judge and condemn those, who received the written law, and at the same time were transgressors of it. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *Shall not his uncircumcision* (Literally, his præputium [foreskin]) *be reputed for circumcision?* Nonne præputium illius in circumcisionem reputabitur? *Greek: e peritome sou akrobustia gegonen.* A translation may adhere to the letter too much; this seems literal enough. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *Nor is that circumcision, which is outwardly in the flesh.* St. Paul distinguisheth two sorts of circumcision; that which is made in the flesh, according to the letter of the law, which is an *outward* circumcision; and a more necessary circumcision of the heart, and of the spirit, by which a man's interior is reformed, and by which his vices and disorders are cut off. The first circumcision would never avail a man any thing without the second. (Witham)

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### ROMANS 3

**Ver. 1.** *What advantage then? &c.* The apostle, not to offend the Jews, by insisting too long in reprehending them, turns his discourse to the advantages they have hitherto had above other nations. As *first*, that the *words of God*, those divine oracles, revelations, promises in the Scriptures, were credited or intrusted to them. And though *some*, or many of them have *not believed* God's promises, especially concerning their Messiah; this hath not hindered *God from* being *faithful* to his word, in sending the Messiah, and those blessings that were promised with him. *For God* is always *true*, or *faithful* in his promises, and therefore must needs *be justified*, or found just, when his proceedings are judged, that is, considered and examined. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *God only is essentially true.* All men in their own capacity are liable to lies and errors: nevertheless God, who is the *truth*, will make good his promise of keeping his Church in all *truth*. See St. John, xvi. 13. (Challoner) --- The Greek text has, "may God be true;" that is, may all men acknowledge him as such; let the whole world know, that he neither can be unfaithful to his word, nor his promises; and that, on the contrary, all men of themselves have but lies and vanity for their portion. --- *That thou mayest be justified*, &c. The particle *that*, is not casual in this place, but only marks the event. Thy conduct shews that thou art faithful and true to thy promises, and that, notwithstanding the judgments of men, thou art always unchangeable and infallible. Thou art victorious, when judged by them; thou shewest them the falsity and injustice of their judgments. (Calmet) --- And that the infidelity of man, so far from affecting the fidelity of God, will only serve to set it off in a more striking and clearer light. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 5-6.** *But if our injustice, &c.* St. Paul here puts this objection, that if men's sins and iniquities, *make the justice of God commendable*, that is, make his justice more apparent and known; if the

*truth of God*, as to his promises, be more discovered, praised, and glorified by our *lies*, that is, by our sins, how then can God blame, or punish men for sins, which contribute more to his honour? May we not say, (as some falsely pretend St. Paul said) *let us do evil things, that good things may come of them?* The apostle answers in short both this objection, and the calumny against him. As to the first; that though men's sins give an occasion to God to shew his justice, and make known his divine perfections, yet this will not excuse them from being justly condemned, and punished, when God shall judge the wicked world; for if that were a sufficient plea, God *could not judge* and condemn the wicked: so that as St. John Chrysostom [1] observes, that apostle resolves their question, by asking another, and shews their reasoning absurd, by taking notice of another absurdity that follows from it. 2ndly. He tells them, they slander him, and his doctrine, by only telling them, they deserve to *be condemned* who say, *let us do evil that good may come of it: the damnation*, he says, *of such men is just.* (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *What then do we Jews excel the Gentiles?* He again turns his discourse against the Jews, by shewing that they have been sinners, as well as the Gentiles, notwithstanding the particular favours God had done to them, and not to the Gentiles: this he proves out of the psalms; and (ver. 19.) he shews, that these things were spoken *of them*, who were *under the law.* (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *There is not any man just*, viz. virtue either of the law of nature, or of the law of Moses; but only by faith and grace. (Challoner) --- The apostle here adduces a series of passages from the ancient Scripture, to convince both Jews and Gentiles, that not one amongst them was just, nor had any title to glory, on account of his good works. Not that a just man could not be found under the old law, or even before the law; an infinite number of passages of Scripture will shew the contrary: but he must be understood as speaking of man left to himself, as a son of Adam, conceived in sin, and brought forth a child of wrath. (Calmet) --- These crimes, enumerated by the apostle, are not mentioned as if found in each individual, but some of this black catalogue of crimes were found in one man; some in another; yet so that all had become infected with sin and iniquity, all had deserted the path of virtue. There was none just, none found, who feared or sought after God. (Estius) --- These texts of Scripture, though formerly, even before the times of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, they were found together in some Latin editions, viz. Psalm xiii. cannot be found united either in the Hebrew text, or Septuagint version, as St. Jerome affirms, in Præf. lib. xvi. commentar. in Isai. This, he says, all the Greek commentators allow. He says, that those who were ignorant of this apostle's art in uniting together the texts of different parts of Scripture, upon finding no part where they were all together, placed them, without any authority, in that psalm whence the first part of the citation is taken. The words, *an open sepulchre*, are taken from Psalm xiii. (Hebrew text xiv.) the verse "Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have dealt deceit fully," from Psalm v. "The venom of asps is under their lips," from Psalm cxxxix. "Whose mouth is full of curses and bitterness," from Psalm ix. "Their feet are swift," &c. as far as, *there is no fear*, from Isaias chap. lix. "There is not the fear of God before their eyes," from Psalm xxxv. (Estius)

**Ver. 17.** St. Augustine says, that by the law of actions, is understood, that which teaches us what we have to do: by the law of faith, is meant faith itself, which obtains for us grace of performing what the law requires. The law of action, then, is the old law, which contains the precept; the law of faith is the new law, which gives assistance to fulfil the law. (De Spir. & Lit. chap. iv.)

**Ver. 19.** *And all the world may be made subject to God.* That is, God permitted these sins in all men, that sanctification and salvation might be from Christ only, the Redeemer of all men, so that neither Jew nor Gentile should be justified, but by the free and liberal gift of his grace. See St. John Chrysostom.[2] (Witham)

**Ver. 20. &c.** To the end of this chapter, the apostle shews that the Jews cannot be truly justified, and sanctified by the *works of the* written law of Moses only; that a *knowledge of sin*, or of what is sinful, came *by the law*, but if they did not comply with the precepts of the law, this knowledge made them more guilty. Now, at the coming of Christ, the *justice of God*, that is, the justice by

which he made others just, and justified them, cannot be had without *faith in Christ*, and by the grace of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, who God hath *proposed* to all, both Gentiles and Jews, as a sacrifice of [3] *propitiation* for the sins of all mankind, by *faith in his blood*; that is, by believing in him, who shed his blood and died for us on the cross. It is he alone, (ver. 26.) that is *the just one*, and the *justifier* of all. And as to this, *there is no distinction*. The Gentiles are justified, sanctified, or saved, but by the faith and grace of Christ Jesus. St. Paul does not pretend that the virtue of faith alone will justify and save a man; nothing can be more opposite to the doctrine of the gospel, and of the apostles in many places, as hath been observed, and wil be shewn hereafter. He tells us in this chapter (ver. 20. and 28.) that man is justified *without the works of the written law*: and he teaches us, that no works of the law of Moses, nor any works that a man does by the law of nature, are sufficient to justify a man, and save him of themselves, that is, unless they be joined with faith, and the grace of God. And when he seems to say, that men are justified or saved by faith, or by believing, as he says of Abraham in the next chapter, (ver. 3. and 5.) he never says (as some both ancient and later heretics have pretended) that *faith alone* is sufficient. And besides by faith, he understands the Christian faith and doctrine of Christ, as opposite to the law of Moses, to circumcision, and the ceremonies of that law, as it evidently appears by the design of the apostle, both in this epistle and in that to the Galatians. He teaches us in this epistle (chap. ii. 6.) that God will judge every man *according to his works*: (chap. ii. 13.) that "not the hearers of the law," but *the doers, shall be justified*. See also chap. vi. He tells the Galatians (chap. v. ver. 6.) that faith, by which they must be saved, must be a faith working by charity. He also tells the Corinthians (1 Corinthians vii. 19.) that *circumcision is nothing, nor uncircumcision*, but the keeping of the commandments of God. That though a man should have a faith, that so he could remove mountains, it would avail him nothing without charity. How often does he tell us that they who commit such and such sins, shall not inherit or possess the kingdom of God? Does not St. James tell us, that faith without good works *is dead*? See chap. ii. Of this more hereafter. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** The apostle here tells us that all men are the creatures of God Almighty, and destined to eternal happiness. Neither was it necessary to be incorporated with the Jews by circumcision, to be made partakers of the justice of God. (Estius)

**Ver. 30.** *God who justifieth circumcision*, and also the uncircumcised by faith; that is, by the faith and religion of the new law, or by a faith working by charity, and joined with good words proceeding from faith. See the Council of Trent, Session 6. cap. viii. "When the apostle says, that a man is *justified* by faith, and gratis, according to the perpetual consent of the Catholic Church, we are said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning and foundation of man's salvation, and the root of his justification, without which we cannot please God, nor be made his sons; and we are said to be justified gratis, because nothing of those things which go before justification, whether faith or works, are meritorious of the grace of justification." (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Do we then destroy the law through faith?* No: but *we establish the law*. See the words of Christ: (Matthew v. 17.) 1. Because the figures and types of the law of Moses, and the predictions of the prophets, are fulfilled. 2. Because Christians are now taught to fulfil the moral precepts, and the chief part of the law, with greater perfection, in the spirit of faith, charity, &c. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 6. St. John Chrysostom on the words: how shall God judge the world? *Greek: atapon atopo luei.*

[2] Ver. 19. Ut subditus fiat omnis mundus Deo, *Greek: upodikos genetai. o upodikos kurios legetai, o me dunameos archein eauto pros apologian, alla tes eterou deomenos boethei.*

[3] Ver. 25. Quem proposuit Deus propitiationem, *Greek: ilasterion*. Some read propitiatorium, as I find it in the Council of Trent, Session 6. cap. ii.

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## ROMANS 4

**Ver. 1.** The apostle proves what he had advanced in the last chapter, that the Jews cannot be justified by the works of the written law, nor by any works, unless joined with faith in the Messias, their Redeemer. This he shews by the example of Abraham, who is said to have been justified by believing; 2. and this was before he was circumcised; 3. and long before the law of Moses. Justification was then given without the works of that law. --- *What advantage shall we say, then, that Abraham hath found, who is our father according to the flesh?* This seems the true construction and sense: rather than what did he find according to the flesh, as some expound it. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *If Abraham were justified by works, or by his own works, he might have glory, and be commended by men, who judge only according to outward appearances; but not with God: that is, he could not be truly justified, so as to deserve a reward in heaven, without faith and the grace of God.* (Witham) --- *Not with God.* Whatever glory or applause such works might procure from men, they would be of no value in the sight of God. (Challoner)

**Ver. 3.** *For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice.*[1] The Scripture, therefore, teacheth us that he became just by his faith. And as he had this faith by the grace of God, grace was the cause of his justification, and not any works without grace. And when it is said, *it was reputed to him*, we must not understand an imputation of being just without a true and interior justice: for to be reputed just in the sight of God, who sees the heart, and sanctifies the soul by his interior grace, is the only true justice that can make a man acceptable to God. As not to have our *sins imputed* in the sight of God, is to have them forgiven, and to be free from our sins. (Witham) --- *Reputed, &c.* By God, who *reputeth* nothing otherwise than it is. However, we may gather from this word, that when we are justified, our justification preceedeth from God's free grace and bounty; and not from any efficacy which any act of ours could have of its own nature, abstracting from God's grace. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *Now to him that worketh, &c.* a reward may be looked upon as *due* for his works, and not bestowed upon him as a free gift; but when it is said he *believed and was justified*, (this belief or faith was always a liberal gift of God) and when no mention is made of his works, it appears that such a justification and sanctification are not from the works of the written law, nor from any works he could do of himself, but that they are *according to the purpose, or decree of grace.* (Witham) --- Such a man, says the apostle, challenges his reward as a *debt*, due to his own performance; whereas he who *worketh not*, that is, who presumeth not upon any works done by his own strength; but seeketh justice through faith and grace, is freely justified by God's grace. (Challoner)

**Ver. 5.** Abraham, before his vocation, was an idolater, according to Josephus; (Jewish Antiquities, lib. i. chap. viii.) according to some of the Rabbins, and as the Scripture itself seems to insinuate, Josue chap. xxiv; Isaias xliii; Wisdom x; Judith v. He did not then merit his vocation to the faith by his works. But when God had called him, and made him depart from his country, when he promised to him an innumerable posterity, Abraham believed in his promises, and it was reputed to him unto justice, that his faith and his justice were the pure gift of God. His faith was not a dead and speculative faith only, but an active faith, a faith animated by charity, as appears from the sequel of his life. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *As David, &c.* That is, David accounted a man happy in being justified by God's grace, and not by his own works, when he said: "*Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven* by the mercies of God, *and whose sins are covered*; that is, covered so as to be no more, even in the sight of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* That is,



blessed are those who, by doing penance, have obtained pardon and remission of their sins, and also are *covered*; that is, newly clothed with the habit of grace, and vested with the stole of charity. (Challoner) --- When it is said that the sins of man are covered, we must not imagine that they still remain, but on account of the goodness of God will not be punished, as the Lutherans contend; for the justice of God could not suffer this: but by it we must understand that they are entirely blotted out, and neither exist, nor are considered any longer by God. Still, we must not conclude that man is blessed, as soon as sin is remitted; since the same psalmist, in another place, ascribes happiness to man when he walks in the law of the Lord, and when he keeps judgment and does justice. (Psalms i; cv; and cviii.) And our Saviour says, *If you know these things, blessed shall you be if you do them.* (St. John xiii.) (Estius) --- Moreover, if sins were never blotted out, but only covered, why did the royal prophet pray to the Almighty, saying: *blot out all mine iniquities*; and in different parts of the 50th psalm and psalm cviii, speaking of the egregious sinner, he says: *let the sin of his mother not be blotted out*; which would mean nothing at all, if sins were never blotted out? (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin.* That is, blessed is the man who hath retained his baptismal innocence, that no grievous sin can be imputed to him. And likewise, blessed is the man who, after falling into sin hath done penance, and leads a virtuous life by frequenting the sacraments necessary for obtaining the grace to prevent a relapse, that sin is no more imputed to him. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9.** *This blessedness, by which a man's sins are forgiven, and his soul truly justified, was promised, and is given to the uncircumcised Gentiles, as well as to the circumcised Jews, by the faith and grace of Christ; as Abraham was justified, when he was in the state of uncircumcision.* (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** In effect, Abraham received circumcision a year only before the birth of Isaac; whereas he had received the promises and justification more than 25 years before, when the Almighty caused him to depart from Mesopotamia. (Calmet) --- Therefore he was justified by faith and grace, which is common both to the circumcised and uncircumcised. (Menochius)

**Ver. 11.** *And he received, after he was justified, circumcision, as a seal of the justice of faith,* which he had before when he believed. Circumcision, therefore, in Abraham, was as a *seal* and testimony of the justice which he had already by faith: though circumcision was chiefly given to Abraham and his posterity, as a sign or seal of that alliance which God made with Abraham, and his seed, to shew he had made choice of them for his elect people. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *And might be the father of circumcision.* The apostle here tells them that Abraham is the father of all true believers, uncircumcised as well as circumcised, and all that believe in Christ, his seed, in whom God promised to *bless all nations*, are the spiritual sons of Abraham, and partake of the blessings promised to him in his posterity: nor can the circumcised be his true and spiritual children, unless they follow the *footsteps of his faith*, by which he was justified, when he believed the promises which God made to him before that circumcision was instituted; to wit, that he and Sara should have a son, when they were naturally past the age of having children, and that in his posterity all the world *should be blessed*, that is, in Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Of the world, &c.* By the world, some understand the land of Chanaan, which is sometimes meant by the whole earth, particularly in the times of David and Solomon, when they ruled over the neighbouring nations. But others think that the apostle alludes to the passage of Genesis, where the Almighty promises that in his (Abraham's) seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed; which promise extends much beyond the narrow limits of Chanaan. In fine, it may be understood in a spiritual sense, of his dignity of father of all the faithful; which makes him, in a manner, master of the whole world, since his spiritual children, spread through the whole world, have the universe for their inheritance. (Calmet) --- *Postula a me, et dabo tibi Gentes hæreditatem tuam et possessionem tuam terminos terræ.* (Psalm ii. 8.) (Haydock) --- It was by Christ that Abraham was to *be heir* of the world, in as much as the spiritual kingdom of Christ

should be spread over all the world. And this of one who was of the seed of David, being heir of the world, was not *by the law*, or by virtue of the law, which was not given to Moses till 400 years after. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *For if they, who are of the law, be heirs: faith is made void, the promise is made of no effect.* That is, if the Jews, who are under the law, are the only heirs of the blessings promised, it will follow that the faith which Abraham had before the circumcision, and before the law, was of no value, which I have shewn to be false. And, secondly it will follow that the promise made to him, that *in him all nations should be blessed*, is also null. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *For the law worketh wrath*, not of itself, nor by the intention of the lawgiver, but in as much as it is the occasion of greater punishments, when persons *transgress* it knowingly. (Witham) --- The law abstracting from faith and grace, worketh wrath occasionally, by being an occasion of many transgressions, which provoke God's wrath. (Challoner)

**Ver. 16.** There are two kinds of children of Abraham, to whom alone these promises are made; the one is according to the flesh, the other according to the spirit. The former of these had no part in the promises made to him and his seed than the Gentiles, unless they imitated the fidelity and obedience of their father. (Calmet) --- It is in this sense of spiritual father, that the [Catholic] priest at the altar, speaking in the name of the faithful, calls Abraham our patriarch. (Estius)

**Ver. 18.** *Who, against hope, believed in hope*, or with hope. That is, Abraham, against all probability of human hopes, still hoped in God, says St. John Chrysostom, that he should have a son by Sara: and in this, he *was not weak in faith*. Therefore *it*, that is, is great faith, *was imputed to him unto justice*: and also our faith shall be *imputed to us unto justice, or make us truly just, by believing in Christ*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** Effete, through old age, *Greek: nenekromenon*.

**Ver. 25.** The eternal Father delivered his Son to death, to expiate our offences; he raised him from the dead for our justification. His death is our redemption; his resurrection is the principal object of our faith. Our faith in the resurrection, is imputed unto justice, as was the faith of Abraham in the promises of God. The apostle here seems to refer out faith and justification only to the resurrection, not to the exclusion of other mysteries of religion, which are all, and every one of them, the objects of our faith. But the resurrection is, as it were, the zeal and consummation of the rest; it eminently includes in itself all the others. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 3. Et reputatum est illi ad justitiam, *Greek: kai elogisthe auto eis dikaion*. The Greek word is sometimes translated in the Vulgate Latin, by imputare, or accepto ferre.

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## ROMANS 5

**Ver. 1.** The apostle proceeds in this chapter to shew how great a benefit it is to be truly justified by the coming of Christ. --- *Let us have [1] peace with God*. That is, says St. John Chrysostom, by laying aside all contentions. Or let us have peace with God by sinning no more. And this peace we may have under the greatest *tribulations*, which conduce to our greater good, to an increase in virtues, in patience, in hope, in the love of God, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** We glory in spirit in the afflictions, oppression, and persecution, which we suffer as Christians, esteeming them a great blessing. Thus the apostles went rejoicing from before the council, because they had been thought worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus. (Acts v.) And St. James (chap. i.) says: Think it the greatest joy when you fall into various temptations: (i.e.

tribulations) for these sufferings greatly serve to confirm the elect in the hopes which they have of enjoying the glory of the world to come. (Estius)

**Ver. 5.** God having prevented us with his gifts when we did not at all deserve them, having showered upon us the blessings of faith, charity, patience, and fidelity, we cannot but have the greatest confidence that after this pledge and assurance of his good will towards us, he will finish the work he has begun, and bring us to his heavenly kingdom. (Calmet) --- Not only the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit himself, is given to us, who resides in our soul as in his own temple, who sanctifies it, and makes it partaker of his divine love. (Menochius)

**Ver. 6. &c.** *Why did Christ...die for the ungodly?* He shews Christ's great mercy and love for mankind, that he would die for us, who were sinners, and consequently his enemies. How few are there that will lay down their lives for a *just man*, or for a just cause? --- *Perhaps for a good man*. That is, for another, who has been good to him, his friend or benefactor, we may find one that will expose or lay down his life. But Christ, in *due time*, appointed by the divine decree, died for *sinners*, for us all. And if we have been reconciled to God, and justified by his death; now being made the children of God, and his friends, we may with greater confidence hope to be saved. (Witham) --- The text of the Greek is as follows: *For when we were weak, he gave us our Lord Jesus Christ to redeem us*; shewing how much God loved us, to perform such stupendous acts of love in our behalf. But the reading of the Vulgate is conformable to St. Irenæus, (lib. iii. chap. 18.) and to the commentaries of this epistle, which have been published under the name of St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome. (Calmet) --- St. Augustine says, those whom the apostle first calls weak, he afterwards calls impious, *hos dixit infirmos quos impios*. (Ep. lix. ad Paulinum.) --- St. Jerome, and other fathers and commentators, explain the Greek text of this verse as follows: Scarcely would any one die for a just cause; for who would ever think of dying in defence of injustice? Others explain it thus: Scarcely a single man would die for one that was wicked and unjust: for we can hardly find a person ready to lay down his life for a good man; his friend and benefactor, who has been kind to him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** *As by one man...in whom [2] all have sinned.* That is, in which man all sinned, (not in which death all sinned) as it must be the construction by the Greek text: so that these words are a clear proof of original sin against the Pelagian heretics, as St. Augustine often brings them. Nor does St. John Chrysostom deny original sin, though in this place he expounds it that all by Adam's sin were made guilty of death and punishments. But how could they deserve these, had they not sinned in Adam? (Witham)

**Ver. 13-14.** *Until the law, sin was in the world.* That is, from Adam's fall, both *original* sin and *actual* sins truly infected all mankind. (Witham) --- *Not imputed*. That is, men knew not, or made no account of sin; neither was it *imputed* to them, in the manner it was afterwards, when they transgressed the known written law of God. (Challoner) --- All were conceived and born in sin, in what we call original sin, and liable to *death*, even infants, who were not come to the use of reason, and consequently could not sin after the *similitude of the transgression of Adam*, or by imitating his sin, but were born in sin: and besides this, all manner of actual sins, which men committed by their own perverse will, reigned every where in the world. But before the law these sins were *not imputed*, that is, were not declared sins, that deserved such punishments as were ordained by the law. --- *Adam, who is a figure of him that was to come*. That is, of Christ, whom the apostle calls the *last Adam*, 1 Corinthians xv. 45. But he was a figure by *contraries*. By the first Adam, sin and death entered into the world; by Christ, justice and life. (Witham)

**Ver. 15. &c.** *But not as the offence, so also is the gift*, or the benefits which mankind receive by their Redeemer, Jesus Christ. For St. Paul here shews that the graces which Christ came to bestow upon men, and offers to all, are much greater than the evils which the sin of *one man*, Adam, caused. 1. Because, *if by the offence* of that one man, Adam, *many*, i.e. *all* died by original sin that descended from Adam, (the blessed Virgin mother by a special privilege being always excepted) *much more that grace of one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many*, [3] the comparison does not imply that more in number receive the grace of Christ, than were

infected with sin; but that they who receive the graces which are offered to all, receive greater benefits than were the damages caused by the sin of Adam. *For the judgment indeed was by one unto condemnation*, or so as to make all guilty of one sin, that is, of original sin; and for other actual sins, men committed them by their own proper will; whereas the *grace of Christ* justifies men from *many sins*; that is, also from all sins which they have committed by their own malice. 2. Because by *it*, that is, by the *offence of one man*, *death reigned* in the world, and made all men liable to damnation; yet now by the incarnation of Christ, (which would not have been, had not Adam sinned) all they who are justified by the grace of their Redeemer, have Christ God and man for their head: he is become the head of that same mystical body which is his Church: they are exalted to the dignity of being the brothers of Christ, the Son of God; they are made joint heirs with him of the kingdom of heaven, and so by the grace of Christ have a greater dignity in this world, and shall be exalted to a greater and more eminent degree of glory in the kingdom of his glory for all eternity; which hath given occasion to the Church, in her liturgy, to cry out, as it were with a transport of joy, O happy fault, which hath procured us such and so great a Redeemer! See St. John Chrysostom,[4] hom. x. (Witham)

**Ver. 20-21.** *Now the law entered in.* Not that the law was designed for *that end*; but the word *that*, as in many other places, so here expresseth only the consequence that followed, when sinners occasionally became more guilty by the knowledge of the law, and the precepts given. St. John Chrysostom takes notice that it is not said the law was given, but only that it *entered in*, as it were by the by, and only for a certain time, till our happy redemption, reconciliation, and justification by Jesus Christ. (Witham) --- *That sin might abound.* Not as if the law were given purposely for sin to abound; but that it so happened, through man's perversity, taking occasion of sinning more, from the prohibition of sin. (Challoner) --- *Where sin abounded.* Grace abounded in the elect; for the apostle does not say that grace abounded in every place where sin abounded; but he says indefinitely *where*, that is, in many places where sin abounded, grace hath abounded also. (Estius) --- The Jews and Gentiles having become sensible of their weakness and misery, the Almighty, in his mercy, sent his only Son to enrich both the one and the other with his graces. The Gentiles were in the more deplorable case, and received the greatest abundance of grace; as may be seen from the great number of conversion wrought amongst them in so short a time in every part of the world. (Calmet) --- In the Greek it is *Greek: pareiselthe*, entered in by stealth, as it were, and for a time, till the preaching of the gospel. (Menochius)

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[1] Ver. 1. Pacem habeamus. In the common Greek copies we read *Greek: echomen*, habemus. But in other manuscripts *Greek: echomen*, as St. John Chrysostom must have read by his commentary, *Greek: meke[] amartano[]en*. &c.

[2] Ver. 12. In quo omnes peccaverunt, *Greek: eph o pantes emarton*. If it agreed with sin, in the Greek it must have been *Greek: eph es*.

[3] Ver. 15. Abundavit in plures; *Greek eis tous pollous*, in multos; so that it wis not to be taken comparatively *for more*, but absolutely for many, or for all; because all here are many, as in other places.

[4] Ver. 19. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. x. p. 73. Ed Savil. *Greek: eis uiiothesian echthemen ... kai egenometha adelphoi tou monogenous*, &c.

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## ROMANS 6

**Ver. 1.** *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?* He puts and rejects the same objection as before. (Chap. iii. ver. 7.) And having set forth in the last chapter the grace and advantage by Christ's coming, he now exhorts them to avoid sinning, and live in the grace of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Dead to sin, &c.* We are then dead to sin when we neither live in sin by serving it, nor sin lives in us by reigning; in this case, how can we still live in it by yielding to its desires? St. Augustine (chap. vi. de spiritu et litera) thus explains the passage: when grace has caused us to die to sin; if we live again in it, we must be exceedingly ungrateful to grace. (Estius)

**Ver. 3. &c.** *We...are baptized in his death.* Greek, *unto his death.* The apostle here alludes to the manner of administering the sacrament of baptism, which was then done by immersion or by plunging the person baptized under the water, in which he finds a resemblance of Christ's death and burial under ground, and of his resurrection to an immortal life. So must we after baptism rise to lead a quite different life: having been also, when we were baptized and made Christians, *planted* as branches ingrafted in Christ, let us endeavour to bring forth the fruits of a virtuous life. (Witham) --- *Old man...body of sin.* Our corrupt state, subject to sin and concupiscence, coming to us from Adam, is called out *old man*, as our state, reformed in and by Christ, is called the *new man*. And the vices and sins which then ruled in us, are named *the body of sin*. (Challoner) --- The old and sinful man we must look upon as crucified with him, and the *body of sin*, or our sinful body, destroyed. We must look upon ourselves as dead to sin, and that we must sin no more, as *Christ* being *once risen*, dies no more. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *He that is dead is justified from sin.*[1] Some translate, is freed from sin: this is true; but perhaps it is better to retain the word *justified*, which is observed to be a law-word used in courts of justice, where to be *justified* is to be acquitted, so that a man cannot be questioned again on that account; and so are sinners, when their sins are forgiven. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *For in that he died to sin.* But the sense must be for sins, or to destroy other men's sins, he himself being incapable of sinning. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Let not sin, therefore, reign, &c.* He compares *sin* and *justice* to two kings, or generals, under one of which every man fights in this world. Sin is the tyrant, under which fight the wicked, and make their minds and their members the instruments, or *arms* of iniquity to sin, when they follow and yield to their disorderly *lusts*. But he exhorts them to live so as to make the powers of their souls, and their *members, instruments* or *arms of justice* to God, to fight under God, their lawful king, and under the banner of his justice. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *You are not under the law* of Moses, as some of you were before: but *now you* are all under *grace*, or the law of grace, where you may find pardon for your sins. But take care not to abuse this grace of pardon offered you, nor multiply your sins, and defer your conversion, as some may do, by presuming, that after all, by the merits of Christ, you can find pardon. This, says Tertullian, is the greatest ingratitude, to continue wicked, because God is good. Reflect that you make yourselves servants of him whom you obey. By yielding to your passions, you become *slaves to sin*. If you keep your obedience to the law of Christ, and to his doctrines, *the form of which you have delivered to you* by the gospel, you are the happy *servants of justice*, and the servants of God, who is justice itself. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Thanks be to God, &c.* He thanks God, not because they had been in sin, but because after having been so long under the slavery of sin, they had now been converted from their heart, and with their whole strength gave themselves to that form of doctrine to which they had been conducted by the gospel. He returns God thanks for their obedience to the faith, because this obedience of the human will is the work and gift of God, that so no one may glory in his sight. (Ephesians ii.) (Estius)

**Ver. 19.** *I speak a human thing,*[2] or I am proposing to you what is according to human strength and ability assisted by the grace of God, with a due regard to the *weakness* and *infirmity of your flesh*. The sense, according to St. John Chrysostom is this, that the apostle having told them they must be *dead to sin, lead a new life, &c.* he now encourages them to it, by telling them, that what is required of them is not above their human strength, as it is assisted by those graces which God

offers them, and which they have received. Where we may observe that these words, *I speak of a human thing*, are not the same, nor to be taken in the same sense, as chap. iii. 6. when he said, *I speak after a human way*, or *I speak like men*. (Witham) --- What I ask of you Christian Romans, is, that you so earnestly labour for your sanctification as to improve daily in virtue, as formerly you plunged every day deeper and deeper into vice. (Menochius)

**Ver. 20-22.** *You were free from justice*; that is, says St. John Chrysostom, you lived as no ways subject to justice, nor obedient to the law and precepts of God: an unhappy freedom, a miserable liberty, worse than the greatest slavery, *the end of which is death*, eternal death: of which sins with great reason *you are now ashamed*, when you are become the *servants of God*, and obedient to him, for which you will receive *the fruit* and reward of *everlasting life in heaven*. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *For the wages*, which the tyrant *sin* gives to his soldiers and slaves, is eternal death; but the wages, the pay, the reward, which God gives to those that fight under him, is *everlasting life*; which, though a reward of our past labours, as it is often called in the Scriptures, is still *a grace*, [3] or free gift; because if our works are good, or deserve a reward in heaven, it is God's grace that makes them deserve it. For, as St. Augustine says, when God crowns our works, he crowns his own gifts. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 7. Is justified from sin, justificatus est a peccato; *Greek: dedikaiotai apo tes amartias*. *Dikaioo* est vocabulum, forense. See Corn. a Lapide, Estius, &c.

[2] Ver. 19. Humanum dico, *Greek: anthropinon lego*; chap. iii. 6. Secundum hominem, *Greek: kat anthropon*. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xii.

[3] Ver. 23. Gratia Dei, vita æterna; that is, in construction, vita æterna, est gratia Dei.

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## ROMANS 7

**Ver. 1.** *As long as it liveth*; or, as long as he liveth. (Challoner) --- This seems the literal construction, rather than as long as *he*, the man, liveth. For St. Paul here compares the law (which in the Greek is in the masculine gender) to the husband, whom a wife cannot quit, nor be married to another, as long as the husband liveth, without being an adulteress: but if the *husband be dead*, (as the law of Moses is now dead, and no longer obligatory after the publishing of the new law of Christ) the people that were Jews, and under the Jewish law, are now free from that former husband, to wit, the written law of Moses. Nay, this people also are *become dead to the law*, (ver. 4.) because the law itself is dead *by the body of Christ*, or, as in the Greek, by reason of the body of Christ offered and sacrificed for you, and for all on the cross: so that now you must look upon yourselves as spiritually married to him: which agrees with what follows, *that you may belong to another*, (in the Greek, to *another husband*) to Christ, who *is risen from the dead*, and is now the spouse of your souls. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *For when we were in the flesh*; i.e. lived according to the flesh, *the passions of sins, which were by the law*: he does not say, as St. John Chrysostom observes, that they were *caused* by the law, but only *were by it*, meaning that they were occasioned by the knowledge of the law, but properly caused by ourselves, and our corrupt inclinations, that were *wrought in our members*, rather than did work. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *But now are loosed from the law of death*, by which many understand from the law of Moses; so called, because it could not of itself give the life of grace, and occasioned death. Others expound these words, *free from the law of death*, that is, from sins, which before they had

been guilty of, and which made them deserve eternal death. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Is the law (of Moses) sin? God forbid.* The apostle declares, that the law itself was far from being sinful; on the contrary, that it was *good, spiritual, holy*: but, saith he, I should not know *concupiscence* to be sinful, unless the law said: *thou shalt not covet*: by which it is made known to every one, that sins of thought consented to, and evil desires, are sins. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Sin, taking occasion.* Sin, or concupiscence, which is called *sin*, because it is from sin, and leads to sin, which was asleep before, was awakened by the prohibition; the law not being the cause thereof, nor properly *giving occasion* to it: but *occasion being taken* by our corrupt nature to resist the commandment laid upon us. (Challoner) --- *Sin.* The apostle here calls concupiscence by the name of sin; because it is the consequence and punishment of it, and drags us along to sin. This takes occasion from the precept of the law to induce us to transgress it; for we are naturally inclined to do what is forbidden. --- *Nitmur in vetitum* --- which is the offspring of a disorderly love of liberty and independence. Without the law sin was dead, because concupiscence had nothing to rouse and trouble it. It was like a torrent which rolled rapidly, without resistance in its channel, but as soon as the law came and put an obstacle, it began to spread itself far and wide, and commit the strangest ravages. Or it may be explained thus: without the law sin was dead; not being known to the world, and not imputed to us as a transgression. He speaks here of the transgressions of the written law, not the law of nature, of which each one has a sufficient knowledge to render him inexcusable, whenever he transgresses it. (Calmet) --- *Without the law sin was dead*; that is, many sins were so little known, that before the written law they seemed no sins; not but that, at all times, reason and conscience shewed many things to be sinful and ill done, so that whosoever acted against these lights could not be excused. See what St. Paul says of the heathen philosophers, chap. i. (Witham)

**Ver. 9. &c.** *I lived some time without the law*; i.e. without the knowledge of the law. This some understand St. Paul in the time of his childhood, before he came to the knowledge of what was forbidden by any law. But the exposition, which agrees with the rest of this chapter, is this; that St. Paul, though he seems to speak of himself, yet represents the condition of any person that lived before the written law was given: *but when the commandment came*, after that the written law was given, and its precepts came to my knowledge, *then sin revived*, by giving me a perfect knowledge: and by transgressing those precepts, I became more guilty and without excuse. --- *I died*: i.e. became guilty by transgression of the known law, and guilty of eternal death: *and the commandments* or precepts, *which were unto life*, which were good in themselves, and designed to direct me what I was to do, and what I was to avoid in order to obtain eternal life, *were found to be unto death to me*, but by my own fault; and *occasionally* only, from the *commandments* of the law and the knowledge of them, when with full knowledge I transgressed them. Thus I was *seduced* by sin, which with it brought death, though the law and the commandment (ver. 12) were in themselves *holy, and just, and good*. They could not but be good, as St. John Chrysostom says, their author being the true God, and not any evil principle or cause, that was the author of evils, as the impious Manicheans pretended. We might as well, says St. John Chrysostom, find fault with the tree of life [the tree of knowledge of good and evil?] and the forbidden fruit in Paradise, which was not the cause, but only the occasion of our misery, when Adam ate of it. It cannot then be said, *that that which was good*, (to wit, the *law*) *was made death to me*, or the cause of my death; but *sin*, and my unresisted sinful inclinations, *that it might appear sin*, or that it might evidently appear how great an evil sin is, *by that which is good*, (i.e. by the transgression of the precepts given and known, *sin might become sinful above measure*. He speaks of sin as it were of a certain person; and the sense is, that sin, which was in my corrupt nature, might *become sinful above measure*, when it led me into all manner of disorders and excess, which I yielded to. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *That it may appear sin, or that sin may appear*; viz. to be the monster it is, which is even capable to take occasion from that which is good to work death. (Challoner)

**Ver. 14.** *I am carnal, sold under sin*, a slave subject to sinful inclinations, which are only properly

sins when they are consented to by our free-will. There has been a great dispute both among the ancient and later interpreters, whether St. Paul from this verse to the end of the chapter speaks of a person remaining in sin, either under the law of nature or of the written law, (which was once the opinion of St. Augustine) or whether he speaks of a person regenerated by baptism, and in the state of grace in the new law, and even of himself when he was a faithful servant of God. This is the opinion of St. Augustine in many of his later writings against the Pelagians, for which he also cites St. Hilary, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and St. Ambrose. It is also the opinion of St. Jerome, (Ep. ad Eustochium de custod. Virg.) of St. Gregory the great, of Ven. Bede, and the more approved opinion, according to which the apostle here by sin does not understand that which is properly speaking a sin, or sinful, but only speaks of sin improperly such, that is of a corrupt inclination, or a rebellious nature corrupted by original sin, of a strife betwixt the spirit and the flesh, which remains for a trial in the most virtuous persons: of which see again St. Paul, Galatians v. 17. We may take notice that the apostle before spoke of what he *was* and what he *had been*, but now speaks in the present time of what he *is*, and what he *doth*. (Witham) --- The law is styled *spiritual*: 1st, because it prescribes what appertains to the spirit, and to the spiritual man: i.e. to follow virtue and shun vice: 2nd, because it directs man to the worship of God, which is spirit and truth: 3rd, because it cannot be fulfilled by spiritual men, unless by spirit and grace: 4th, because it directs the spirit of man and disposes him properly towards God, towards his neighbour, and towards himself: and lastly, because the law, which is the law of grace and spirit. (Menochius)

**Ver. 15.** *For that which I work, I understand not.* To know, or understand is often, in the style of the Scriptures, the same as to approve or love: so the sense here is: I *approve not* what I do, that is, what happens to me in my *sensitive part*, in my imagination, or in the members of my body, which indeed the just man rather suffers than does; and this is the sense, by what immediately follows, *the evil which I hate, that I do*, i.e. that I suffer, being against my will; and *I do that which I would not*. (Witham) --- *I do not that good which I will*, &c. The apostle here describes the disorderly motions of passion and concupiscence; which oftentimes in us get the start of reason, and by means of which even good men suffer in the inferior appetite what their will abhors: and are much hindered in the accomplishment of the desires of their spirit and mind. But these evil motions, (though they are called the *law of sin*, because they come from original sin, and violently tempt and incline to sin) as long as the will does not consent to them, are not sins, because they are not voluntary. (Challoner)

**Ver. 17-18.** *Now then it is no more I that do it: To will good is present with me.* These expressions all shew that he speaks of temptations that affect the sense only, the imagination, or the members of the body, but to which the mind and the will give no consent, but retain an aversion to them; and so long they never can be truly and properly sins, which must be with full deliberation and consent. (Witham) --- The apostle here means to say, that he knew by experience that evil and not good dwelt within him, according to the flesh. He does not contradict this passage when he says elsewhere, that our members are the temples of the Holy Ghost: (1 Corinthians iii. 6. &c.) for good cannot be found in our flesh, inasmuch as it is corrupted by sin;; whence our Saviour says, "What is born of flesh, is flesh." (John iii.) But good is in our body, when our members under the influence of the soul, renewed by the Holy Ghost residing in it, are employed in good works. The meaning of this passage is, that although now healed and renewed by grace, he could have a perfect desire of doing good; yet still on account of the evil of concupiscence dwelling in his flesh, he found not himself able to perform all the good he wished, because concupiscence was always urging him on to evil against his will. (Estius)

**Ver. 22.** *I am delighted with the law of God according to the inward man.* As long as the inward man, or man's interior, is right, all is right. --- (I perceive another law in my *members*, *fighting*, and different from the law of my *mind*: this is true in any man just striving against and resisting temptations, but not of the sinner, whose mind also and will consent to them. A man can never lose God's favour and grace, unless his mind and interior consent. --- These *hold me* as it were *captive in the law of sin*, or sinful inclinations, but which are *in the members* only. I cry out, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death*, from this mortal body with its sinful lusts, which if



consented to would bring *death* to the soul? Nothing but the *grace* of Jesus Christ can secure me from such temptations, and by freeing me from this body, can make me perfectly happy; which cannot be hoped for in this life. But I have still this greatest of consolations, that I myself, *with my mind* and will, still serve God, and remain firm in obedience *to his laws*; but with the *flesh*, or in the flesh, I am subject *to the law* of sin, i.e. of sinful inclinations. --- We must avoid here two heretical errors; that of those late pretended reformers, who denying man's free will, hold the commandments of God impossible, even to a just man. See also the first heretical proposition of Jansenius. Next we must detest the late abominable error of those called *Quietists*, who blushed not to say that a man might yield and abandon himself to the most shameful disorders of the flesh, pretending that it was not they themselves, but sin and the devil that caused the abominations in their flesh. St. Augustine foresaw this frivolous excuse: (lib. i. de. nup. and Concup. chap. xxviii.) "That man (saith he) is in a grievous mistake, who, consenting to the concupiscence of the flesh, and to do what the flesh prompts him to, thinks he can still say: it is not I that do that," &c. (Witham)

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## ROMANS 8

**Ver. 1.** Notwithstanding this law of sin opposing the law of the spirit, and endeavouring to captivate us to sin, we can, by the succour of the grace of Jesus Christ, preserve ourselves from sin and damnation, by resisting sin, and attaching ourselves strongly to Jesus Christ, by faith and charity. Concupiscence is not sin. And they who have received a spiritual birth in Jesus Christ by baptism, and have remained faithful to the grace of their justification, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, shall receive a recompense proportionate to their combats and labours. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *The law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus.* That is, the new law, by which the Holy Ghost, or the spirit of life is given, *hath delivered me from the law of sin and of death*: that is, from the slavery of sin, that causeth death: though some think that the law of Moses may be here called the law of *death*, and of *sin*, because it occasionally brought death upon such as transgressed the known law. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,* not in sinful flesh, (because the Son of God could not sin) hath now done; *even of sin hath condemned sin in the flesh.* That is, *in* or *by* his flesh, which was offered on the cross, hath *condemned* the tyrant *sin*, as guilty of so many sins, and hath destroyed his tyranny, where the apostle speaks of sin, as it were of a certain person or tyrant. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *That the justification of the law.* That is, that was aimed at, but never attained to, by the written law, *might now be fulfilled in us*; that is, that we, by the grace of Christ, may be enabled to fulfil and comply with the law, and its moral precepts, by walking according to the spirit of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 5. &c.** *For the who are according to the flesh.* That is, who live according to the false, vain, and deceitful maxims and customs of carnal men, which he also calls the *prudence of the flesh*: and this prudence he calls *death*, as leading men to eternal death. Such carnal men *relish* nothing else but such pleasures. But they *who are* and live *according to the spirit*, *mind the things which are of the spirit*, fix their hearts on the things that belong to God, and his service; and this *wisdom of the spirit*, in which they experience much greater pleasure, leads them to eternal *life*, and to eternal *peace* in the enjoyment of God. The false *wisdom of the flesh* is an enemy of God, *cannot be subject to the law of God*, because the maxims of the flesh, and of the world, are so opposite to those of the gospel, and to the doctrine of Christ. (Witham) --- They who are subject to the flesh, by having their affections fixed on the things of the flesh, that is, carnal men,

whilst they are such, cannot please God: for this prudence of the flesh makes them the enemies of God. (Estius) --- *If Christ, or the spirit of Christ*, which he also (ver. 9.) calls *the spirit of God*, as being one and the same, *dwell in you*, and direct you, *the body indeed is dead because of sin*; that is, is mortal, and liable to death, the consequence of Adam's sin; but *the spirit* and the soul liveth by the life of *grace*, by reason of *justification*: that is, because she hath been justified and sanctified by the merits of Christ. And *the spirit of God*, who raised *Jesus* to life, will also raise all who remain sanctified by the grace of Christ to a happy resurrection. (Witham)

**Ver. 14. &c.** They are the sons of God, by this new grace of adoption, by which also they call God, *Abba*; that is to say, *Father*, whereas under the former law of Moses, God rather governed his people *by fear*; there were his *servants*, we are his *sons*; and if sons, also *the heirs of God*, with the promise of an eternal inheritance in his kingdom, *provided we suffer* for Christ's sake, as he suffered for us. And surely the short sufferings in this world have no proportion, nor can be put in balance with the *future* endless glory, which is promised and prepared for us in heaven. (Witham) --- *Abba* is a Syriac word, which signifies my father. This is properly the word of free and noble children; for amongst the Hebrews, the children of slaves were not allowed to call their fathers *Abba*, nor their mothers *Imma*. This kind of expression was very rarely used under the old law. The Hebrews called the Almighty their Lord, their God, their Salvation, their King, their Protector, their Glory, &c. but seldom their father, scarcely ever, except in the case of Solomon, who was a particular figure of the Messiah, the true Son of God. On this account God said to him: "He shall call me Father and God; and I will be to him a Father, and will treat as my first-born." But it is the property of the Christian to call the Almighty his Father with confidence indeed, yet tempered with a filial awe; remembering at the same time that he is his judge. (Calmet) --- Mat. Polus says that not any one of the just dared to call God, my *Father*, before the coming of Christ, as this favour was reserved for the time of the gospel. (In this location.) (Haydock) --- St. John Chrysostom[1] takes notice, that God was also called the Father of the Israelites, and they his *children*, in the Old Testament, when God rather governed his people by fear of punishments, and promises of temporal blessings, but not in that particular manner as in the new law. (Witham) --- *The Spirit himself*, &c. By the inward motions of divine love, and the peace of conscience, which the children of God experience, they have a kind of testimony of God's favour; by which they are much strengthened in the hope of their justification and salvation; but yet not so as to pretend to an absolute assurance, which is not usually granted in this mortal life: during which we are taught to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*. (Philippians ii. 12.) And *that he who thinketh himself to stand, must take heed lest he fall*. (1 Corinthians x. 12.) See also Romans xi. 20, 21, 22. (Challoner) --- *He hath given to us*, says St. John, (chap. i. 12.) *the power*, or dignity, *of being the sons of God*. Christ taught us to pray, and to begin our prayers with *our Father*, &c. (Matthew vi. 9.) (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The expectation* [2] *of the creature*. He speaks of the corporal creation, made for the use and service of man; and, by occasion of his sin made subject to vanity, that is, to a perpetual instability, tending to corruption and other defects; so that by a figure of speech, it is here said to groan and be in labour, and to long for its deliverance, which is then to come, when sin shall reign no more; and God shall raise the bodies, and united them to their souls, never more to separate, and to be in everlasting happiness in heaven. (Challoner) --- *Waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God*. That is, for the time after this life, when it shall be made manifest that they are the sons of God, and heirs of the kingdom of this glory. Several interpreters understand all creatures whatsoever, even irrational and inanimate creatures of this world, which are represented as if they had a knowledge and sense of a more happy condition, of a new unchangeable state of perfection, which they are to receive at the end of the world. See 2 Peter i. 13; Apocalypse xxi. 1. Now every insensible creature is figuratively brought in *groaning* like a woman in labour, *waiting*, and wishing for that new and happy state; but in the mean time *unwillingly made subject to vanity*, i.e. to these changeable imperfections of generations and corruptions, which then they shall be *delivered from*. (Witham) --- *The creature*, &c. The creatures expect with impatience, and hope with confidence, to see a happy change in their condition; they flatter themselves that they will be delivered from the captivity of sin, to which man has reduced them, and enter into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. Not that the inanimate creation will really participate the happiness

and glory of the elect; although in some sense they may be said to have part in it, since they will enter into a pure, incorruptible and perfect state to the end of ages. They will no longer be subject to those changes and vicissitudes which sin has brought upon them; nor will sinful man any longer abuse their beauty and goodness in offending the Creator of all. St. Ambrose and St. Jerome teach that the sun, moon, and stars will be then much more brilliant and beautiful than at present, no longer subject to those changes they at present suffer. Philo and Tertullian teach that the beasts of prey will then lay aside their ferocity, and venomous serpents their poisonous qualities. (Calmet) --- Other, by the *creature* or creatures, understand men only, and Christians, who groan under miseries and temptations in this mortal life, amidst the *vanities* of this world, under the *slavery of corruption*; who having already (ver. 23.) received *the first-fruits of the Spirit*, [3] the grace of God in baptism, have been made *the children of God*, and now, with *expectation* and great *earnestness*, wait and long for a more perfect *adoption* of the sons of God: for the *redemption of their bodies*, when the bodies, as well as the souls of the elect, shall rise to an immortal life, and complete happiness in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 24, &c.** *For we are saved by hope*, as it is the will of God we should be, waiting and hoping with *patience* for the things which we have *not seen*, *which neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard*, &c. (1 Corinthians ii. 9.) --- *And the spirit also helpeth our infirmity...asketh for us with unspeakable groanings*. [4] If we understand this according to the common exposition, of the divine spirit of the Holy Ghost, the sense is, says St. Augustine, that the Holy Ghost *maketh us ask*: but we may understand the spirit of God and his grace, *diffused in our souls*, and in particular that gift of the Holy Ghost, called the *spirit of prayer*, given to the new Christians, which taught them what to ask, and how to pray. See St. John Chrysostom. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *To them that love God, all things work together unto good.* All trials, temptations, afflictions, must be taken as coming from the hand of God, who ordains or permits them for the greater good of his elect. --- For the good of those, who, *according to his purpose* [5] *are called the saints*. Literally, *according to purpose*: but it seems certain that to translate *his purpose*, is only to give the literal sense, if we compare this place with other texts, both in the Greek and Latin, where the same words signify according to God's good will, or his eternal decree, and not according to the purpose, or will of men, as some expound it. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *For whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son*, in suffering with Christ, in following his doctrine, in imitating his life. This foreknowledge of God, according to St. Augustine, [6] is not merely a foreseeing of what men will do by the assistance and graces of God's ordinary providence, much less a foreseeing of what they will do by their own natural strength, as the Pelagian heretics pretended: but is a foreknowledge including an act of the divine will, and of his love towards his elect servants; (as to *know* in the Scriptures, when applied to God, is many times the same as to approve and love) God therefore hath foreseen or predestinated, or decreed that these elect, by the help of his special graces, and by the co-operation of their free-will, should be *conformable to the image of his Son*, that so his Son, even as man, might be the *first-born*, the chief, and the head of all that shall be saved. (Witham) --- God hath preordained that all his elect shall be conformable to the image of his Son. We must not here offer to dive into the secrets of God's eternal election: only firmly believe that all our *good*, in time and eternity, flows *originally* from God's free goodness; and all our *evil* from man's free will. (Challoner)

**Ver. 30.** *And whom he predestinated, them he also called* to the true faith and to his service, without any deserts in them, nay, when all mankind were guilty of eternal death, by original sin. --- *And whom he called, them he also justified*, by faith, by hope, by a love of him, and a true penance. --- *And whom he justified, them he also glorified*. That is, hath decreed to glory. Yet not all who have been justified, but only his elect, who are under his special protection, and to whom he grants a perseverance in his grace to the end: so that the call to faith, their sanctification, their final perseverance, and glorification in heaven, are the effects of their free election and predestination. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *What shall we then say to these things?* That is, though we live amidst temptations and afflictions in this life, we need not fear as long as we are faithful in the service of God, under his protection. --- *If God be for us, who is against us*, or who shall hinder us from being saved. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *He that spared not, &c.* This is another argument for us to hope in the goodness of God, who hath so *loved the world*, that he hath *delivered*, and given his true and only Son for *us all*, to redeem all and every one, and has by his death obtained helps and graces by which we may all be saved. --- *How hath he not also, with him, given us all things?* That is, since he has given for us his only Son, how can we doubt, but that, with him, he will give us all gifts and graces? He hath given us, says St. John Chrysostom, his Son himself, and how can we doubt of other blessings? (Witham)

**Ver. 33-34.** *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of the elect of God? God who justifieth.* Others read without an interrogation, it is God *who justified us*: the sense will scarce be different; for it is the same as to say, we need not fear that God will accuse us, since by his mercy he hath been pleased to die, and to rise again from death for us. (Witham)

**Ver. 35. &c.** *Who then, or what shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Neither devils, nor men, nor any thing in nature, unless it be by our own fault, and unless we wilfully and sinfully leave God. --- *I am sure.* In the Greek, I am [7] *fully persuaded*, that nothing can separate us, &c. In fine, another argument to prove we ought to have a firm hope in God, is that *Christ Jesus, who sits at the right hand of God, also intercedeth for us*. Christ, as man, intercedeth, prayeth for us, is our advocate and chief mediator See Hebrews vii. Christ is truly said to pray for us in heaven, though it is not the custom of the Church to call upon him in this manner, "Christ pray for us;" because being God, as well as man, he has all things under his command. (Witham)

**Ver. 39.** So powerful and efficacious, so certain and unchangeable is the love of God, which conducts us to the kingdom of bliss, that no creature can separate us from it, either by making us cease to love him, or by frustrating our love of its effect, viz. life everlasting. (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 15. Abba (Pater) St. John Chrysostom, hom. xiv. p. 115. *Greek: oude euchomenous outos, &c.*

[2] Ver. 19. Expectatio creaturæ, *Greek: e gar apokaradokia.* St. John Chrysostom, hom. xiv. p. 119. *Greek: apokaradokia gar e sphodra prosdokia estin*, intenta et sollicita expectatio. See Mr. Legh, Crit. Sac.

[3] Ver. 23. Redemptionem corporis, i.e. complete happiness, says St. John Chrysostom, p. 119. *Greek: toutesti ten apertismenen doxan.*

[4] Ver. 26. Postulat pro nobis, i.e. says St. Augustine, interpellare nos facit...nobisque interpellandi et gemendi inspirat affectum.

[5] Ver. 28. *Secundum propositum* vocati sunt sancti, *Greek: tois kata prothesin.* See Romans ix. 11. Ephesians iii. 11. where in the Latin is *secundum præfinitionem*, and 2 Timothy i. 9. non *secundum opera nostra*, sed *secundum propositum suum*, et gratiam, where he speaks of God, *Greek: sosantos emas...kata idian prothesin.*

[6] Ver. 29 St. Augustine, de dono persever. chap. xviii. prædestinatione Deus ea præscivit, quæ fuerat ipse facturus. And again, chap. xiv. Prædestinatio est præscientia et præparatio beneficiorum, quibus certissime liberantur quicunque liberantur. See Bellar. and Petau, as to St. Augustine's opinion. But I never in these short notes touch upon any thing that regards the opinions in Catholic schools; my design being nor more than a literal exposition of the text.

[7] Ver. 38. Certus sum, *Greek: pepeismai*, persuasus sum. No one has an absolute certainty that they shall be saved.

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## ROMANS 9

**Ver. 3.** *I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ.*[1] The word *anathema*, according to its derivation, signifies a thing separated or laid apart for some particular use. Hence it was put to signify things given and consecrated to God, which therefore used to be presented and hung up in temples. 2. The word also was applied to signify things whose destruction, as sometimes, men deputed to be sacrificed to the gods to appease their anger. This signification was according to the Hebrew word *cherem*, and the Syriac word *horma*, as Numbers xxi. 3. He called the name of that place *Horma*, that is, *anathema*; because it was to be entirely destroyed. See 1 Machabees v. Hence *anathema* was also used for a *curse*, and to *anathematize*, to curse. See Acts xxiii. 14. The sense of this place is differently expounded. Tolet, by the word *I wished*, or *I did wish*, thinks that St. Paul might speak of the time before his conversion, when out of a false zeal, he wished to be separated from Christ, and from all Christians: and that he brings this to shew his brethren how zealous he had been for their religion. But this wish of St. Paul is generally expounded as proceeding from the great love and charity he had, when he was an apostle, for the conversion and salvation of his brethren, the Jews, who mostly remained obstinate and incredulous: and some will have it to be no more than a hyperbolical expression of his great love and affection for them. Others, with St. Jerome, ep. ad Algasiam, tom. iv. p. 203. Ed. Ben. think that by this way of speaking, St. Paul signifies himself willing to be sacrificed, by undergoing any death for their conversion: but St. John Chrysostom (hom. xvi.) thinks this far short of the sublime charity of St. Paul; for by such a death, says he, he would not be separated *from* Christ, but would be a great gainer by it; since by that means he would soon be free from all the troubles and sufferings of a miserable life, and blessed with the company and enjoyment of Christ in the kingdom of his glory. He, and many others, think that St. Paul was so troubled and grieved to the heart at the obstinacy of the unbelieving Jews, at their blasphemies against Christ, and their eternal perdition, that an extraordinary charity and zeal for God's honour, and their salvation, made him wish even to endure a separation from Christ, and from the glory prepared for him in heaven, though not from the love, or from the grace of Christ. If this, says St. John Chrysostom, seems incredible to us, it is because we are far from such heroic dispositions of the love of God, and of our neighbours. (Witham) --- The apostle's concern and love for his countrymen, the Jews, was so great, that he was willing even to suffer an *anathema*, or curse, for their sake; or any evil that could come upon him, without his offending God. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4-5.** *To whom belongeth the adoption of children.* Literally, *whose is the adoption*. He mentions the favours which God had done to his people, the Jews. As, 1. That God had adopted them for his elect people. 2. That he had glorified them with so many miracles. 3. That he had made a particular *covenant* and alliance with them. 4. Given them a written law. 5. Prescribed the manner they should worship him. 6. *Promises* of divers blessings. 7. *Who are from the Fathers.* Literally, *whose are the Fathers*; i.e. who descended from the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c. 8. Of whose race, i.e. of the family of David, Jesus Christ, as man, was born. --- *Who is over all things God*,[2] *blessed for ever. Amen.* Though the apostles did not often, in express words, call Jesus Christ, *the God*, lest the heathens, when they were not sufficiently instructed, should imagine that there were many gods, (as divers of the fathers take notice) yet here, and in several places, they clearly delivered the divinity of our Saviour, Christ. The Socinians might here observe, that the apostle calls him the God blessed for ever, and with the Greek article. (Witham)

**Ver. 6-7.** *Not as though the word of God hath failed* in his promises made to Abraham and the patriarchs. The Jews pretended that the promises were made to them only, and to those that were of their race, and that the Gentiles were not to partake of them. St. Paul shews them their

mistake, by telling them who are to be esteemed the true children of Abraham, and of the patriarchs, according to the promises which God made, and who are not. (Witham) --- *All are not Israelites, &c.* Not all, who are the carnal seed of *Israel*, are true *Israelites* in God's account: who, as by his free grace he heretofore preferred Isaac before Ismael, and Jacob before Esau, so he could, and did by the like free grace, election, and mercy, raise up spiritual children by faith to Abraham and Israel, from among the Gentiles, and prefer them before the carnal Jews. (Challoner) --- *Neither are all they, who are of the seed of Abraham*, his true spiritual children, to whom these promises were made: *nor are all they who are descended from Isaac the children of these promises nor are all they true Israelites*, to whom these blessings were promised, although they are descended *from Israel*; but only they who are the children of the patriarchs by faith in Jesus, the Messiah, in whom God promised that he would bless all nations. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** To prove that the children of Abraham are the children of the promise, he adduces the passage of Scripture: "I will come in a year's time, and Sara shall have a son." (Genesis xviii.) This promised child was Isaac, the true son of the promise of God, and of the faith of Abraham; and not the son of the flesh, for Ismael was this as well as Isaac; but he was granted to the prayers of Abraham, a child of the grace and mercy of God. All the faithful, therefore, of whatever race or nation they may be, are in this sense the children of Abraham, by being gratuitously chosen by God, and by the fidelity in which they are imitators of Abraham. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10. &c.** *and not only she* (Sara) brought forth Isaac, who was the only child of Abraham, to whom the promises descended, though he was the father of Ismael, by Agar, and of all the Ismaelites. And lest the Jews should say that the Ismaelites, though descending from Abraham, according to the flesh, were not to be reputed as his children for another reason, because they came of Agar, who was only the handmaid of Sara; he brings them another example to which they could make no such reply; to wit, that *Rebecca* also at once had two sons of Isaac, *Esau* and *Jacob*; where, though Esau was the first-born, these promises were not reputed as made to him, and his descendants, the Idumeans, who were equally the descendants of Isaac, yet not the favourite people, nor the children of God, as the Jews saw very well. (Witham) --- *Not yet born.* By this example of these twins, and the preference of the younger to the elder, the drift of the apostle is, to shew that God, in his election, mercy, and grace, is not tied to any particular nation, as the Jews imagined, nor to any prerogative of birth, or any foregoing merits. For as, antecedently, to his grace, he sees no merit in any, but finds all involved in sin, in the common mass of condemnation; and all children of wrath; there is not one whom he might not justly leave in that mass; so that whomsoever he delivers from it, he delivers in his mercy: and whomsoever he leaves in it, he leaves in his justice. As when, of two equally criminal, the king is pleased out of pure mercy to pardon one, whilst he suffers justice to take place in the execution of the other. (Challoner) --- *Nor had done any good or evil.* God was pleased to prefer, and promise his blessings to the younger of them, Jacob, declaring that *the elder shall serve the younger*; that is, that the seed of the elder should be subject to that of the younger, as it happened afterwards to the Idumeans. And the prophet, Malachias, said of them, *I have loved Jacob, but hated Esau, and turned his mountains into a desert, &c.* --- *That the purpose of God*, his will, and his decree, (see the foregoing chap. ver. 28.) *might stand according to election*, might be, not according to any works they had done, or that he foresaw they would do, but merely according to his mercy. And though the preference which God gave to Jacob was literally true, as to temporal benefits; yet St. Augustine observes in divers places, that Jacob was a figure of the elect or predestinate, and Esau of the reprobate; and that as Jacob and his posterity was more favoured, purely by the mercy of God, without any merits on their side; so are God's elect, whom he has called, and to whom, according to his eternal purpose, he decreed to give eternal glory, and special graces to bring them thither. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *What shall we say, then? Is there injustice with God*, when he bestows special favours and benefits on some, and not on others? He answers, *by no means.* And he justifies almighty God's conduct, ver. 22. In the mean time, it is certain that there is no injustice in not giving what another has no right to: and besides all men having sinned, deserved punishment. If, then, he shews mercy to some, it is an effect of his goodness and liberality only which they do not

deserve. If he leaves others in their sins, they are only punished according to their deserts. His mercy shines upon his elect; and his divine justice is displayed against the wicked and the reprobate, but only according to what they have deserved. (Witham)

**Ver. 15-16.** *I will have mercy, &c. Then it is not of him that willeth, &c.* By these words he again teaches that God's call and predestination of those whom he has decreed to save, is not upon account of any works or merits in men, but only to be attributed to the mercy and goodness of God. See St. Thomas Aquinas on this chap. lect. iii. See St. Augustine, Encher. chap. xcvi. Epis. 194. in the new Ed. Ep. 105. ad Sixtum de lib. Arbit. chap. xxv. &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, &c.* St. Paul had shewn that there was no injustice in God by his giving special graces to the elect; now he shews that God cannot be accounted unjust for leaving the reprobate in their sins, or for punishing them as they deserve; for this purpose he brings the example of Pharaoh, who remained hardened against all the admonitions and chastisements of him and his kingdom. --- *Have I raised thee up*, placed thee king over Egypt; I have done so many miracles before thee, I have spared thee when thou deservedst to be punished with death, and at last shall punish thee with thy army in the Red Sea, that my name may be known over all the earth. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *And whom he will, he hardeneth.*[3] That is, permits to be hardened by their own malice, as it is divers times said in Exodus, that Pharaoh hardened his heart. God, says St. Augustine, is said to harden men's hearts, not by causing their malice, but by not giving them the free gift of his grace, by which they become hardened by their own perverse will. (Witham) --- Not by being the cause, or author of his sin, but by withholding his grace, and so leaving him in his sin, in punishment of his past demerits. (Challoner)

**Ver. 19. &c.** *Thou wilt say, therefore, to me, &c.* The apostle makes objection, that if God call some and harden, or even permit others to be hardened, and no one *resisteth*, or can hinder *his* absolute *will*, *why* should God *complain* that men are not converted? St. Paul first puts such rash and profane men in mind, that is unreasonable and impertinent for creatures to murmur and dispute against God their Creator, when they do not comprehend the ways of his providence. --- *O man*, [4] *who art thou that repliest against God?* This might stop the mouths, and quiet the minds of every man, when he cannot comprehend the mysteries of predestination, of God's foreknowledge, his decrees and graces, or the manner of reconciling them with human liberty. He may cry out with St. Paul again, (chap. xi. 33.) *O the riches of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!* --- *Shall the thing formed, &c. Hath not the potter power, &c.*[5] To teach men that they ought not to complain against God and his providence, when they cannot comprehend his works, he puts them in mind of their origin. Every one may say to God, with the prophet Isaias, (vi. 48.) *Lord, thou art our Father, and we are but clay; thou art our Maker who framed us, and we are all of us the work of thy hands.* Hath not the potter power as he pleaseth, out of the same lump of clay to make some vessels for honourable uses, and some for less honourable. St. John Chrysostom observes very well, that this comparison must not be extended further than the apostle designed; which was to teach us, how submissive we ought to be to God, in what we do not understand; but we must not pretend from hence, nor from any expression in this chapter, as divers heretics have done, that as vessels of clay are destitute of free will and liberty, so are men. This is against the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and against the Scriptures, in many places. (Witham) --- *The potter.* This similitude is used, only to shew that we are not to dispute with our Maker: nor to reason with him why he does not give as much grace to one as to another: for since the whole lump of our clay is vitiated by sin, it is owing to his goodness and mercy that he makes out of it so many vessels of honour; and it is no more than just that others, in punishment of their unrepented sins, should be given up to be vessels of dishonour. (Challoner)

**Ver. 22-23.** *And if God, &c.* He now gives the reason why God might, without any injustice, have mercy on some, and not on others; grant particular graces and favours to his elect, and not equally to all; because all mankind was become liable to damnation by original sin: the clay that al

are made of, is a sinful clay; and as St. Augustine says, was become a lump and mass of damnation. Every one had sinned in Adam. Now, if out of this sinful lump and multitude God, to *shew the richness of his glory*, and superabundant mercy, hath chosen some as vessels of election, whom he hath decreed to save, and by special graces and favours to make partakers of his heavenly kingdom; and to shew *his justice* and hatred of in, hath left others as *vessels of his wrath* and justice, to be lost in their sins, which for a time *he bears patiently with*, when they deserved present punishment, who can say that he hath done unjustly? (Witham)

**Ver. 24. &c.** *Whom also he hath called, &c.* That is, he hath called some of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles, to be vessels of election, as he foretold by his prophet Osee, (ii. 24.) *I will call them my people, that were not my people,...* and I will make them *the children of the living God*. And as it was also foretold by the prophet Isaias, of all the numerous nation of the Jews, only a *remnant shall be saved*, by their obstinacy in not receiving, and refusing to believe in, their Messias. For *finishing his word, and reducing it by his justice to a little, because the Lord will bring to pass his word reducing it to a small compass upon the earth*. The sense and construction of this verse is equally obscure in the Greek and in the Latin text: the true sense seems to be, that *finishing his word*, or fulfilling his promises to Israel, those that are to be saved, will be *reduced* by his justice for their sins, to a few; because, though *he brings to pass his word*, and his promises, the saved among the Israelites will be reduced to a small compass, in comparison of the great number of the Gentiles. This exposition agrees with the rest of the text, and with what follows, and was foretold by Isaias, (chap. i. 9.) that *unless the God of Sabaoth* (of hosts) had, through his mercy, *left them a seed*, a small number, they would all in a manner have deserved to be utterly destroyed, like Sodom and Gomorrha. (Witham) --- What I say, shall come to pass, that in those places, viz. Greece, Italy, &c. where those who are strangers to the worship of the true God dwell, and have been called, on account of their profane worship, *not my people*. In those very places, they shall receive the true worship God, and by this means shall become and be called *the children of the living God*. He is so particular as to place, lest the Jews should imagine that the Gentiles would be converted like their former proselytes, and either dwell in Judea, or repair to it at certain stated times. Thus the apostle repeats what Jesus Christ had before said to the Samaritan woman. *The hour will come when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you adore the Father*. (Estius) (John iv.) --- *A remnant*. That is, a small number only of the *children of Israel* shall be converted and saved. How perversely is this text quoted for the salvation of men of all religions, when it speaks only of the converts of the children of Israel. (Challoner) --- St. Paul is here speaking of the reprobation of the Jews, and of the vocation of the Gentiles, and foretells that a remnant, or small number of the children of Israel shall be converted, and saved. In the sense of St. Paul, we sincerely hope, and confidently trust, that a remnant of all will be saved through a timely conversion. But we nowhere read, in the *Old*, or *New* Scriptures, that *a remnant of all will be saved*, as if it were a matter of indifference to what society or connexion a Christian was joined. (Haydock)

**Ver. 30-32.** *What then shall we say?* Or what shall we conclude from these testimonies of the Scripture, but this paradox, as St. John Chrysostom calls it, that they who sought for justice, or sanctification, found it not, and they who did not seek it, found it; that is, the Jews, who sought for this justice by the works of their law, which they magnified so much, have not attained to that *law* that could make them just; whereas the Gentiles, who had no such written law to confide in, have only sought to be justified by the *faith* and law of Christ, by which they have met with justice, and sanctification? (Witham) --- Behold what was wanting to the justice of the Jews! Scrupulous observers of the ceremonial law: esteeming too much their power, and pretended justice, they regarded the gospel and faith in Christ as of no advantage. Running in the path of the commandments with zeal, but without circumspection, they struck against Jesus Christ, who became to them a stumbling-block. They rejected him: they refused to believe. Thus did their works become dead works, without any fruit for eternity. (Calmet)

**Ver. 33.** Why then have not the Jews been justified? *because they stumbled at the stumbling-stone*: that is, the doctrine of Christ crucified has been a scandal to the Jews, at which being offended, they would not own him their Messias. Yet *whosoever believeth in him*, and follow his



law and doctrine, *shall not be confounded*, but obtain justification and salvation. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. Anathema esse a Christo, *Greek: anathema einai apo tou Christou*. From *Greek: anathesthai*. See *Greek: anathema*, and *Greek: anathema* in Legh's critic. sac. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xiv. p. 136. Ed. Sav. where he says, that to expound St. Paul, as if he wished to die for Christ's sake, is a childish exposition, not worthy of the great charity of St. Paul, that is deserves no confutation: *Greek: ouk esti tauta, ouk esti....oude gar antilegein pros taouta axion*. He thinks that St. Paul was willing to be separated, not from the love of Christ, (God forbid) but from the glory of the kingdom of heaven; Pag. 135. *Greek: alotriothernai ouchi tes agapes autou, me genoito, alla tes apolauseos ekeines kai tes doxes*.

[2] Ver. 5. Qui est super omnes Deus benedictus in sæcula. Amen. *Greek: o on ep ponton theos eulogetos eis tous aionas, Amen*.

[3] Ver. 18. Et quem vult indurat. &c. St. Augustine, lib. de Gra. & Lib. Arb. chap. 23. Deus induravit cor Pharaonis, & ipse Pharao per Liberum Arbitrium. Quærimus meritum obdurationis & invenimus: merito namque peccati, universa massa damnata est: nec obdurat Deus impertiendo malitiam, sed non impertiendo misericordiam:....quærimus autem meritum misericordiæ, nec invenimus: quia nullum est, ne gratia evacuetur, si non gratis donetur, sed meritis redditur. Obduratio Dei est, nolle miserere, &c. Pharao, says St. John Chrysostom, was a vessel of anger, but his was from himself; *Greek: kai par eautou*.

[4] Ver. 20. O homo, tu quis es? &c. The apostle, says St. John Chrysostom, (p. 141.) does not say, that this cannot be answered, but that such questions are impertinent, because we cannot understand what God does, &c. *Greek: ou legei oti adunaton toiauta luein, &c*.

[5] Ver. 21. Annon potestatem habet figulus, &c.? St. John Chrysostom (p. 142.) expressly takes notice, that we must not by this comparison pretend that man has not free-will, &c. *Greek: entautha ou to autexousion anairon. &c*.

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## ROMANS 10

**Ver. 1.** *Is for them*. That is, for *Israel*, or the Israelites, named before. (Witham) --- After having said that the greatest part of Israel was cast off by the Almighty, the apostle, to shew that he meant not to insult or provoke them, here testifies that he sympathizes in their misery, and with groans prays in their behalf to the Lord, that he would vouchsafe to grant them understanding, and open their eyes to the truth. Thus, though tenderly affected towards his countrymen, still he could not dissemble the truth, or flatter them in their incredulity, and hardness of heart. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *According to knowledge*, &c. The Jews ran with ardour in the paths of the law, but saw not whither they were going; they followed the law, but did not know whither it conducted them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *The justice of God*. That is, the justice which God giveth us through Christ; as, on the other hand, the Jews' *own justice* is that which they pretended to by their own strength, or by the observance of the law, without faith in Christ. (Challoner) --- *Seeking to establish their own*. That is, for *justice*, or to be justified by their works, or the works of their written law. (Witham)

**Ver. 5-7.** *Moses* (Leviticus xviii. 12.) *wrote that the justice which is of the law....shall live by it*. That is, shall have the recompense of along temporal life, or even an everlasting life, by joining a faith in Christ their Redeemer, that was to come. *But the justice which is of faith, speaketh thus*, that is, *Moses speaketh thus of it*, (Deuteronomy xxx.) *say not in thy heart, who shall ascend into*

heaven? &c. the apostle gives us the spiritual sense of the words, by adding, *to bring Christ down*, &c. The sense is, that it is now fulfilled in the new law, when Christ is come from heaven by his incarnation, and is also again risen from the *abyss* by his resurrection: and therefore,

**Ver. 8.** *The word is near thee*, is near to every one, who to be justified and saved, need but believe, and comply with the doctrine of the gospel which we preach, and make a *confession* or profession of it *with his mouth*; and then whether he hath been Jew or Gentile, he shall not be confounded. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Thou shalt be saved.* To confess the Lord Jesus, and to call upon the name of the Lord, (ver. 13.) is not barely the professing of a belief in the person of Christ: but moreover implies a belief of his whole doctrine, and an obedience to his law; without which the calling of him Lord will save no man. (St. Matthew vii. 21.) (Challoner) --- This passage must be understood like many others of this apostle, of a faith accompanied by a good-will ready to perform what faith says must be practised; as it is required in this very place, that what we believe in the heart, we should confess with our mouth. (Estius)

**Ver. 14.** &c. *Or how shall they believe*, &c. He shews the necessity of preachers, and that all true preachers must *be sent*, and have their mission from God. --- *Who hath believed our report?* [1] Literally, *our hearing?* Some expound it thus: who hath believed the things we have heard from God, and which we have preached? The common interpretation is, who hath believed what he hath heard from us? (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Unless they be sent.* Here is an evident proof against all new teachers, who have all usurped to themselves the ministry, without any lawful mission, derived by succession from the apostles, to whom Christ said, (John xx. 21.) *As the Father hath sent me, I also send you.* (Challoner) --- The Almighty sends people to preach two different ways. The one is extraordinary by internal inspiration, as was that of John the Baptist, and all the other prophets; in which case, however, extraordinary proofs must be given that they are sent by God; and the other is ordinary, which is derived from Christ, and from the apostles and their successors, whom he has appointed to be his vicegerents on earth. (Estius)

**Ver. 18.** *But I say, have they not heard?* He puts an objection, and by his answer shews the Jews are inexcusable in not believing, since the gospel has been preached all the world over, and in places where the Jews were, as it was foretold: and also because the Gentiles every where have believed; which even excites you Jews to jealousy against them, as Moses foretold: (Deuteronomy xxxii. 21.) that is, when you now see, that the Gentiles, whom you despised so much, by believing in Christ, have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of working miracles, of speaking tongues, of prophecy, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** A people whom you have always despised, as not being worthy to be numbered amongst mankind, I will make my beloved people. I will enrich with my graces those whom you have contemned; I will give them the grace of adoption, thus to stir you up to jealousy and rage. And in effect, what greater rage ever was there, than that of the Jews against the converted Gentiles? In persecution, the Jews were always most busy. Thus were the Jews plainly informed of the truth of the gospel, by the Gentiles converted before their face. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** After the preaching of Christ, and his apostles, after so many wonders wrought by our Saviour, he at last offers himself to the Jewish people, with stretched-out hands, and yet they cannot be induced to believe in him. They resist him as much as they can, thus verifying the prophecy of holy Simeon, that he should be set up as a sign to be contradicted. (Luke ii.) (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 16. Quis credidit auditui nostro? *Greek: te akoe emon?*

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## ROMANS 11

**Ver. 1. &c.** St. Paul in this chapter endeavours to comfort the Jews, though the greatest part of them were rejected for their blindness; and to admonish the Gentiles, not to boast for being called and converted, but to persevere with humility, and the fear of God. --- *God hath not cast away his people.* That is, not all of them, nor hath he cast off those whom *he foreknew*, and decreed to save. --- *The Scripture saith of Elias.* He brings the example of Elias living among the ten tribes of Israel, when all the people were forbidden to go and adore in the temple of Jerusalem, when the altars of the true God were destroyed, and almost all in these tribes were fallen into idolatry, and worshipped *Baal*: he complains as if he were left alone in the worship of the true God. But *the divine answer* shewed him his mistake. *I have reserved to myself seven thousand man, &c.* Some take notice that *seven* is divers times put for a great number, as three and a half for a small number: however, besides these seven thousand, all in the kingdom of Juda remained firm in the worship of the true God. In like manner, a *remnant* is now saved by the election of grace, by God's free and liberal gift of divine grace. Some pretended reformers of the faith of the Church bring this as an argument, that the Church of God may fail, and fall into errors. It is sufficient to answer, that there is a wide difference betwixt the Jewish synagogue, which brought nothing to perfection, and the Church of Christ, which he *built upon a rock*, with which he has promised to *be to the end of the world*, and *guide* them by the *Spirit of Truth*. (Witham) --- This is very ill alleged by some against the perpetual visibility of the Church of Christ: the more, because however the number of the faithful might be abridged by the persecution of Jezebel in the kingdom of the ten tribes; the Church was at the same time in a most flourishing condition (under Asa and Josaphat) in the kingdom of Juda. (Challoner) -- Our separated brethren add to this text, as in Acts xix. 35. the word *image*. They also cite it in proof of an invisible Church; but with no just grounds: for in Jerusalem the faith and worship were public to the whole world. Besides, the Christian Church rests on better promises than the synagogue. (Bristow) --- The Jews obtain not the justice they sought after, because they did not seek it as they ought; they expected to obtain it by their works, whereas it can only be had from grace. (Estius)

**Ver. 6.** *It is not now by works: otherwise grace is no more grace.* The election of God, and the first grace at least, are always without any merits on our part; but if we speak of works done in a state of grace, and by the assistance of God's grace, we co-operate with the graces given, and by thus co-operating, we deserve and merit a reward in heaven. (Witham) --- If salvation were to come by *works*, done by nature, without faith and grace, salvation would not be a grace or favour, but a debt; but such *dead* works are indeed of no value in the sight of God towards salvation. It is not the same with regard to *works done with and by* God's grace; for to such works as these he has promised eternal salvation. (Challoner)

**Ver. 8.** *God hath given them, &c.* Not by his working, or acting in them; but by his permission, and by withdrawing his grace in punishment of their obstinacy. (Challoner) --- Permitted them (says St. John Chrysostom) to fall *into the spirit of insensibility*. Literally, *the spirit of* [1] *compunction*. Compunction is not here taken, as in some spiritual writers, for a great sorrow for sins. In the Latin Vulgate (Isaias vi. 9.) it is called the *spirit of slumber*, as in the Protestant translation. We cannot have a better judge of the sense of the word than St. John Chrysostom, who tells us, that it signifies a *habit of the soul*, firmly fixed in *evil*, and an insensible disposition: as, saith he, persons under a pious compunction are not to be removed from their good resolutions; so the wicked, under a hardened compunction, are nailed, as it were, to vice. And that here this is the true sense, appears by the following words out of Isaias: *he hath given them eyes that they should not see, &c.* And also out of David, (Psalm lxxviii. 23.) *let their table be made a snare, &c.* We may understand the spiritual food of the word of God, and of the Scriptures; which by the blindness of this people, have served to their great condemnation. --- *And a recompense*, that is, for a just punishment of their obstinacy. --- *And bow down their back always*, a metaphor to represent the condition of such, as are under heavy oppressions. (Witham) --- Although by bending their back is literally understood the yoke of servitude and captivity, with

which the Jews were oppressed at the destruction of Jerusalem; yet it seems more conformable to the apostle's meaning, when considered in a spiritual sense, and then it will signify the insensibility of the Jews, as to heavenly things, and their anxious solicitude for the things of the earth. This their avaricious and carnal disposition was so manifest, that the poet said of them---  
O curvæ in terram animæ et cœlestium inanes.--- (Estius)

**Ver. 11-15.** *Have they so stumbled, that they should fall? God forbid.* That is, their fall is not irreparable, or so as never to rise again: but by their offending, salvation (through the liberal mercy of God) is come to the Gentiles, *that they*, the Jews, may be *emulous* of the Gentiles, and of their happiness, and so may be converted. (Witham) --- The nation of the Jews is not absolutely and without remedy cast off for ever; but in part only (many thousands of them having been at first converted) and for a time: which fall of theirs God has been pleased to turn to the good of the Gentiles. (Challoner) --- *How much more the fulness of them?* As if he should say, if the obstinacy of so many Jews seem to be an occasion upon which God, whose mercy calls whom he pleaseth, hath bestowed the riches of his grace on other nations; and while the glory of the Jews, the elect people of God, has been *diminished*, the Gentiles have been made happy: how much more glorious *will be the fulness of them?* that is, according to the common interpretation, will be the re-establishment and conversion of the Jews hereafter, before the end of the world? See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. ith.* p. 164; St. Hilary, in Ps. lviii; St. Jerome, in chap. iii. Osee. Habacuc iii.; St. Augustine, lib. xx. de Civ. Dei. chap. xxix. --- Then (ver. 15.) the *receiving* of them into the Church, and their conversion to Christ, shall be like *life from the dead*, when the Jewish nation in general, shall rise from the death of sin, and their hardened infidelity, to the life of faith and grace. These things I speak to you, Gentiles, to *honour* and comply with my *ministry* of being your apostle: yet endeavouring at the same time, if by a pious emulation, or by any other way, I may be able to bring any of my *flesh*, or of my brethren, the Jews, to be saved by the faith of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 16. &c.** *If the first-fruit* (see the Greek word) *be holy, so also is the mass*; so also the rest, the product that follows. He alludes to the offering made by the law of the first-fruit, which was to acknowledge that all good things were from God, and to bring a blessing upon the rest. --- *If the root be holy, so are the branches.* By the *root*, says St. John Chrysostom, he understands Abraham, and the patriarchs, from whom all the Jewish nation proceeded, as branches from that root: and these *branches* are to be esteemed *holy*, not only because of the root they proceeded from, but also because they worshipped the true God. And if *some*, or a great part of *these branches*, have been *broken*, they may, as it is said, (ver. 23.) be ingrafted again. And you, Gentiles, ought to remember that, you were of yourselves a *wild olive-tree*: and it is only by the merciful call of God, that you have the happiness to be *ingrafted* upon the same root of the patriarchs; and so, by imitating the faith of Abraham, are become his spiritual children, and heirs of the promises, and by that means have been made partakers of *the root*, and of the sap, and *fatness* of the sweet *olive-tree*. Remember that you *bear not the root*, nor were you the root that was holy; *but the root beareth you*; and that being branches of a wild olive, you ought naturally still to bear bad fruit, though ingrafted on the root of a sweet olive. It is only by the mercies of God, if you bring forth good fruit. Do not then be *high-minded*, nor boast, but *fear*, and endeavour to *continue in goodness*; lest God also *spare not you*, but *cut you off*, as unprofitable branches. And let me tell you, as to the Jews, if *they abide not still in unbelief*, God is able to ingraft them again into their own olive-tree; and it seems more easy, that they, who are naturally branches of the sweet olive-tree, should bring forth good fruit, when they shall be ingrafted in their own olive-tree, being of the race of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. (Witham) --- We see here, that he who standeth by faith, may fall from it; and therefore must live in fear, and not in the vain presumption and security of modern sectaries. (Challoner) --- The apostle here exhorts the converted Gentiles, to fear lest they fall, and bring upon themselves a punishment similar to that of the Jews. The Jews were his chosen people, the children of the alliance; they have now been stripped of all; the same may also happen to you. You may fall into presumption and incredulity; if you remain firm, it is not by you own merits or works, but by faith, the pure gift of God. Neither faith, nor vocation, nor grace, are inadmissible. You may lose all; and therefore ought always to fear and live in humility. If God has not spared the natural branches, fear, lest he should not

spare you. (ver. 21.) (Calmet) --- The Gentiles are here admonished not to be proud, nor to glory over the Jews; but to take occasion rather from their fall to fear and to be humble, lest they be cast off. Not that the whole Church of Christ can ever fall from him; having been secured by so many divine promises in holy writ; but that each one in particular may fall; and therefore all in general are to be admonished to beware of that, which may happen to any one in particular. (Challoner)

**Ver. 25-26.** *I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, this hidden truth of God's justice and mercy, that blindness in part hath happened in Israel, or to part of them, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, by the conversion of all nations: and then all Israel should be saved, when they shall submit to the faith of Christ: as it is written by the prophet Isaias, (lix. 20.) there shall come out of Sion he that shall deliver; that is, their Redeemer, Christ Jesus, who is indeed come already, but who shall then come to them by his powerful grace. This is my covenant with them. (Witham)*

**Ver. 28.** *According to the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sake. That is, enemies both to you, because they see the gospel preached and received by you, and enemies of God, because he has rejected them at present for their wilful blindness: yet according to election, God having once made them his elect, and because of their forefathers, the patriarchs, they are most dear for the sake of the fathers: for the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance, in as much as God is unchangeable, and his promises, made absolutely, cannot fail. (Witham)*

**Ver. 30. &c.** *As you also in times past did not believe God, but now have obtained mercy through their unbelief, which was an occasion of God's sending his preachers to you: but the cause of your salvation is God's mercy. --- That they also may obtain mercy. That is, God has permitted their incredulity, that being a greater object of pity, he may shew greater mercy in converting them by the free gift of his grace. --- For God hath concluded [2] all, that is, has permitted at different times, both Gentiles and Jews, to fall into a state of unbelief, that the salvation of all may be known to come, not from themselves, but as an effect of his mercy and grace. (Witham) --- He hath found all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, in unbelief and sin; not by his causing, but by the abuse of their own free-will; so that their calling and election are purely owing to his mercy. (Challoner)*

**Ver. 33-36.** *O the depth, &c.* After he hath spoken of the mysteries of God's grace and predestination, of his mercy and justice, which we must not pretend to dive into, he concludes this part of his epistle, by an exclamation, to teach us submission of our judgment, as to the secrets of his providence, which we cannot comprehend. --- *How incomprehensible are his judgments, &c.* --- *Who hath first given to him, and recompense shall be made him?* That is, no one, by any merit on his part, can first deserve God's favours and mercy, by which he prevents us. --- *For of him, from God, or from Jesus Christ, as God, and by him, who made, preserves, and governs all things, and in him, is our continual dependance: for in him we live, we move, and exist. In the Greek, it is unto him,[3] to signify he is also our last end. See the notes, John chap. i. (Witham)* --- All things are from God, as their first cause and creator; all things are by God, as the ruler and governor of the universe; and all things are in God, or (as the Greek has it) for God, because they are all directed to his honour and glory. For he hath made all things for himself. (Psalm xvi; St. Basil, lib. de Spiritu sto. chap. 5.)

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[1] Ver. 8. Spiritum compunctionis; *Greek: pneuma katanuxeos.* In the Latin Vulgate, Isaias xxix. 10, the same Greek words are translated, spiritum soporis; the spirit of slumber. See Mr. Legh, Crit. Sacr. on the word *Greek: katanusso.* St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om ith.* p. 163. *Greek: katanuxin, entautha ten peri to cheiron exin tes psuches, &c.* See Corn. a Lap. S. Chrys. in the same place; *Greek: katanugenai gar ouden eteron esti to empagenai, kai proselosthai.*

[2] Ver. 32. Conclusit omnia. *Greek: pantas.*

[3] Ver. 36. Et in ipso, Greek: *kai eis auton*.

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## ROMANS 12

**Ver. 1.** With this chapter St. Paul begins his second part, in which he gives us most excellent lessons of morality, after which every Christian should aim to form his life, and thus resemble Jesus Christ and his saints. (Haydock) --- *That you present your bodies a living sacrifice.* And how must this be done? says St. John Chrysostom, hom. xx. Let the eye abstain from sinful looks and glances, and it is a sacrifice; the tongue from speaking ill, and it is a sacrifice, &c. --- *Your reasonable service, or worship,[1] from you;* nothing being more reasonable, than for men to serve God with their souls and bodies, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** Take care, lest you imitate the practices of worldlings. Let your heart, your ambition, carry you to heaven: ever despise those things which the world admires, that every one may see by your actions that you are not of the society of worldlings, and have neither regard nor friendship for them. (Calmet) --- Transform yourselves into new men, by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern on all occasions, what is most perfect, most pleasing and acceptable to God. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 3.** *To be wise unto sobriety.* Not pretending to be more wise, or more knowing than you are. --- *As God hath divided to every one the measure of faith.* The sense by what follows is, that every one make the best use, for the glory of God, and the good of his neighbour, of the gifts and graces which he hath received together with the faith of Christ; i.e. *of prophecy*, or the gift of interpreting past prophecies, or of foretelling things to come, *of exhorting*, of *ministering* as to those functions which belong to the ministers of the gospel, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** The apostle does not here prohibit that defence, by which a person, either by word or action, preserves himself from injury. This he could not condemn, since he had so often recourse to it himself, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles: and in the second [epistle] to Timothy, he writes: "In my first defence no one was with me." Be he only forbids that revenge which a person takes of his neighbour, by private means, without having recourse to legal authority. (Estius)

**Ver. 13.** *Communicating [2] to the necessities of the saints.* Making them partakers of what you have, by relieving them. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Condescending to the humble,* in the spirit of charity and sweetness. See Luke ii. 48. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *If it be possible,....have peace with all.* That is, if it can be without prejudice to truth or justice, &c. And even when others wrong you, seek not to revenge yourself, but leave you cause to God. Do good offices even to those that do evil to you. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Give place to wrath.* That we do, says St. John Chrysostom, when we leave all to God, and endeavour to return good for evil. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.* This figurative way of speaking is differently expounded. Some say, inasmuch as by this means thou shalt make him liable to greater punishments from God. Others, as St. Jerome and St. Augustine, by *coals of fire*, understand kindnesses and benefits, which shall touch the heart, and inflame the affections even of thy enemies, which shall make them sorry for what they have done, and become thy friends. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** This is the apostle's conclusion of the foregoing instructions. Be not overcome by the

malice of thy enemy, so as to wish to revenge thyself, without leaving all to the just judgment of God; but overcome his malice by thy kindness. This is complied with, when upon occasion of injuries received we always return a kindness, and in proportion as the malice of our enemies increases, our spirit of benevolence should also increase. (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 1. Rationabile obsequium, *Greek: logiken latreian*.

[2] Ver. 13. Communicantes; *Greek: koinonountes*. *Koinonein* is often used by St. Paul for making others sharers by giving to them.

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## ROMANS 13

**Ver. 1.** *Let every soul, or every one, be subject, &c.*[1] The Jews were apt to think themselves not subject to temporal princes, as to taxes, &c. and lest Christians should misconstrue their Christian liberty, he here teacheth them that every one (even priests and bishops, says St. John Chrysostom) must be subject and obedient to princes, even to heathens, as they were at that time, as to laws that regard the policy of the civil government, honouring them, obeying them, and their laws, as it is the will of God, because the power they act by is from God. So that *to resist them, is to resist God*. And every Christian must obey them even for conscience-sake. St. John Chrysostom takes notice that St. Paul does not say that there is no prince but from God, but only that there is no power but from God, meaning no lawful power, and speaking of true and just laws. See hom. xxiii. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** *But that you love one another.* This is a debt, says St. John Chrysostom, which we are always to be paying, and yet always remains, and is to be paid again. --- *He that loveth his neighbour, hath fulfilled the law*. Nay, he that loves his neighbour, as he ought, loves him for God's sake, and so complies with the other great precept of loving God: and upon these two precepts (as Christ himself taught us, Matthew xxii. 40.) *depends the whole law and the prophets*. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Love of the neighbour worketh no evil.*[2] This, by the Latin, is the true construction; and not, love worketh no evil to the neighbour, as it might be translated from the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Now our salvation is nearer than when we believed.* Some will have the sense to be, that our salvation is now nearer, when the gospel is preached, and Christ offers us his graces, than when we believed the Messiah was to come. Others expound it, that the more our life is spent, we come nearer to the judgment of God, and to the salvation promised in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *The night is passed.* That is, the night of sin and infidelity, in which you lived, before you began to serve Christ. (Witham) --- St. Paul is here addressing himself to Gentile converts. Before your conversion, you were in the darkness of infidelity: this time is past; now is the day, when the gospel has dissipated the darkness of idolatry, ignorance, and sin. Let us lay aside the works of darkness, by flying from sin, which hates the light, and seeks always to conceal itself; and let us put on the armour of light, the shield of faith, the breast-plate of justice, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *Let us walk honestly as in the day.* As men are accustomed to do in the light, without being afraid that their works come to light. --- *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering, [3] not in beds and impurities, not in immodest disorders.* (Witham) --- The night of the present life full of darkness, of ignorance, and of sin, is already far advanced; and the day of eternity approaches: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 14.** *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.* To *put on*, is a metaphor used in the Scripture; as when it is said, *put on the new man*, &c. *And make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.* That is, do not take care, nor pamper and indulge your appetite in eating and drinking, so as to increase your disorderly inclinations, but keep them in due subjection. (Witham) --- The apostle does not forbid all care of the body, since he himself says in the epistle to the Ephesians, v. "No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it." But he forbids that care of the flesh, by which the desires and concupiscences of the flesh are strengthened and encouraged. This those are guilty of, who are always indulging in delights and voluptuousness. (Estius) --- Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, enter into his sentiments, imitate his virtues, and indulge not the flesh in its inordinate desires.

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[1] Ver. 1. Non est potestas, *Greek: exousia*, nisi a Deo. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. kg. p. 189. Greek: ouk eipen, ou gar estin archon ei me upo tou theou, alla peri tou pragmatos dialegetai legon, ou gar estin exousia.*

[2] Ver. 10. Dilectio proximi malum non operatur, i.e. dilectio non operatur malum proximi, vel proximo, *Greek: e agape to plesion kakon ouk ergazetai.*

[3] Ver. 13. Non in cubilibus, *Greek: me koitais*, which may signify beds, chambers, or immodest actions.

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## ROMANS 14

**Ver. 1.** *Not in disputes about thoughts.*[1] That is, without blaming or condemning the thoughts, and reasonings (as it appears by the Greek) of those new converts, who had been Jews, and who were still of this opinion, that they ought to abstain from *meats* forbidden by the Jewish law, and observe the Jewish *festival days*. You must charitably bear with the weakness of such converts. (Witham) --- Be tender with him who is weak in faith; enter not into disputes with him, which only serve to extinguish charity, and create inveterate prejudices.

**Ver. 2.** *Eat all things.* Viz. without observing the distinction between clean and unclean meats, prescribed by the law of Moses: which was now no longer obligatory. Some weak Christians, converted from among the Jews, as we here gather from the apostle, made a scruple of eating such meats as were deemed unclean by the law: such as swine's flesh, &c. which the stronger sort of Christians did eat without scruple. Now the apostle, to reconcile them together, exhorts the former not to judge or condemn the latter, using their Christian liberty; and the latter to take care not to despise, or scandalize their weaker brethren, either by bringing them to eat what in their conscience they think they should not: or by giving them such offence, as to endanger the driving them thereby from the Christian religion. (Challoner) --- *For one* that is not so weak, but well instructed, *believeth*, is persuaded, that *he may eat all things*, the distinction of *clean* and unclean meats being no longer obligatory under the new law of Christ. He that is weak, and not convinced of this Christian liberty, let him *eat herbs*, or such things as he esteems not forbidden. It is likely some of them abstained many times from all manner of flesh, lest they should meet with what had been offered to idols, or lest something forbidden by the law might be mixed. (Witham)

**Ver. 3-4.** *God hath taken him to him*, that eats of any meats; he accounts him his servant, and will reward him as such. --- *God is able to make him stand*, and will justify him before his tribunal. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Between day, &c.* Still observing the sabbaths and festivals of the law. (Challoner.) --- *And another judgeth every day.* That is, thinks every day to be taken away, that was to be kept,



merely because ordered under the Jewish law. And now since both they who keep days, or do not keep them; and they who *eat*, or who *abstain*, do these things which a regard to God, and according to their conscience, let no one judge, or condemn the one party, nor the other; in these things, *let every man abound in his own sense*. It is without grounds that some would pretend from hence, that Christians cannot be bound to fast, or abstain from flesh on certain days. The apostle speaks only of the distinction of meats, called *clean* and *unclean*, and of *fasts* or *feasts* peculiar to the law of Moses. It does not follow from hence, that the Catholic Church hath not power to command days of fasting, and abstaining, for self-denial or humiliation. (Witham) --- The apostle here treats only of the subject in hand, viz. the Mosaic distinctions of clean and unclean meats: and in this he allows, for that present time, each one to follow his own private judgment. St. John Chrysostom observes that St. Paul did not wish the weak to be left to their own judgment in this, as in a point of no consequence; but that they should wait for a time. The converts were not immediately prohibited their accustomed practices, but they were tolerated in them for a while, till fully instructed. This we see in many of the converts at Jerusalem, who were still observers of the Mosaic ordinances; this was tolerated, that the synagogue might be buried with honour. (Estius)

**Ver. 11.** The apostle here gives a remarkable proof of the divinity of our Saviour. He could not possibly be more express. He had said in the preceding verse, that all men should appear before the tribunal of Christ; to prove this assertion, he adduces this testimony of the prophet Isaías: "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (Isaías chap. xlv.) Thus shall all acknowledge the power, the divinity, and sovereign dominion of Christ, by bending the knee; and by confessing to him, shall acknowledge him for the master and judge of all mankind. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14.** *Nothing is unclean itself.* Because the law that made them unclean, is not now binding of itself, yet a man must not act against his conscience, neither must he, when he can avoid it, scandalize or offend the weak: nor cause divisions or dissensions. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** St. Paul repeats this, in almost the same words, in 1 Corinthians chap. viii. and plainly gives us the understand, that Christ died for the salvation of all men, by supposing a Christian brother, for whom Christ had died, in danger of perishing by the scandal given by another. This supposition could never have been made, if the death of Christ was only offered up for the elect: but we here learn from St. Paul, that they for whom Christ shed his blood and suffered the death of the cross, may perish eternally; and therefore all, even the greatest reprobates, may be saved, if they effectually desire it, by virtue of the death of our divine Redeemer.

**Ver. 16.** *Let not then our good,* or which we have a Christian liberty to do with a good conscience, *be evil spoken of,* because of the disputes and quarrels you have about it. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The kingdom of God is not meat, &c.* It does not consist of eating, nor in abstaining, both which may be done without sin, but in *justice, peace, &c.* (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Destroy not the work of God for meat.* That is, do not hinder your brother's salvation, *for whom*, whoever he be, *Christ died*, who may be so offended at the liberty which you take, as to quit the Christian religion; or you may make him sin against God, by eating by your example against his weak conscience. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Hast thou faith?* [2] He doth not here mean, saith St. John Chrysostom, a faith to believe divine truths. But art thou by faith persuaded in mind and conscience, that to eat meats formerly forbidden, in now lawful, *have it within thyself*, remain in this faith and conscience, but make it not appear, when it is prejudicial to thy weak brother. --- *Happy is he that condemneth not himself*, that maketh not himself liable to condemnation, by giving scandal, by using that liberty, which he is convinced is allowed. Or happy is he that acteth not against his conscience, by doing what he sees is allowed of by others, but which his conscience tells him he ought not to do. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *He that discerneth*, or who judgeth that he ought to abstain from such meats, if he eat, is self-condemned, because he acts not *according to his faith*. For whatever a man doth, and is not according to what he *believeth* he may do, or whatever is against a man's conscience, *is sinful* in him. It is a mistake of the sense of this place, to pretend that every moral action done by an infidel, must needs be a sin, as when he gives an alms to relieve the necessities of the poor. (Witham) --- *Discerneth*. That is, distinguished between meats, and eateth against his conscience, what he deems unclean. --- *Of faith*. By *faith* is here understood judgment and *conscience*: to act against which is always a sin. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 1. Non in disceptationibus cogitationum, *Greek: me eis diakriseis dialogismon*. Non in condemnationem rationum vel cogitationum.

[2] Ver. 22. Tu fidem habes? upon which St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om ks. p. 209. Greek: ou ten peri dogmaton (pistin) alla ten peri tes prokeimenes upotheseos*.

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## ROMANS 15

**Ver. 1. &c.** *We that are stronger, &c.* The apostle goes on with his exhortation not to scandalize, or offend such as are *weak*, and not well instructed in faith. He brings the example of Christ, *who pleased not himself*, who submitted himself to the law of circumcision, when he was above the law, who bore with the weakness and sins of others, their reproaches, their blasphemies, which he could not but hate, but this to gain their souls. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Receive one another*, in the spirit of charity, peace, patience, as *Christ also hath received you*, and bore with your infirmities. (Witham) --- Mutually support each other for the glory of God: learn to practise a grand lesson of Christian morality, to bear and to forbear. (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** *Christ Jesus was minister of the circumcision*, who came both for the salvation of the Jews, and of the Gentiles, who preached and would have his gospel first preached to the Jews, *for the truth of God to confirm the promises made to the fathers*, that he, the Messias, should be sent for their salvation; but at the same time also for the salvation and conversion of the Gentiles, which he confirms by divers evident testimonies of the holy Scriptures. (Witham) --- He calls our Saviour the minister of circumcision, that is, of the Jews, because he appeared amongst them, dwelt amongst them, and himself preached amongst them. This was a privilege which the Gentiles did not enjoy, having never seen, nor heard Jesus Christ, since he confined his preaching to the strayed sheep of the house of Israel; and this, to accomplish the promises made to their fathers. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15. &c.** *I have written to you, brethren, more boldly, &c.* St. John Chrysostom admires with what mildness he addresses himself to them, yet puts them in mind, that he is *the minister*, and the *apostle of the Gentiles*, in which he may have reason to glory, or *boast*. --- *Sanctifying the gospel of God*, preaching it in a holy manner, that the Gentiles may be sanctified by it. (Witham) --- To be the minister of Jesus Christ among the nations, exercising in their regard the rite of sacrifice, as we read in the Greek, *ierourgounta*. --- *For I dare not*, I shall forbear to speak of any thing but my labours: I need not mention the power of *miracles and wonders*, which the *Holy Ghost* hath done by me in many places, from Jerusalem to Illyricum, in places where Christ had not been preached by others. And now having *no more place*, nor occasion to preach *in these countries*, when *I begin my journey to Spain*, &c. by which, it appears, he designed at least to go into Spain. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** St. Paul does not mean to say, that he never preached where the gospel had before

been announced; this would not have been true, for he preached at Damascus, where there were already Christians, whom he formerly wished to take in chains to Jerusalem; and again in this epistle he announces the truths of the gospel to the Romans already converted by the preaching of St. Peter. But he means to say, that on these occasions he acts not as an apostle, whose office it is to preach to infidels; but as one that waters, confirms, comforts, as he says in the beginning of this epistle: and this he did as occasion offered, as the subsequent verses shew, where he tells us his design in calling on the Romans, in his journey to Spain. (Estius)

**Ver. 24.** It is a matter of dispute, whether St. Paul ever executed this his design of visiting Spain. The proofs of the Spaniards, who consider it as certain, are by no means unanswerable. There remain no certain monuments of this journey of his. The proof taken from the words of St. Clement, who lived at Rome in the time of St. Paul, is not certain, since he only says, that St. Paul came to the very extremities of the west. It is a subject on which commentators appear pretty equally divided. (Calmet) --- There is an old tradition that St. Paul, in his journey to Spain, left three of his disciples in Gaul; Trophimus at Arles, Crescentius at Vienne, and Paul at Narbonne; but this very tradition is disputed. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 25-28.** *But I shall go to Jerusalem, &c.* By this St. Paul is thought to have written this epistle at Corinth, where he was about to set forward for Jerusalem, with the charities collected in Achaia and Macedonia, for the poor Christians in Judea. This he calls to *minister* to the poor saints, or to be *serviceable* to them. And to exhort others to the like charitable contributions, he says, (ver. 27.) *they are their debtors*; that the converted Gentiles are debtors to the converts, who had been Jews, as having been made partakers of the promises, particularly made to the people of the Jews, and sharers of those spiritual blessings, which Christ promised to the Jews, but were also conferred upon the Gentiles. He looks upon it, therefore, reasonable, that they relieve the Jews in their temporal wants. The apostle says, he goes to *consign to them this fruit*, to deliver to them their contributions. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *I know*, by the Spirit of God revealing it to me, that God will give a *blessing* to my labours, when I come to you. That I may *be delivered* from the *unbelievers in Judea*, from the unbelieving Jews, foreseeing the persecution he should there meet with. That I may *be refreshed* with you, have comfort by finding peace and union among you. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** The word in the original signifies to combat with another, to teach us, that to beg the prayers of our friends will be of little assistance to us, if we do not join our prayer also, and labour, on our part, to the best of our power. (Calmet)

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## ROMANS 16

**Ver. 1.** *I commend, &c.* He concludes with a number of salutations, to show his affection for them. --- *Phœbe*, who is in the ministry, or employed in the ministry, as women, called *diaconissæ*, used to be, privately instructing catechumens, assisting particularly at the baptizing of women, distributing charities, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** It is not exactly known to what the apostle here refers. Origen thinks that they delivered the apostle from the snares of the Jews. Others, that they exposed themselves from him in the sedition raised at Corinth, or in that at Ephesus, when he was in such danger, on account of the outcry of the silversmiths. The obligations of the Churches of the Gentiles towards them must be understood of the hospitality, which these faithful servants of Christ exercised to all. (Calmet) --- *Greek: Ton eauton trachelon upethekan*, a proverbial expression, as in Latin, *præbere cervices*, *caput objicere periculis*, to support any thing, or person, that is in a sinking way, or in great danger.

**Ver. 5.** This means the assembly of Christians, who probably resorted to the house of Prisca and Aquila, as to a place of retreat, and there held their religious assemblies. Or it may mean their family only, which was as regular and holy as an assembly of saints. The apostle, in another place, salutes the Church in the house of Nympha, and writing to Philemon, salutes the Church in his house. (1 Corinthians xvi. 19.)

**Ver. 16.** Thus the primitive Christians express their concord and benevolence, as also their perfect equality. For it was customary with the Persians, and all oriental nations, to salute only their equals thus; though, to their inferiors, they presented their hand to be kissed. (St. Clem. Pædog. and Polus.)

**Ver. 17.** The apostle does not here say that these men caused scandals, contrary to the Scripture; but contrary to the doctrine delivered to them: this place, therefore, is an argument in favour of tradition. (Estius)

**Ver. 22.** This Tertius was the amanuensis, or secretary of St. Paul, and wrote this epistle as St. Paul dictated. It is not on that account less divinely inspired than the rest. (Estius)

**Ver. 25-27.** *Now to him that is able, &c.* These three last verses, in divers Greek copies, were found at the end of the 14th chapter, where we find them expounded by St. John Chrysostom. --- *According to the....mystery kept secret from eternity, now made manifest;* he means the mystery of Christ's incarnation, and man's redemption, formerly revealed indeed to the prophets, but now made *known to all nations*, in order to bring all men to *the obedience of the gospel*, by embracing the faith and doctrine of Christ. (Witham)

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## 1 CORINTHIANS

### THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE CORINTHIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Corinth was the capital of Achaia, a very rich and populous city, where St. Paul had preached a year and a half, and converted a great many. See Acts xviii. 10. Now having received a letter from them, (chap. vii. 1.) and being informed of divers disputes and divisions among them, (chap. i. ver. 11.) he wrote this letter to them, and sent it by the same persons, Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, who had brought him their letter, chap. xvi. 17. It was written about the year 56, not from Philippi, as it is commonly marked at the end of the Greek copies, but rather from Ephesus. The subject and main design of this Epistle was to take away the divisions among them about the talents and merits of those who had baptized and preached to them, and to settle divers matters of ecclesiastical discipline. The apostle justifieth his mission, and his manner of preaching, chap. i, ii, iii, and iv. He teacheth them what was to be done with the man guilty of a scandalous sin of incest, chap. v. He speaks of sins against chastity; of matrimony; and of the state of continency, chap. vi and vii. Of meats offered to idols, chap. viii. Of his manner of conversing with them, and what their conversation ought to be, chap. ix and x. Of the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, chap. xi. Of the different gifts of the Holy Ghost, and how to employ them, chap. xii, xiii, and xiv. Of the faith of the resurrection, chap. xv. Of charitable contributions, and of his design of coming again to them, chap. xvi. (Witham) --- St. Paul having planted the faith in Corinth, where he had preached a year and a half, and converted a great many, went to Ephesus. After being there three years, he wrote this first Epistle to the Corinthians, and sent it by the same persons, Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, who had brought their letter to him. It was written about twenty-four years after our Lord's ascension, and contains several matters

appertaining to faith and morals, and also to ecclesiastical discipline. (Challoner)

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 1

**Ver. 1.** *Paul called to be an apostle.* St. Paul had preached to the Corinthians, and had remained a long time with them, to instruct and confirm them in the faith. During his absence, the faithful of Corinth were divided into several parties, on occasion of some new teachers, who had come amongst them. (Calmet) --- It was to heal the wounds caused by these divisions, that the present epistle was written. (St. Thomas Aquinas; Haydock) --- *And Sosthenes.* There are various conjectures made concerning the person St. Paul here mentions. Some are of opinion that this Sosthenes is the same mentioned, Acts xviii. 17. who was beaten before the tribunal of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, when St. Paul was carried before that magistrate. Eusebius says, that Sosthenes was one of the 72 disciples, and a different person from the one mentioned in Acts. Estius takes him to be St. Paul's secretary. The common opinion is, that he was a great sufferer for the faith at Corinth, and St. Paul here mentions him as a man worthy their imitation. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *In every place of theirs and ours.* Inasmuch as among Christians in all places there ought to be such an union of faith, and conformity of discipline, as if they were all in one place. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *That is given you in, or by Christ Jesus.*[1] Where we may take notice with St. John Chrysostom for the understanding of other places, that *in*, is many times put for *by* or *through*.

**Ver. 5.** *Rich in him in all knowledge.* The apostles never addressed any epistle, except to persons who had been previously converted to the faith. Nor is it reasonable to expect, that infidel and pagan nations, merely by reading the inspired writings, will be able, by the light that is in them, to elicit from the said book the truths of religion. Would they not be tempted to worship the wily serpent, that succeeded in deceiving Eve? and how will they know that this serpent is the devil? (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *As the testimony of Christ,* what Christ testified and taught *was confirmed in you*, that is, your faith in Christ hath been *confirmed* by those graces and gifts which you received from the Holy Ghost at your baptism, and when by imposition of hands you were confirmed by me, or some other bishop. (Witham)

**Ver. 10. &c.** *That there is no schism....contentions, &c.* To hinder these, was the chief design of this letter; one saying, *I am of Paul*, &c. each party bragging of their master by whom they had been baptized, and made Christians. *I am of Apollo*, the eloquent preacher, and *I of Cephas*, the head of the apostles, and of the whole Church; whilst others, the only party not to be blamed, contented themselves with saying, and *I am of Christ*. --- *Is Christ divided?* Is not your salvation, is not your justification in baptism, and all gifts from him? (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Of Chloe.* It is worthy our observation, that St. Paul does not here mention any one person in particular, lest he might expose any one to the resentment of the rest, but mentions only in general terms the house of Chloe. (St. John Chrysostom; Theophylactus)

**Ver. 12.** Chloe was a Christian woman of Corinth. Apollo is the person mentioned, Acts xviii. 24. &c. Cephas is St. Peter, so called in the Syriac tongue. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 13.** *Was Paul crucified for you?* Though says St. Augustine brothers may die for brothers, yet the blood of no martyr is shed for the remission of a brother's sin. See also St. Leo the Great, serm. xii. de pass. Dom.

**Ver. 14.** *I give God thanks that I baptized none of you, but, &c.* It is strange that Quakers should

from hence pretend, that St. Paul condemned baptism, when he only tells them, he is *glad* they were baptized by some other, rather than by him, lest they should say, they were baptized in his name, or think that baptism had a greater virtue, when given by a minister of greater sanctity; whereas it is Christ only, who is the chief minister, who gives grace in baptism, and in the other sacraments. This makes him say, *was Paul crucified for you*, &c. He tells them the occasion why he baptized few, because he was sent chiefly to *preach* and to be their apostle, whereas other inferior ministers were employed in baptizing. (Witham)

**Ver. 17. &c.** *Not to baptize.* That is, the first and principal intent, in my vocation to the apostleship, was to *preach* the gospel, before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. (Acts chap. ix. 15.) To *baptize* is common to all, but to *preach* is peculiarly the function of an apostle. (Estius; Menochius; Grotius) --- I was sent to *preach the gospel, not with wisdom of speech*, and as he says in the next chapter, (ver. 13.) *not in the persuasive words of human wisdom*, &c. The Spirit of God, which guided the thoughts and pen of St. Paul, and the other sacred writers, inspired them to deliver the gospel-truths with great simplicity, without the ornaments of an artificial human eloquence, *lest the cross of Christ should be made void*, lest the conversion of the world might be attributed to any human means, and not to the *power of God*, and of Christ crucified. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *For the word of the cross.* That is, the preaching that the Son of God, both God and man, died nailed to an infamous cross, *is folly*, is looked upon as ridiculous and incredible, by all obstinate unbelievers *that perish*: but it is received as the work of God, and an effect of his divine *power*, by such as are saved. (Witham)

**Ver. 19-20.** *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.* I will confound the false and mistaken wisdom of the great and *wise* philosophers, of the learned doctors or scribes, of the curious *searchers* of the secrets of nature. --- *Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world*, by the means he hath made use of to convert, and save the world, particularly by sending his only Son to die upon a cross? the preaching of which seems a folly, &c. only *they who are called*, believe Christ, though crucified, to be *the power and wisdom of God*. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *For seeing that in the wisdom of God*, &c. That is, by the works of the divine wisdom, by the visible creatures of this world, and the effects of his providence, the world had not *wisdom*, or was not wise enough, *to know* and worship God, as they might, and ought to have done: *it pleased God* to shew his power *by the foolishness of preaching*, by sending illiterate men to preach a God crucified, which to human wisdom seems a folly, and to *save men by this belief*. (Witham) --- The gospel, which I announce to you, though it appears folly to the vain philosopher, is the wisdom of God; and whilst it exhibits the picture of a crucified God, and teaches us the mortification of our senses, promises a happiness in the next life, not to be found in this. (Vat. Grot. Tir. Just. [Vatable?; Grotius?; Tirinus?; St. Justin Martyr?])

**Ver. 22-25.** The Jews, in the mean time, ask for miracles, such as God formerly wrought in their favour, and the Greeks, or the Gentiles, to be converted, expect from us, what they would look upon as the highest points of human *wisdom* and knowledge; *for that which* appeareth *the foolishness of God*, *is wiser than men*, and able to confound the highest human wisdom; and *that which* appeareth *weakness of God*, *is stronger than men*, who cannot hinder God from converting the world, by means and methods, that seem so disproportioned to this his design. (Witham) --- *Foolishness.* That is to say, what appears *foolish* to the world in the ways of God, is indeed more wise: and what appears *weakness*, is indeed above all the strength and comprehension of man. (Challoner)

**Ver. 26-28.** *Vocation*, is here used for the called, as Romans iii. 30. circumcision for the circumcised, (Romans xi. 7.) election for the elect. (Bible de Vence) --- Consider you manner of being called; not many, hitherto, of those who have believed, or of those who have preached the gospel, *are wise according to the flesh*, or as to worldly wisdom; and in the esteem of men, *not many mighty, not many noble*. God hath chosen such as are looked upon as illiterate, without

power, without riches, without human wisdom, to confound the great and wise men: He hath chosen the *things that are not*, that is, says St. John Chrysostom, men reputed as nothing, of no consideration, to confound, to destroy, to make subject to him, and to the gospel, men who had the greatest worldly advantages, *that no flesh*, no men how great, wise, rich, or powerful soever, *might glory* in his sight, or attribute their call, and their salvation to their own merits. --- *From him you are in Christ Jesus* brought to believe in him, *who is made to us wisdom*, acknowledged to be the wisdom of his eternal Father, by whom we have been justified, sanctified, redeemed. We have nothing of ourselves to boast of, and can only *glory in the Lord*. (Witham) --- *And the mean things*. In the beginning of Christianity, it was frequently objected to the Christians, that they had none but men of the basest extraction. The emperor Julian likewise made the Catholics the same reproach. (Grotius) --- But this objection was not founded; for we find many persons of considerable mention in the Scriptures, who had embraced Christianity. Witness, ver. 1. of this chap. Sosthenes, the head of the synagogue at Corinth, and some in the very palace of Cæsar.

**Ver. 29.** *Glory in his sight.* God wished it to be known, that the establishment of his Church was not the work of human wisdom or power, but of the omnipotent power of his divinity. (Calmet)

We may here admire, (ver. 1.) the happiness of those who, like St. Paul, are called to the sacred ministry, not through human respects, nor by any influence of parents, by the vocation of heaven. --- Ver. 2. We have here the model and origin of all future pastoral letters. --- Ver. 3. &c. he gives thanks to God for past favours, and prays for a continuation of graces and blessings. --- Ver. 10. He begs that there be no schisms found among them, but that unanimity of sentiment and disposition may reign among them, certain and unequivocal marks of truth. --- Ver. 12. &c. He shews that both pastors and flocks should look up to God, as the only source of truth and grace; that it is a crying injustice to withdraw any share of our heart and confidence from God, to fix it on any thing that is not God; as it is to attach ourselves to the ministers of truth, and not to the **Truth** itself. Therefore, concludes St. Paul, though the Jews call for miracles, and the Gentiles lean upon worldly wisdom, Christians must seek their strength and success in the weakness of the cross, and their glory in the ignominy of Christ crucified, to whom alone be all the honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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[1] Ver. 4. In Christo Jesu, *Greek: en christo iesou*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. b., ora pos pollakou to en, anti tou di ou, estin*.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 2

**Ver. 3.** *In weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* We must not think, says St. John Chrysostom, that this made the virtue of St. Paul less commendable. It is natural to every man to fear persecutions and torments. We admire the apostle, who amidst these fears, was always ready to expose himself, was always fighting, and always victorious. (Witham) --- During the stay I made with you at Corinth, I saw myself daily exposed to injuries, affronts, and persecutions. I had then the opportunity of practising the lessons which our expiring Redeemer delivered to us from the wood on which he died, and the daily contradictions I met with obliged me to think of other things than fine discourses, and elegant harangues. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 4.** *In the shewing of the spirit and power, &c.* The gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed on those that believed, and the miracles which God wrought by his apostles, were the means God made use of to convert the world, which were of much greater force than human eloquence. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *That your faith, &c.* Had we employed the subtleties, the reasonings, and eloquence of men, some might perhaps be induced to believe that you had been seduced by artifice. But none can reasonably say so; your faith is founded on the force and evidence of truth, and upon the

virtue and power of the Holy Ghost, who has bestowed upon you both the light of knowledge, and the fire of love. (Theod.)

**Ver. 6. &c.** *Wisdom among the perfect.* That is, when we first came amongst you, you were incapable of understanding the great mysteries of our religion: we therefore preached to you Christ crucified; (Calmet) but to the true perfect disciples of Christ we reveal the most sacred mysteries. (St. John Chrysostom) --- By wisdom, here seems to be understood a more sublime doctrine concerning the most abstruse mysteries of faith, which the ignorant could not understand. To the same purpose he tells them in the next chapter and in the 5th chapter to the Hebrews, that *milk* is the proper food of little children, not *solid meat*, which is proper for those that are perfect. --- Yet we speak not the wisdom of this world, nor of the great men, and princes of this world, because the doctrine of the Christian faith, which we preached, is not esteemed wisdom, but folly by them, who pretend to worldly wisdom. --- We speak then in a mystery, or after a mysterious manner, according to the capacity of those that hear us, the *great wisdom of God*, which *hidden*, and not understood by the wise men of this world, God hath manifested by the incarnation of his Son, and by our redemption; which mystery, and which wisdom, *none of the princes of this world knew*, that is, the devils, according to the common interpretation; or Pilate, Herod, Caiphas, &c. according to St. John Chrysostom, *or they would never have crucified*, nor have permitted others to crucify, *the Lord of glory*, Jesus Christ, who by his divine person is truly the Lord of glory. See St. Augustine, lib. i. de Trin. chap. 12. &c. He may also be called the *Lord of glory*, because of that glory, which from eternity he predestinated, and decreed to give his elect; and of which it is written, that *the eye hath not seen*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** It appears from the gospel, that they suspected Jesus might be the Son of God; but the major part of interpreters judge from this text, that they had not a certain knowledge. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 10.** *But to us God hath revealed them by his Spirit;* these mysteries, and secrets of the divine wisdom. --- *For the Spirit searcheth all things:* the divine Spirit, the Holy Ghost, searcheth all things, and none but this Spirit of God, that is, the Spirit, which is God, *knoweth the things that are of God*, as none but the *spirit that is in man*, knoweth *the things of man*, knoweth his thoughts and interior affections. But by the *Spirit of God*, we may understand the spirit of grace, of knowledge, of prophecy, which God hath given to his faithful, and particularly to his apostles, to raise them to a higher knowledge of the divine mysteries. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *For what man?* As the secrets of man's heart are known only to himself, so the mysteries of the divinity are known only to the Spirit, who is God, and who proceedeth from the Father and the Son. (Theophylactus)

**Ver. 13.** *Which* mysteries and divine truths, we apostles (even when we speak to the more perfect sort of men) deliver *not in the learned words of human wisdom*, not in the fine languages, studied periods and sentences arranged by the art of rhetoric, but *in the doctrine of the Spirit*, that is, as the Spirit of God within us teacheth us for the good of those that hear us. --- *Comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, that is, treating spiritual things with persons that are more spiritual and more perfect, adapting our discourses to the capacity of those we speak to. Others will have the sense to be: *we compare spiritual things with spiritual things*, that is, we treat of such matters after a spiritual manner, with proofs and examples out of the revealed Scriptures, &c. (Witham) --- St. Paul seems in this place to answer an objection that might be brought against him. If, as you say, you are gifted with a knowledge of mysteries, who do you not reveal those mysteries to us? To this he seems to answer, because to spiritual persons, we impart spiritual knowledge. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14-15.** *But the sensual man, &c.* They who are led away by sensual pleasures, do not even perceive or understand spiritual things; they seem foolish to them, and a folly to seek after them; because such things must be *spiritually examined*, that is, examined by the Spirit of God, which they have not. --- *But the spiritual man judgeth all things*, passeth a right judgment, not only of the things of this life, as carnal men can do, but even of spiritual things, which concern his eternal



salvation. --- *And he himself is judged by no one*, that is, by no one, who is not spiritual, or who is not taught by the Spirit of God, to pass a right judgment: the sense also may be, that he cannot be justly blamed or condemned by any worldly man, who knows not how to judge of such spiritual things. (Witham) --- The sensual man is either he who is taken up with sensual pleasures, with carnal and worldly affections: or he who measureth divine mysteries by natural reason, sense, and human wisdom only. Now such a man has little or no notion of the things of God. Whereas the spiritual man, in the mysteries of religion, takes not human sense for his guide; but submits his judgment to the decisions of the Church, which he is commanded to hear and obey. For Christ hath promised to remain to the end of the world with his Church, and to direct her in all things by the Spirit of truth. (Challoner)

**Ver. 16.** *For who* among the sensual men of the world, *hath known the mind* of the Lord, so as to be able to instruct him, or them, whom he guides by his spirit. --- *But we*, whom he has chosen to be his apostles, *have the mind of Christ*; having been taught and instructed by the Spirit of Christ. Some enthusiasts and fanatics pretend from this passage of St. Paul, that they being led and inspired by the spirit, *can be judged by no one* in matters of faith and religion. *They* pervert and wrest the words of St. Paul, *as they do also other Scriptures*, to their own perdition. (2 Peter iii. 16.) First, because no one knows by his pretended private spirit, that he is truly such a spiritual man, who has the Spirit of God in him: and many have too much reason to know by their sensual carnal lives, that they have it not. Secondly, St. Paul here speaks only of spiritual men in opposition to sensual men, and only says that they who are spiritual, have the spirit of discretion to judge what things are spiritual, and what are not; and that none can judge rightly of these matters, but they who are spiritual, guided by the Spirit. Thirdly, as to controversies about religion, the proper spiritual judge appointed by our Saviour, Christ, are the bishops, whom he has appointed to govern his Church, with an entire submission of every man's private judgment, and private spirit, to the judgment of the Catholic Church, which he has commanded us to hear and obey, with which he has promised to remain to the end of the world, and to direct her in all things by the spirit of truth. (Witham)

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### 1 CORINTHIANS 3

**Ver. 3.** *And walk according to man?* As carnal and sensual men, as long as there are jealousies and divisions among you. (Witham)

**Ver. 7-8.** *That planteth* you by your first conversion. Apollo *watered* you by preaching the same truths. --- He that *planteth* and *watered*, are one, aim at one and the same end. (Witham) --- *According to his own labour.* God does not recompense his servants according to the success of their labours, because their success depends upon him alone; but he recompenses them according to their sufferings and diligence in his service; for, whilst he crowns the labour of his apostles with success, he crowns his own work. (St. John Chrysostom) --- This text most evidently proves that good works proceeding from grace are meritorious, and that the rewards in heaven are different, according as God sees just to appropriate them. The Greek word here employed is *Greek: misthos*, (merces) or wages. See 1 Timothy v. 18; Apocalypse xxii. 12; Matthew xvi. 27. It is by our union with Jesus Christ that our actions, of themselves without value or merit, become gold, silver, and precious stones. (Haydock)

**Ver. 9.** *We are God's coadjutors*, labouring in his service, as he hath employed us. --- *You are God's husbandry*, the soil, where virtues are to be planted. *You are God's building*, the edifice, the house, or even the temple of God; we are employed as builders under God. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *I have laid the foundation* well, as a wise architect, not of myself, *but according to the grace of God*, and the gifts he bestowed upon me: and *another*, or several others, *built upon it*, continue the building. --- *But let every man take heed how he buildeth*, and that it be always upon

the same *foundation*, which is *Christ Jesus*, his faith, and his doctrine. (Witham)

**Ver. 12-15.** *Now if any man build, &c.* This is a hard place, says St. Augustine, lib. de fid. & Oper. chap. xvi. tom. 6. p. 180. The interpreters are divided, as to the explication and application of this metaphorical comparison, contained in these four verses. St. Paul speaks of a *building*, where it is evident, says St. Augustine, that the *foundation* is Christ, or the faith of Christ, and his faith working by charity. The difficulties are 1. Who are the *builders*. 2. What is meant by *gold, silver, precious stones*, and what by *wood, hay, stubble*. 3. What is meant by *the day of the Lord*. 4. What by *fire*, how *every one's work* shall be *tried*, and how some shall be *saved by fire*. As to the first, by the *builders*, as St. Paul had before called himself the first *architect*, who had laid the foundation of the faith of Christ among the Corinthians, interpreters commonly understand those doctors and preachers who there succeeded St. Paul: but as it is also said, that *every man's works* shall be *made manifest*, St. Augustine and others understand not the preachers only, but all the faithful. As to the second difficulty, if by the builders we understand the preachers of the gospel, then *by gold, silver, &c.* is to be understood, good, sound, and profitable doctrine; and *by wood, hay, stubble*, a mixture of vain knowledge, empty flourishes, unprofitable discourses; but if all the faithful are builders, they whose actions are pure, lay *gold* upon the foundation; but if their actions are *mixed with imperfections, venial failings, and lesser sins*, these are represented by *wood, hay, stubble, &c.* 3. By *the day of the Lord*, is commonly understood either the day of general judgment, or the particular judgment, when every one is judged at his death, which sentence shall be confirmed again at the last day. 4. As to *fire*, which is mentioned thrice, if we consider what St. Paul says here of fire, he seems to use it in different significations, as he many times does other words. First, he tells us, (ver. 13.) that *the day of the Lord...shall be revealed*; or, as it is in the Greek, *is revealed in, or by fire*; where, by *fire*, is commonly understood the just and severe judgments of God, represented by the metaphor of *fire*. Secondly, he tells us in the same verse, that *fire shall try every one's work, of what sort it is*. This may be again taken for the examining and trying fire of God's judgments: and may be applied to the builders, whether preachers only or all the faithful. Thirdly, he tells us, (ver. 14. and 15.) that some men's works *abide* the fire of God's judgments, they deserve no punishment, they are like pure gold, which receives no prejudice from the fire: but some men's works burn, the superstructure, which they built upon the faith of Christ, besides *gold, silver, precious stones*, had also a mixture of *wood, hay, stubble*, which could not stand the trial of fire, which met with combustible matter, that deserved to be burnt. Every such man shall *suffer a loss*, when his works are burnt, *but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire*. Here the apostle speaks of fire in a more ample signification: of a fire which shall not only try, and examine, but also *burn*, and punish the builders, who notwithstanding shall also, after a time, escape from the fire, and be *saved by fire*, and in *the day of the Lord*, that is, after life (for the time of this life is the day of men). Divers of the ancient fathers, as well as later interpreters, from these words, prove the Catholic doctrine of a purgatory, that is, that many Christians, who die guilty, not of heinous or mortal sins, but of lesser, and what are called venial sins, or to whom a temporal punishment from the sins they have committed, still remains due, before they can be admitted to a *reward* in heaven, (into which nothing *defiled or unclean can enter*) must suffer some punishments for a time, in some place, which is called Purgatory, and is such a manner, as is agreeable to the divine justice, before their reward in heaven. These words of the apostle, the Latin Fathers in the Council of Florence[1] brought against the Greeks to prove purgatory, to which the Greeks (who did not deny a purgatory, or a third place, where souls guilty of lesser sins were to suffer for a time) made answer, that these words of St. Paul were expounded by St. John Chrysostom and some of their Greek Fathers (which is true) of the wicked in hell, who are said to *be saved by fire*, inasmuch as they always subsist and continue in those flames, and are not destroyed by them: but this interpretation, as the Latin bishops replied, is not agreeable to the style of the holy Scriptures, in which, *to be saved*, both in the Greek and Latin, is expressed the salvation and happiness of souls in heaven. It may not be amiss to take notice that the Greeks, before they met with the Latins at Ferrara, of Florence, did not deny the Catholic doctrine of purgatory. They admitted a third place, where souls guilty of lesser sins, suffered for a time, till cleansed from such sins: they allowed that the souls there detained from the vision of God, might be assisted by the prayers of the faithful: they called this purgatory a place of *darkness, or sorrow, of punishments, and pains*, but they did not

allow there a true and material fire, which the Council did not judge necessary to decide and define against them, as appears in the definition of the Council. (Conc. Labb tom. xiii. p. 515.) (Witham) --- The fire of which St. Paul here speaks, is the fire of purgatory, according to the Fathers, and all Catholic divines. (Calmet) --- St. Augustine, expounding Psalm xxxvii. ver. 1, gives the proper distinction between this fire of purgatory and that of hell: both are punishments, one temporary, the other eternal; the latter to punish us in God's justice, the former to amend us in his mercy.

**Ver. 16-17.** *Know you not.* After the apostle had described the builders who are employed in the spiritual edifice, he proceeds to speak of the duties of those who are the living temples of Christ. As for you, my brethren, who are the temples of God, preserve yourselves in purity of faith, and innocence of morals. Fly from those false apostles who seek your ruin, and remain steadfast in that faith which you have received from us; (Calmet) that is, the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic faith. What a happiness for the faithful minister to assist in erecting and ornamenting the living temples of God; but what punishment must await the unfaithful minister, who by his own neglect and bad example, helps to ruin and destroy the temples of God himself had entrusted to their care! (Haydock) --- *The Spirit of God dwelleth in you*, having received the grace of God at your conversion: you are the *holy temple of God*: *But if any one violate, or profane the temple of God*, either by false doctrine, or by any grievous offence, he destroys the spiritual edifice, that was built in his soul upon the faith and grace of God. He cannot be said to be built any longer upon the same foundation: and therefore *God will destroy* such persons: they shall not be saved even by fire, or temporal punishments, but shall be excluded for ever from heaven, and condemned to eternal punishments. (Witham)

**Ver. 18-21.** *Let no man deceive himself.* He next precautions them against themselves, and admonishes them to be upon their guard against curiosity, presumption, and self-love, and tells them to undervalue all other sciences, when put in competition with the science of salvation, the knowledge of the gospel. It hence appears, that some of the Corinthians were renowned for that human eloquence which the world so much esteems, and accordingly the apostle discovers to them the danger to which they are exposing themselves, by pursuing their present line of conduct. (Calmet) --- *If any man among you seem to be wise in this world.* He hints at some new teachers among them, (not at Apollo) who to gain the esteem of men, had introduced errors from profane philosophy, or the false principles of human wisdom, which, as he had told them before, was *folly* in the sight of God. He therefore tells such persons, that to become truly *wise*, they must become *fools*, by returning to the simplicity of the gospel-doctrine. (Witham) --- *Let no man.* That is, let no man say, I am for Paul, I am for Apollo. This language will introduce into the Church of God those various sects that existed amongst the philosophers, who were distinguished by the title of Platonics, Stoics, Peripatetic, and so on. (Grotius)

**Ver. 22-23.** *All things are yours.* Are ordained for your good. For this end, I, Apollo, and Cephas have been sent to promote your salvation. *The world and all things* in it are allowed you, *are yours*, that by making good use of them, you may save your souls: that *death* may be to you a passage to a happy eternity, that *the things to come* may be your eternal reward. --- *You are Christ's*, you belong to him who hath redeemed you, and sanctified you by his grace: *and Christ is God's*, Christ as man, who being the Son of God, was made also man, and sent to make known the glory of God, his divine perfections of mercy, justice, &c.

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[1] Ver. 15. In the Council of Florence, which began at Ferrara an. [in the year] 1438. The Greeks at the very first declared they admitted a third place, where souls were punished for a time, which they called a place of darkness and sorrow. See Labb. tom. xiii. Con. p. 20. Græci fatentur pœnam temporaneam, quod peccatis obnoxiorum animæ in locum abeunt tenebricosum, in locum mœroris, in quo, ad tempus, versantur in mœrore & pœnis, *Greek: eis topon skoteinon, kai topon lupes, kai lupountai merikos.* --- Again, Hæc est inter eos differentia: Græci pœnam, mœrorem, & pœnæ locum asserunt, Itali pœnam, purgationemque per ignem. See again p. 491. Sess. 25. where the Greeks say of such souls, that they are in a middle state, medias autem esse

in loco tormentorum, sed sive ignis sit, sive caligo, sive turbo, sive quid aliud, non contendimus. See also the definition of the Council, p. 515, where it is only defined, eorum animas pœnis purgatoriis post mortem purgari, & ut a pœnis hujusmodi releventur, prodesse vivorum suffragia, which was the doctrine both of the Greek and Latin Church. See on this place of St. Paul, Bellarmine, lib. i. de Purgatorio, cahp. 5; Salmeron disp. 7. in lib. ad Corint.; Estius; a Lapide; etc.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 4

**Ver. 1.** *Mysteries of God.* That is, the dogmas of faith, revealed by the Almighty. (Estius)

**Ver. 3.** *Or by human judgment.* Literally, *by human day.* The sense, says St. Jerome, is, by any human judgment, or by men, whose judgment is in the day, or time of this life: but God judges in his day, after this life, and chiefly at the last day of judgment. --- *Neither do I judge myself,* so as to look upon myself absolutely certain of the state of my soul, or that I am for certain justified, though *I am not conscious to myself of any thing,* because I am to be judged by an omniscient God, the great searcher of hearts, who perhaps may discover faults, which I, partial to myself, overlook. Now if St. Paul durst not say, he was justified, what presumption is it for others to pretend to an absolute certainty, that they are just in the sight of God! (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *For I am not conscious.* This great apostle of the Gentiles, though conscious to himself of no breach of duty, still does not dare to call himself just. How different is the conduct of this apostle, from those wicked impostors, who teach, that a man is justified by believing himself so. (Estius) --- If this privileged apostle was afraid to from any judgment of his own heart and thoughts, whether they were pure or not, but left the trial thereof to the day of judgment, the day of his death, how presumptuous are they, who dare to pronounce on their election and predestination!

**Ver. 5.** *Judge not, &c.* He gives them an admonition against rash and false judgments, and hints at those among them, who said, this man is better, this man is greater than such a one, &c. See St. John Chrysostom. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself, and to Apollo.* Literally, *these things have I transfigured in me and Apollo,* that is, I have represented the divisions and disputes among you, as if it were by your contending, whether I, or Apollo, or Cephas were the best preachers, without naming those, as I might do, who are the true causes of these divisions, by striving who should be thought men of the greatest and brightest parts. --- *That in us,* and by our example, who have no such proud disputes, *you might learn that one be not puffed up against the other,* and *above that which is written,* against the admonitions given in the holy Scriptures of being humble: or against what I have now written to you, that we must strive for nothing, but to be the *faithful* ministers of God, and not seek the esteem of men. (Witham) --- It is the opinion of St. Thomas Aquinas and likewise of Estius, that St. Paul, Apollo, and Cephas were not the real causes of the divisions that existed amongst the new converts at Corinth, but that in making use of these names, he wished to teach them, that if it was unlawful to keep up these divisions even for the sake of the apostles, how far should they be from doing any thing of this kind for those whose authority was much less in the Church. But Calmet is of opinion, that the divisions amongst the Corinthians were certainly on account of Paul, Apollo, Cephas, and perhaps some others, whose names are not mentioned.

**Ver. 7.** *For who distinguisheth, or hath distinguished thee* from another? He speaks particularly to those proud, vain preachers: if thou hast greater talents than another man, who hath given them to thee, or to any one, but God, who is the giver, and the author of every gift and perfection? This is not only true of the gift of preaching, but of all gifts and graces; so that St. Augustine makes use of it in several places against the Pelagians, to shew that it is by grace only, that one

man is preferred before another, and not by, or for his own merits. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Now you are satiated, &c.* You great, vain preachers, you are *rich* in every kind, blessed with all gifts, &c. *You reign* over the minds of the people, *without* us, you stand not in need of our assistance. *And I would to God you did reign, that we also might reign with you.* I wish your reigning and governing the people were well grounded on virtue and truth, that we might be sharers of the like happiness. St. John Chrysostom take notice, that St. Paul speaks thus, meaning the contrary, by the figure called *irony*: and so also St. John Chrysostom understands the two following verses, as if St. Paul only represented what those vain preachers said with contempt of him, as if he were only an apostle of an inferior rank, not one of the chief, nor of the twelve. And when he says, *we are fools for Christ's sake*, whom he blames, *wise*, especially in Christ. But though the apostle partly use this figure of irony, intermixing it in his discourse, yet he also represents the condition of all true apostles, and preachers of Christ crucified, whose persons and doctrine were slighted, ridiculed, and laughed at by men that were wise only with worldly wisdom, especially by profane libertines, and atheistical men, that make a jest of all revealed religion. To go about preaching in *hunger*, in *thirst*, in *nakedness*, in *want*, under afflictions and persecutions, is what they think is to be miserable: they despise such men as the *out-cast*, the *dross*,<sup>[1]</sup> and the *dregs* of mankind. (See the Greek text.) (Witham) --- He speaks to the Corinthians, who forgetting their first fervour, and the Christian modesty which St. Paul had taught them, both by word and example, were endeavouring to distinguish themselves by the reputation and honour of the apostle, who had converted them, by their antiquity of faith, and by other things more frivolous. (Calmet)

**Ver. 9.** *Made a spectacle.* It is evident from the writings of St. Paul, and from innumerable other records, that the apostles were made a spectacle to the world and to men; but how, some one may perhaps ask, were they made a spectacle to angels? St. John Chrysostom, Theod. [Theodoret?], and many others think, that the apostle is here speaking of the good angels, who behold with pleasure the labours and afflictions of the saints, knowing that it will prove a source of glory; but Estius, Vat. [Vatable?], and some others, are of opinion, that the wicked angels are here spoken of, who rejoice at the persecutions of God's servants, and with to revenge themselves for the destruction of their empire.

**Ver. 14-17.** *I write not.* St. Paul here insinuates to the Corinthians, that they ought to blush with shame for neglecting the apostles, who had suffered so many hardships for them, to follow after teachers void of honour, and to glory in being called the disciples of such men. (Estius) --- *I admonish you as my dearest children*, of what is for your good, and I may take this liberty, as being your spiritual father in Christ, by whom you were first made Christians. *Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ*: follow the doctrine of Christ, which I follow, and taught you. *Timothy, my beloved son in the Lord*, whom I send to you, will *put you in mind* of what I teach, and of what I practise. (Witham)

**Ver. 18. &c.** *Some of those new doctors and preachers are so puffed up*, that they pretend I dare not come to you any more, nor defend myself: he may also mean the man that lived in incest, his companions and his flatterers. --- *But I will come to you shortly*, and then I shall use my authority in taking notice of their vain talk, they shall find and experience that *power*, which God hath given me by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and of working miracles. (Witham) --- *But I will come.* The good effect which this letter produced amongst the Corinthians retarded his intended journey, so that he did not go to Corinth till one or two years after this letter was written. He wrote his second epistle to the same before he paid them a visit, to apply a soothing remedy to their minds and hearts, sorely afflicted with his charitably severe corrections contained in this his first epistle. (Haydock) --- *What will you*; or what disposition shall I find in you? let it not be necessary for me to use the chastising *rod* of excommunications, and other spiritual arms, but be so reformed before I come, that I may come to you in the *spirit* of mildness, as I wish to do. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 8. Tanquam purgamenta, omnium peripsema, *Greek: os perikatharmata*, Sordes,

quisquiliæ, *Greek: panton peripsema*, Scobes, ramentum. See Mr. Legh, Crit. Sacra.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 5

**Ver. 1.** *As the like is not among the heathens.* This seems to have been the crime of incest, that he took the wife of his father yet living. See 2 Corinthians vii. 12. (Witham) --- St. John Chrysostom, Theod. [Theodoret?], &c. think, that this incestuous person was one of the chiefs of the schism which then reigned in Corinth. This man, say they, was a great orator, with whose eloquence the Corinthians were enchanted, and therefore dissembled a knowledge of his crime, public as it was. The apostle having proved to them the vanity of all human learning, in the preceding chapter, now attacks the incestuous man, and exposes to their view the enormity of his crime. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *You are puffed up,* seem to be unconcerned, to take pride in it, instead of having the man separated from you. (Witham)

**Ver. 3. &c.** *Have already judged,* decreed, and do decree, being *present in spirit* with you, and with your congregation. --- *In the name....with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one to Satan* by a sentence of excommunication, depriving him of the sacraments, the prayers, and communion, and even of the conversation of the rest of the faithful. It is likely in those times, such excommunicated persons were delivered over to Satan, so as to be corporally tormented by the devil, to strike a terror into others. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xv. and this is said to be done *for the destruction, or punishment of the flesh*, that the *spirit*, or soul, *may be saved*. (Witham) --- It is the opinion of most of the Greek fathers, that this man was either really possessed by the devil, or at least struck with such a complaint as a mortification, and humiliation to his body, whilst it served to purify his soul. We have seen from many instances in holy Scripture, that it was not unusual, in the origin of Christianity, for persons who had fallen into crimes of this nature, to be punished with death, some grievous sickness, or by being possessed by the devil, so as to be separated from the communion of the Church. (St. Ambrose; Estius; Just. [St. Justin Martyr?]; Menochius)

**Ver. 6-8.** *Your glorying is not good,* when you suffer such a scandal among you: you have little reason to boast of your masters, or even of the gifts and graces you received. *A little leaven corrupteth the whole mass;* a public scandal, when not punished, is of dangerous consequence. --- *Purge out the old leaven.* He alludes to the precept given to the Jews of having no leaven in their houses during the seven days of the Paschal feast. For our Pasch, i.e. Paschal lamb, *Christ is sacrificed:* and Christians, says St. John Chrysostom, must keep this feast continually, by always abstaining from the leaven of sin. (Witham)

**Ver. 9. &c.** *I wrote to you in an epistle.* If he does not mean what he has said already in this epistle, it must have been in some other, which he had written to them before, (as some conjecture) and which is not now extant. --- *Now to keep company with fornicators,* nor with such like public scandalous sinners, *not so much as to eat* with them. But you must take notice, that I mean, when they are *brethren*, or Christians, not when they are infidels, for this cannot be avoided, especially by those who are to labour to convert them. This admonition of the apostle, shews us how much such persons are to blame, who by their carriage encourage, applaud, and are delighted with wicked company. Them who are *without* the pale and fold of the Church, the apostle leaves to the great *judge* of the living and the dead. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *To judge them that are without.* Those who are said by the apostle to be without, are those who have never been converted to the faith, and therefore are not within the jurisdiction of the Church.

**Ver. 13.** *Take away.* This passage is differently understood by commentators. By some it is understood thus: expel the evil one from among you, that is, the incestuous man. (Estius) --- By others, it is understood to be spoken in a general sense, meaning, take away the evil of sin from among you. (Calmet)

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 6

**Ver. 1.** *Go to law before the unjust.* St. Paul here dissuades the new Christians from carrying their differences and causes about their temporal concerns before judges who were infidels, especially seeing the saints and the elect shall one day *judge*, that is, condemn all the wicked, and even the apostate *angels*, by approving the sentence which Christ shall pronounce against them at the day of judgment. (Witham) --- It was not unusual in the primitive ages, and even under Christian emperors, for the Catholics to refer their disputes to the bishop, and to abide by his decision, as Possidius informs us, in the life of St. Augustine. (Estius)

**Ver. 3.** *Judge angels?* That is, the wicked angels, the devils. (St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 4-7.** *Set them to judge, who are the most despised in the Church.* Rather make choice of Christians of lesser parts and talents, than have recourse to infidels, who will be scandalized at the injuries and injustice done by Christians to each other. Besides you cannot but have some wise men among you to decide such matters. (Witham) --- St. Paul does not here mean to tell the Corinthians that they must choose the most despised and the most ignorant, but he wishes to inform them that if there were none but men of this description in the Church, it would still be more preferable to appoint these judges than to go to law before idolatrous judges. (Estius) --- It is *plainly a fault*, [1] weakness in you to run to such heathen judges: you should rather bear, and put up with the injuries done to you. --- *A fault.* Law-suits can hardly ever be without a fault, on one side or the other; and oftentimes on both sides. (Challoner)

**Ver. 8-11.** *Defraud....your brethren.* That is, you still make yourselves much more guilty by the injustices done to one another: for the *unjust*, and all they who are guilty of such crimes as I have mentioned, *shall not possess the kingdom of God.* And some of you were guilty of part of them, which have been *washed off* by your conversion, and your *baptism*, when you were *justified*. (Witham) --- *And such some of you were.* It is probable that this was added by the apostle, to soften his preceding words, lest he might seem to accuse all the Corinthians of each of these sins, and he likewise adds, such indeed you were, but now you are washed, &c. &c. (Estius; St. Thomas Aquinas)

**Ver. 12.** *All things are lawful to me.* We cannot take the words in the obvious sense, St. Paul having just before declared, that *unjust dealers, fornicators, drunkards, shall not possess the kingdom of God.* Some expound the words, as if he said, I have free-will and liberty to do what I will. Others think that the apostle speaks not of all things in general, but with this or the like limitation, all things that are indifferent of their own nature, or all things that are not forbidden by the law of God, and this seems agreeable enough to what he had said of going to judges that were infidels, which, though not a thing unlawful in itself, *was not expedient.* It may also be connected with what follows of *meats*, to signify that in the new law any meats may be eaten; (see chap. viii.) but it may be *expedient* to abstain, when it would be a scandal to the weak. --- *But I will not be brought under the power of any.* It does not appear by the Latin or Greek text, whether the construction be under the power of *any* person or of *any thing*. There are divers interpretations; the most probable seems to be, that these words are again to be taken as connected with what went before, and with what follows, to wit, that though it be not unlawful in itself to go before judges that are infidels, or to eat any kind of meats, yet I will not permit my love of money, nor my sensual appetite, to make me a slave to such passions, so as to do things that are not convenient, much less to do things unlawful. (Witham) --- *All things are lawful*, &c. That

is, all *indifferent things* are indeed lawful, inasmuch as they are not prohibited; but oftentimes they are not expedient; as in the case of law-suits, &c. And much less would it be expedient to be enslaved by an irregular affection to any thing, how indifferent soever. (Challoner)

**Ver. 13. &c.** *Meat for the belly.* That is, meat is necessary for the support of nature, though this or that kind of meat be indifferent: and we ought to reflect, that God in a short time will *destroy* both the meats, and the appetite of eating, and the body shall shortly die, but it shall rise again. --- *Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ....and the temple of the Holy Ghost.* Man consists of soul and body; by baptism he is made a member of that same mystical body, the Church, of which Christ is the head: In baptism both the soul and body are consecrated to God: they are made the temple of the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as the spirit and grace of God inhabits in men, who are sanctified. Christ redeemed both our souls and bodies, both which he designs to sanctify, and to glorify hereafter in heaven; so that we must look upon both body and soul as belonging to Christ, and not as *our own*. --- *Shall I, then, taking the members of Christ, make them the members of an harlot,* by a shameful and unlawful commerce? --- *Fly fornication.* Such sins are chiefly to be avoided by flight, and by avoiding the occasions and temptations. Other sins are not committed by such an injury done to the body, but by an abuse of something else, that is different from the body, but by fornication and sins of uncleanness, the body itself is defiled and dishonoured, whereas the body ought to be considered as if it *were not our own*, being redeemed by our Saviour Christ, consecrated to him, with an expectation of a happy resurrection, and of being glorified in heaven. Endeavour, therefore, to glorify God in your body, by employing it in his service, and bear him in your body by being obedient to his will. (Witham) --- We know and we believe the we carry about Jesus Christ in our bodies, but it is the shame and condemnation of a Christian to live as if he neither knew or believed it. If fornication is a great crime in a pagan, in a Christian it is a species of sacrilege, accompanied with injustice and ingratitude. Whoever yields to impurity, converts his body into the temple of Satan, glorifies and carries him about, tearing away the members of Jesus Christ, to make them the members of a harlot.

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[1] Ver. 7. Omnino delictum est, *Greek: ettema*, a diminutive, from *Greek: etton*, minus, a failing, a weakness, a fault.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 7

**Ver. 1.** *Now concerning.* The heads of the Church of Corinth had written to St. Paul, desiring to know whether he thought it more expedient to marry or not. This was a question which the sages of antiquity had frequently taken into consideration. To this question St. Paul here delivers his opinion. (Calmet) --- Others, with greater probability, suppose the chief question proposed to St. Paul was, whether they were not bound, upon their conversion, to abstain from their infidel wives. (St. Jerome, cont. Jovin. chap. iv.; St. John Chrysostom, on this location, hom. xix. --- To this he answers in v. 12. and 13. --- *It is good.* That is, according to the style of the Scriptures, *it is better*, if we consider the advantage of every particular, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 2. &c.** But *because of fornication, let every man have, and live with his own wife*, [1] and not leave her, nor dismiss her. Take notice, that St. Paul speaks these words to those that are already married, and speaks not of the unmarried till the 8th verse. He does not then here exhort every one to marry, but admonishes married persons to live together, and not to refuse the marriage duty, which neither the husband nor the wife can do without mutual consent, because of the marriage engagement. Yet he advises them to abstain sometimes from what they may lawfully do, that they may *give themselves to prayer*, [2] and as it is added in the common Greek copies, *to fasting*. St. John Chrysostom observes, that the words of St. Paul, are not only, that *they may pray*, (which no day must be omitted) but that they *may give themselves to prayer*, that



is, may be better disposed and prepared for prayer, contemplation, and for receiving the holy Sacrament, as we find the priest even of the ancient law, were to abstain from their wives, when they were employed in the functions of their ministry. But such kind of advice is not relished by all that pretend to be reformers. *And return together again....yet I speak this by way of indulgence*, of what is allowed to married persons, and not commanded them, unless when one of the married couple is not willing to abstain. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *By indulgence.* That is, by a condescension to your weakness. (Challoner)

**Ver. 7-8.** *I would*, or I could wish you *all were even as myself*, and as it is said in the next verse, to *continue* unmarried as I do. From hence it is evident, that St. Paul was not then married, who according to the opinion of the ancient fathers, was never married. But when the apostle says, *I would* this as to *you all*, he only signifies what could be wished for, the particular good of every one considered as a particular person, but what cannot be hoped for, considering the state of mankind in general, and the temptations, and frailty of men. --- *But every one hath his proper gift from God*, so that some prudently embrace a single life, and also make a religious vow of always living so, as it has been practised by a great number both of men and women in all ages, ever since Christ's time. Others have not this more perfect gift: they find themselves not disposed to lead, or vow a single life, they marry lawfully: *it is better to marry than to burn*, or be burnt by violent temptations of concupiscence, by which they *do not contain themselves* from disorders of that kind. It is against both the Latin and Greek text to translate, *they cannot contain themselves*, as in the Protestant and Mr. N....'s translation. Dr. Wells, in his paraphrase, gives the sense of this place in these words: The inconveniences of marriage are to be undergone, rather than such sinful imaginations, or practises, as arise from the flames of an ungovernable lust. They therefore that are unmarried or widows, (to whom St. Paul speaks in these two verses) may have recourse to marriage as a remedy. But let it be observed, that when St. Paul allows of marriage, he speaks not of those who have already made a vow of living always a single life. Vows made to God must be kept. (Psalm lxxv. 12.; Ecclesiastes v. 3.) And St. Paul expressly says of such persons, who have made a vow of perpetual continency, and afterwards marry, *that they incur damnation, because they violate their first faith*, or vow made to God. See 1 Timothy v. 12. This saying, therefore, *it is better to marry than to burn*, cannot justify the sacrilegious marriages of priests, or of any others who were under such vows. There are other remedies which they are bound to make use of, and by which they may obtain the gift of continency and chastity. They must ask this gift by fervent prayers to God, who give a *good spirit to them that ask it*. (Luke xi. 15.) They must join fasting, alms, and the practice of self-denials, so often recommended in the gospel. See the annotations on Matthew xix. The like remedies, and not others, must they use, who being already in wedlock, are under such violent temptations, that they are continually in danger of violating, or do violate the chastity of the marriage-bed. For example, when married persons are divorced from bed and board, when long absent from one another, when sick and disabled, when one has an inveterate aversion to the other: they cannot marry another, but they can, and must use other remedies. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *If they do not contain.* This is spoken of such as are free; and not of such as by vow have given their first faith to God; to whom, if they will use proper means to obtain it, God will never refuse the gift of continency. Some translators have corrupted this text, by rendering it, *if they cannot contain*. (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *But to them that are married, &c.* He tells these persons that they ought not to part, or if a separation for weighty reasons can be allowed, neither party can marry another. (Witham) --- *That the wife.* Jesus Christ has expressly declared, that in one case only a divorce may be allowable, and that is in the case of adultery. (Estius)

**Ver. 12-17.** *For to the rest, &c.* This was a case entirely new, which the wisdom of the apostle regulates according to the laws of charity. Tertullian thinks that some of the faithful, who had been converted from paganism, did not esteem it lawful to live any longer with their wives, who were yet buried in the superstitions of idolatry, which scruples St. Paul answers, guided as he

was, by the particular lights of the Holy Ghost. (Calmet) --- *Not the Lord*. That is, it is the command of the Lord, for such even as are separated, not to marry to another, but when I advised the unmarried not to marry, this is a counsel, or advice, not a divine precept, which doctrine he repeats again before the end of this chapter, ver. 25, 28, and 39. --- *If any brother have a wife that believeth not*, &c. St. Paul speaks of two that were joined by a contract of marriage, when both of them were infidels, and that one of them is converted to the Christian faith: we do not read of any precept that Christ gave, as to those marriages, but the apostle seems to order by his apostolical authority, that they continue as man and wife, unless the party that remains still an infidel, will needs depart; then, says the apostle, *let* such an one *depart*. There is also another case, to wit, when the man or woman remaining an infidel, will not live without continual injuries and blasphemies against God and the Catholic religion, so that there can be no *peace* on that account betwixt them. In these two cases, according to the canons of the Church, it is looked upon as no marriage, so that the party converted may marry another. And this seems grounded on the reason, which the apostle here gave, *that God hath called us in peace*. (Witham)

**Ver. 14-16.** *Is sanctified*. The meaning is not that the faith of the husband, or the wife is of itself sufficient to put the unbelieving party, or their children, in the state of grace and salvation: but that it is very often an occasion of their sanctification, by bringing them to the true faith. (Challoner) --- Sanctification which has different significations, cannot here signify that an infidel is truly and properly sanctified, or justified, by being married to a faithful believer; therefore we can only understand an improper sanctification, so that such an infidel, though not yet converted, need not be looked upon as unclean, but in the dispositions of being converted, especially living peaceably together, and consenting that *their children* be baptized, by which they are truly *sanctified*. --- *How knowest thou, O wife?* &c. These words seem to give the reason, why they may part, when they cannot live peaceably, and when there is little prospect that the party that is an infidel will be converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 17. &c.** But[3] *as the Lord hath distributed, ... and called every one*, &c. St. Paul proceeds to other points of discipline, that persons converted may remain and continue in the same employments, and lawful state of life as before, that it is nothing to the purpose, whether before his conversion he was a *circumcised Jew*, or an *uncircumcised Gentile*, circumcision being no longer of obligation in the new law. If any one that is converted was a *bond-man*, or a slave, let him not be concerned at this, *but use it rather*, [4] which many interpret, let him rather endeavour to be made free, though St. John Chrysostom and others understand, let him rather remain content with his servile condition. Perhaps it was an admonition to those new converts, who might imagine that their Christian liberty exempted them from being *servant of men*. However, he gives them this great comfort, that *such an one is the Lord's free-man*, that is, whoever is a Christian, and in the grace of God; but he adds, let him not be a *slave to men*, that is, not follow their sinful ways, nor consent to any thing that is criminal. (Witham) --- All consists in doing the will of God, by loving him with our whole heart; without this, all is illusion. To attach ourselves to exterior practices contrary to the order of God, is the superstition of circumcision; to despise what comes from God, is the pride of uncircumcision.

**Ver. 23.** *With a price*. Viz. with the price of the precious blood of Christ. (Estius) --- Him only should we serve, for whatever draws us from this allegiance, is perfect servitude, such as the love of any person or thing out of God.

**Ver. 25-28.** *Now concerning virgins*, &c. He turns his discourse again to the unmarried, who (if they have made no vow) may lawfully marry, though he is far from commanding every one to marry, as when he says, *seek not a wife*. And *such shall have tribulation of the flesh*, cares, troubles, vexations in the state of marriage, *but I spare you*, I leave you to your liberty of marrying, or not marrying, and will not discourage you by setting forth the crosses of a married life. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *The time is short*, &c. Incomparable instructions to the end of this chapter, which are not

obscure. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *And they who weep.* In this passage the apostle teaches us, in the midst of our greatest afflictions not to suffer ourselves to be overwhelmed with grief, but to recollect that the time of this life is short, and that temporary pains will be recompensed with the never-fading joys of eternity. (Estius)

**Ver. 33.** It is far easier to give our whole heart and application without any the least reserve to God, than to divide them without injustice.

**Ver. 36.** *Let him do what he will, he sinneth not, &c.* The meaning is not as libertines would have it, that persons may do what they will, and not sin; provided they afterwards marry: but that the father with regard to the giving his virgin in marriage, may do as he pleaseth: and that it will be no sin to him if she marries. (Challoner)

**Ver. 38. &c.** *He that giveth her not, doth better. And more blessed shall she be, if she so remains, according to my counsel.* It is very strange if any one, who reads this chapter without prejudices, does not clearly see, that St. Paul advises, and prefers the state of virginity to that of a married life. --- *I think that I also have the spirit of God.* He puts them in mind, by this modest way of speaking, of what they cannot doubt of, as to so great an apostle. (Witham) --- It is worthy our notice, that St. Paul on every occasion avoids the least appearance of vanity, and frequently when delivering his own opinion, gives us only a hint, hoping that we shall supply the rest. Of this apostle's modesty in this particular, we have many instances in his writings, as in ver. 26. "I think, therefore, that this is good;" and likewise in chap. iv. ver. 9. "For I think that God." (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 2. Suam uxorem, suam virum. *Greek: eautou gunaika, ton idion andra.*

[2] Ver. 5. Ut vacetis orationi, *Greek: ina scholazete te proseuche.* St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: ouk eipen aplos proseuchesthe.*

[3] Ver. 17. Nisi, &c. *Greek: ei me,* it bears the sense here of *but*.

[4] Ver. 21. Magis utere, *Greek: mallon chresai.* St. John Chrysostom says, *Greek: touteti mallon douleue.*

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 8

**Ver. 1.** *Now concerning those things.* It appears from this whole passage that the Corinthians had, in a former letter, consulted this apostle, upon the subject of eating meats offered to idols. It was not unusual to reserve some part of the sacrifice of which they made a supper, either in their own family, with their friends, or sometimes even in the temple. Some of the Christians of Corinth attended without scruple at these sorts of feasts, and eat of the meats offered to idols; whilst others, on the contrary, took scandal at this conduct, and thought it a tacit approbation of idolatry. St. Paul being consulted upon this difficulty, gives them his advice in this chapter. (Calmet) --- *We know that we all have knowledge* about it. That is, all we, who are sufficiently instructed, have knowledge enough to be convinced, that *idols are nothing* in themselves, nor the meats offered to them better nor worse upon that account. (Witham) --- *Knowledge puffeth up, &c.* Knowledge, without charity and humility, serveth only to puff persons up. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *An idol is nothing.* The apostle seems to allude in this place to the Greek signification of this word, *Greek: eidolon*, signifying a false representation; as for instance in ghosts, which are said to appear sometimes at night. *Umbrae tenues, simulacra luce carentium.* (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *Many gods, &c.* Reputed for such among the heathens. (Challoner)

**Ver. 6.** *To us there is but one God, the Father; of whom all things, and we unto him.* Of or from the Father are all things, even the eternal Son and the Holy Ghost, though they are one and the same God with the Father. --- *And one Lord Jesus Christ: by whom are all things, and we by him.* All things were created *by the Son* of God, the eternal and uncreated wisdom of the Father, from whom he proceeds from eternity, and also *by the Holy Ghost*, all creatures being equally the work of the three divine persons. The Arians and Socinians pretend from this place, that only the Father is truly and properly God. The Catholics answer, that he is called the God, *of whom all*, because from him always proceeded, do proceed, and shall always proceed the Son and the Holy Ghost, though one and the same God in nature, substance, &c. And that when he is called the *one God*, by these words are excluded the false gods of the heathens, not the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are but one God with the Father. St. John Chrysostom also here observes, (hom. xx.) that if the two other persons are excluded, because the Father is called *one God*, by the same way of reasoning it would follow, that because Jesus Christ is called the *one Lord*, neither the Holy Ghost, nor even the Father, are the *one Lord*, whereas the Scriptures many times express the divine majesty, as well by the word Lord as by the word God. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *But knowledge is not in every one, &c.* The new converts, who had been Jews, thought that things which had been offered to idols were defiled, unclean, and could not be lawfully eaten: they who had been Gentiles looked upon them as victims offered to idols, in which there was some virtue of enchantment, &c. Their weak consciences judged they could not be lawfully eaten: and when they were induced to eat them by the example of others, it was still against their consciences. The infidels also might sometimes think that the Christians, in eating such things, honoured their idols; in such cases, they who were better instructed, were to abstain, not to give offence to weak consciences, and lest they should make them sin. And a weak brother *shall perish, for whom Christ died*; where we may learn, that Christ died also for those the *shall perish*, and not only for the predestinate. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** *Meat doth not commend us to God.* It is an admonition to those, who because they knew that meats offered to idols were not worse, would not abstain, even when this scandalized the weak brethren: he tells them that eating or not eating of them, does not make them more acceptable to God, nor puts them to any inconvenience, since they may get other meats: therefore they ought not to make use of *their liberty*, when it proves a stumbling-block to the weak, and makes them sin. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *In the idol's temple.*[1] It does not seem likely that any Christians would go to eat with idolaters in their very temples, of things offered to their idols: so that we may rather understand any place where infidels and Christians eat together, and where it happened that some meats were brought which had been first offered to idols, which the well-instructed Christians regarded not, nor asked any questions about, but the weak scrupled to eat them. (Witham) --- *Shall not his conscience.* The meaning of St. Paul's words is this: Will not your weak brother, who is not endowed with so great a knowledge as you, be induced, from your example, to eat these meats offered to idols, believing that he will derive therefrom some benefit. (Estius)

**Ver. 13.** *If meat scandalize.* That is, if my eating cause my brother to sin. (Challoner) --- Can we put any meat, or life itself, in competition with a soul, and the blood of Christ, which has been shed for that soul, when we know the value of each!

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[1] Ver. 10. In idolio, Greek: *en eidoleio*. Though the Greek word may sometimes be used to signify the temple itself of idols, yet it may in general signify a place, or thing some ways belong to idols. See Estius, P. Alemain, &c.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 9

**Ver. 1. &c.** *Am not I free?* The apostle in this place wishes to teach the Corinthians, how careful and solicitous they should be not to give cause for scandal to their neighbour, and how anxious for his spiritual welfare, informing them, that as he refused to take even what he had a just right to, as a minister of the altar, that is to live by the altar, so they must do in like manner, abstaining even from things lawful, for the good of religion. (Estius) --- *Am not I an apostle?* &c. St. Paul here, to the 20th verse, answers those reflections, which the new preachers at Corinth made against him and Barnabas, as if they were only an inferior kind of apostles. To this he answers, that he had seen *Jesus Christ*, who appeared to him. He tells the Corinthians, that *they* at least, ought to respect him as their apostle, who had converted them. He tells them, that when any persons ask about his apostleship, he has this to say for himself, that he not only laboured as an apostle in converting them, but also laboured without taking of them what might supply him and his companions with necessaries, as to *meat* and *drink*. He insists upon this particular circumstance, to shew he did not preach Christ for gain-sake; and at the same time brings seven or eight proofs to shew that he, and all who preach the gospel, have a *power* and a right to be maintained with necessaries by them to whom the preach. 1. He had a title to be supplied with necessaries, as being an *apostle*. 2. And by them, as being their apostle. 3. By the example of a *soldier*, who has a right to be *paid*: of a *husbandman*, who has a right to partake of the fruit of his labours: of a *shepherd*, nourished by the milk of the flock. (ver. 7) 4. He brings the example of those who *threshed*, or trode out the corn by oxen, as it was formerly the custom, that the threshers, nay even the *oxen*, when *treading out the corn*, were not to be *muzzled* according to the Scripture, (Deuteronomy xxv.) but were to eat, and to be fed with the corn or straw; much more men that labour, are to be fed with the fruit of their labours. (ver. 8. 9. 10.) 5. Nothing is more reasonable that to supply those with corporal and temporal things, who labour to procure spiritual and eternal blessings for others. (ver. 11.) 6. They who preached to the Corinthians after St. Paul, were maintained by them; had not he and Barnabas as much right as they? (ver. 12.) 7. He shews it by the examples of the ministers and priests in the law of Moses, who had a share of the sacrifices and victims offered, and who, serving the altar, lived by the altar. (ver. 13.) 8. He brings the authority of our Saviour Christ, who said to his apostles, (Matthew x. 10.) *that a labourer is worthy of his meat, or of his reward, as it is said*, Luke x. 7. But St. Paul puts them in mind, (ver. 15.) *that he did not make use of his right, as to any of these things*: that he does not write in this manner, to get or have any thing of them hereafter: nay, he makes warm protestations, says St. John Chrysostom,[1] that he will take nothing of them; that he will preach *without putting others to any cost*; (ver. 18.) that he will accept of nothing, *lest thereby he put any obstacle to the gospel*, or gave any person occasion to say he preached for gain. He tells them, *it is better for him to die*, than, by taking any thing of them, to *make void* this, which he has to *glory in*, and to justify himself against his backbiting adversaries: the sense is, that he is willing to spend his life as well as his labours among them, sooner than in these circumstances receive any temporal reward from them. Yet when the circumstances were different, he received of the Philippians (Philippians iv. 15.) enough to supply him in his necessities. He also tells them here, that he does not pretend to glory or boast for *having preached*: this being a *necessary duty*. --- *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward*. The sense seems to be, if I do this office cheerfully, and with a right intention to please God only, I shall have a copious reward prepared for such a labourer: *if unwillingly*, and imperfectly, and not with a pure intention, I cannot expect such a reward; though *still a dispensing of it is entrusted to me*; that is, it is always my duty to preach. Others, *by willingly*, understand the doing of it in so perfect a manner, as not to receive any thing, and *unwillingly*, when they would scarce do it, at least so zealously, unless they received what would maintain them. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** It appears certain, from the testimony of the fathers, that St. Paul was not in the state of wedlock. St. Jerome informs us that the apostle is here speaking of such holy women who, according to the Jewish custom, supplied their teachers with the necessaries of life, as we see was done to Christ himself. It is evident from ancient records that this was a very prevalent

custom in Judea, and therefore a cause of no scandal; but to the Gentiles this custom was unknown, and therefore lest it might prove a cause of scandal to any, St. Paul did not allow any woman to follow him as a companion. Tertullian denies, with St. Augustine and St. Jerome, that St. Paul is here speaking of his wife. (Estius; Calmet) --- *A woman, a sister.*[2] Some erroneous translators have corrupted this text, by rendering it, *a sister, a wife*; whereas it is certain, St. Paul had no wife, (chap. vii. ver. 7. 8.) and that he only speaks of such devout women, as according to the custom of the Jewish nation, waited upon the preachers of the gospel, and supplied them with necessaries. (Challoner) --- And to what end could he talk of burthening the Corinthians with providing for his *wife*, when he himself clearly affirmeth that he was single? (Chap. vii. v. 7. and 8.) This all the Greek fathers affirm, with St. Augustine, do op. Monach. chap. iv.; St. Jerome, adv. Jovin. chap. xiv. &c. &c. [Also see annotations on ver. 25, below]

**Ver. 11.** *Is it a great matter?* The apostle is here speaking of what he had given to the Corinthians, and what he had received from them; and this he does under the comparison of the sower and the reaper. Can any of you think it hard that we receive some part of your *temporal* goods, when we have bestowed upon you *spiritual*: nevertheless, we have not used this power, but we bear all things, &c. (ver. 12.) (Estius)

**Ver. 16.** *It is no glory.* That is, I have nothing to glory of. (Challoner) --- If I preach the gospel through compulsion, fear, or mere necessity, having no other means of maintenance, I must not look for a reward in heaven; but now doing it through charity and freely, I shall have my reward from God; and the more abundant the charity, the greater the reward. (St. Augustine, de Op. Mor. i. 5.)

**Ver. 17.** *But if against my will.* That is, if I do not do it with alacrity and zeal, but instigated by the sole motive of punishment, woe unto me, as he says in the preceding verse, if I am instigated by this motive alone; still the dispensation of the gospel is entrusted to me, and I must comply with that obligation, either with the zeal and alacrity of a son, or for fear of punishment, as a slave. (Estius)

**Ver. 19.** *Free as to all.* That is, whereas I was under no obligation to any man, yet I made myself the servant of all, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20.** *I became to the Jews as a Jew.* That is, upon occasions, not to hinder their conversion, I practised the ceremonies of their law; though I am *not under their law*, which is no longer obligatory, but only *under the new law of Christ*. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *To them that were without the law.* That is, to the Gentiles, who never were under the law of Moses. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** How convincing it this and many similar texts against those who deny the merit of good works, and who would not have men to act with a view to any recompense, though rewards and recompenses are very frequently mentioned in holy writ. (Haydock)

**Ver. 24.** *Know you not?* Nothing is more famous in the annals of history than the public games in Greece: it is to these the apostle is here alluding. (Calmet) --- *All run indeed*, &c. He brings the examples of runners and wrestlers for a prize in the Grecian games, where only one could gain the prize. It is true in our case many obtain the crown for which we strive, but every one is in danger of losing it, and so must use all his endeavours to *obtain it*. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** He *refraineth himself*, &c. Curbs his inclinations, abstains from debauchery, and any thing that may weaken him, or hinder him from gaining this corruptible crown, how much more ought we to practise self-denials for an eternal crown?

In the fifth verse, where we translate, *a woman, a sister*, or *a sister, a woman*: the Protestant translation has *a sister, a wife*. We have reason to reject this translation, since it is evident by this

epistle, that St. Paul at least then had not a wife, chap. vii. ver. 7. 8. And the ancient interpreters expressly examined and rejected this translation. See St. Jerome against Jovian. lib. i. tom. 4. part 2. p. 167. edit. Ben.; St. Augustine, lib. de opere Monach. tom. vi. chap. 4. p. 478. Nov. edit. The Greek word, as every one knows, signifies either a woman or a wife. Nor doth any thing here determine it to signify a wife. He speaks of a woman, or of women that were sisters, that is, Christians; so that a sister expounds what kind of woman it was. Dr. Hammond puts in the margin a *sister-woman*, as it were to correct the Protestant translation. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *I chastise, &c.* Here St. Paul shews the necessity of self-denial and mortifications to subdue the flesh, and its inordinate desires. (Challoner) --- Not even the labours of an apostle are exemptions from voluntary mortifications and penance.

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[1] Ver. 1. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om kb*, p. 382. *Greek: meta sphodrotatos arneitai*.

[2] Ver. 5. *Mulierem sororem, Greek: adelphen gunaika.* Sororem mulierem, where Estius brings examples to shew that it is the same sense and construction, whether we read mulierem sororem, or sororem mulierem. Tertullian, the most ancient of the Latin fathers, read: mulieres circumducendi, not uxores. De pudicitia, chap. xiv. p. 566. Ed. Rig. and lib. de monogam. chap. viii. p. 519. he first says, Petrum solum invenio maritum. And on this place, non uxores demonstrat ab Apostolis circumductas....sed simpliciter mulieres, quæ, illos eodem instituto, quo et Dominum comitantes, ministrabant. St. Jerome. Ubi de mulieribus sororibus infertur, perspicuum est, non uxores debere intelligi, sed eas, ut diximus, quæ de sua substantia ministrabant. St. Augustine. Hoc quidam non intelligentes, non sororem mulierem, sed uxorem interpretati sunt, fefellit illos verbi græci ambiguitas....quanquam hoc ita posuerit, ut falli non debuerint, quia neque mulierem tantummodo ait, sed sororem mulierem, neque ducendi, sed circumducendi: verum alios Interpretes non fefellit hæc ambiguitas, et mulierem, non uxorem interpretati sunt.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 10

**Ver. 1-2.** *Our Fathers, the Jews, were all under the cloud.* He means, when God conducted the camp of the Israelites, in the day-time by a cloud, and in the night by a pillar of fire. (Exodus xiii. 21.) (Witham) --- *In Moses.* Under the conduct of Moses they received baptism in figure, by passing under the cloud and through the sea: and they partook of the body and blood of Christ in figure, by eating of the *manna*, (called here a *spiritual food*, because it was a figure of the true bread which comes down from heaven) and drinking the water miraculously brought out of the rock, called here a *spiritual rock*; because it was also a figure of Christ. (Challoner) --- *Were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea,* figuratively, these being figures of baptism in the new law. As Moses, who delivered them from the slavery of Egypt, was figure of Christ, who came to deliver mankind from the slavery of sin. (Witham)

**Ver. 3-4.** *All eat the same spiritual food,* to wit, the *manna*, which seemed to come from heaven, and was a figure of the eucharist, the spiritual food of our souls. --- *All drank the same spiritual drink,* and....*rock that followed them,* by which is understood the stream of water, that came miraculously out of the rock struck by Moses, and which is said to have followed them, because it ran plentifully through their camp. --- *And the rock was Christ,* a figure of Christ; for *all these things* (ver. 11.) *happened to them in figure.* (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *God was not well pleased, &c.* Of 600,000, only Josue and Caleb entered the land of promise; the rest were *destroyed*, and perished in *the wilderness*. Their punishment ought to be an admonition to all to avoid such sins of idolatry, fornication, murmuring, &c.

**Ver. 6.** *In a figure of us.* That is, this was done and written to teach us, what we may expect, if we imitate the murmurs, infidelities, ingratitude, and disobedience of the Hebrew people. Unless we renounce our irregular desires, unless we mortify our passions, baptism and communion will prove our greater condemnation. The greatest graces are but subjects of alarm, unless our life correspond with them.

**Ver. 9.** *As some of them tempted Christ.* This cannot but be understood of Christ, as God. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Upon whom the ends of the world are come.* The last age of the world, which St. John calls the *last hour*. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Take heed lest he fall.* This regards the doctors and teachers in the new Church of Corinth; who, relying upon their own learning, did not think themselves weak, and presuming too much upon their own strength, exposed themselves to the danger of falling. See St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine, de dono. Persev. --- Self-diffidence is the foundation of our strength. We prevent many dangerous falls when we keep close to the earth by humility.

**Ver. 13.** *Let no temptation [1] take hold on you.* Or, *no temptation hath taken hold of you,* or come upon you as yet, but what is human, or incident to man. (Challoner) --- The sense of these words is obscure: we may expound them by way of prayer, let no temptation, but such as are of human frailty, and not hard to be overcome, happen to you. See the Greek text. --- *Will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it.* The literal signification of the Latin, compared with the Greek is, that God will bring you off, and make you escape out of those dangers, when you are tempted. (Witham) --- The most violent temptations are occasions of merit and triumph to such as are in the hands of God; whilst the lightest are snares and a deep abyss to such as are in their own hands.

**Ver. 14.** There are various kinds of idolatry. It is the perfection of Angels never to err: it is a human imperfection to fall into error, but a diabolical crime, so to love our error, as to divide the Church by schism, or leave it by heresy: this love of self is the most dangerous idolatry.

**Ver. 16.** *The chalice of benediction,[2] &c.* Which the priests bless or consecrate, *is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break,* (so called because of the outward appearance of bread) *is it not the partaking or communion of the body of the Lord?* See St. John Chrysostom here, hom. xxiv. p. 396. and p. 400. See also the Annotations, Matthew xxvi. 26. (Witham) --- Here the apostle puts them in mind of the partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the sacred mysteries, and becoming thereby one mystical body with Christ. From whence he infers, (ver. 21.) that they who are made partakers with Christ, by the eucharistic sacrifice, and sacrament, must not be made partakers with devils, by eating of the meats sacrificed to them. (Challoner)

**Ver. 17.** *We being many, are one bread.* Or, as it may be rendered, agreeably both to the Latin and Greek, *because the bread is one, all we, being many, are one body, who partake of that one bread.* For it is by our communicating with Christ and with one another, in this blessed Sacrament, that we are formed into one mystical body; and made, as it were, one bread, compounded of many grains of corn, closely united together. (Challoner) --- From the sacrament of the real body of Christ in the eucharist, he passeth to the effect of this sacrament, which is to unite all those who partake of it, as members of the same mystical body of Christ, which is his Church: and from hence he presently draws this consequence, that such as are members of that body, of which Christ is the head, cannot have any communication with idolaters, or with those that offer sacrifices to idols and devils. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Behold Israel, according to the flesh.* That is, the people that were the offspring of Israel or Jacob. *Are not these they who offered sacrifices to the true God, and eat of the sacrifices,* which were offered on his altars, and by offering to him such sacrifices, acknowledged him to be



their God, and the only true God: and so you, if you partake, and eat of the sacrifices of idolaters, and of what they tell you was offered to their idols, you seem at least, to join with them in acknowledging, and paying reverence to their idols, which are devils: and you cannot be *partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the table of devils*. --- *Co we provoke the Lord to jealousy?* that is, how dare we provoke our Lord, who is a jealous God, and will admit of no rival, by partaking of sacrifices offered to false gods? how dare we thus condemn his power, as if we were *stronger* than he, or that he could not punish us? (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *What then? do I say, &c.* He puts this objection, as if it were contradictory to what he had taught before, (chap. viii. ver. 4.) *that an idol is nothing, &c.* but he answers this objection by saying that *all things*, that is, all meats are *lawful* in themselves, but not always expedient, nor *edifying*, when they give scandal to weak brethren, or when the infidels themselves think that such as eat things offered to idols, join with them in honouring their idols. (Witham) --- The meaning of this passage is: whilst I advise you to abstain from eating of any thing consecrated to idols, I do not advise you as supposing that these offerings have any power in themselves to defile your souls, in the same manner as by eating of the body and blood of Christ we receive strength to overcome our spiritual enemies. St. Paul here anticipates an objection that might be made by some to whom he was writing. (Estius)

**Ver. 21.** In all this discourse, a comparison is instituted between the Christian host and oblation, its effects, conditions and properties, with the altars, hosts, sacrifices and immolations of the Jews and Gentiles; which the apostle could not have done, had there not been a proper sacrifice in the Christian worship. The holy Fathers teach the same with the ancient Councils. This in the council of Nice: *The lamb of God laid upon the altar*. Conc. Ephes., *The unbloody service of the sacrifice*. In St. Cyril of Alexandria, in Conc. Ephes., Anath. 11, *The quickening holy sacrifice; the unbloody host and victim*. Tertullian, de coron. milit., *The propitiatory sacrifice both for the living and the dead*. This Melchisedech did most singularly prefigure in his mystical oblation of bread and wine; this also according to the prophecy of Malachias, shall continue from the rising to the setting sun, a perpetual substitute for all the Jewish sacrifices; and this, in plain terms, is called the Mass, by St. Augustine, Sermon. ccli. 91.; Conc. Cartha. ii. chap. 3. 4. chap. 84. Milevit. 12.; St. Leo, ep. 81. 88. chap. 2.; St. Gregory, lib. ii. ep. 9. 92. &c. &c. See next chapter ver. 24.

**Ver. 23.** *All things are lawful*. This is the same sentiment he has expressed in chap. vi. ver. 12. and in chap. viii. ver. 8. 9. wherein he teaches us, that on some occasions it is necessary to abstain even from things in themselves lawful, as in the case of meats consecrated to idols. (Calmet) --- Two excellent rules that can serve as guides on these occasions, are the edification of the Church, and the spiritual good of our neighbour. Without the aid of these guides, we go astray ourselves and decoy others, in doing what the letter of the law permits, but what the spirit of the law, charity, forbids.

**Ver. 27.** *Eat of any thing, &c.* Here at length St. Paul prescribes them a rule by which they were to govern themselves, as to meats that they met with. Buy and eat any thing sold in the market, or of any thing that you meet with at the table of infidels, when they invite you, for all are *the Lord's* creatures, and may be taken *with thanksgiving*, as we ought to take whatsoever we eat. --- But if any man say, *this hath been sacrificed to idols, do not eat of it for his sake, &c.* And why must they not then eat of it? because either he is an infidel that says it: and then by saying so, he may mean that they who eat it, ought to eat it in honour of their gods. Or if a weak brother says so, he thereby signifies, that his conscience judges it not lawful to be eaten; so that in one case, you seem to consent that things are to be taken in honour of idols: in the other, you give offence to your weak brother: and I would have you to be without *offence*, both to *Jews and Gentiles*; and not to think it enough that you can eat such things with thanksgiving. It may be asked here why the apostle should not absolutely forbid them ever any thing offered to idols, as this seems a thing absolutely forbidden in the council of Jerusalem? (Acts xv. 23.) To this some answer, that the apostle here expounds the true sense of that decree, which was only to be understood, when eating such meats gave scandal. Others say, the prohibition was only for a short time, and now was out of date. Others take notice, that the prohibition was not general, nor for all places, but

only for the new converted Gentiles that were at Antioch, or in Syria and Cilicia, as specified in the decree. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** *For why is my liberty?* The meaning of this passage is, that though we ought, on some occasions, to abstain from things in themselves lawful, yet, that on other occasions we are by no means obliged to it, particularly when our brother is not thoroughly instructed on that head. (Theophylactus)

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[1] Ver. 13. *Tenatio vos non apprehendat.* In almost all Greek copies, non apprehendit in præterito, *Greek: ouk eilephen.* Which reading is also in divers ancient Latin interpreters, as if he puts them in mind that hitherto they had not suffered any great temptations or persecutions. *Faciet cum tenatione proventum,* is not the saem as progressum, or utilitatem, by the Greek, but that they should escape out of it. *Greek: sun to peirasme kai ten ekbasin.*

[2] Ver. 16. Calix benedictionis cui, (or as it is in the Greek) quem benedicimus. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxiv. No Catholic now-a-days can declare his faith of the real presence in clearer terms than St. John Chrysostom hath in this, and other places: *Greek: oti touto en to poterio on, ekeino esti, to apo tes pleuras reusan,* &c. He calls the eucharist, *Greek: thusian,* a sacrifice.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 11

In this chapter are three instructions: 1. That women must have a veil on their heads at public prayers, to ver. 17. --- 2ndly, he corrects the abuses in their banquets of charity, called *Agape*, to ver. 23. --- 3rdly, he teaches that in the sacrament of the holy Eucharist, is the body and blood of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *I praise you.* That is, a great many of you. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *The head of a woman is the man,* &c. To have the head covered at public meetings, is, according to St. Paul, a mark of subjection: The man was created to be *head* over the woman, who was made subject to the man, being *made* of him, of his rib, and the woman *made for him*, not he *for the woman*. The man in a special manner, is the *image of God*, not only by his immortal soul, in which sense also the woman was made to God's image, and likeness, but inasmuch as God gave him a power over all creatures, and so he is called, *the glory of God*. For these reasons, as well as from a received custom, St. Paul tells every woman, that in prayer or prophesying in public meetings, she must have her head veiled, and covered in testimony of her subjection to man, her head, otherwise she dishonours herself, and her head. This is what he tells her, (ver. 10.) that she ought *to have a power over her head*, [1] that is, to have a veil or covering, as a mark of man's power over her: and *because of the angels*, that is, out of a respect to the angels there present. Some understand the priests and ministers of God, called angels, particularly in the Apocalypse. St. Paul adds, that *nature* [2] having given to women long hair, designed it to be as a natural veil. In fine, he appeals to them, to be judges, whether it be not unbecoming in women to pray without a veil. But he will have men to be uncovered, and not to bear such a mark of subjection, as a veil is, by which a man would dishonour his head, that is, himself, and Christ, who is his head, and who appointed him, when he created him, to be head over the woman. He looks upon it as a dishonour and a disgrace for men to nourish their hair, as women should do. He also calls *God the head of Christ*, that is, of Christ, as man. Lest he should seem to lessen the condition of women more than necessary, he adds, that the propagation of mankind now depends on the woman, as well as on the man, seeing every *man is by the woman*. (Witham)

**Ver. 4. *Praying or prophesying.*** By prophesying, in this place is meant, reading publicly in the Church, or singing, or explaining some part of the Scripture. To have the head covered, or uncovered, is in itself a thing very indifferent. Amongst the Greeks it was the custom always to sacrifice to their idols with heads uncovered; amongst the Romans, the opposite was the fashion, and among the Jews, as well formerly as at present, they always appear in their synagogues with heads covered. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10. *A power:*** That is, a veil or covering, as a sign that she is under the *power* of her husband: and this, the apostle adds, *because of the angels*, who are present in the assemblies of the faithful. (Challoner)

**Ver. 16. *If any man seem to be contentious*** about this matter, or any other, *we have no such custom, nor hath the Church*; that is, says St. John Chrysostom, to have such quarrels and divisions. Or, as others understand it, we have no such custom for women to be in the Church uncovered. (Witham)

**Ver. 17. *Now this I ordain, &c.*** St. Paul found that several abuses had crept in among the Corinthians at their Church meetings, where before the holy mysteries (though St. John Chrysostom thinks after them) they used to have those *charitable suppers*, called the *Agape*. For as our Saviour eat first a common supper with his apostles, before he instituted the holy sacrament, so the Christians in many places brought meats with them, and eat a supper together, in token of that friendship and union, which they had with all their brethren, before they began to celebrate the holy mysteries. It is this supper, which according to the common interpretation St. Paul here (ver. 20.) calls the *Lord's supper*,<sup>[3]</sup> (though St. Augustine and some others by the *Lord's supper*, understand the holy sacrament itself of Christ's body and blood.) The apostle tells them, he *hears there are divisions among them* at their meetings, which he says will happen, as there *must be also heresies*, which God permits, that *they who are approved, may be made manifest*, that is, that on such occasions, the just may shew their fidelity and constancy in their duty to God. The apostle tells them, that *it is not now to eat the Lord's supper*, that is, there were such abuses among them, that it was not now to imitate the supper, which Christ made with his apostles, or, according to the exposition of St. Augustine, this was not becoming persons, who, before the end of their meetings, were to partake of the divine mysteries. (Witham)

**Ver. 19. *There must be also heresies:*** By reason of the pride and perversity of man's heart; not by God's will or appointment; who nevertheless draws good out of this evil, manifesting, by that occasion, who are the good and firm Christians, and making their faith more remarkable. (Challoner) --- Not that God hath directly so appointed, as necessary: this originates in man's malice, and his sole pride, and great abuse of free-will. The providence of God draweth good out of evil, but *wo to the man*, says the Scripture, *by whom scandal cometh*, such as sects and heresies. Hence St. Augustine, chap. viii. de vera relig. says: "Let us use heretics not so as to approve their errors, but to make us more wary and vigilant, and more strenuous in defending Catholic doctrine against their deceits."

**Ver. 20. *The Lord's supper.*** So the apostle here calls the *charity [Agape] feasts* observed by the primitive Christians; and reprehends the abuses of the Corinthians on these occasions: which were the more criminal, because these feasts were accompanied with the celebrating the eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament. (Challoner)

**Ver. 21. *Every one taketh before his own supper to eat.*** The sense seems to be, that he took and brought with him, what he designed to eat with others, and give at that supper: but as soon as some were met (without staying for others, as he orders them, ver. 33. when he again speaks of these suppers) the rich placing themselves together, began this supper, and did not take with them their poor brethren, who had brought nothing, or had nothing to bring; by this means, *one indeed is hungry, and another is drunk*, that is, had at least drunk plentifully, while the poor had nothing but shame, and *confusion*. By this means of eating and drinking without temperance and moderation, they were by no means disposed to receive afterwards the holy Eucharist. He tells

such persons that committed these disorders, that if they be so hungry that they cannot fast, they should eat (ver. 34.) before they come from home. We find these Agape forbidden to be made in the Churches, in the 28th canon of the council of Laodicea, a little before the general council of Nice. In St. John Chrysostom's time, and from the first ages, every one received the sacrament of the holy eucharist fasting, as it is probable this was one of the things which St. Paul gave *orders* about, (ver. 34.) when he came to Corinth. We must not imagine, that because Christ instituted the holy sacrament, and gave it to his apostles after he had supped with them, that the apostles, or the pastors of the Church, their successors, could not order it to be received *fasting*, and *kneeling*, for greater reverence and devotion. See St. Augustine on this same subject, in his letter to Januarius, liv. tom. 2. part 2. p. 126. Nov. edit. He says, that though it is evident that apostles did not receive the body and blood of Christ fasting, yet we must not on that account calumniate, or blame the universal Church, in which it is received only by those who are fasting. He says, it is most insolent madness to dispute against what is a custom in the universal Church. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *I have received from the Lord.* That is, by revelation from Christ, as well as from others, who were present with him, *that which also I delivered to you* by word of mouth, &c. Here he speaks of the holy sacrament itself, of the words of consecration, as the evangelists had done, and of the real presence of Christ's body and blood. --- *Which shall be delivered for you.* In the common Greek copies, *which is broken for you*, to wit, on the cross. --- *You shall shew the death of the Lord.* As often as you receive, it shall be with a devout and grateful remembrance of his sufferings and death for your sake. He puts every one in mind, that whosoever *shall eat this bread*, (ver. 27.) so called from the outward appearances, *or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall, by such a sacrilege, be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord.* And (ver. 29.) that *he eateth, and drinketh judgment, or condemnation to himself, not discerning* the difference betwixt celestial food and other meats, and not considering it to be truly *the body of the Lord.* See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvii. If the words of our Saviour, *this is my body*, &c. were to be understood in a *metaphorical* and *figurative sense only*, is it probable that St. Paul, writing twenty-four years afterwards, to the new converted Gentiles at Corinth, would have used words, which full as clearly express a true and real presence of Christ's body in the eucharist, without one word to signify that this was to be understood in a figurative sense only? (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** Juvenius, a native of Spain, and a priest, who flourished under Constantine the Great, about the year 329, has left us the life of Christ in hexameter verse, where speaking of the institution of the eucharist, he says, "Christ taught his disciples, that he delivered to them his own body;" and when he gave them the chalice, "he taught them that he had distributed to them his blood: and said, this blood remits the sins of the people: drink this, it is mine." (Bibl. Max. P. P. T. iv. p. 74)

Discipulos docuit proprium se tradere corpus,  
Edocuitque suum se divisisse cruorem.  
Atque ait: Hic sanguis populi delicta remittit:  
Hunc potate meum.

**Ver. 27.** *Or drink.* Here erroneous translators corrupted the text, by putting *and drink* (contrary to the original, Greek: *e pine* ) instead of *or drink*. --- *Guilty of the body, &c. not discerning the body, &c.* This demonstrates the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, even to the unworthy communicant; who otherwise could not be *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, or justly condemned for *not discerning the Lord's body.* (Challoner) --- The real presence in the sacrament is also proved by the enormity of the crime, in its profanation. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. de non contem. ec. and hom. lx. and lxi. ad pop. Antioch. where he shews that the unworthy receiver imitates the Jews in crucifying Jesus, and trampling under foot his sacred blood. Hence the dreadful punishments we read of in verse 27 and 30.

**Ver. 28.** *Drink the chalice.* This is not said by way of command, but by way of allowance, viz. where and when it is agreeable to the practice and discipline of the Church. (Challoner)

**Ver. 30-32.** *Therefore* in punishment of the sin of receiving unworthily, many are *infirm*, visited with infirmities, even that bring death, which is meant by those words, *many sleep*. But it is a mercy of God, when he only punishes by sickness, or a corporal death, and does not permit us to perish for ever, or *be condemned with this wicked world*. To avoid this, *let a man prove himself*, examine the state of his conscience, especially before he receives the holy sacrament, confess his sins, and be absolved by those to whom Christ left the power of forgiving sins in his name, and by his authority. If *we judge* ourselves in this manner, we shall not *be judged*, that is, condemned. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. Debet mulier potestatem habere super caput suum, *Greek: exousian*, but some Greek copies have *Greek: peribolaion*, cinctorium, velum.

[2] Ver. 3. *Nec ipsa natura docet vos*. I do not find an interrogation in the Latin copies, as it is marked in the Greek, *Greek: oude didaskei umas*. The rest of the text seems to be better connected, if we read it with an interrogation.

[3] Ver. 17. *Jam non est dominicam cœnam manducare*, *Greek: kuriakon deipnon*. This expression is used no where else in the New Testament, and it is much more probable, that by it St. Paul signifies those charitable [Agape] suppers, which the Christians had together, in imitation of Christ's supper with his disciples before he instituted the holy mysteries, which was after supper, as St. Paul here says, ver. 25. and St. Luke xxii. The sacrament of the Lord's body and blood has been called the Eucharist, even from the first ages of the Christians religion, as appears by the epistles of St. Ignatius, by St. Irenæus, Tertullian, &c. The late pretended reformers found it called by this name in the Catholic Church. Why then should they, who pretend to nothing but Scripture, affect to give it no name but the *Lord's supper*, when these words in the Scripture signify a different supper?

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 12

**Ver. 1.** *Concerning spiritual things*. In the apostle's time, the Christians in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, many times received those graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which some of them *prophesied*, others wrought *miracles*, and cured diseases, others spoke *tongues*, and different languages: now some among the Corinthians made not a right use of these gifts, especially they who had the *gift of tongues*, and made use of it through vanity, rather than for the profit of others. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *You went to dumb idols*. He speaks to the Gentiles before their conversion, to put them in mind, how much happier they are by receiving the faith of Christ, and such graces and favours from God. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *No man, speaking by the Spirit of God, &c.* He tells them, if they see a person moved in an extraordinary manner, and say *anathema*, curse, or speak ill of Jesus, such an one cannot be moved by a good spirit. And *no man can say, the Lord Jesus*, that is, praise Christ as he ought, but by a good spirit. (Witham)

**Ver. 4-7.** *There are diversities of grace*. Literally, *divisions of grace*; but all from the *same spirit*, from the *same Lord*, from the *same God*: and all these gifts are designed, and to be made use of for the *profit* of the faithful. (Witham) --- St. Justin Martyr, St. Irenæus, and Origen bear testimony, that these special gifts of the Holy Ghost were not unusual in their time. St. Paul, in order to curb the vanity of such as seemed to be a little puffed up with the gifts they had received, and likewise to comfort those who had received no such spiritual and extraordinary favours, wishes to teach both parties, that the same Holy Spirit distributes these graces according as they are more

conducive to the welfare of his Church, and the glory of God. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8, &c.** *Word of wisdom*, which differs from that of *knowledge*, inasmuch as *wisdom* is a more eminent and sublime knowledge. These are numbered among the gifts of the Holy Ghost. (Isaias, chap. xi.) --- *To another faith*, by which, confidence of working miracles, grounded on faith, and on the power and goodness of God. --- *The same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will*; by which words, they that valued themselves on the gifts of *prophesying*, and *speaking tongues*, are put in mind, that all these were purely the gifts of God, to whom alone the honour is due. (Witham)

**Ver. 12. &c.** *As the body is one*, &c. From this comparison of the mystical body of Christ, that is, of his Church, to a man's natural body, he brings excellent instructions. 1. That as all members and parts, make up the same body, *so also is Christ*; that is, so it is in the Church of Christ, which is his mystical body. 2. As all the parts of man's body are enlivened by the same soul, so all in the Church have their life from the same Spirit of God in baptism, and in the sacraments instituted by our Saviour Christ; in which we *are made to drink of the same spirit*. 3. As all the members, that have such different offices and functions, do but constitute one complete body, so is it in the Church of Christ. 4. As those that seem the less considerable parts of the human body, are no less necessary for the subsistence and harmony of the whole, and stand in need of one another, (for example, the head stands in need of the feet) so in the Church, &c. 5. He take notice, that in a natural body, the less *honourable*, the baser, and as they are called, the *uncomely parts*, are clothed with greater care and decency, Literally, *have a more abundant honour bestowed upon them*, so in the mystical body, no less, but even a greater care is to be taken of the weaker, and more infirm members, of the poor, the weak, the ignorant; and in the spirit of charity and love, that there may be no divisions or *schisms*, but a brotherly union: that if *one suffer*, another compassionate and assist him, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *If the foot*, &c. By this comparison St. Paul teaches the Corinthians, that as all cannot exercise the same functions in the Church, so no one should be envious of his brother; but that by their mutual charity, co-operation, union of hearts, and faith, they should compose one body, of which Christ is the head. (Calmet)

**Ver. 24.** Cicero, in his 1st liber de Off. speaking of the human body, says, *Natura quæ formam nostram atque figuram, in qua esset species honesta, eam posuit in promptu; quæ partes autem corporis ad naturæ necessitatem datæ, aspectum essent deformem habituræ atque turpem, eas contextit atque abdidit.* (Calmet)

**Ver. 27.** *Members of members.*[2] The sense seems to be, you are members of the particular Church of Corinth, which is only a part or member of the whole body of the Christian Catholic Church. This is agreeable to the common reading in the Greek, where it is said, *you are members of a part*. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxxii. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *First apostles*, &c. Here he sets down these gifts or graces in their order of dignity. 1. *The apostles*, blessed above others with all kinds of graces. 2. *Prophets*, who had the gift of interpreting of prophecies, and of knowing things to come. 3. *Doctors*, or teachers of the gospel, preferred before those who had the gift of *miracles*, or of *healing* the infirm, and before the *gifts of tongues*, which they valued and esteemed so much, which he reckons in a manner in the last place, except that of *interpreting*, which is wanting in the present Greek copies. But as *interpreting* is found in all the Greek manuscripts (ver. 30.) we have reason to prefer the reading of the Latin Vulgate. (Witham)

**Ver. 31.** *Be zealous for the better gifts*: which are to be more or less esteemed, as they are accompanied with charity, as he is going to *shew* in the next chapter. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 9. *Fides*, Greek: *pistis*, upon which word St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *om. kth.* p. 433.

Greek: *pistin ou tauten legon, ten ton dogmaton, alla ten semeion.*

[2] Ver. 27. Et membra de membro. Some Greek copies, Greek: *kai mele ek melous*, but in most Greek manuscripts, Greek: *kai mele ke merous*. St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *om. kb. p. 448. Greek: e ekklesia e par emin, meros esti tes pantachou keimenas ekklesias.*

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 13

The apostle here shews the necessity of the great virtue of charity, that is, of the love of God, and of our neighbour. (Witham)

**Ver. 1.** *A tinkling cymbal.* Which may give notice, and be beneficial to others, but not to itself. (Witham) --- Without charity, both towards every individual, and especially towards the common body of the Church, none of the aforesaid gifts will be available. (Bristow)

**Ver. 2-3.** These prove that faith without good works, and especially charity for God and our neighbour, cannot avail to eternal life; faith and charity are both essentially necessary. Hence St. Augustine declares, that where there is not true faith, there cannot be justice; because the just man liveth by faith: and where charity is not, there can be no justice, which if they had, they would never tear in pieces the body of Christ, which is the Church. (De fid. ad Pet. chap. xxxix.)

**Ver. 4.** *Charity....dealeth not perversely.*[1] The Greek word here seems taken from the Latin. St. John Chrysostom expounds it, is not rash, but acteth prudently and considerately. Others, it is not light or inconstant. Others, it *braggeth*, or *vaunteth not*, as in the Protestant translation. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Is not ambitious;*[2] which is also the sense of some Greek copies, but in others, and in St. John Chrysostom, it signifies, it is not ashamed of any one. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Prophecies and tongues* last not longer than this life. --- *Knowledge shall be destroyed*, that is, that imperfect knowledge we have in this world. For now we *know only in part*, we only see, as it were, through a *glass*, and imperfectly. --- *Faith*, which is of things *that appear not*, and *hope*, which is of things that we enjoy not, will cease in heaven, but *charity*, the greater, or *greatest* even of *these three*, will remain, and be increased in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** St. Augustine proves from this text, that the saints in heaven have a more perfect knowledge of what passes here below, than when they sojourned on earth. (De Civit. Dei. lib. xxii. chap. 29.)

**Ver. 11.** *When I was a child.* I, like you, formerly judged of the goodness and excellency of these spiritual gifts by the advantages the procured; but after the Almighty had bestowed upon me his particular light, my opinion was far otherwise. Prophecy, and the gifts of languages are certainly very estimable gifts, yet charity is much more excellent. (Calmet) --- It is by charity we approach near to God, that we become his true image. Can we, then, wonder at the magnificent praises, glorious prerogatives, and surprising effects St. Paul gives to this all necessary virtue?

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[1] Ver. 4. Non agit perperam, Greek: *ou perpereuetai*. St. John Chrysostom says, Greek: *toutesti ou propeteuetai*, non est præcept, aut temeraria.

[2] Ver. 5. Non est ambitiosa. Some Greek copies, Greek: *philotimei*. In the ordinary Greek, and in St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *ouk achemonei*. It is not ashamed to undergo any disgrace for God, or our neighbour's sake.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 14

St. Paul gives them further instructions how to make a right use of these gifts, of *prophesying*, of *interpreting*, and especially of *speaking tongues*. He is far from condemning the gift of speaking tongues, in proper circumstances, but only the indiscreet use, or the abuse of it. This is evident by the 5th verse, *I would have you all to speak with tongues, but rather to prophesy*. He blames those assemblies and meetings, (ver. 23.) when all present speak tongues together, by which means, the infidels that came thither, and ought to be instructed, understood nothing. He permits at their meetings *two* or *three* (ver. 27.) to *speak tongues*, provided some other *interpret* them. He also orders, that only *two* or *three prophets* speak at a meeting, and by *turns*, to avoid confusion, that those present may be edified, exhorted, and instructed. (Witham)

**Ver. 1.** *But rather that you may prophesy.* That is, declare or expound the mysteries of faith. (Challoner) --- To prophesy, in its proper signification, is to foretell things to come: it sometimes is to expound the obscure places in other prophets; and sometimes it is to preach the word of God. Here it is chiefly taken in this last sense. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *He that speaketh in a tongue,* which others at least understand not: nay, which sometimes, perhaps, by the 14th and 15th verse, he himself that spoke tongues, did not understand, can only be said to speak to God. In *spirit he speaketh mysteries*, edifies himself, because in his spirit he is piously and devoutly affected; but he must endeavour that the Church, or people present, may be also edified. Let him then pray for the other gift of *interpreting*, what he speaks, or let another interpret. (Witham) --- *Not to men.* Viz. so as to be *heard*, that is, so as to be understood by them. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *If I come to you, speaking with tongues in this manner, what shall I profit you,* unless in *revelation*, &c. that is, unless I reveal, and expound to you the meaning, by some other gift, as in *knowledge, in prophecy, in doctrine?* To speak tongues only without interpreting, is no ways instructive. He that speaks to me, what I understand not, is not better than *a barbarian to me*, (so the Greeks called those that spoke not their language.) He signifies this inconvenience of not being understood, by the example of instruments, pipes, harps, trumpets, which would not move persons to different affections, nor excite them to different actions, unless the sound, and manner they were played upon, were different; seek, then, and endeavour to make use of the gifts of the Spirit, to *edification of the Church*, or of the hearers. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Of spirits.* Of spiritual gifts. (Challoner)

**Ver. 13.** *Pray that he may interpret.* In order that he may be rendered more useful to the Church, as the martyrs, who prayed for those particular gifts they saw would be most useful for themselves, or their neighbours. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14.** *If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is without fruit:* it may signify without fruit, or profit to others, though some understand, as if by this gift of tongues, they sometimes spoke what they themselves did not understand. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *How shall he that holdeth the place of the unlearned* (literally, an idiot) *say Amen to thy blessing?* When persons speak, or pray, and the ignorant have had no instruction concerning such prayers, they cannot know when to say Amen: and when infidels come into such meetings, where they hear many persons at once speaking many tongues, which are understood by no body, will they not be apt to say, *you are mad?* The like in a manner happened on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples having received this gift, and speaking with tongues, the people hearing them, cried out, they *were drunk*. (Acts ii. 13.) Yet St. John Chrysostom takes notice,



that the fault and madness was in the hearers, not in those who spoke tongues. (hom. xxxvi.) (Witham) --- *Amen*. The unlearned not knowing that you are then blessing, will not be qualified to join with you by saying Amen to your blessing. The use or abuse of strange tongues, of which the apostle here speaks, does not regard the public liturgy of the Church, (in which strange tongues were never used) but certain conferences of the faithful, (ver. 26. &c.) in which, meeting together, the discovered to one another their various miraculous gifts of the Spirit, common in those primitive times; amongst which the apostle prefers that of prophesying before that of speaking strange tongues, because it was more to the public edification. Where also note, that the Latin, used in our Liturgy, is so far from being a strange or unknown tongue, that it is perhaps the best known tongue in the world. (Challoner)

**Ver. 19.** *But in the Church.* The apostle here condemns the vanity of the Corinthians, who made a parade of their gift of tongues. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20-22.** *Tongues are for a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers,* according to what the law (under which he comprehends the prophet Isaías, xxviii. 11.) said: *In other tongues, and other lips, I will speak to this people: and neither so will they hear me.* St. Paul here gives the sense, rather than the words of the prophet, and expounds them of what happened particularly on the day of Pentecost, when the miraculous gift of tongues was designed to strike the unbelieving people with admiration, and to bring them afterwards to the true faith: but when he adds, that *tongues are not for the believers, and that prophecies are not for the unbelievers*, he cannot mean that tongues, used with discretion, may not also be profitable to believers, or that prophecies and instructions may not also be profitable to unbelievers, as well as to the believers; for this would be to contradict what he teaches in this chapter, and particularly (ver. 24.) where he says, that by prophecy the infidel is *convinced*, &c. St. Paul, whose design in all this chapter is to regulate the meetings, that they may be conducted with greater edification, and for the instruction, both of the Christians and unbelievers, thanks God, that he has the gift of tongues more than they, but says, that *in the Church*, or at such Church-meetings, he *had rather*, for the common edification of others, *speak five words, &c. than ten thousand words, &c.* and so he concludes, (ver. 39.) *be zealous to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.* (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *When you come together, &c.* St. Paul here settles the rules, which they are to observe in their meetings: *one hath a psalm*, the Spirit inspiring him with some psalm, or spiritual canticle, whereby to praise God: *another hath the gift of doctrine*, to instruct all there present: *another the gift of tongues*, which he will not have him to make use of, unless when there is one to *interpret*, that all *things may be done in the most profitable manner unto edification.* *Two or three at a meeting may speak with tongues*, if another *interpret.* (Witham)

**Ver. 29-32.** *Two or three*, who have the gift of *prophecy*, may speak by turns in one of these assemblies, and the rest of the prophet shall *judge*, whether he be truly inspired, and speak good doctrine. --- *If any thing be revealed to another sitting by*, let the former, who was standing and speaking, *hold his peace*, which they can do; *for the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*, that is, they are not like men possessed with evil spirits, who have not power to desist, or to be silent; but these who are moved by an impulse of the holy Spirit, have it in their power either to speak or to be silent, as they judge convenient; for the true God is not the God of dissension and confusion, but the God of *peace* and order. (Witham)

**Ver. 34.** *Let women be silent*, and not speak at all in public Church-meetings: and if they would ask any thing, let them ask it at home. (Witham)

**Ver. 36-38.** *Did the word of God first come out from you?* This he says, to check these new preachers, by putting them in mind, that they are not the first, nor the only Christians, and so must conform themselves to the discipline practised in other Churches, especially since, as their apostle, he hath delivered them the *commandments of the Lord.* And *if any man know not*, will not acknowledge, and follow these rules, *he shall not be known*; God will not know, nor approve his ways. The pretended reformers, from the expressions with which the apostle blames the

abuse some new converts made of the gift of tongues, think they have found a plausible argument to reprehend Catholic, for using the same Latin tongue in the Mass, and in the public liturgy. They consider not, whether they have the same reasons to find fault with the present discipline of the Church, as St. Paul then had to blame the Corinthians: whether the circumstances be the same or different: they think it enough that Latin, which is used in the Mass, is a language not understood by a great many ignorant people, and therefore they can say with St. Paul, that *an idiot*, or an unlearned man, knows not when to say *Amen* to what he hears. Two things offer themselves here to the consideration of every man, who is disposed to judge impartially. 1. Whether the same reasons and motives now subsist for blaming the Catholics. 2ndly, whether the conveniences and inconveniences, duly examined, it be found more commendable to perform the public liturgy, in those, which are the most general languages, as in Latin or Greek, or to have all liturgies turned into as many tongues, as the ignorant people understand and speak in different places. As to the first, St. Paul does not absolutely forbid the use of this gift of tongues, that were not understood, even by any one (as hath been already observed). All that he blames is, that many, who valued themselves on this gift, spoke at the same time altogether strange tongues, which none understood, but those who had another gift of the Spirit, called the *interpretation of speeches*, on which account in these meetings there was nothing but confusion, without any profit, edification, or instruction, at a time, and in such circumstances, when instructions were absolutely necessary, both for the new converted Christians, and also for the infidels, who flocked thither as much as the Christians. The case is now quite different, when none but Catholics meet, (especially at the Mass) who have been instructed from their infancy, what they are to believe, as to the mysteries of faith, and what they ought to practise, as to the commandments, the sacraments, prayer, and other points, which they have in their catechisms, or which have been delivered to them by catechetical discourses and instructions. And if they have been happily converted, or are upon their conversion, they are always carefully instructed in the tongue which they understand, as to what they ought to believe, and in the duties of a Christian life. Besides this, all present are frequently instructed by sermons and exhortations, not only on Sundays and holidays, but daily in Advent and Lent, as it is the custom in Catholic countries. I know some of our adversaries have been persuaded, that we preach in Latin to the people; to be convinced of the contrary, let them come and hear us; it is the worst I wish them. As to the sacrifice of the Mass, which none but they who are priests, can offer for the people, of which also a great part, according to the *institution of the Church*, as the Council of Trent observes, (session 22. cap. 5.) is said with a *low voice*: it is not performed in Latin in the Western Church, or in Greek in the East, that the meaning of the words may be concealed, since the same Council has laid an express injunction upon all *pastors*, and upon *all that have care of souls*, that they *frequently*, and *especially on Sundays*, and *holidays*, expound to the people, what *is contained* in the Mass, to wit, the parts, and the ceremonies. See 22nd session, cap. 8.) And this command is again repeated, (session 24. cap. 7.) that they *instruct* the people in their *mother tongue* concerning the divine mysteries and sacraments. All that can read, may find the Mass translated into their own language, and the most ignorant are taught and instructed, that by the different parts are represented the death and sufferings of our Saviour, Christ: they are taught how to offer up at the same time their intention, their heart, and their prayers: to confess themselves sinners before God, as the priest does, how they ought to endeavour to praise, and adore Christ with the blessed spirits in heaven; how they ought to beg graces of God, by saying the Lord's prayer; how they ought, at the same time, at least in spirit and desire, to receive the holy sacrament of the eucharist, with a sincere repentance, with humility and devotion. Cannot all things, then, be done to edification, as St. Paul requires, though the words of the Mass, and public liturgy, be in a language which the ignorant do not understand, but which, of all others, is the most general! Now the second thing to be examined is, whether, all things duly considered, it be better to retain the public Church-offices in Latin, and in those ancient dead languages, as they are called, or to turn the liturgy into as many tongues, as are spoken in different places and countries! Our adversaries, by this new alteration which they have made, have good against the judgment of all Christian Churches, both in the West and East, and in all parts of the world. For as Mons. Simon takes notice, in his Critics, all other Churches (the Protestant only excepted) have judged it expedient, to stick to the words and languages of their ancient liturgies, the Grecians to the ancient Greek, which now the ignorant among them do not understand; the like is

to be said of the ancient Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, &c. And it is also observed, that the Israelites continued the reading of the law and the prophets, in the ancient Hebrew, which the common people of the Jews did not understand after their return from the Babylonian captivity. It is well known that Latin in this part of the world, is more generally spread and known, than any other language whatsoever. It is taught every where in all public schools. It is learnt, not only by the ministers of the Church, but by almost all gentlemen, and by persons of all conditions, the poorer sort only excepted. There is this great convenience, that the same priest can perform all the public Church-offices, in all places and kingdoms where he travels. All the faithful, whithersoever they have occasion to go, meet with the same Mass, and liturgy in the same words abroad, which they were accustomed to hear at home. The same uniformity is every where preserved without change or confusion. But according to the method introduced by the Protestants, the liturgy must be changed into as many different tongues, as there are countries and places, and in almost every century, as we see by experience, languages are liable and subject to considerable changes and alterations. From hence arises a danger of changes, as to the doctrine and belief of the faithful: errors and heresies are the consequences, that follow such frequent changes, especially, when by another false principle of the said reformers, every private man and woman has a right to expound the hard and obscure place of the holy Scriptures, which make up the chief and greatest part of all public liturgies in all Christian Churches. I might ask of the Protestants, whether the ignorant people at lest, and *idiots*, as St. Paul calls them, understand the meaning of the Psalms, when they are sung in Hopkins's rhymes; though they may perhaps know when to say *Amen*, with the rest. Nor yet does every ignorant man know what the word itself, *Amen*, signifies, and therefore knows not what he answers. I cannot but here take notice of an unfair way of proceeding, even in the best Protestant translation, by sometimes adding in this chapter the word *unknown*, and sometimes omitting it. All Catholics are willing to allow, that by the gift of *speaking tongues*, St. Paul means tongues *unknown*, though the word *unknown* is not found so much as once, neither in the Latin, nor even so much as in any one Greek manuscript. The Protestant translators, *for tongues*, have put *unknown tongues*, in all the verses, where St. Paul blames the abuse of this gift; to wit, ver. 2. 4. 13. 14. 19. 27. but they make now such addition, where St. Paul either commends, or permits the speaking in tongues not understood, as ver. 5. where he says, *I would have you to speak tongues*; and ver. 29. where he says, *forbid not to speak tongues*. It is evident, that there is the very same reason for the addition, or the omission equally in all these verses. Is this to translate faithfully? I would by no means judge rashly, even of any adversary; but it looks as if both the addition and omission was with a design of making this popular objection seem to be of greater force against this point of discipline, and practice of the Catholics, and indeed of all Christian Churches. (Witham)

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 15

This chapter is addressed to some among the Corinthians who denied the resurrection: St. Paul, therefore, in order to cure this philosophical opinion, gives them his counsel and advice in this chapter; and lest he might be thought to preach up a new doctrine, in the beginning of his admonitions he informs them that he is preaching no other gospel than what he has always taught, and wherein they believe. (Estius)

**Ver. 7.** *He was seen by James.* The time is not mentioned in the gospels. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *As by one born out of due time;* not born at the ordinary term, meaning after Christ's ascension. He calls himself so out of humility, abortives being commonly imperfect and less than others. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *I have laboured more abundantly.* He does not say better, or that he excelled them; and even as to his labours, he gives the honour to God: *Not I, but the grace of God with me.* (Witham)

**Ver. 13-23.** He brings many reasons to convince them of the resurrection. 1. If *there be no resurrection* for others, *Christ is not risen again*: but his resurrection (as he tells them ver. 4) was foretold *in the Scriptures*. 2. *And if Christ be not risen again,...your faith is also in vain*, this being one of the chief articles of your belief. 3. We should be found guilty of lies and impostures; and yet we have confirmed this doctrine by many miracles. 4. It would follow that you are not freed from your *sins*; i.e. unless Christ, by his resurrection, has triumphed over sin and death. 5. Without a resurrection we Christians, who live under self-denials and persecutions, would be the most miserable of all men, neither happy in this world nor in the next, for the happiness of the soul requires also a happy resurrection of the body. 6. Christ is *the first-fruits*, and the first begotten of the dead, of those *who have slept*: and by his being the first-fruits, it must be supposed that others also will rise after him. 7. As death came by the first man, (*Adam*) so the second man (Christ) came to repair the death of men, both as to body and soul; and without Christ's resurrection, both the souls of men have remained dead in their original sins, and their bodies shall not rise again. (Witham)

**Ver. 24. &c.** *Afterwards the end*; i.e. after the general resurrection of all, will be *the end* of the world. Then Christ shall *deliver up his kingdom*, as to this world, over all men, over the devil and his apostate angels, signified by *principalities* and *powers*; not but that Christ, both as God and man, shall reign for all eternity, not only over his elect but over all creatures, having triumphed by his resurrection over the enemy of mankind, the devil, over sin, and over death, which is as it were the *last enemy* of his elect. At the general resurrection, Christ will present these elect to his heavenly Father, as the fruits of his victory over sin and death; and though as man he came to suffer and die, and was also made *subject* to his *eternal Father*, yet being God as well as man, he is Lord of all, and will make his faithful servants partakers of his glory in his heavenly kingdom. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *The Son also himself shall be subject to him*. That is, the Son will be subject to the Father, according to his human nature, even after the general resurrection; and also the whole mystical body of Christ will be entirely subject to God, obeying him in every thing. (Challoner)

**Ver. 29.** *Who are baptized for the dead*.<sup>[1]</sup> He still brings other proofs of the resurrection. This is a hard place, and the words are differently expounded. 1. Several late interpreters understand a metaphorical baptism, and that to be *baptized for the dead*, is to undertake self-denials, mortifications, and works of penance, in hopes of a happy resurrection; and this exposition agrees with what follows, of *being exposed to dangers every hour*, of *dying daily*, &c. But if this had been the apostle's meaning, he would rather have said, Who baptize themselves. Besides, this exposition is not so much as mentioned in any of the ancient interpreters. 2. Some think that St. Paul tells the Corinthians that they ought not to question the resurrection of the dead, who had a custom among them, if any one died without baptism, to baptize another that was living for him; and this they did, fancying that such a baptism would be profitable to the dead person, in order to a happy resurrection. Tertullian mentions this custom in one or two places, and also St. John Chrysostom on this place. But it does not seem probable that St. Paul would bring any argument of the resurrection from a custom which he himself could not approve, nor was ever approved in the Church. 3. St. John Chrysostom and the Greek interpreters, who generally follow him, expound these words, *who are baptized for the dead*, as if it were the same as to say, who receive baptism with hopes that they themselves, and all the dead, will rise again; and therefore make a profession, when they are baptized, that they believe the resurrection. So that St. Paul here brings this proof among others, that they who have been made Christians, and continue Christians, cannot call in question the resurrection, which they professed to believe in their creed at their baptism, the creed being always repeated before they were baptized. 4. Others, by being *baptized for the dead*, understand those who begged and called for baptism when they were in danger of death, and would by no means go out of this world without being baptized, hoping thereby to have a happy resurrection of their bodies; so that to be baptized for the dead is the same as on the account of the state of the dead, which they were entering into. See St. Epiphanius, hæc. viii. p. 144. Edit Petavii. (Witham) Some think the apostle here alludes to a ceremony then in use: but others, more probably, to the prayers and penitential labours

performed by the primitive Christians for the souls of the faithful departed: or to the baptism of afflictions and sufferings undergone for sinners spiritually dead. (Challoner)

**Ver. 31.** *By your glory.*[2] He seems, especially by the Greek text, to call God to witness, and to protest by the reasons he has to glory or boast in their conversion, that his life is as it were a continual death. Other expound it, I die daily *for your* glory; or, that I may have reason to glory for the progress of the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *With beasts at Ephesus.* He seems to mean, with men as cruel and brutal as beasts: for there is not sufficient reason to think that at Ephesus he was exposed to beasts in the amphitheatre. (Witham) --- Interpreters are divided upon this passage. Calmet is of opinion that St. Paul was exposed in the amphitheatre at Ephesus, but was secured from all injury by the all-powerful hand of God: he produces the testimony of St. John Chrysostom, Theo., St. Ambrose, St. Cyprian, and St. Hilary, all of whom understand this passage in the literal sense. Nicephorus cites a book, entitles *The Travels of St. Paul*, in confirmation of this fact, wherein (he informs us) there is a long account of this transaction. St. Jerome says, that St. Paul was condemned by the governor of Ephesus to be devoured by beasts. Estius seems to maintain the same opinion as Challoner. To inspirit us to combat, it is advisable to turn our eyes frequently to a future life. The brevity of the present is a principle common to the mortality of Jesus Christ, and to that of Epicurus. But how contrary are the conclusions! Why should we not rather say: "Let us watch, and fast, and pray, and do penance, for to-morrow we die; and after that, judgment." --- *Let us eat and drink*, &c. That is, if we did not believe that we were to rise again from the dead, we might live like the impious and wicked, who have no belief in the resurrection. (Challoner)

**Ver. 33.** *Evil communications* (or discourses) *corrupt good manners.* He hints that this error against the resurrection, and the other faults into which they had fallen, were occasioned by the heathen philosophers and other vain teachers among them. (Witham)

**Ver. 35-50.** *How do the dead rise again?* He now answers the objections these new teachers made against the resurrection. St. John Chrysostom reduces them to these two questions: how is it possible for them to rise? and in what manner, or with what qualities, will they rise? To shew the possibility, he brings the example of a grain of wheat, or of any seeds, which must be corrupted, and die as it were in the ground, and then is quite changed, comes up with a *blade*, a stalk, and an ear quite different from what it was when sown, and yet comes to be wheat again, or to be a tree that produces the same kind of fruit: so God can raise *our bodies as he pleaseth*. He also tells them that there are very different bodies, *terrestrial*, and *celestial*, some more, some less glorious, differing in beauty and other qualities, as God pleaseth. As the *sun* is brighter than the *moon*, and as one *star* is *brighter* than another, so shall it be at the general resurrection. But all the bodies of the elect shall be happily changed to a state of *incorruption*. (ver. 42.) Here the bodies even of the just are subject to corruption, to decay, liable to death, but they shall then rise to a state of incorruptibility and immortality: And so he answers the second question, that here every one's body is a weak, sensual, *animal* body, clogged with many imperfections, like that of Adam after he had sinned; but at the resurrection, the bodies of the saints shall be spiritual bodies, blessed with all the perfections and qualities of a glorified body, like to that of Christ after he was risen. --- St. Paul also, comparing the *first man* (Adam) with Christ, whom he calls the second or the *last Adam*, (ver. 45) says that the first Adam was made a *living soul*, (i.e. a living animal, or a living creature, with a life and a body that required to be supported with corporal food) but that Christ was made a *quickening Spirit*: he means, that though he had a true mortal body by his nativity of his Virgin Mother, yet that by his resurrection he had a glorified body, immortal, that needed no corporal food, and that he would also give such spiritual and immortal bodies to those whom he should make partakers of his glory. --- *But not first that which is spiritual*, &c. (ver. 46) that is, both in Adam and in us, and even in Christ, the body was first mortal, which should afterwards be made spiritual and immortal by a happy resurrection. --- *The first Adam* (ver. 47) *was of the earth, earthly*, made of clay, and with such a body as could die, *but the second man* (Christ) *was from heaven, heavenly*: not that he took a body from heaven, as some ancient heretics pretended, but he was heavenly not only because he was the Son of God,

but in this place he seems to be called heavenly even as to his body, after his resurrection, his body being then become spiritual and immortal. --- *Such as is the earthly man, &c.* (ver. 48) that is, as the first man, Adam, was earthly by his earthly and mortal body, so were we and all his posterity *earthly*; but such as *the heavenly man, Christ, was heavenly*, and rose with a heavenly and immortal body; so shall all those be heavenly, to whom he shall give a spiritual, a heavenly, and an immortal body at their happy resurrection. --- *Therefore*, (ver. 49) *as we have borne the image of the earthly man*, (that is, have been made mortal, and also by sin subject to the corrupt inclinations of this mortal body) *so let us bear also the image of the heavenly one*, by a new life imitating Christ, by which means we shall be glorified with him, both as to soul and body. --- *Now this I say*, and admonish you, *brethren*, (ver. 50) *that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God*; i.e. those that lead a sensual and carnal life, nor the corruption of sin, deserve the state of incorruption in glory. (Witham)

**Ver. 51.** *We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed.*[3] This is the reading of the Latin Vulgate, and of some Greek manuscripts, and the sense is, that all both good and bad shall rise, but only the elect to the happy change or a glorified body. The reading in most Greek copies at present is, *we shall not all sleep*, (i.e. die) *be we shall be all changed*: so also read St. John Chrysostom: and St. Jerome found it in many manuscripts from which divers, especially of the Greek interpreters, thought that such as should be found living at the day of judgment should not die, but the bodies of the elect (of whom St. Paul here speaks) should be *changed* to a happy state of immortality. This opinion, if it deserve not to be censured, is at least against the common persuasion of the faithful, who look upon it certain that all shall die before they come to judgment. Some expound the Greek only to signify, that all *shall not sleep*, i.e. shall not remain for any time in the grave, as others who die are accustomed to do. (Witham)

**Ver. 52.** *In a moment, &c.* By the power of the Almighty all shall rise again in their bodies, either to a happy or a miserable resurrection. (Witham)

**Ver. 54.** *Death is swallowed up in victory*, in regard of the saints and the elect, so that it may be said, *O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?* over which the saints shall triumph, and also over sin and hell. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 29. *Qui baptizantur pro mortuis*, Greek: *oi baptizomenoi uper ton nekron*. See St. John Chrysostom, Greek: *om. m.* p. 154. Greek: *epi te pistei taute*, &c.; see Tertullian, lib. de resurrec. carnis chap. 48. and lib. v. . cont. Marcion. chap. 10. and the notes of Rigaltius on these places. See St. Epiphanius, hæc. viii. p. 114. Greek: *epi taute te elpidi*, &c.

[2] Ver. 31. *Morior per vestram gloriam*, Greek: *ne ten umeteran kauchesin*.

[3] Ver. 51. *Omnes quidem resurgemus, sed non omnes immutabimur*; and so some Greek manuscripts have, Greek: *pantes anastesomen*, but in most Greek copies we find, Greek: *pantes men ou koimethesometha, pantes de allagesometha*. See St. Jerome (Ep. ad Minervium Alexandrium, tom. iv. p. 207. et seq. Ed. Ben.) where he gives at large the different opinions and readings. See also his Epist. to Marcella, (tom. iv. p. 166) where he says: *Deprehensi in corpore in iisdem corporibus occurent ci (Christo)*.

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## 1 CORINTHIANS 16

**Ver. 1.** St. Paul had been charged by the apostles at the council of Jerusalem, to collect alms from the faithful of other Churches, for their poor brethren in Palestine. The apostle acquitted himself of his commission with the greatest possible zeal, and he wishes in this chapter to excite the Corinthians to a like generous conduct with the Galatians: (Calmet) a pastoral ordinance this

for alms-deeds, which should be prompt, free, and proportionate to our means. It is just to prefer the wants of the children of the Church to others, particularly in those places whence the light of faith has been received, Jerusalem and Rome.

**Ver. 2.** *On the [1] first day of the week*, which is Sunday, and our sabbath, not the Jewish sabbath, as St. John Chrysostom observes, so that before this time, the apostles had appointed the first day of the week for the worship of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Now I will come.* St. Paul came to Corinth a year after he had written this epistle. Titus, his favourite disciple, arrived at Corinth before St. Paul, and was received with the greatest marks of esteem: by him he sent his second epistle to the Corinthians. (Calmet)

**Ver. 9.** *A gate is opened to me, large and evident;* that is, a fair and good occasion of labouring to convert many, where there are many *adversaries*. (Witham) --- The work of God is carried on by the power of the cross, and in the midst of contradictions and persecutions. If we suffer this to damp our courage, we forget that we are ministers of a crucified master, and ought to wear his livery.

**Ver. 12.** *As to our brother.* St. Paul here made an apology for sending Timothy to them, who was a young man, and not so renowned for eloquence and sanctity as Apollo, informing them that Apollo did not wish to come, perhaps on account of the commotions that were at Corinth at his account. (Estius)

**Ver. 13.** A Christian is a soldier, environed and attacked on all sides by enemies. It is his duty to guard against surprise. He should never abandon the post of faith, nor the fortress of the Church, unless he wish to fall an easy prey to his adversaries. He should fight with courage, and after each attack, carefully repair the breaches made by the enemy, that he may be in a condition to sustain fresh attacks by charity, which is the principle, the soul, the life, and heart of our every action.

**Ver. 15.** *The first-fruits fo Achaia;* the first there converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Which was wanting on your part, they have supplied,* by informing me, and giving me a full account of all. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Let him be anathema,* accursed. *Maran Atha,*[2] which, according to St. Jerome and St. John Chrysostom, signify, the Lord *is come* already, and so is to be taken as an admonition to those who doubted of the resurrection, and is to put them in mind, that Christ, the Judge of the living and the dead, is come already. The Rabbinical writers tells us, there are three curses among the Jews called by different names: that the first was *niddui*, which implied an expulsion from the synagogue for a time; the second was greater, such being quite cut off from the common society, called *Cherem*; the third, *Maran Atha*, the Lord cometh, is coming, or is come, which was followed by exemplary judgments and punishments. Thus Mons. Hure, in his Bible Dictionary, Mr. Legh, in his *Critica Sacra*, and also Mr. Nary. But whether this is better grounded than many other Rabbinical stories, let others judge. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** Happy, thrice happy the pastor, whose life, labours, zeal, and the testimony of his own conscience, embolden him to say with St. Paul, that he loves the flock of Jesus Christ, that he only loves them for Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ, by virtue of the Holy Spirit.

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[1] Ver. 2. Per unam, that is primam Sabbati, *Greek: eis mian sabbaton*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. m., toutesti kuriaken*, p. 530.

[2] Ver. 22. *Maran Atha*, *Greek: maran atha*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: ti de esti maran atha; o kurios emon elthe*, &c. St. Hierom [St. Jerome], *Epist. ad Marcellam*. tom. ii. p. 706, and de

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## 2 CORINTHIANS

### THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE CORINTHIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The subject and design of this second Epistle to the Corinthians, is much the same as of the former. He comforts and congratulates with those who were now reformed by his admonitions. He blames the faulty with apostolical liberty; and being forced to justify himself and his proceedings against the upstart false teachers, he gives an ample account of his sufferings, and also of the favours and graces, which God had bestowed upon him. This Epistle was written not long after the first, (an. 57. [in the year 57.]) some months before that to the Romans, from some place in Macedonia, perhaps from Philippi, as marked at the end of divers Greek copies, though it is observed, that those subscriptions are not much to be relied upon. (Witham) --- In this Epistle St. Paul comforts those who are now reformed by his admonitions to them in the former, and absolves the incestuous man on doing penance, whom he had before excommunicated for his crime. Hence he treats of true penance, and of the dignity of the ministers of the New Testament. He cautions the faithful against false teachers, and the society of infidels. He gives an account of his sufferings, and also of the favours and graces which God hath bestowed on him. (Challoner) --- St. Paul, not being able to come to the Corinthians as soon as he had promised, writes this Epistle to inform them, that it was not through inconstancy, but on account of several weighty reasons, which had hitherto hindered him. Several other reasons, likewise, compelled him to write. For during his absence, several false teachers of the Jews had come amongst them, teaching them that it was necessary to observe the law of Moses, in order to be saved. St. Paul, therefore, first excuses himself, by saying, that the afflictions and troubles he had met with, had hindered him from coming to them. He next orders the fornicator to be restored to favour; after which, he extols his apostleship, forming a comparison between the law of Christ, and of Moses, wherein he blames the false teachers. He then subjoins an exhortation to a pious and holy life, with liberality in their alms, after the example of the Macedonians. As the false teachers had been very industrious in establishing their own reputation, by detracting from that of St. Paul, he enumerates his own sufferings, and the favours he had received from God, shewing that he had much more reason to glory than they; and concludes by exhorting them to correct those faults with which they still remained infected. (Estius) --- This letter may be justly appreciated as a perfect masterpiece of that animated and solid eloquence, which all interpreters so much admire in St. Paul. (Bible de Vence)

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 1

**Ver. 1.** St. Timothy, it appears, had been sent to Corinth to confirm the faithful in the doctrine which they had received from St. Paul. After he had fulfilled this commission, he returned to St. Paul, and gave him an account how they had behaved, and what good effects his first letter had produced. He styles him brother, to conciliate to him the esteem and respect of the Corinthians. This epistle is not merely addressed to the Corinthians, but to all Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital. (Estius) --- Others think that Timothy had left Corinth before St. Paul's first epistle had arrived thither; and that this determined St. Paul to send Titus with another disciple thither. See 2 Corinthians xii. 18. From him St. Paul had the consolation to learn the happy effects produced by



his first letter. See 2 Corinthians vi. 7. 11.

**Ver. 4.** *Wherewith we also are exhorted by God.* The Latin interpreter sometimes translates the same Greek word by *exhorted*, sometimes by *comforted*: so the sense may be, *with which we are comforted by God.* (Witham) --- St. Paul knew that his former letter had afflicted them exceedingly; here he comforts them by telling them that God had filled him with consolation in order to comfort them. The Greek rather signifies, by the consolation with which we are comforted. Either explanation is sufficiently clear, though the latter is stronger. We may here remark the great tenderness St. Paul had for the Corinthians, since he here insinuates that he had received comfort from God merely to communicate it to them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** St. Paul here styles his own sufferings, the sufferings of Christ, to shew that Christ take part, and suffers in all his members. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Though it is generally understood to signify the sufferings undergone for Christ. (Estius) --- If we consider the very intimate union that exists between Jesus Christ, who is the head, and every one of the living members of his body, that is, the Church, that whatever any one suffers, for the cause of truth, Christ is said to suffer, as the Lord said to Saul, why persecutest thou me? and that whatever is given to any indigent brother in the name of a disciple, Christ receives as given to himself, can we want any further proof of the excellence and power of good works, which begin and terminate in charity? (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *Or whether we be exhorted,[1] for your exhortation and salvation.* These words are not in the present Greek copies; the omission is not of moment, being in a manner a repetition of what is in the same verse: the sense is, that this happens to us for your instruction, and that you may be *exhorted*, or *comforted* by our example. This is also signified by the following words, *which makes you bear* (literally, *which worketh the enduring*) *the like tribulations, as we suffer.* (Witham) --- Whatever happens to us, it will always be to your advantage. And certainly it is the greatest comfort when the faithful are in affliction, to see their pastors preaching and planting the faith of Christ, in the midst of afflictions and persecutions. This gives them the greatest courage to bear patiently all adversity, being convinced after the example of their divine master, that *by many tribulations we are to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* (Cajetan)

**Ver. 8.** *That we were weary even of life.[2]* The Greek seems to imply the condition of one, who knows not what way to turn himself, seeing no prospect to avoid the dangers. (Witham) --- The sufferings which we underwent in Asia were so great, that we despaired of escaping even with our life. We were in daily expectation of death; like the criminal, who has been condemned to death, we had no hopes of escaping, but we trusted in God, who has delivered us from all danger, by your intercession, ver. 11. He alludes to the tumult raised at Ephesus, and other afflictions which befell him on that account, which, though not mentioned in the Acts, (chap. xix. 24, &c.) were of such nature as to make him weary of life. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 9.** *The sentence.* Literally, *the answer of death*, by which death seemed unavoidable; and this God permitted to teach us not to *trust*, or confide, *in ourselves*, but in him only, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *That for this gift,[3] or favour, obtained for us by many persons, &c.* The words and construction are obscure, both in the Latin and Greek. It would seem a tautology if translated, *that by many persons thanks may be rendered by many.* Therefore the sense must be, that God must now be thanked by many persons for the benefit in preserving my life, and hearing the prayers of many persons, who before had prayed for my life. (Witham) --- St. Paul in soliciting the prayers of the Corinthians, did not suppose that this was derogatory to Christ's mediation, nor to the hope he had in God. And can it be more dishonourable to God to solicit the aid of saints in heaven than of sinners on earth? Or is it to be supposed, asks St. Jerome, that the intercession of our fellow-men beneath, is more available with God, than the prayers of those, who enjoy the beatific vision above. (Cont. Vigil.)

**Ver. 12.** *And sincerity of God,[4]* which, according to the style of the Scriptures, seems the same

as in great sincerity. --- In the grace of God. and more abundantly towards you: the sense seems to be, that God had wrought more wonders and miracles by him for their conversion, that in other places. (Witham) --- The apostle here indirectly attacks the false teachers, by saying that his doctrine was always the same, in one continued path of sincerity, and that he made no use of the wisdom of this world, like those false doctors, whose whole design was to insinuate themselves into the affections of the Corinthians by speaking what they knew would be agreeable to them. (Estius) --- He declares that the subject of his glory was, the testimony his own conscience afforded him of having uniformly acted in their regard with sincerity and truth.

**Ver. 13.** *What you have read*, in my former letter, or letters, *and known* by my preaching: this he says, to clear himself from the accusation of his adversaries, that his words, preaching, and promises were not to be regarded, saying different things at different times, and promising to come to them, which he had not done. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *When, therefore, I had a mind*, and purposed to come to you, *did I use levity?* was it an effect of levity, of a fickle mind, and of a want of sincerity? or do I purpose and promise things *according to the flesh*, to human motives and interest, which make me say, and unsay again, so that in me is *yes and no*? (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *But God is faithful*: The sense seems to be, as God is faithful, or I appeal to God, who is faithful, that in what I have preached to you, there is not *yes and no*; my doctrine concerning the faith in Jesus Christ, is and was always the same. Whether I, or Silvanus, or Timothy preached the *Son of God*, that is, what we taught concerning the Son of God, was not *yes and no*, was not first one thing, and then another; *but in him was yes only*, that is, in him, and his doctrine, which we have taught, all is *yes*, firm, and unchangeable. --- And *all the promises of God*, of sanctification and salvation, made to us *in him*, by his merits and grace, are equally *yes*, certain, and infallible; and *therefore by him*, and his promises are *Amen to God*, must needs be true, *unto our glory*, will turn to the salvation and glory of his elect in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *It is*, was in him. There was no inconstancy in the doctrine of the apostles, sometimes, like modern sectaries, saying, *It is*, and at other times saying, *It is not*. But their doctrine was ever the same, one uniform *yea*, is Jesus Christ, one *Amen*, that is, one *truth* in him. (Challoner)

**Ver. 20.** The doctrine which the apostle delivered to them was not ambiguous, doubtful, or contradictory, first one thing, then another; on the contrary, it was such, that the apostle could say, (ver. 14.) we are your glory. --- *Amen*. All the promises made by God, with regard to Christ, are fulfilled in him; therefore we may say *Amen*, and give glory to God, through Jesus Christ, who hath fulfilled all his promises. (Calmet) --- One of the distinctive marks, as the holy fathers affirm, between separatists and Catholics is; the former are fond of innovation, changes, and reform, the latter are scrupulously tenacious of what has been delivered from the beginning. See St. Irenæus, lib. i. chap. 18.; Tertullian, de præscript.; St. Basil, ep. 12. Vine: Lyr. See also Les Variations, by Bossuet.

**Ver. 21-22.** This must needs be true, because he is God, *who hath confirmed us with you*, both us and you *in Christ*, in the faith, and grace of Christ crucified, *who hath* anointed us with divine graces, who hath *sealed us*, as it were, by an indelible character, in the sacraments of baptism, and confirmation, and ordination, when we were made ministers of Christ, who in this manner *hath given the pledge* [5] *of his holy Spirit in our hearts*, a sufficient pledge and earnest of his graces in this life, and of the glory he has prepared for us in the next. (Witham) --- By these texts, and Ephesians iv., the Catholic Church teaches, that we are anointed and consecrated to the service of God, and sealed with a spiritual and distinctive mark, called by divines, a *character*, (see St. Jerome in Ephesians iv.; St. Cyril, cateches. 17.) which, as it is indelible, can never be iterated. The same is true of confirmation, and holy orders. See St. Augustine, cont. Parm. chap. xiii. & Conc. Tarrac. chap. vii.

**Ver. 23.** Now as to my not coming to you, *I call God to witness*, that I only deferred my coming

out of kindness to you, *that I came not hitherto to Corinth, to spare you*, when by reason of the disorders among you, I must have been forced to use severities against those who were not yet reformed. --- *Not that we lord it over your faith*, nor desire to treat God's faithful with severity, or by shewing the power that God hath given us: but we rather desire to be *helpers* and promoters of *your joy*, that we may rejoice together with you in God. And now I have this greatest comfort to hear that *you stand steadfast* and firm in the *faith* of Christ. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 6. In the Greek we only read, *Greek: eite de thlibometha, uper tes umon paraklesewos, kai soterias, tes energoumenes en upomone ton auton pathematon, on kai emeis paschomen eite parakaloumetha, uper tes umon parakleseos kai soterias.*

[2] Ver. 8. Ita ut tæderet nos etiam vivere, *Greek: oste exaporethenai.* See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. B.* p. 550.

[3] Ver. 11. Ut ex multorum personis, ejus, quæ in nobis est donationis, per multos gratiæ agantur pro nobis. The Greek is clearer, *Greek: ina ek pollon prosopo, ton eis emas charisma, dia pollon eucharistethe uper emon.*

[4] Ver. 12. Sinceritate Dei, *Greek: eilikrineia Theou*, so montes Dei, i.e. magni.

[5] Ver. 22. Pignus spiritus, *Greek: ton arrabona.* That by receiving the *earnest*, says St. John Chrysostom, p. 662, you may be assured to *receive the whole*.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** St. Paul continues to justify his not coming to them as he promised. He told them that he did not wish to domineer over their faith, but that his whole design was to contribute to their joy, and that he did not wish to visit them as long as any thing remained worthy of correction, lest his presence should only increase their sorrow. And if in his former epistle he made use of strong expressions, it was not through any design to make them sad, but merely to correct them, by which he manifested his great charity for them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *Who is he that should make me glad?* &c. The sense is to be gathered from the circumstances. He speaks of the Corinthian guilty of incest, whom he brought to sorrow and repentance, by excommunicating him in his former epistle, and now St. Paul rejoiceth at his conversion. (Witham) --- The meaning of the apostle is, that if I had come to you in order to make you sorrowful, what pleasure could I have derived from your grief, since you are the only persons who can afford me any, the least comfort? What motives could have influenced me to undertake so disagreeable a mission? This is more fully explained in the following verse, which shows this to be the reason why he had written to them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *And if any one* (he means the same incestuous man) *hath caused grief*, or caused me to grieve, *he hath not grieved me*, that is, not me only, but all the virtuous Christians at Corinth: *but in part, that I may not charge you all* with this fault. The sense seems to be, *but in part*, that is, it was only one man, and some that joined with him, by showing themselves unconcerned for his scandalous crime, so that I do not blame the rest: or as it was *but in part*, that is, it was only a passing trouble for a little time, since by admonitions and severities, he soon repented. (Witham) --- When last I wrote to you, I was in great anguish on account of the crime of the incestuous man; but my grief was moderated by the consideration of the behaviour of the rest of the Church of Corinth, which had remained steadfast in faith and virtue. (St. Gregory and St. Augustine) --- It is not the whole Church of Corinth that has caused me this grief, but only one of you: I say this, that you may not believe that I wished to charge you all with this crime. (Grotius)

**Ver. 6.** *This rebuke already given him, may suffice, and I would have you pardon and comfort him, lest he be overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up [1] and devoured by and excess of grief, so that by the artifices of Satan, which we are acquainted with, it turn to his greater prejudice. I wrote, and proceeded in that manner, to know by experience, how far you are obedient to me, and to the ministers of Christ. (Witham)*

**Ver. 9.** This was another reason why I wrote my former letter to you, viz. to try your obedience, and your attachment to the faith, and that I might know whether the difference of opinion which prevailed among you had prevented you from being obedient. (Calmet) --- Others explain it thus: I have written this second letter to you to try your obedience, and to know if you will pay the same obedience to my orders, when I tell you to receive the incestuous man into your communion, as you did when I told you to separate him from your communion. (Estius and Theodoret)

**Ver. 10.** *I also.* The apostle here granted an indulgence, or pardon, *in the person*, and by the authority of Christ, to the incestuous Corinthian, whom before he had put under penance: which pardon consisted in a release of part of the temporal punishment due to his sin. (Challoner) --- *Now* as you have *pardoned him* by my instructions, and have received him again into your communion, I also *pardon* [2] *him*, and confirm what you have done, *for your sake*, as well as for his, and dispense with any further severities of a longer penance, which he deserved. (St. John Chrysostom) And I do this *in the person of Christ*, by that power and authority derived from Christ, which he left to his apostles, when he said, (Matthew xviii. 18.) *whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven, &c.* not only in the sight of men, says St. John Chrysostom, but in the sight of God, who hath given us this power. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** In the name and in the person of Christ, I ordered him to be excommunicated; in the same, I order him now to be re-admitted into your communion, and this for your sake. We ought to take care that the remedies we employ, do not give occasion to the triumphs of Satan, by throwing the patient into despair, on account of our too great severity. (St. Ambrose) --- The Greek may be translated: that we may not fall into the power of Satan, on account of our too great severity. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12, &c.** *When I was come to Troas....and a door was opened to me,* towards promoting the gospel, which I never neglect, yet I *had not rest in my spirit*; I remained still in a great concern for you, not meeting with *Titus*, from whom I expected with impatience to hear how all things went with you at Corinth: I went on, therefore, bidding them farewell at that time, and deferred the good I might do by a longer stay with them till another time. (Witham) --- Troas is the same town as the ancient Troy or Ilium, famous for its ten years' siege, when it was destroyed by the Greeks in the year 1184, B. Christ [1184 B.C.]. (Estius) --- Here, though there was a great promise of abundant fruit, St. Paul's solicitude to meet Titus, that he might learn from him the effect of his letter, made him depart from Macedonia, where he had much to suffer. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 14.** *Thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph* by his grace, so that we every where *make manifest the odour of his knowledge*, making God known and worshipped, and instructing the people in the faith of Christ, to the advantage and eternal good of those who hearken to us, and *are saved*; but to the greater condemnation of those, who after they have heard of the truth, by their own fault remain obstinate: so that the preaching of the gospel is to some *the odour of death unto death*, when they remain dead in their sins, they incur an eternal death: and to them who are converted, *the odour of life unto life*; they receive the spiritual life of grace in their souls in this world, and an eternal life in the next. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *The odour of death, &c.* The preaching of the apostle, which by its fragrant odour brought many to life, was to others, through their own fault, the occasion of death; by their wilfully opposing and resisting that divine call. (Challoner) --- *And for these things who is so sufficient*, [3] as we whom Christ hath chosen to be the ministers of his gospel? The reading of the Latin Vulgate seems to agree better with the following verse of the next chapter, when he answers

their objection, *Do we then begin again to commend ourselves?* (Witham) --- Who are so fit as we who are chosen by God to fulfil his ministry? If God had not chosen us, how should we have been able to acquit ourselves of so arduous an undertaking? for we did not intrude or thrust ourselves into this ministry. (Calmet) --- Though it is not so difficult for those to preach the gospel who corrupt its doctrines, who weaken its truths, who disguise its obligations, and who mix the word of God with human inventions in order to be more esteemed, or for the sake of filthy lucre, like those who mix and adulterate their wines, in order to be the greater gainers. (St. John Chrysostom) --- But we preach the word in all sincerity, as on the part of God, in the presence of God, and in the Spirit and person of Jesus Christ. (Bible de Vence) --- In this grand work all may justly tremble, for who is fit? as we read in the Greek.

**Ver. 17.** *We are not as many false doctors and preachers, who adulterate [4] the word of God, by mixing human doctrine, to be more esteemed, or for gain-sake.* The expression is metaphorical, from the custom of those who mix and adulterate wines, says St. John Chrysostom, for their greater gain and advantage. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 7. Ne forte....absorbeatur, *Greek: katapothē, absorbeatur, deglutiatur.*

[2] Ver. 10. In persona Christi, *Greek: en prosopō Christou*, [not only before Christ] and St. John Chrysostom says, *Greek: os tou Christou keleuontos.* Christo jubente, though he had not done sufficient penance, nor deserved it: *Greek: ou gar epeide axios esti, oude epeide archousan metanoian epedeixato.*

[3] Ver. 16. Et ad hæc quis tam idoneus? but in the Greek without *tam*; *Greek: kai pros tauta tis ikanos.*

[4] Ver. 17. Adulterantes, *Greek: kapeleuontes*, cauponantes; upon which St. John Chrysostom, p. 576, *Greek: otan tis notheue ton oionon.*

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** The apostle had been obliged, in different parts of his first epistle, to say some things to his own advantage, in order to maintain the dignity of his ministry against false teachers, who had endeavoured to lessen his authority. He is again obliged to shew the excellency of his ministry, and the superiority of the gospel over the law of Moses. (Theodoret) --- We have not need, he says, of commendatory letters, like those false teachers: we have only to say that we founded the Church of Corinth, and we shall be sufficiently known. Your religion, your piety, and your virtues are renowned in the whole world. (ver. 2.) This is our letter: we have no need to speak: the effects speak for themselves. But still this is not our doing; for we are not sufficient to think any thing of ourselves. (ver. 5.) This letter is not of our writing; we could only do the same as Moses in the old law, prepare the tables, (ministered by us) it was God himself that wrote the ten commandments, and it is God himself that has written this our letter, by implanting his faith in your hearts. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *You are our epistle*, better, and of greater force, than any commendatory epistle, *written* and engraven in my heart, by the love and affection I bear you. You may also be looked upon as the *epistle of Christ*, because of your zeal for the Christians religion, written upon the soft and *fleshy tables* of your tender affections, with which you have received, and kept his precepts; and not like the precepts of the law, which were engraven *on tables of stone*, which the hard-hearted Jews did not keep. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** Though the Scriptures be of the Holy Ghost, the proper book of Christ's doctrine is in the

hearts of the faithful, the true mansions of the holy Spirit. Hence St. Irenæus says: "If the apostles had left no writings, ought we not to follow the order of tradition they delivered to the persons to whom they committed the Churches? How many barbarous nations have received and practised the faith without any thing written in ink and paper? (lib. iii. chap. 4.)

**Ver. 5-6.** *To think any thing of ourselves*, that may deserve a reward in heaven. --- But Christ hath *made us fit ministers* of his New Testament by the Spirit: for the letter of the Old Testament killeth, but the Spirit of the New Testament giveth life. (Witham) --- *The letter*. Not rightly understood, and taken without the spirit. (Challoner) --- This verse, (6th) refers to that in the last chapter, where he says: *And for these things who is so fit?* Who is so capable of such a ministry? It is God alone who gives us strength, light and grace. I am far from giving a part only to God, and a part to myself. It all exclusively belongs to him. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 7.** *Now if the ministration of death*: he meaneth the former<sup>[1]</sup> law, which by giving them a greater knowledge, and not giving graces of itself to fulfil those precepts, occasioned *death*, was notwithstanding *glorious*, accompanied with miracles on Mount Sinai, and so that the Israelites, when Moses came down from the mountain, could not bear *the glory of his countenance*, which he was forced to cover with a veil, when he spoke to them. Shall not the *ministration of the Spirit* in the new law, which worketh our sanctification and salvation, *abound* with much greater *glory*? especially since the old law was to be *made void*, and pass away. --- *Neither was that glorified*, or to be esteemed glorious, in comparison of the new law, the blessings of the new so far surpassing those of the old law. (Witham) --- If the law of Moses, written on tables of stone, which was only able to cause death, inasmuch as it gave us light sufficient to know what was right, though it did not give us strength or graces to comply with the obligations imposed by it; if this law, nevertheless, was accompanied with so much glory, that Moses was obliged to put a veil over his face, what must we think of the *ministry of the Spirit*, and of the glorious duties of the apostleship? How ought our glory to be manifest, and who is fit for such an undertaking. If I thus extol the excellency of my ministry, do not imagine that I attribute any thing to myself. I am unworthy of this office, which so far surpasseth that of Moses, that his glory (ver. 10.) could not be truly called glory, when compared with this of ours, which so far excelleth his. (Calmet) --- The letter of the New Testament also, not truly taken or expounded by the Spirit of God, which is in his Church, must in the same manner be said to kill. See St. Augustine, serm. 70. & 100. de tempore. & l. de spir. & lit. chap. 5. 6. & dein.

**Ver. 12.** *Having therefore such hope, we use much confidence* and assurance, and need not conceal God's promises, nor put a *veil over our face*, as Moses did, the children of Israel not being able to *look on the face*<sup>[2]</sup> of that which is *made void*, meaning on that passing glory of Moses, to whom the law was given, and of that law, and all that belonged to it, which was only to last till the coming of Christ, and which is now made void. The reading of the ordinary Greek is now different, viz. that they *looked* not on the *end* of that which is now made void, meaning by the *end*, on Christ, who was the end of the law, which now by his coming is abolished and made void, as it was always designed to be. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** The apostle here informs the Corinthians that the apostles speak with confidence, without any veil, discovering to men mysteries hidden from the foundation of the world; not like Moses, who put a veil on his face that the Israelites *might not look steadfastly*, or might not discover the weakness and short duration of the law, which was represented by the light that surrounded his face, and which quickly passed away. St. Paul here give the allegorical explanation of the light and veil on the face of Moses. (Estius)

**Ver. 14-15.** *But the senses and minds* of the Jews have been *dulled*, hardened, and blinded, so that *to this day* we may say the veil remains over their eyes and minds, and *hearts*; that is, the greatest part of them understand not Moses' books, prophecies, and those things that were figures of Christ. But they shall understand them, and the veil shall be *taken off*, when they shall be converted before the end of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Now the Lord is a Spirit.* Many expound it, *the Spirit is the Lord.* And where this Lord and this Spirit is, *there is liberty*; i.e. by this Spirit, they who are sanctified are freed from the slavery of sin and the devil. (Witham) --- We must recollect what he had said before, that the letter killeth and that the Spirit giveth life; that by the Spirit was meant the gospel, and by the letter was meant the law of Moses. Here he says that God is the Spirit, in opposition to the law of Moses; that he is the Author of the liberty of the children of God, in the new law; that in the new law are found the true adorers in spirit and truth, in opposition to the spirit of servitude which animated the Jews. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18.** *We all, beholding,*[3] &c. i.e. we who have been called to the faith of Christ, have received a greater knowledge; and we hope and believe to be hereafter *transformed into the same image*, and to be in some measure like unto God, whom we shall see and enjoy, when we pass from the less glory of grace and sanctification in this life, which is the seed of glory, to the state of a more perfect glory and happiness in heaven, says St. Augustine. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 7. *Ministratio mortis, Greek: diakonia thanatou.* Thus, says St. John Chrysostom, he calls the law, *Greek: ton nomon legei.* p. 584.

[2] Ver. 12. *In faciem ejus quod evacuatur;* but the common Greek copies, and also St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: eis to telos, in finem.*

[3] Ver. 18. St. Augustine, *de gloria fidei in gloriam speciei, de gloria, qua Filii Dei sumus, in gloriam, qua similes ei erimus, quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est.*

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 4

**Ver. 1.** The apostle, having in the last chapter shewn the excellence of his ministry above that of the law, proceeds to inform them of his own labours, &c. in order to destroy the credit which the false teachers had acquired amongst the Corinthians, and to caution them against any attempts that these teachers might make to destroy what had caused St. Paul so much trouble to effect. But he still refers all to God. As for these false teachers, what Churches had they founded? what persecutions have they endured? (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** The apostle here brings another proof of the sincerity of his preaching, viz. the success with which it is attended: And he says, if there be any who have not yet received it, that is their own fault. For had they been as eager to receive it, as we have been to announce it to them, the whole world had long since been converted. (Theodoret)

**Ver. 4.** *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers.*[1] Thus the words are placed, both in the Latin and Greek text, so that the true God seems to be called the *God of this world*, as he is elsewhere called *the God of heaven, the God of Abraham.* God, says St. John Chrysostom, *blinded*, that is, permitted them to be blinded. Others translate, *in whom God hath blinded the minds of the infidels of this world;* so that *this world* may be joined with *unbelievers*, and not with *God*: and by the *God of this world*, some understand the devil, called sometimes *the prince of this world*, that is, of the wicked. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *The light to shine out of darkness.* He alludes to what is related at the first creation, when God divided *the light from darkness.* (Genesis i. 4.) --- *In the face of Christ Jesus*, which may signify in the person of Christ, who was the *true light enlightening every man, that comes into this world.* (John i. 9.) (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *We are straitened.*[2] This, by the Greek, seems the sense of the Latin word, which is

taken to signify, one perplexed, and in a doubt. See John xiii. 22.; Acts xxv. 20.; Galatians iv. 20.) (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *That the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies*, when we suffer, and undertake voluntary sufferings for his sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Death worketh in us*, when we are under persecutions, and dangers of death, *and life in you*, who live in ease and plenty. (Witham) --- The preaching of the gospel, which we undertake in such a disinterested manner, and which exposes us to so many dangers, is the case of death to us, but procures you all kinds of advantages. You tranquilly enjoy the fruit of our labour, though we do not envy you this happiness, because we hope one day to enjoy the reward of our labours. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *We also believe*, &c. That is, we have the like faith as David, when he spoke in that manner; we hope and believe, God will deliver us, or at least raise us up from the dead with Jesus. (Witham)

**Ver. 15. &c.** *For all things*, that we suffer, *are for your sakes*, that many may be brought to give thanks, and to praise God for eternity. This encourages us not *to fail*, nor faint in the cause of God, under these *momentary* and *light tribulations*, which mark in us above measure, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. See the Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Worketh*. In the Greek, *Greek: katergazetai*, which the English Bible of the year 1577 falsely renders by *prepareth*, unwilling to allow, with the apostle, that tribulation worketh eternal glory. The ardour with which the apostle speaks is sufficient to inspire the most timid with courage. A life full of crosses, labours, persecutions, injuries, &c. he call momentary and light, if compared with the eternal, immense, and incomprehensible glory prepared for us. (St. Augustine) --- All earthly substance, compared with the happiness of heaven, is rather a loss than a gain. This life, when put in comparison with that to come, is rather a death than life. (St. Gregory in Evangel.)

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[1] Ver. 4. In quibus Deus hujus sæculi excæcavit mentes infidelium, *Greek: en ois o Theos tou aionos toutou etuphlose ta noemata ton apiston*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. e.* p. 594. lin. 11. says, it should be read thus: *Greek: anagnosteon, oti ton apiston tou aionos toutou, etuphlosen o theos [] oemata*.

[2] Ver. 8. Aporiamur, *Greek: aporoumenoi*, from *Greek: a* and *Greek: poros*, transitus. See Mr. Legh.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 5

**Ver. 1.** *Of this habitation*. [1] In the Greek, of this *tabernacle*; i.e. of the body. St. John Chrysostom take notice that a *tabernacle*, or *tent*, is not to dwell in for a long time, but only to lodge in for a while, as this life is short; but the *building* God has prepared for his elect in heaven, is for eternity. (Witham) --- But, although the hopes of possessing the eternal mansion consoles us interiorly, and supports us under the pressure of evil, the obligation we have of purchasing it, even at the expense of our lives, does not fail to afflict us. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** *To be clothed over*, signifying the natural desire of men have not to die, but to be changed without dying to a happy state in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *that we any be found clothed, not naked*, [2] not divested of the body, as before; i.e. we



desire immortal happiness without dying: though some expound it, *not naked*; i.e. not deprived of the glory we hope for. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *He that maketh us for this very thing, (literally, to this same thing ) is God, who created us to be eternally happy, who hath given us the earnest of the Spirit.* See Chap. i. ver. 22. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *We are absent from the Lord, and as it were pilgrims.* He compares the condition of men in this mortal life with that of pilgrims far from their own beloved country, yet with hopes to arrive there, which makes them willing to undergo dangers, and makes Christians even resigned to death, to a separation of body from the soul, that they may *be present with the Lord*, and enjoy him. But let every one reflect that he must be judged, and receive a reward or punishment *according* to his works. (ver. 10.) (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** It is only by faith we now walk in this foreign land towards God; we do not as yet feast on Him by any clear view. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 11.** *Knowing, therefore, the fear of the Lord, and how dreadful a thing it is to appear at his tribunal, we endeavour to exhort men to fear and to worship him: and this intention is made known to God, who sees our heart: and I hope our sincere manner of asking and preaching is also known to your consciences.* (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *We commend not, nor desire to commend ourselves, but they who may do harm to others, and to the progress of the gospel, make it necessary to speak what may give you an occasion to answer their objections, and even to glory in my behalf* against those who *glory in face*, in outward appearances of learning and talents, but *not in heart*, being sensible themselves that they have no solid grounds of boasting in this manner. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *For whether we be transported in mind, and out of zeal for the good of others seem to exceed in speaking of ourselves, it is to God, for God's honour and that of his ministers: or whether we be more moderate,[3] (literally, sober ) that is, if I speak not, even what with truth I might, of my own actions, it is to you, to give you an example of modesty and humility.*

**Ver. 14.** *For the charity of Christ, the love of God, the love that Christ has shewn to me and all mankind, and a return of love due to him, presseth me on, is the motive of all that I do; because I consider that if one, our Redeemer Christ Jesus, died for all, then all were dead, and had been lost in their sins, had not Christ come to redeem us.* Thus St. Augustine in many places, proving original sin against the Pelagians. Divers interpreters add this exposition, *therefore all are dead*; that is, ought to die, and by a new life look upon themselves as dead to sin, which is connected with what follows in the next verse. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *And Christ died for all, (not only for the predestinate or the elect) that they also, who live, may not now live to themselves; that they may not follow their own inclinations of their nature, corrupted by sin, but may seek in all things the will of Christ, their Redeemer, their Lord, to whom they belong, who died and rose again for them.* (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Wherefore, henceforth we know no man according to the flesh; i.e. having our thoughts and hearts fixed upon Christ, as he is risen, and has prepared for us an immortal life, we know not, i.e. we do not esteem any thing in this mortal life, nor any man according to any human considerations of this life; we regard not whether they are Jews, and the sons of Abraham, or Gentiles; nay, if we have known and esteemed Christ, as descending from Abraham and David, now we know him so no longer, nor considering him as born a mortal man, but as he is risen immortal, and will bless us with an immortal and eternal glory.* (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *If then any be in Christ, &c.* The sense seems to be, if by believing in Christ we are become as it were new creatures, rescued by his grace and his Spirit, the *old things are passed away*, we must renounce all former carnal affections, all sin and all errors in which either Jews or

Gentiles lived. --- *Behold all things are made new*: the New Testament succeeds to the Old, the law and doctrine of Christ to the law of Moses, the Christian Church to the Jewish Synagogue, truth and grace to types and figures, &c. (Witham) --- With the renovated Christian all his thoughts, sentiments, inclinations, and actions, are new.

**Ver. 18.** *But all things* (all these blessings of grace and glory) *are of God*, who hath sent his only divine Son, by whom *he hath reconciled us to himself*, by his incarnation and death for our redemption. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Not imputing*, i.e. truly taking away our sins, *blotting out the handwriting of the decree which was against us,...fastening it to the cross*, as it is said, Colossians ii. 14. And to us, who are his apostles and the ministers of his gospel, he *hath imparted and committed this word of reconciliation*, by the preaching of his doctrine, and the administration of his sacraments, &c. In these functions we act and we speak to you as the *ambassadors of Christ*; we speak to you in his name, we represent his person, when we exhort you to *be reconciled to God*. "He that heareth you, heareth me." (Luke x. 16.) (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** Be not deaf to this voice, harden not your hearts, suffer yourselves to be moved to the charity of God: it is immense, it is infinite. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 21.** *Him* (Christ) *who knew no sin*, (who had never sinned, nor was capable of sinning) *he* (God) *hath made* [4] *sin for us*. I had translated, with some French translators, *he hath made a sacrifice for sin*, as it is expounded by St. Augustine and many others, and grounded upon the authority of the Scriptures, in which the sacrifices for sins are divers times called sins, as Osee iv. 8. and in several places in Leviticus, by the Hebrew word *Chattat*, which signifies a sin, and is translated a victim for sin. But as this is not the only interpretation, and that my design is always a literal translation of the text, not a paraphrase, upon second thoughts I judged it better to follow the very words of the Greek, as well as of the Latin text. For besides the exposition already mentioned, others expound these words, *him he hath made sin for us*, to signify that he made Christ like unto sinners, a mortal man, with the similitude of sin. Others that he made he reputed a sinner; *with the wicked was he reputed*; (Mark xv. 28.) God having *laid upon him all our iniquities*. (Isaiah liii. 6.) --- *That we might be made the justice of God in him*; that is, that we might be justified and sanctified by God's sanctifying grace, and the justice we receive from him. (Witham) --- *Sin for us*. That is, to be a *sin-offering*, a victim for *sin*. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 1. Habitationis, Greek: *tou skenous*.

[2] Ver. 3. *Si tamen vestiti, non nudi inveniamur*, Greek: *eige kai endusamenoï*: some read, Greek: *ekdusamenoï*. See St. John Chrysostom.

[3] Ver. 13. *Sive enim mente excedimus, Deo, sive sobrii sumus, vobis*, Greek: *eite gar exestemen, theo eite sophronoumen, umin*. See Annotation on Mark iii. 21. p. 147. [There is an applicable annotation in this commentary on Mark iii. 21. but the page reference is unknown.]

[4] Ver. 21. *Pro nobis peccatum fecit*, Greek: *uper emon amartian epoiesen*. See St. Augustine, lib. de pec. Orig. chap. 32. serm. 48. de verbis Dei. nunc 134. tom. v. p. 655. and Serm. vi. de verb. Apost. chap. 8. Serm. clv. t. 5. p. 745.; Epist. ad Honoratum 120, nunc 140. chap. 30. tom. ii. p. 450, &c.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 6

**Ver. 1.** *We helping*, or in the Greek, *working together*, that is, with God, as employed by him, or

as his ministers, and ambassadors, we *exhort* you not to *receive* the grace of God in vain, by resisting his interior graces, by an idle, or a wicked life. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Now is the day of salvation*, by the coming of your Redeemer. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** In this, and in the following verses, St. Paul shews his anxious solicitude not to give any, the least occasion of scandal, lest some reproach might fall upon the ministry of the gospel: for nothing is more likely to cast a blemish on the sanctity of religion, than the want of conduct in any of its ministers. If what they say be true, why do their own lives correspond so little with what they say. This will be the cry of all libertines. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8.** The apostles maintained the character, and fulfilled the duties of the ministers of Christ, equally in prosperity and adversity; they continued to speak the truth, though regarded by the Jews as seducers; exposed to all kinds of dangers, they relied on God, who preserved them, though in the midst of dangers, and of death itself. Though they possessed nothing in this world, yet God never permitted them to remain in want: his providence procured for them all things necessary. Though they had nothing in their possession, yet they procured relief for others, by the alms, of which they were made the disposers, though this latter part is generally understood of the spiritual riches, which they bestowed upon their auditors. (Estius)

**Ver. 11. &c.** Our *mouth is open* to speak with freedom and confidence. --- *Our heart is enlarged*, dilated, as it were, with the warmth of love and charity. --- *But you are straitened in our own bowels*; you have not the like charity and love for me, nor for all your brethren, and for all mankind, &c. (Witham) --- The apostle here complains, that the Corinthians have not the same affection for him, which he has for them: as if he should say, however enlarged your heart may be, through the love you have for me, it can never equal the ardour of my love for you. He alludes to those who followed some false teachers, of whom he says a little after: Though I love you more, I am less loved. --- *But having the same recompense*, by a just return have the same affection for me, as I have for you. (St. John Chrysostom) --- Let your heart be dilated for me, and receive the advice I give you as coming from a father, who most tenderly loves his children. (Haydock)

**Ver. 14.** *Bear not the yoke together with unbelievers*. He does not mean, that they must wholly avoid their company, which could not be done, but not to have too intimate a friendship with them, not to marry with them, to avoid their vices. *Be ye separate....touch not the unclean thing*. He does not speak of meats, clean and unclean, according to the law of Moses, nor of legal uncleannesses, but what is sinful under the new law of Christ, and would defile the soul, as idolatry, fornication, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** Such as have cast off the yoke of God are called children of Belial. (John viii. 44.) *Belial*, in its radical signification, means without yoke. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** The apostle here blames the too great affection the Corinthians had for the Gentiles, who sometimes invited them to their religious feasts, at which were eaten meats which had been offered to idols, and which gave scandal both to the Christians and Gentiles. To draw them from these feasts he tells them, that they are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that consequently they ought not to make themselves the temples of devils, by eating of the sacrifices of devils. (Calmet) --- St. Paul, in this and the foregoing verses, clearly shews that the faithful ought not to frequent, on any account, the tabernacles of those who have left the Church. In the old law, Moses was ordered to command the ancients of Israel, on the part of God, to *depart from the tents of those wicked men, lest they be involved in their sins*. (Numbers xvi. 27.)

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**Ver. 1.** *Having, therefore, these promises*, mentioned just before, that God would be a *father* to us, &c. let us *cleanse ourselves from all filth or defilement of the flesh, and of the spirit*, that is, from all kind of sins. It is not without good grounds, that St. Thomas Aquinas, and the divines in the schools, tell us, that some sins, as those of impurity, gluttony, and drunkenness, may be called *carnal sins*, bring disorders that in a particular manner affect and defile the body: and that (though all sins whatsoever defile the soul, and when they are such as are called mortal, bring a spiritual death to the soul, by depriving her of the grace of God) other kinds of sins may be called *spiritual sins*, their malice and disorder affecting, and residing, as it were, in the mind or *spirit* of man; such are all the sins of pride, envy, idolatry, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Receive us.*[1] This, according to St. John Chrysostom and others, is the same as what he said before, *be enlarged or dilated in heart*, that is, have a love, and true charity, and a zeal for us, and for the ministers of the gospel. --- *We have injured no one*, &c. He perhaps hints at the ways and proceedings of the false teachers among them. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *I speak not this to your condemnation*; he means not to condemn them in general, though some had been blameable. --- *Great is my glorying*. I have great *joy* in the greatest part of you. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Our flesh*, that is, I myself, *had no rest*, because of the concern I was in about you, after I had written my last letter. (Witham) --- *Combats without, fears within*. Openly persecuted by the pagans, by the Jews, and by false brethren, I was tormented in my interior, by the apprehensions and fears I have just related to you. I was under continual apprehension, that my letter had been written in too severe a tone. I was in doubt whether the incestuous man would submit to the sentence of excommunication, and censure pronounced against him. And I said with myself, will not false teachers undo, and render fruitless all my endeavours to benefit the Church? Will not my letter alienate their minds from me? (Calmet) --- Our body had no ease, assailed with a deluge of evils from without, by the enemies of the gospel from within, by fears of new persecutions. (Menochius)

**Ver. 6-7, &c.** *God....comforted us by the coming of Titus*, and with the joyful news he brought me, of the submission and repentance of the incestuous man, and of the good state you are in, of *your earnest desire* to see me. Now I have no reason to repent, that I wrote to you pretty sharply; though my letter *troubled* you, through the concern you were in on account of the incestuous man, yet both *his sorrow*, and yours for his sake, will turn to his, and your greater advantage, with a lasting repentance, such as a true sorrow produces, when it is from God. I see the good effects, by the apology or defence you make for yourselves, by your zealous *indignation*,[2] and, as it were, *revenge* against sin, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Now I rejoice*, &c. I should have been inconsolable, had my letter made you sad, without producing the salutary effect intended by it; but I now rejoice that it caused a sorrow and sadness productive of the great advantages you have reaped from it. Thus in every sentence St. Paul shews the solicitude of a father, seeking nothing but the advancement of his spiritual children. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *For the sorrow*, &c. Sorrow for the loss of temporal goods, such as friends, riches, honours, &c. is productive of no good effects; but on the contrary, it ruins the constitution, exciting in the soul emotions of anger, murmuring, revenge, and brooding melancholy. It moreover betrays an inordinate attachment to creatures. But sorrow for our own sins, and for those of others, sufferings which we endure for the glory of God, work penance unto salvation, of which we shall never repent. For tears shed in prayer unto God are sweeter, says St. Augustine, (Psalm cxxvii.) than any pleasure that can be procured from the stage, &c. The tears of the saints are like sweet wine, which inebriate those who love God. (St. Augustine, Psalm lxxxi.) --- Contrition, or a hearty sorrow for sin, and not faith alone, as some pretend, is essential to salvation.

**Ver. 12.** *I wrote to you not on the account, &c.* That is, not only on his account, or the account of his father, who suffered the injury, (by which his father seems to have been then alive) but also to demonstrate the care and solicitude I have for you. I was also overjoyed to find that Titus was so well received by you, with *fear* and trembling, that is, with so great respect, and submission to him. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** After these proofs of your charity, and the uprightness of your heart, I can reprehend and correct you, exhort and praise you, without fear of my reprehensions separating you from me, without apprehension that my recommendations will prove false, or my confidence vain; I now reckon you as persons entirely devoted to me, and whose affection towards me will never cease. (Calmet) See Grotius, Estius, &c. &c. --- I therefore rejoice, as we read in the Greek, after this trial, that you will refuse me nothing I ask of you: and this my confidence I shall shew, by asking you to contribute to the wants of the distressed brethren in Jerusalem, who have suffered so much for their religion.

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[1] Ver. 2. *Capite nos, Greek: choresate emas.* St. John Chrysostom says, hom. xiv., *Greek: toutesti philesate emas.* Others think the sense is, receive and understand the instruction I give you.

[2] Ver. 7. *Desiderium, Greek: epipothesin.* St. John Chrysostom says, *Greek: oude epithumian all epipothesin.*

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 8

**Ver. 1.** *Grace of God,[1] that hath been given in the Churches of Macedonia.* It was certainly the grace of God, that moved the Macedonians to make those charitable contributions for the relief of their poor Christian brethren in Judea, which St. Paul now speaks of: and therefore with those who seem the most exact translators, (even with the most approved Protestant translation) I have, according to the letter, put the *grace of God*, rather than the godly charity, as others would have it, whom I had once followed, and which I think probable, taking the *grace of God*, for a great grace, a great charity, or a great benevolence. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Poverty hath abounded, &c.* The sense seems to be, that in their great poverty, they shewed the riches of *their simplicity*, that is, of a sincere, willing, and charitable heart. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Begging of us the grace, &c.* We may translate, *benevolence*, or *charity*, meaning their charitable alms or contributions. It also may be called a grace, a favour, or a charity, which they did for the poor. He exhorts them to these charitable contributions by the example of Christ, who being the God of glory, made himself the lowest and poorest of men to enrich us with grace and glory. (Witham) --- *Towards the saints.* The saints whom St. Paul is here speaking of, are the faithful of Jerusalem, who had been deprived of all their property at the beginning of their conversion, by their countrymen, for their steady adherence to the Christian faith, and were now reduced to the greatest want. It is for the support of their brethren in Palestine that the charitable contributions here mentioned by St. Paul, were raised in the Churches of Macedon. (Calmet) --- In the Greek we read, entreating us to receive the alms which they offered as a contribution to the charitable fund destined for the saints, or faithful, at Jerusalem. See Romans xv. 25. 26. and 1 Corinthians xvi. 1. 3.

**Ver. 5.** *They gave their own selves.* That is, they resigned themselves and families to the care of Providence for the necessities of life, begging that the apostle would receive their alms, which exceeded even their means. (Calmet) --- And by the will of God they also gave themselves to us,

that we might dispose of them, and of all that belonged to them, as we should judge proper. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 6.** *We desired Titus.* Having experienced the benevolence and generosity of the faithful of Macedon, St. Paul dismisses his faithful disciple, Titus, to exhort the Corinthians to imitate the example of their brethren in Macedon, laying before their eyes, in the following verses, the charity of Christ, who reduced himself to the greatest poverty and indulgence, to shew us an example of humility and charity.

**Ver. 10.** *Began not only to do, but also to be willing.* The sense seems to be, that they not only began the last year to do it, to contribute, but that they were the first that had this will, and began it of their own accord, by a motion of their own will. And therefore in the next chapter (ver. 2.) he *boasted of their ready mind to the Macedonians*, and that their zeal or emulation had incited a great many. (Witham)

**Ver. 12-13.** He tells them that it is the *will* that chiefly makes their charity *acceptable* to God, who sees the heart. And that the design is not to make others live at *their ease*, in a richer condition than those who give, but to make a kind of *equality*, their brethren in Judea being now in great poverty and want. (Witham) --- God regards two things in our alms: first, the zeal and good-will with which we give our alms; secondly the greatness of our charities, that is, if they be proportionate to our means. If you have little, give a little, but with good-will; if you have much, give also much, but with equal benevolence and zeal. God measures the extent of our charity by the greatness of our zeal, not requiring of us what we have not, but what we have to spare, relieving others, without overcharging ourselves. (Bible de Vence) --- Yielding our superfluities, that the poor may not want necessities. (Menochius)

**Ver. 14.** *This present time, let your abundance, &c.* The sense, according to some interpreters is, that the time may perhaps come, when they in Judea may supply the wants of those in Achaia in the same kind. Others rather understand it of a communication of spiritual for temporal goods, that your alms, by the assistance of those who will pray for you, and your charities, may obtain for you the spiritual riches of grace, which every one stands chiefly in need of. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *He that had much, &c.* The words were spoken of those who gathered the manna. (Exodus xvi. 18.) Every one was there ordered to gather such a particular measure, called a gomer, and they who for fear of wanting, gathered more, found they had no more than the measure they were ordered to take, and they, who as it happened, took less, still found they had their measure of a gomer. By this example, St. Paul exhorts them to contribute to the relief of their brethren, with confidence in God's providence, and without fear of wanting themselves. (Witham)

**Ver. 16. &c.** The apostle then tells them, that he has *sent Titus*, and two other brethren of known probity and honesty, lest any one should suspect, that he, or they should turn these charitable contributions to their own profit and advantage by enriching themselves, *that no one*, saith he, *might find fault with us in this abundance, which is managed by us.* (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Brother, whose praise is in the gospel, through all the Churches.*[2] It may either signify in writing or in preaching the gospel, so that though St. Jerome expound this of St. Luke, who wrote his gospel, (but probably not till after this time) yet St. John Chrysostom rather understands it of Barnabas, by the words that follow, *who was ordained by the Churches companion of our travels.* Others also guess it might be Silas or Silvanus. Who the third brother was, is also uncertain. (Witham) --- Commentators vary in their opinions upon the person here mentioned. St. John Chrysostom and Theo. are of opinion, that this person is St. Luke or Barnabas; St. Jerome also thinks that it must be St. Luke the evangelist.

**Ver. 22-23.** *With much confidence in you, either for Titus, &c.* Some expound it of *the confidence* which this the third *brother* had in the Corinthians, but it seems rather to be understood of the

confidence which St. Paul himself had in them, that they would shew great respect to Titus, and to the other brethren whom he sent. He concludes, (ver. 24.) by exhorting them to these charitable contributions, which he calls the *manifestation* of their charity, in the *sight of the Churches*. Literally, in *the face of the Churches*, in your public meetings. (Witham) --- Most commentators understand here Apollo, but without any certainty. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Gratiam Dei*. *Greek: ten charin tou Theou*. The same word gratia and *Greek: charis* is used, ver. 4. 6. 7. where it is generally understood of their charitable contributions.

[2] Ver. 18. *Cujus laus est in evangelio*, *Greek: ou o epainos en to euangelio*. See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. in.* p. 645. *Greek: othen moi dokei ton barnaban ainittesthai*.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 9

**Ver. 1.** *The ministry*, that is, the contributions for the brethren, so it is also called again, (ver. 12.) the *ministry of this office*, or, as the Greek signifies, *of this sacrifice*, inasmuch as alms, and such charitable works, are spiritual sacrifices to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *That Achaia also was ready*. Corinth was the capital of Achaia. St. Paul had formerly exhorted the Macedonians to contribute to the utmost of their power, informing them, that Corinth and all Achaia were prepared a year ago to collect alms, and now the apostle, speaking to the Corinthians, encourages them by the example of the faithful of Macedon, and informs them of the greatness of their charitable contributions, and the greatness of their zeal. (Theo.)

**Ver. 3.** Titus, and two others.

**Ver. 5.** *Not forced from covetousness*. Literally, not as avarice, as it were extorted from covetous people, who give unwillingly. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** God is generous to the liberally disposed Christian; filling such as relieve the poor with every species of good, and returning their charities a hundred-fold. (Menochius)

**Ver. 11-13.** *All bountifulness*, [1] by which is signified, a sincere and free liberality, by giving with a sincere heart, and good intention. St. Paul encourages them to contribute willingly for God's sake, and out of a true charity for their indigent brethren, who will praise, and thank God, and pray for them, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *For his unspeakable gift*. Such is the conclusion, which the apostle puts to the subject upon alms-deeds. In the following chapter he proceeds to a new subject; but first thanks the Almighty, that he has enriched the Corinthians with so charitable a disposition. St. John Chrysostom, Theo., and some other commentators think, that by the expression, *his unspeakable gift*, is meant the incarnation of Christ. The fruit of alms-deeds is the increase of grace in all justice and good works to life everlasting; God granting these blessings for a reward and recompense of charitable works, which therefore are called the seed, (ver. 10. above) or meritorious cause of these spiritual fruits.

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[1] In omnem simplicitatem, *Greek apiloteta*, upon which St. John Chrysostom says, *Greek: om. k., apiloteta ten dapsileian kalei*, a plentiful abundance.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 10

In these three following chapters, St. Paul, for the common good of those whom he had converted, and to obviate the prejudice raised by his adversaries against his person and preaching, is forced to set in a true light his apostolical authority, the favours he had received from God, his actions, his labours, and his sufferings, with an apology for mentioning them, giving all the glory to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 1-11.** *Who in presence indeed am lowly.*[1] Literally, *humble*, (see Luke i. ver. 48.) that is, of a mean aspect, as to exterior appearances, and *my speech contemptible*, without the ornaments of human eloquence, but am said to *be bold* when *absent*, reprehending and threatening by my *letters*, which are owned to be *weighty* and strong, let such persons *think*, and be convinced, that *such as I am* by my letters, they shall find me by *deeds*, when I come, and shall be *present* with them. I desire and *beseech you*, that *I may not be bold* when I come, to make use of my authority, nor of those spiritual arms and weapons, of censures and excommunications, nor perhaps of exemplary punishments, which God sometimes in a miraculous manner shewed by his apostle. See the examples of Ananias and Saphira struck dead at St. Peter's words, (Acts v.) of Elymas struck with blindness for opposing St. Paul's preaching. (Acts xiii.) He puts them in mind, that the power, which God has given to his apostles, is so great and prevalent, that no force upon earth has been able to resist or hinder the designs of God, as to the spreading of the gospel, and the faith of Christ, and as he expresseth it, to the *destruction of fortifications*, *we subverting counsels*, and every thing that opposed the *knowledge of God*, who reduceth whom he pleaseth to the *obedience of Christ*. He admonishes them all to return to the obedience due to him, and the true ministers of the gospel, lest he be obliged to revenge, that is, punish such as remain disobedient. He acknowledges that his apostolical power was given him for the good and *edification* of the faithful, not for their *destruction*, which he will take care not to abuse. In fine, he tells them here in short, and more at large in the following chapter, that they may, if they please, consider outward appearances, his apostolical functions, the miracles God has wrought in his favour, what he has done, and suffered, by which will appear the advantages he has above his adversaries, who spoke with contempt of him. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** I beg of you now to hear my apology, that I may not be obliged to make use of my authority, when present among you, which they say I have abused, and usurped over you. There is in this discourse a little irony against the facility with which the Corinthians heard the enemies of St. Paul. He alludes to those false teachers who decried his doctrine, by preaching up the observance of the ceremonial parts of the law, for they were Jews, and had introduced many new practices into the Church. We may here take notice, that these observations are applicable to the epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, and Philippians, for they are the same false teachers whom he there attacks, and who accused St. Paul of being a hypocrite, a seducer, in a word, one who walked according to the flesh. (Estius and St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 4.** *For the weapons, &c.* The powers with which we are endowed will easily overturn all obstacles, or fortifications which devils may raise against us. They will easily refute the pride, the learning, and the eloquent sophisms of philosophers, and reduce every height, or high-minded philosopher, to the obedience of Christ. (Calmet) --- Hence doth our Saviour pray, "I praise thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father, for so hath it seemed good in thy sight." (Matthew xi. 25.)

**Ver. 6.** *Having in readiness.* God gave power, not only to persuade, and to convince the incredulous, but also to punish them, as we see in the examples of Simon Magus and Elymas. What then should hinder him from using the same against these false apostles? But he says, your obedience must first be fulfilled. God forbid that I should first use the sword, before I have tried the ways of sweetness and conciliation. But if any remain obstinate, then I will employ the arms that God has given me. (Grotius) --- This sweet and forcible example of the apostle is



worthy the imitation of all superiors, temporal and ecclesiastical, how ever high their dignity or command. (Haydock)

**Ver. 12. &c.** The following verses to the end of the chapter, are equally obscure, both in the Greek and Latin text. --- *We dare not rank or compare ourselves, &c.* He seems to write this ironically, by way of mocking at those, who commended and preferred themselves before others. But I will not compare myself with others, but will only *compare* [2] myself with myself, to shew that my actions agree with my words and my letters. --- *We will not glory beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hat measured to us, a measure to reach even to you.* Here he speaks of a measure, and a rule. By the measure, with which God measured *to him*, he means the places and countries, in which he, and the other apostles were appointed to preach, and plant the gospel: and by the *rule* also prescribed him, he means that it was given him as a rul not to preach, where other ministers of Christ had preached. When he says, therefore, *we will not glory beyond our measure*, [3] or (as it is implied in the Greek) of things *out of the measure*, the sense is, I will not, like false preachers, pretend to have preached in places out of my province, or which were not measured out to me, nor have we *extended* ourselves farther than we ought to have done, when we came to you, for you were within our measure. Nor have I transgressed the *rule*, because others had not preached to you before me, so that I have not *boasted in other men's labours*. But as your faith is growing, and increasing, when I have sufficiently settled the gospel among you, I hope my measure may *be enlarged*, and that without breaking the settled rule, I may preach also to people and *places beyond you*. This is what seems to be understood by these words, to be *enlarged* or *magnified, even to an abundance*, and yet not to glory in other men's labours, but to glory in the Lord, only, and in what we do, as we have been directed, and assisted by him. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** The apostle here reprehends the vain boasting of false teachers. I will not, like them, say, that I have carried the light of the gospel to the utmost limits of the globe, that I have converted millions of men, avoided an infinity of dangers, performed many miracles, &c. No: I confine myself to the part assigned me by God. I will only glory in have come even to you. This I can do with justice, and without arrogance. Each one has his share, his measure, or his part to cultivate in the vineyard of Christ. (Calmet and Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 16.** The words, measure, rule, &c. signify through the whole of this chapter a share, or an allotment of any place to cultivate. St. Paul never gloried like the persons whom he is here blaming, that he entered into other men's labours. But still neither those persons who have come to you, nor we who first preached the gospel to you, have any right to glory, except in God alone. (Calmet) --- We still hope, that your faith every day increasing, we shall be able to extend our measure much further, and carry the gospel to nations far beyond you, without interfering with any other, by glorying of having built on what they had already prepared. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 1. Humilis sum, *Greek: tapeinos*.

[2] Ver. 12. Ipsi in nobis nos metipsos metientes; the Greek is somewhat different, *Greek: autoi en eautois eautous metrountes*, ipsi in seipsis, seipsos mensurantes.

[3] Ver. 15. Non in immensum, *Greek: ouk eis ta ametra*, non in non mensurata.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 11

**Ver. 1.** *My folly.* So he calls his reciting his own praises, which commonly speaking, is looked upon as a piece of folly and vanity; though the apostle was constrained to do it, for the good of the souls committed to his charge. (Challoner)

**Ver. 2.** *With the jealousy of God*, or that came from God: it may also signify a great, or godly jealousy. --- *To present you*, that is, the Church of Corinth, *a chaste virgin to Christ*, as the whole Catholic Church is called the chaste spouse of Christ. See Matthew ix. 13.; Apocalypse xxi. 2. (Witham) --- I cannot suffer these false prophets thus to destroy what has been prepared with so much labour, but I am not jealous for my own sake; it is for the honour of God; for I do not wish to prepare this spouse for myself, but for God. (Tirinus) --- It is a duty incumbent on me to preserve you in the purity of the faith you have received, to present you to him as a virgin, holy, and free from every spot or blemish, and hence arise my fear and solicitude, lest by insinuating and designing men, you suffer yourselves to be drawn away from the simplicity of your faith in Christ Jesus, the Lord.

**Ver. 3.** *So your minds shall be corrupted by those false teachers, from the simplicity in Christ*, from the sincerity and purity of the gospel doctrine. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *You might well bear with him*. These new teachers pretended at least to preach only the doctrine of Christ. St. Paul tells them, they might in some measure be excused, if they preached a new doctrine, or *another gospel* that brought them greater blessings, or another Spirit accompanied with greater spiritual gifts, than they had already received by his preaching. But *I think*, and may say, *I have nothing less* than the greatest apostles, and you have received the same blessings from me, as others from them. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *For I suppose*. Many understand this as spoken ironically, and alluding to the false apostles, who called themselves great. But it ought rather to be understood in a literal sense, that God had performed as many and great miracles by his hands, as by any of the apostles. St. Paul here wished to refute those who called themselves the disciples of Peter, and other apostles. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *Though I be rude in speech*, (as St. Jerome also thought) in my expressions in the Greek tongue, *yet not in knowledge*, the chief or only thing to be regarded. Nay, St. Paul's adversaries acknowledged that his letters were weighty and strong. (chap. x. ver. 11.) St. John Chrysostom in many places, and St. Augustine, lib. iv. de Doct. Christians, chap. vi. and vii tom. 3. p. 68. and seq., shews at large the solid rhetoric and eloquence of St. Paul, even in this and the next chapter. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Did I commit a fault?* &c. It is a kind of reproach to them, and by the figure, called irony, with a reflection on the false preachers, who some way or other, got themselves handsomely maintained, while St. Paul neither took, nor would take any thing of them, that his adversaries might not have an occasion to say, he did as they did, or that they only did as he did. And lest they should suspect that he would receive nothing from them, because *he did not love* them (as men sometimes refuse presents from those whom they do not love) he appeals to God, how much he loves them. But he will have this to *boast* of against his adversaries, those false apostles and crafty labourers, who cunningly endeavoured *to transform themselves*, that they might be thought *the apostles of Christ*, insinuating themselves into their favour, and receiving at least presents from them, which St. Paul would not do, though it was but reasonable that he should live by the gospel. See 1 Corinthians chap. ix. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *The truth of Christ is in me*. This is a kind of asseveration; I assure you by the truth of Christ, which is in me, that what I say is true, and that no one can deny it in Achaia. (Theodoret)

**Ver. 12.** St. Paul declares that he will continue to receive nothing for his preaching and his labours, that the false apostles may not glory in their disinterestedness; or rather, that he will not, by receiving any thing, authorize by his example, these new teachers, who only seek their own ease, to live on the Church, and to receive their support from it. (St. Augustine and Estius)

**Ver. 16.** &c. *Otherwise take me as one foolish*. St. Paul divers times excuses himself for

mentioning thins in his own commendation: he owns that this in itself, and unless it were necessary, might be blamed as *folly*, that it would not be *according to God*, but he declares himself forced by them to it, and that he will speak nothing but the truth. See chap. xii. ver. 6. 11. He tells them that they bear with others that are foolish, even with those false preachers that endeavour to bring them into slavery by their domineering carriage, by making them perhaps subject to the yoke of the Mosaical law. Who *devour* them, that is, their goods and substance, who take from them, who in a *manner strike them on the face*, (ver. 20.) he means a metaphorical striking them, that is, by imperious ways, and insolent language. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** I trust that you will permit me to speak in my own praise, since as wise as you are, you have permitted others, who have not greater wisdom than myself. And if it be folly to praise one's self, as you have pardoned them, I trust you will also pardon me. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20.** St. Paul still continues to speak ironically, that they will permit him to praise himself in his own justification, since they have permitted these false teachers to reduce them to bondage under the law, to devour their substance, and to behave haughtily to them, striking them on the face, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 21.** *I speak according to dishonour, as if we had been weak in this part.* The interpreters are divided on this verse; the sense seems to be, I speak what others took upon as *dishonourable in us*, that we had not the like authority over you as these false teachers, and therefore could not keep you in such subjection as they have done. But yet I must tell you, that *wherein if any man is bold, I am bold also*; that is, I have no less motives to domineer and boast, than they have. And then he proceeds to particulars. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *They are ministers of Christ: I am more.* To wit, an apostle chosen and sent by Jesus Christ, appointed in a special manner to be the apostle of the Gentiles, your apostle. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** The Jews had power under the Romans to inflict punishments, not indeed capital, but corporal, such as flogging, &c. See Mark xiii. 9. The law, in Deuteronomy xxv. 3. permitted, but did not command, forty stripes to be inflicted; it strictly forbad that number to be exceeded.

**Ver. 25.** *Thrice I suffered shipwreck.* This was before the shipwreck in his voyage to Rome, by which we make take notice, that St. Luke, in the Acts, omits a great many things relating to St. Paul; as also when he adds,[1] *a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea*. We do not read expressed in the Greek, *of the sea*; but the Greek word is observed to imply the same: and so it is understood by St. John Chrysostom who gives these two expositions; first, that he was truly and literally in the middle of the sea. Secondly, that he was floating or swimming in the sea after shipwreck, which seems the more common interpretation. (Witham) --- St. Paul could have avoided that disgrace, as a Roman. See Acts xxiii.; but in Acts xvi. he refused to claim his privilege, that he might have an opportunity of converting the guard of the prison. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 28.** *My daily instance.* The labours that come in, and press upon me every day. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 25. Nocte et die in profundo maris sui, *Greek: en to butho pepoieka*.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 12

**Ver. 1.** *If I must glory.* St. Paul in the whole of this discourse shews the repugnance he had of speaking in his own praise, and that if he did it, it was only through constraint, and for the advantage of the Corinthians; as also to defend himself from calumniators. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *I know a man, &c.* He speaks of himself, as it were of a third person. --- *Whether in the body, I know not.* If St. Paul himself knew not, how can we pretend to decide, whether his soul was for some moments separated from his body, or in what manner he saw God. (Witham) --- It appears that this took place about the period when the Holy Ghost commanded that he should be separated for the work whereunto he was called. (Acts xiii. 2.)

**Ver. 4.** *Caught up into paradise.* St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas are of opinion that this third heaven and paradise are the same place, and designate the abode of the blessed. In order to understand the language of the apostle, we must observe that the Hebrews distinguished three different heavens. The first comprised the air, the clouds, &c. as far as the fixed stars. The second included all the fixed stars; and the third was the abode of Angels, in which God himself discovered his infinite glory, &c. The first is called in Scripture simply the heavens, the second the firmament, and the third heaven the heaven of heavens. (Calmet)

**Ver. 7-10.** *A sting of my flesh,[1] an angel, or a messenger of Satan, to buffet me.* The Latin word signifies any thing that pricks or stings, the Greek word a sharp stick or pale: he speaks by a metaphor, as also when he says *to buffet me*; that is, by causing great trouble or pain. Some understand by it a violent headache or pain, or distemper in the body. St. Augustine mentions this opinion, and does not reject it, in Psalm xcvi. tom. 4. p. 1069.; in Psalm cxxx. p. 1465. St. Jerome also speaks of it in chap. iv. ad Galatas, tom. 4. p. 274. Ed. Ben. But St. John Chrysostom, by sting, and the angel of Satan, understands that opposition which St. Paul met with from his enemies, and those of the gospel; as Satan signifies an adversary. Others understand troublesome temptations of the flesh, immodest thoughts, and representations, suggested by the devil, and permitted by Almighty God for his greater good. --- *Thrice I besought the Lord.* That is, many times, to be freed from it, but received only this answer from God, that his grace was sufficient to preserve me from consenting to sin. And that *power* and strength in virtue should increase, and be *perfected in weakness*, and by temptations, when they are resisted. St. Augustine seems to favour this exposition, in Psalm lviii. Conc. 2. p. 573. St. Jerome, in his letters to Eustochium, to Demetrius, and to Rusticus, the monk. And it is the opinion of St. Gregory, lib. 23. moral. tom. 1. p. 747. and of many others. (Witham) --- If there were any danger of pride from his revelations, the base and filthy suggestions of the enemy of souls must cause humiliations, and make him blush. But these are to be borne with submission to the will of God, for his power is more evident in supporting man under the greatest trials, than in freeing him from the attacks. --- *Power is made perfect.* The strength and power of God more perfectly shines forth in our weakness and infirmity; as the more weak we are of ourselves, the more illustrious is his grace in supporting us, and giving us the victory under all trials and conflicts. (Challoner) --- *When I am weak.* The more I suffer for Christ, the more I perceive the effects of his all-powerful grace, which sustains, enlightens, and strengthens me: the more also the glory and power of God appeareth in me. The pagans themselves were not ignorant that calamity was the soil in which virtue usually grows to perfection. Calamitas virtutis occasio est. (Seneca) --- Optimos nos esse dum infirmi sumus. (Plin. vii. ep. 26.)

**Ver. 11-13.** *Although I am nothing.* These words are a demonstration of the humility of St. Paul, when forced to speak his own praises. --- *The signs and marks of my apostleship....on you,* by your conversion, especially being accompanied by wonders and miracles. --- *Pardon me this injury.* A reproach by irony, against such as seemed to value him less, because he lived in poverty, and took nothing of them. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Now the third time I am ready to come.* So he says again in the next chapter. That is, he was once with them, he had purposed to come a second time, and now a third time. --- *I seek not the things that are yours, but you.* That is, says St. John Chrysostom, your *souls*, not your *goods*; your *salvation*, not your *gold*. --- *For the children.* A modest pretty turn in their favour, by saying that fathers and parents are commonly supposed to leave their goods and riches to their children, not children for their parents. (Witham) --- St. Paul came to Corinth for the first time in the year 52, remaining with them 18 months. (Acts chap. xviii.) He came the second time in 55, but did not remain long with them; on which account it is omitted by St. Luke in the Acts. The

date of this letter is in 57, when St. Paul again came to them towards the end of the year. (Calmet) --- Other interpreters, which no less authority question this sentiment, see ver. 1. of the following chapter, and say he only went twice; the first time as mentioned in Acts xviii. 1.; the second time, as we may draw from Acts xx.2. 3. after this epistle, as it is evident from comparing 2 Corinthians i. 15.

**Ver. 15.** *I most gladly will spend* [2] all, and even my life, for your sake, and so as to be *spent*, and even *sacrificed*, for your souls; though the more I love you, the less you or some of you love me, a kind and modest reproach. (Witham)

**Ver. 16-18.** *I caught you by guile.* He answers an objection or suspicion of his adversaries, as if he took no presents himself, but employed others to do it for him: he appeals to them, if Titus did not serve them in all things as he had done, in the same spirit, treading the same steps. *Think you*, as some pretended of old, formerly, or of a long time, that we make vain and false excuses to you, and at the bottom aim to be gainers by you? He appeals with an oath to God, that he does *all things* for their good, for their advantage, and *edification*. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** After having answered one of their objections with regard to his disinterestedness, he thus proceeds: I perceive that of old, or for a long time, you have regarded this lengthened discourse merely as an apology to justify myself from the suspicion of avarice. But *we speak before God in Christ*; or, God is my witness that I have acted thus only for your edification. (Theodoret) --- Seeking not the things that are yours, but yourselves, most willingly to spend our strength and life, and to be spent or completely exhausted for the sake of your souls.

**Ver. 20-21.** He puts them in mind to be all of them reformed, to lay aside *animosities, dissensions, swellings*, [3] proceeding from pride, uncleanness, fornication, &c. which indeed will be a humiliation and trouble to him, to be forced to use his power by severities; for if he *find* them *such* as he *would not*, they will also *find him such as they would not*. (Witham) --- *Greek: Ton me metanoesanton.* This, according to St. Augustine, is spoken here of doing great penance for heinous sins, and not merely of repentance, as some moderns would fain interpret it. (ep. 198.)

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[1] Ver. 7. Stimulus carnis meæ, angelus Satanæ, qui me colaphizet, *Greek: skolops te sarki* (in carne mea) *aggelos Satan, ina me kolaphize.* See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. ks.* where he says, *Greek: me genoito.* See Tillemont, chap. x. on S. Paul; a Lapide; &c.

[2] Ver. 15. Libentissime impendam, & superimpendar, *Greek: edista dapaneso, kai ekdapanethesomai,* consumam, & consumar.

[3] Ver. 20. Inflationes, *Greek: phusioseis,* tumores; a metaphor for being puffed up with pride, vain glory, &c.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 13

**Ver. 1.** The third time he had made preparations to visit the Corinthians, (see chap. xii. 14.) when every delinquent shall be tried as the law directs. (Deuteronomy xix. 15.; Matthew xviii. 16.; Hebrews x. 28.)

**Ver. 2.** *I will not spare.* Estius, Menochius, and others explain this of the censures, excommunications, &c. of the Church; whilst some are of opinion that he means temporal punishments. But we must observe, that not unfrequently God punished, even in a sensible manner, those who by their crimes had compelled their pastors to make use of the spiritual sword. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *Do you seek a proof?* By the Greek it signifies for you, or in your regard. The sense is, that he has left me power enough to chastise those among you who shall deserve it, when I come. (Witham) --- I do not know why you delay your conversion. Can you doubt whether it is God who speaks to you by my mouth, who has great power among you, and who is very capable of punishing you. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 4.** *He was crucified through weakness.* That is, he took upon him our weak and infirm nature, in which he was made capable of suffering, and of laying down willingly his life for us on the cross. But he liveth again by the *power of God*, of his divine power. --- *We also are weak in him*, like him liable to sufferings, undergoing sufferings by his example; *but we shall live with him by the power of God*, of which you have also a share. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Try your ownelves if you be in the faith.*[1] He does not mean if they have a right Christian faith or belief, but either whether they had a saving Christian faith working in them by charity, or as St. John Chrysostom says, a faith that shewed itself by the gift of miracles, as at time commonly given to the first Christians. --- *Unless perhaps you are disapproved*,[2] rejected, and justly deprived of this gift, which was a proof that they were Christians, and had received the Spirit of Christ. I judged it better to translate here *disapproved*, that *reprobates*, which in other places is often taken as opposed to the predestinate and the elect, whereas there it signifies those who were rejected, and deprived of the gifts of the spirit, particularly of that of miracles, and of those spiritual gifts granted to the first Christians, and which were a proof that they had received the grace: and the 7th verse, *not that we may appear approved, but that....we may be as reprobates*. That is, we wish that we may have no occasion to shew the power and the gifts of the spirit, and that of miracles, but as if we were rejected, disapproved, reprobated, and deprived of such proofs. (Witham)

**Ver. 6-7.** I trust that we have not fallen from the state in which we were, but that we continue to exercise our ministry and to use the power which he has given us. Though I do not wish to find you guilty of any sins which may oblige me to use this power over you. I rather wish in this respect to have no authority whatever over you, to be as it were an outcast or reprobate, that you may never feel the power that God hath given me for the punishment of the wicked. (St. John Chrysostom) --- *Reprobates*. That is, without proof, by having no occasion of shewing our power in punishing you. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9.** *We rejoice* that we have not made our power appear in punishing the wicked, and afflicting our enemies; we are glad that we appear to them to be weak; but we are particularly glad, when you live in such a manner as to give us no occasion of reprimanding you, or of exercising our power over you. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 10.** We write this for the edification of Christ's mystical body, and to cause all men to enter; not for its destruction, and to compel many to abandon it.

**Ver. 11.** *Rejoice.* *Greek: Chairete*, bene valete. In this sense the Greeks used this term at the conclusion of their writings; and *Greek: Loipon*, to denote that the writer or speaker was hastening to a conclusion. (Pastorini) --- *Be perfect*. [3] Literally, in the Latin *be exhorted*. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** This was customary with both Jews and Persians, as we learn from Xenophon and Herodotus, and with other oriental nations. And in process of time, from the custom of common life, it was introduced into ecclesiastical assemblies. The ancients were in the habit before they began their meal to embrace each other, to manifest by that sign their mutual cordiality and friendship; then they contributed their alms, that they might give a substantial proof of what was represented by their kiss of charity. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 13.** For my part, I wish you, with all my heart, that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the charity of God, and the communion of his holy Spirit, may dwell with you all. Amen is wanted in

the Greek, but was added by the Church of Corinth, which was accustomed to make this reply as often as this epistle was read. When we recall to our mind the excess of corruption that had reigned in the city of Corinth under paganism, excess attested by profane authors, and which St. Paul brings to their recollection, (1 Corinthians vi. 9.) we are all astonishment that in the short space of four years the gospel had operated amongst the faithful of this church, such a prodigious change in their manners, and that they were become capable of receiving lessons of morality so very pure as is this of the apostle. (Bergier.)

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[1] Ver. 5. Si estis in fide, *Greek: ei este en te pistei*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. kth.*, p. 701, *Greek: emoi dokei entautha legein ten ton semeion*. Also in Ver. 5., Nisi forte reprobi estis, *Greek: adokimoi*, improbati, or non probati. The Protestant, as well as the Rhem., hath reprobates; but Dr. Wells, in his amendments, has put destitute of proofs, which here is the true sense.

[2] Ver. 7. Non ut nos probati appareamus....nos autem ut reprobi simus, *Greek: os (not ina) adokimoi omen*, i.e. sicut or tanquam non probati simus.

[3] Ver. 11. Exhortamini, *Greek: parakaleisthe*, consolemini, consolationem capite.

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## **GALATIANS**

### THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE GALATIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Galatians, soon after St. Paul had preached the gospel to them, were seduced by some false teachers, who had been Jews, and who were for obliging all Christians, even those who had been Gentiles, to observe circumcision, and the other ceremonies of the Mosaic law. In this epistle he refutes the pernicious doctrine of those teachers, and also their calumny against his mission and apostleship. The subject matter of this epistle is much the same as of that to the Romans. It was written at Ephesus, about twenty-three years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- The Galatians were originally Gauls, who under their leader, Baennus, spread themselves over Greece, and at length passed over into Asia Minor, where they settled between Cappadocia and Phrygia, in the province afterwards called from them Galatia. It seems that St. Peter preached first in those parts; but it was only to the Jews, as my be gathered from the inscription of his first epistle, which he addresses to the Jews of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. But St. Paul was the first that preached to the Gentile inhabitants of this province. When he first preached to them, he was received as an angel from heaven, or rather, as Christ himself: he visited them oftener than once, and the Church he there formed was very considerable. It was the Jewish converts of Galatia (who, as we have before mentioned, were the spiritual children of St. Peter) that caused those troubles which gave rise to this epistle. They strongly advocated the legal observances; and making a handle of the high pre-eminence of St. Peter, they decried St. Paul, even calling in question his apostleship. They taught the necessity of circumcision, and other Mosaic rites, which the apostles then in part retained. Thus divisions were raised in this infant Church. On these accounts the apostle warmly asserts his apostleship, as being called by Christ himself. He shews that his doctrine was that of the other apostles, who, in the council of Jerusalem, four years before, testified their exemption from the legal observances. He teaches, that it is not by the law, but by faith, that the blessings of salvation are imparted to them. After establishing these more important parts of the epistle, he gives them instruction on various heads. The Greek subscription to this epistle informs us, that it was written from Rome. St.

Jerome says, he wrote it when in chains. Theodoret says, it was the first epistle that St. Paul wrote from Rome. This opinion has probably been adopted from a mistaken interpretation of the text: *I bear the marks of the wounds of Christ in my body*. By these marks they understand chains, whilst the text equally applies to the mortifications and self-denials of a Christian. The contrary opinion is, that this epistle was written from Ephesus in the year of Christ 55. This is the more probable opinion, and is maintained by St. Gregory the Great, Ludovicus, Capellanus, Estius, Usher, Pearson, and many others. The authority of the Greek copies, in assigning the places whence the letters were written, has been long rejected by the learned. We find no such information in the more ancient Greek manuscripts of St. Germanus and Clermont, &c. (Calmet)

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## GALATIANS 1

**Ver. 1. &c.** The apostle begins by asserting his apostleship which the false teachers had called in question. He was called to it by Christ himself, in his miraculous conversion, being changed "into a vessel of election to carry his name before kings and nations, and the children of Israel." Thus chosen, we see him immediately after his conversion, preaching in Damascus and Arabia. (Calmet) --- Let us beware of self-appointed teachers, who are neither called by God nor rightly ordained by men, and yet are observed to intrude themselves into the ministry. --- *Not from man, neither by man.*[1] The apostle here expressly says, all the brethren who are with me; to shew that he advanced nothing which was not conformable to the belief of all the faithful. (St. Jerome) --- And again he says, (ver. 12.) *neither did I receive it from man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. That is, not from him, who was a man only, but from Jesus Christ, who was both God and man. St. Jerome, who has left us a commentary on this epistle, (tom. iv. p. 222. Ed. Ben. as also St. John Chrysostom, tom. iii. p. 709. Ed. Sav.) takes notice, that Christ's divinity is proved from these expressions, that St. Paul was not an apostle, nor had his mission from man only, but from Jesus Christ, who therefore was not a man only. --- *By Jesus Christ and God the Father*. A second argument to shew the equality of the Son with the Father. And thirdly, it destroys another objection of the Arians, who used to pretend that the Father, being always first named, he only, and not the Son, was properly God. Fourthly, another of their arguments to prove only the Father truly God, was that he was called *the God*, with the Greek article; and here the Father is called God, without the said Greek article. Fifthly, they also pretended that the Son was not God, because the Father was said to deliver him to death: and here (ver. 3.) the Son is said *to give* and *deliver* himself. (Witham)

**Ver. 6-7.** This was about three or four years after their conversion. The apostle knowing very well how to suit his discourse to his auditors, in this epistle makes use of a more severe and harsh address than is observable in his other epistles. The reason is, the Galatians were a less civilized people, and had already shewn the little attachment they had to their spiritual father. (Calmet) --- *To another gospel: which is not* [2] *another*. That is, it is not properly another, because they pretended to be Christians, and teach the faith: and yet it was in some measure *another*, because *changed* by such teachers with a mixture of errors, particularly that all converted Gentiles were to observe the Jewish law: and in this sense, they are said *to subvert*, or *destroy the gospel of Christ*: so that the apostle hesitates not to pronounce and repeat *an anathema*, a curse upon all that preach any thing *besides*, that is, in point of religion, not agreeing with what he had taught. I cannot omit here a reflection, which St. John Chrysostom makes on the 7th verse. *Where are they*, saith he, *who condemn us* (Catholics) *for the differences we have with heretics?* and *who pretend there is no such essential difference betwixt us and them*, so as to judge them excluded from the communion of the Catholic Church, out of which there is no salvation, unless perhaps through ignorance. --- *Let them hear what St. Paul says, that they destroyed the gospel who made any such innovations*: to wit, by introducing again as necessary some of the Jewish ceremonies, even at a time when the Christians, who had been Jews, might lawfully use them, and even they who had been Gentiles. St. Paul says, this is to *change* and *destroy* the gospel; he repeats *anathema* against them. Let them hear, and take notice of this,



who pretend that the unity of the one Catholic faith is sufficiently maintained by all Christian societies, that agreeing, as they say, in fundamentals, their faith is a saving faith: that the council of Trent, without reason, pronounced such anathemas against them: that all Catholics are uncharitable for denying them to be in the way to salvation, when they make Scripture alone, as interpreted by their private judgment, the only rule of their faith. They may as well accuse not only St. John Chrysostom but also St. Paul, of *uncharitableness*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** The terrible sentence awarded by St. Paul, bears equally strong against modern as against ancient innovators in religion.

**Ver. 10.** *If I did yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* I should not have embraced the Christian faith, I who was so zealous against it, and who by changing have exposed himself to persecutions, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** He here alludes to his being a Pharisee, as he himself mentions more openly in Acts xxiii. 6. *A Pharisee, and son of Pharisees.* This sect always distinguished itself by its zeal for ancient traditions, which shews evidently that he was very far from being instructed in a religion of which he was the sworn enemy; nor since his conversion did he apply for instruction. What he delivered, he learned not of man, but of God. See below.

**Ver. 16.** *I condescended not to flesh and blood.* Literally, *I did not acquiesce to flesh and blood.* I had no regard to temporal friends or advantages. Some expound it, I did not think it necessary to consult the other apostles, men who were my countrymen: and so it follows, *I came not to Jerusalem to the apostles*, to be instructed by them, having been instructed by Christ himself. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** So far from receiving his apostleship from the other apostles, he saw none of them, till he had spent three years in announcing the word of God. (Calmet) --- In this epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul treats the same matter as in his epistle to the Romans; to the former he writes less exactly and more briefly, as very rude and uncivilized; to the latter, with more precision, and with greater copiousness, as *replenished with all knowledge*: repleti omni scientia. (Romans xv. 14.)

**Ver. 18.** *Then three years after, I came to Jerusalem to see* (and as St. John Chrysostom says, out of respect to make a visit to) *Peter*, but staid only at Jerusalem fifteen days, and saw none of the apostles except him, and James, the brother, or cousin of our Lord; so that I was yet unknown by face to the Christian churches in Judea. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. and 12. Non ab homine, on which words St. Jerome, ergo non homo tantum est Christus. See St. John Chrysostom in his commentary, or *Greek: ermeneia*, on this epistle, p. 713, where he takes notice against the Arians, that here God the Father is called *Greek: Theos*, not *Greek: o Theos*; so that their argument from the Greek article is of no force; *Greek: choris arthrou....ouk apo tou, alla apo theou patros*, &c.

[2] Ver. 7. In aliud Evangelium, quod non est aliud; *Greek: eis eteron euangelion, o ouk estin allo*. Volunt convertere, *Greek: metastrepsai*, invertere, evertere, pervertere. St. John Chrysostom, Lat. edit. p. 812. E. ubi sunt igitur, qui nos ut contentiosos damnant, eo quod cum hæreticis habemus dissidium, dictitantque nullum esse discrimen inter nos & illos.... Audiant Paulum (p. 813. A.) illos subvertisse Evangelium, qui paululum quiddam rerum novarum invexerant. And in the Greek edition of Savil, p. 717, linea 3, *Greek: pou nun eisin*, &c. ....akouetosan ti phesin o Paulos, &c.

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## GALATIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** *Then fourteen years after.* That is, after my former going to Jerusalem, which was seventeen years after my conversion, an. 51 [the year A.D. 51]. See Tillemont. (Witham) The cause of St. Paul's second journey to Jerusalem was as follows. Some brethren coming from Judea to Antioch, there maintained the necessity of circumcision and the other Mosaic rites, asserting that without them salvation could not be obtained. St. Paul, upon his return to Antioch, strongly defended, in conjunction with Barnabas, the liberty of the gospel. As the contest grew warm, it was resolved to depute Paul and Barnabas to consult the other apostles and ancients of Jerusalem. By the approbation of the living and speaking tribunal, which all are commanded to hear, the Scriptures are not made true, altered or amended; they merely are declared to be the infallible word of God, a point only to be learned by authority; hence that memorable saying of St. Augustine: "I would not believe the gospel unless the authority of the Church moved me." (Cont. ep. fund. chap. v.)

**Ver. 2.** *According to revelation,* or an inspiration of the Spirit of God, and conferred with them, as an equal, says St. Jerome. --- *But apart to them, who seemed to be something* considerable. That is, with the other apostles, *lest I should run in vain*, not for fear of false doctrine, says St. John Chrysostom, but that others might be convinced that I preached not any thing disapproved by the apostles, which would prejudice the progress of the gospel. (Witham) --- The particle *but*, which begins this verse, is quite useless: the Latin Vulgate and the Greek copies have it indeed, but in many copies it is not found; it is omitted also by St. Jerome and Theodoret; and this verse is united in sense with the preceding. Titus was not compelled to be circumcised on account of the false brethren, &c.

**Ver. 3.** *Neither Titus....circumcised,* who had been a Gentile. A convincing proof, says St. John Chrysostom, that even according to the other apostles, the Gentiles converted, were not subject to the Jewish laws. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *To whom we yielded not.* St. Jerome takes notice that in some Latin copies read, *to whom we yielded*; but this is not the true reading by the Greek and Syriac. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *As to Peter was that of the circumcision.* Calvin pretends to prove by this, that St. Peter and his successors are not head of the whole Church, because St. Peter was only the apostle of the Jews. But St. Paul speaks not here of the power and jurisdiction, but of the manner that St. Peter and he were to be employed. It was judged proper that St. Peter would preach chiefly to the Jews, who had been the elect people of God, and that St. Paul should be sent to the Gentiles; yet both of them preached both to Jews and Gentiles: and St. Peter, by receiving Cornelius, first opened the gate of salvation to the Gentiles, as he says of himself, (Acts xv. 7.) *that God made choice of him, that the Gentiles by his mouth should hear the gospel, and believe.* That St. Peter was head of the Church, see the notes on Matthew xvi. and John xxi. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *James, and Cephas, and John.* No proof of any greater authority can be drawn from the placing or numbering of James first, which perhaps St. Paul might do, because of the great respect he knew the Jewish converts had for St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, where the ceremonies of the law of Moses were still observed. Several Greek copies have *Peter, James, and John*. So we also read in St. Jerome's Commentary, p. 240, and St. John Chrysostom in his Exposition, p. 729, has *Cephas, John, and James*. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *But when Cephas, &c.*[1] In most Greek copies, we read *Petrus*, both here and ver. 13. Nor are there any sufficient, nor even probable grounds to judge, that *Cephas* here mentioned was different from *Peter*, the prince of the apostles, as one or two later authors would make us believe. Among those who fancied Cephas different from Peter, not one can be named in the first ages [centuries], except Clemens of Alexandria, whose works were rejected as apocryphal by Pope Gelasius. The next author is Dorotheus of Tyre, in his Catalogue of the seventy-two disciples, in the fourth or fifth age [century], and after him the like, or same catalogue, in the

seventh age [century], in the Chronicle, called of Alexandria, neither of which are of any authority with the learned, so many evident faults and falsehoods being found in both. St. Jerome indeed on this place says, there were some (though he does not think fit to name them) who were of that opinion; but at the same time St. Jerome ridicules and rejects it as groundless. Now as to authors that make Cephas the same with St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, we have what may be called the unexceptionable and unanimous consent of the ancient fathers and doctors of the Catholic Church, as of Tertullian, who calls this management of St. Peter, *a fault of conversation, not of preaching* or doctrine. Of St. Cyprian, of Origen, of Alexander, of Theodoret, Pope Gelasius, Pelagius the second, St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas. In later ages, of Bellarmine, Baronius, Binius, Spondan, of Salmeron, Estius, Gagneius, Tirinus, Menochius, Alex natalis, and a great many more: so that Cornelius a Lapide on this place says, *that the Church neither knows, nor celebrates any other Cephas but St. Peter*. Tertullian and most interpreters take notice, that St. Peter's fault was only a lesser or venial sin in his conduct and *conversation*. Did not St. Paul on several occasions do the like, as what is here laid to St. Peter's charge? that is, practise the Jewish ceremonies: did not he circumcise Timothy after this, an. 52 [in the year A.D. 52]? did he not *shave his head in Cenchrea*, an. 54? did he not by the advice of St. James (an. 58.) *purify himself with the Jews in the temple*, not to offend them? St. Jerome, and also St. John Chrysostom,[2] give another exposition of this passage. They looked upon all this to have been done by a contrivance and a collusion betwixt these two apostles, who had agreed beforehand that St. Peter should let himself *be reprehended* by St. Paul, (for this they take to be signified by the Greek text) and not that St. Peter was *reprehensible*;<sup>[3]</sup> so that the Jews seeing St. Peter publicly blamed, and not justifying himself, might for the future eat with the Gentiles. But St. Augustine vigorously opposed this exposition of St. Jerome, as less consistent with a Christian and apostolical sincerity, and with the text in this chapter, where it is called a *dissimulation*, and that Cephas or Peter *walked not uprightly to the truth of the gospel*. After a long dispute betwixt these two doctors, St. Jerome seems to have retracted his opinion, and the opinion of St. Augustine is commonly followed, that St. Peter was guilty of a venial fault of imprudence. In the mean time, no Catholic denies but that the head of the Church may be guilty even of great sins. What we have to admire, is the humility of St. Peter on this occasion, as St. Cyprian observes,<sup>[4]</sup> who took the reprehension so mildly, without alleging *the primacy, which our Lord had given him*. Baronius held that St. Peter did not sin at all, which may be true, if we look upon his intention only, which was to give no offence to the Jewish converts; but if we examine the fact, he can scarce be excused from a *venial indiscretion*. (Witham) --- *I withstood*, &c. The fault that is here noted in the conduct of St. Peter, was only a certain imprudence, in withdrawing himself from the table of the Gentiles, for fear of giving offence to the Jewish converts: but this in such circumstances, when his so doing might be of ill consequence to the Gentiles, who might be induced thereby to think themselves obliged to conform to the Jewish way of living, to the prejudice of their Christian liberty. Neither was St. Paul's reprehending him any argument against his supremacy; for in such cases an inferior may, and sometimes ought, with respect, to admonish his superior. (Challoner)

**Ver. 16. &c.** *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law.* St. Paul, to the end of the chapter, seems to continue his discourse to St. Peter, but chiefly to the Jewish Galatians, to shew that both the Gentiles, whom the Jews called and looked upon as *sinners*, and also the Jews, when converted, could only hope to be *justified* and saved by the faith of Christ, and not *by the works of the law*. --- *But if while we seek to be justified in Christ*, by faith in him, and by his grace, *we ourselves also are found sinners*, as the false doctors teach you, and not to be justified but by the ceremonies and works of the law of Moses, this blasphemous consequence must follow, *that Christ is the minister and author of sin*, by making us believe that by faith in him, and complying with his doctrine, we may be justified and saved. For thus we must be considered *transgressors*, unless we renew and *build again* what Christ and we have destroyed. --- *For by the law I am dead to the law*. That is, says St. Jerome, by the evangelical law of Christ I am dead to the ancient law and its ceremonies. Others expound it, that by the law and its types and figures, and by the predictions contained in the law, I know the Mosaical law hath now ceased, in which sense he might say, *by the law I am dead to the law*. --- *If justice*. That is, if justification and salvation be to be had, or could have been had *by the works of the law; therefore Christ died in*

*vain*, and it was not necessary that he should become our Redeemer. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** He here expresses the change which had been wrought in him. The law to which he had been attached, had passed away from him. Now he was so united to Christ and his cross, that he says: Not I, but Christ liveth in me. The strong expressions made use of by St. Paul with regard to the Jewish law in this chapter, may appear strange, and very capable of a wrong interpretation. But we must ever bear in mind that St. Paul speaks exclusively of the *ceremonial* part of the law, and not of the *moral*, contained in the decalogue: of this later he says in his epistle to the Romans, (ii. 13.) the doers of the law shall be justified. But to effect this, was and is necessary the grace which Jesus Christ has merited and obtained for all, grace which God has shed on all, more or less, from the commencement of the world.

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[1] Ver. 11. That Peter and Cephas were the same, see Tertullian, lib. de præscrip. chap. 23, p. 210. Ed. Rig.; Origen in Joan. Ed. Græce et Latine, p. 381.; St. Cyprian, Epist. 71. ad Quintum, p. 120.; St. Jerome on this Ep. to the Galatians, as also St. John Chrysostom; St. Augustine. See his epistles on this passage to St. Jerome.; St. Gregory, lib. 2. in Ezech. tom. 1, p. 1368.; Gelasius apud Labb. T. 4. Conc. p. 1217.; Pelagius, the 2d apud Labb. t. 5. p. 622.; St. Cyril of Alexandria, hom. ix. cont. Julianum, t. 6, p. 325.; Theodoret in 2. ad Gal. iv. 3. p. 268.; St. Anselm in 2 ad Gal. p. 236.; St. Thomas Aquinas, lib. 2. q. 103. a. 4. ad 2dum. --- St. Jerome's words: Sunt qui Cepham non putent Apostolum Petrum, sed alium de 70 Discipulis....quibus primum respondendum, alterius nescio cujus Cephæ nescire nos nomen, nisi ejus, qui et in Evangelio, et in aliis Pauli Epistolis, et in hac quoque ipsa, modo Cephas, modo Petrus scribitur....deinde totum argumentum Epistolæ....huic intelligentiæ repugnare, &c.

[2] Ver. 11. St. John Chrysostom by a contrivance, *Greek: eikonomon*. p. 730, &c.

[3] Ver. 11. *Greek: Kategnosmenos* may signify reprehensus, as well as reprehensibilis; and he says it is to be referred to others, and not to St. Paul: *Greek: all upo ton allon*.

[4] Ver. 11. St. Cyprian, Ep. ad Quintum, p. 120. Petrus....non arroganter assumpsit, ut diceret se primatum tenere, &c.

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### **GALATIANS 3**

**Ver. 1.** *Before whose eyes Jesus Christ....crucified among you.*[1] The common exposition is, that St. Paul had *before described* and set before them Christ crucified. Others, that it had been clearly foretold by the prophets that Christ was crucified for them. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law?* As if he said, you esteem it a great favour to have received those spiritual gifts of working miracles, &c. When you were made Christians, had you these favours *by the works of the law*, or was it not *by the hearing of faith*, and by the faith of Christ, that you had such extraordinary graces? and when you *have begun* thus happily by the *spirit* of Christ and his spiritual gifts, are you for *finishing* and thinking to make yourselves more *perfect* by the exterior works of the law, the circumcision of the flesh, and such like ceremonies? (Witham)

**Ver. 4-5.** *If yet in vain:* i.e. I have still good hopes, that what you have already suffered by persecutions and self-denials, since your conversion, will not be in vain; as they would be, if you sought to be justified by the works and ceremonies of the law of Moses, and not by the faith and law of Christ, by which only you can be truly sanctified. (Witham) --- St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and others, suppose that the power of working miracles still remained in the Galatians, notwithstanding what had passed; but St. John Chrysostom and several others, explain it of a

power they had formerly possessed. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *As it is written: Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice.* See Romans iv. 3. They only who imitate the faith of Abraham shall be *blessed* with him, and are his spiritual *children*, whether Jews or Gentiles, whom God promised to bless by the seed of Abraham; i.e. by Christ, who descended from Abraham. (Witham) --- The apostle thus argues with the Galatians; Abraham, who was never under the law, still received the grace of justification in reward of his faith, even before he had received circumcision. Now, if a person can be justified without the law, the law can be no ways necessary to salvation. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10-14.** *Are under a curse....cursed is every man, &c.* The sense of these is to be found Deuteronomy xxvii. 26. in the Septuagint. Some expound them thus: curses are pronounced against every one who keeps not all the precepts of the law, but there is not any one; i.e. scarce any one, who keepeth them all; therefore all under the law are under some curse. But as it cannot be said that no one kept all the precepts, especially the moral precepts of the law, mentioned in that place of Deuteronomy; (for Zacharias and *Elizabeth were both just in the sight of God*, Luke i., and doubtless many others lived so as not to incur those curses, but were just and were saved, though not by virtue of the works of the law only, nor without faith in God, and in their Redeemer, who was to come) therefore others understand that all such persons fall under these curses, who think to comply with all these precepts by their own strength, or who confide in the works of the law only, without faith in Christ, the Messiah, and without which they cannot be saved. This agrees with what follows, that *the just man liveth by faith*. (Habacuc ii. 4.) See Romans i. 17. --- *Now* the law is not of faith, i.e. the works done merely in compliance with the law, are not works of faith that can save a man: *but he that doth those things of the law, shall live in them*; i.e. says St. Jerome, shall have a long temporal life promised in the law; or, as others say, shall have life everlasting, if they are done with faith. --- *Christ hath redeemed us* from these curses; but to do this, hath made *himself a curse* for our sake, by taking upon himself the similitude of a sinner, and by dying upon the cross, as if he had been guilty of the greatest sins, having only charged himself with our sins, inasmuch as it *is written*: (Deuteronomy xxi. 23.) *cursed is every one who hangeth on a tree*; which is to be understood, in case he deserve it for his own sins. --- *That the blessing of Abraham* (or promised to Abraham) *might be fulfilled*; i.e. Christ redeemed us, that these blessings might be fulfilled on all nations, and that all might receive the *promise of the Spirit*, or the promised spirit of grace believing in Christ, who is now come. (Witham)

**Ver. 15, &c.** *I speak after the manner of man*; or, by a comparison, says St. John Chrysostom, common among men. If a man make or execute his last will, or any deed or contract, it stands good; no one *contemns* it, or pretends to annul it, or add *any* thing to it: how much more shall the testament, the covenant, or solemn promise which God made to Abraham, to bless all nations, stand firm and have its effect? And he said to *his seed*, to *one*, i.e. in *Christ only*, not to *his seeds*, as it were by *many*. It is observed, that the word *seed* being a collective signification, may grammatically be taken for the plural as well as for the singular number; so that we are to have more regard to St. Paul's authority, who expounds to us what is here signified by the word *see*, that to the word itself. --- *The law which was made after four hundred and thirty years* (consult the chronologists) does not make void the testament: nor the *promise* which God himself made to Abraham, that mankind should be blessed only by Christ. These blessings could not be by the law of Moses *ordained*, or delivered *by angels* in the *hand of a mediator*, to wit, of Moses, according to the common interpretation, who, in receiving and publishing the law, was as it were a mediator betwixt God and his people. --- *And a mediator is not of one*, (but is called so, as mediating betwixt two parties) *but God is one*. This is to signify, that when he made the covenant or promise to Abraham, he made this promise himself, and did not make use of a mediator inferior to himself, as when he gave the law; and the law, in this respect, was inferior to the promise; but the chief difference was, that true justice and sanctification was not given by the law, for so it would have contradicted and have made void the promise made before to Moses [Abraham?], that the blessings of true sanctification should only be by his seed and by faith in Christ, the Son of Abraham and of David. According to the Scriptures all things (i.e. all men) were

shut up together *under sin*, under the slavery of sin, from which they were not to be redeemed but by the accomplishment of the promise, and by the coming of Christ, by his grace, and faith in him. (Witham) --- *Because of transgressions*. To restrain them from sin, by fear and threats. --- *Ordained by Angels*. The law was delivered by Angels, speaking in the name and person of God to Moses, who was the *mediator* on this occasion between God and the people. (Challoner) --- The law was established not to occasion sin, but to *manifest* sin, and to *punish* sin. Ezechiel (xx. 11.) shews the meaning of the apostle, when he says: that God, after bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, imposed laws upon them that gave life to such as observed them. This was the decalogue, published immediately after the passage of the Red Sea; but violating these commandments, they became guilty of idolatry. To *punish* them, God imposed upon them precepts *which are not good, and which give not life*. (ver. 24, 25.) This is the ceremonial law, which was established and published by degrees during the forty years the Israelites sojourned in the desert. It is then evident that this law was given to punish transgressions in the Israelites, and to prevent relapses. This is the sense of St. Paul.

**Ver. 22.** *Hath concluded all under sin*; i.e. hath declared all to be under sin, from which they could not be delivered but by faith in Jesus Christ, the promised seed. (Challoner) --- The law was not given to all; but all its precepts and prohibitions were binding under sin, and all violators of the law were guilty of sin.

**Ver. 24.** As for the *law*, it was *put* or given *because of transgressions*, to put a stop, by the punishments prescribed, to idolatry and other crimes, which the Jews had learnt from other nations, particularly in Egypt. The law was a *pedagogue*, or schoolmaster, to direct and correct and bring men to Christ, our chief Master, our great Mediator, who being now come, we are no longer under our former pedagogue. Christ hath by his grace made all, who believe in him and follow his doctrine, his *sons* and his adopted children, whether they were before *Jews* or *Gentiles*; now they are all *one*, united in the same *faith*, and in the same spirit of charity. All the faithful are to be accounted of *the seed* of Abraham, and his spiritual children by the accomplishment of the promise. (Witham) --- *Pedagogue*; i.e. schoolmaster, conductor, or instructor. (Challoner)

**Ver. 27.** The baptism of infants shews that the sacrament gives grace of itself, by divine appointment; or, as divines say, *ex opere operato*.

**Ver. 28.** *Neither Jew, &c.* That is, no distinction of Jew, &c. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Præscriptus*, *Greek: proegraphie*; not *proscriptus*, as in some readings of the Latin text: and in vobis is better understood to be joined with *præscriptus* than with *crucifixus*.

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## **GALATIANS 4**

**Ver. 1.** By the child, in this place, the apostle understands all the Jewish people, who, as long as they were under the childhood of the law, were subject to numerous restrictions, although they were the favorite children of God. But when the fulness of time came, they received the adoption of children, and were in possession of the liberty of the law of grace. They were no longer obliged to observe the legal rites. Whence the apostle wishes the conclusion to be drawn, that if persons once subject to the law were now exempt from it, how much more will those be excused from its yoke, who were never under its control. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *Under the elements of the world*. St. John Chrysostom understands the exterior ceremonies and precepts of the law of Moses, with an allusion to the first elements or rudiments which children are taught. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *The fulness of the time.* That is, the time decreed by Divine Providence. --- *God sent his Son made of a woman*, who took a true human body of his virgin Mother. --- *Under the law*, as he was man, because he was pleased to make himself so. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Crying, Abba.* That is, *Father*; Christ taught us in prayer to call God *our Father*, he having made us his adoptive sons by his grace, and *heirs* of heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** *You served them, who by nature are no gods.* These words are to be understood of the converts, who had been Gentiles. --- *Known of God.* That is, approved and loved by him. (Witham) --- The language of the apostle in this verse is not perhaps strictly precise. The Galatians, whom he addresses, had been converted from paganism, and of course were never subject to the law of Moses. But the apostle, by these words, entreats them not to begin now to serve these weak and useless elements, (as he calls the Jewish rites) or by this expression he may mean (as St. John Chrysostom and Theophylactus explain it) the tyranny of error and wickedness. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10-11.** *You observe [1] days, &c.* These false teachers were for obliging all Christians to observe all the Jewish feasts, fasts, ceremonies, &c. Some of the later reformers find here an occasion to blame the fasts and holydays kept by Catholics. St. Jerome, in his commentary on these words, tells us that some had made the like objection in his time: his answer might reasonably stop their rashness; to wit, that Christians keep indeed the sabbath on Sunday, (not the Jewish sabbath on Saturdays) that they keep also divers holydays, and days on which great saints suffered martyrdom, (let our adversaries take notice of this) but that both the days are different, and the motives of keeping them. See St. Jerome, tom. iv. p. 271. (Witham) --- This text cannot mean to condemn the feasts appointed to be kept holy in the Catholic Church. For on the festivals dedicated to our Lord, St. Augustine writeth thus: "We dedicate and consecrate the memory of God's benefits with solemnities on solemn appointed days, lest in process of time they might creep into ungrateful and unkind oblivion." And of the martyrs thus: "Christians people celebrate the memories of martyrs with religious solemnity, both to move themselves to an imitation of their virtues, and that they may be partakers of their merits, and helped by their prayers." (Cont. Faust. lib. xx. chap. 21.) And of other saints thus: "keep ye and celebrate with sobriety the natiivities of saints, that we may imitate them that are gone before us, and that they may rejoice in us, who pray for us." (In Ps. .xxxviii. Conc. 2. in fine.)

**Ver. 12.** *Be ye as I, for I also am as you.* I add no word in the translation, because it is uncertain what is to be understood: some give this construction, be you as *I am*, because I also *was*, as you now *are*; and they expound them thus: lay aside your zeal for the Jewish ceremonies as I have done, who *was* once as zealous for them as you seem now to be. Others would have the construction and sense to be: be you as *I am*, because I *am* as you; that is, be affected to me, and love me, as I have still a true affection and love for you, which is agreeable to what follows, *you have not offended me at all.* (Witham)

**Ver. 13-16.** *Through infirmity of the flesh....and your temptation in my flesh.* St. Jerome thinks the apostle had some bodily infirmity upon him. St. John Chrysostom understands his poverty, and want, and persecutions, and that some were inclined to contemn him and his preaching on these accounts. Yet others among them did not esteem him less: they received him, respected him as an *Angel of God*, as *Christ Jesus*; they would have given him *their eyes*, as one may say, and all that was dear to them. He puts them in mind how *happy* then they thought themselves, and asketh why they are now so much *changed*? (Witham)

**Ver. 17-20.** He tells them this change come from the false teachers among them, who with a false *zeal* would *exclude them* from a friendship and a submission to St. Paul, and deprive them again of that Christian liberty by which Christ, and the faith of Christ, had freed them from the yoke of the Mosaical law. On this account I must labor and *travail*, as it were to *bring you* forth a second time. How do I now wish to be *with you*, to *change my voice*, to exhort you, to reprehend

you, to use all ways and means to regain you to Christ? --- *I am in confusion about you*,<sup>[2]</sup> I am perplexed, as the Greek signifies, as not knowing what to say or do. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *It is written* in the law, that is, in Genesis, (chap. xvi. and chap. xxi.) that *Abraham had two sons*, &c. that his two sons, *Ismael*, born of his servant, *Agar*, and *Isaac* of his wife, *Sara*, in an *allegorical sense*, represent the two *testaments* or covenants, which God made with his people: that by *Ismael* was represented that covenant of the former law delivered to Moses on Mount Sina, by which the Jews were made his elect people, yet as it were his *servants*, to be kept to their duty by fear of punishments; but by *Isaac* is represented the new covenant or testament of *Christ*, given at Jerusalem, where he suffered, where the new law was first published; by which law, they who believe in Christ were made the spiritual children of Abraham, the *sons* of God, and heirs of the blessings promised to Abraham: that *Sina*, the *mountain in Arabia*, hath<sup>[3]</sup> an *affinity with Jerusalem*, and *with here children*, who remain under the *servitude* of the law of Moses: we cannot understand a *conjunction*, or an *affinity*, as to place and situation, Sina and Jerusalem being nearly twenty days' journey distant from each other; therefore it can only be an affinity in a mystical signification, inasmuch as Jerusalem was the capital of the Jews, where the children of those who received the law on Mount Sina lived still under the servitude of the same law: but Christians, who believe in Christ, must look upon themselves as belonging to Jerusalem, and not to the city of Jerusalem upon earth, but to the celestial Jerusalem in heaven, which is our *mother*, now no longer servants and slaves to the former law, but *free*, being made the *sons* of God by the grace of Christ, and heirs of heaven. And these blessings were promised to all nations, not only to the Jews, of which the much greater part remained obstinate, and refused to believe in Christ, but also particularly to the Gentiles, according to the prophecy of Isaias, (chap. liv.) *rejoice thou* that hast been *barren*, like *Sara*, for a long time; i.e. rejoice, you Gentiles, hitherto left in idolatry, without knowledge or worship of the true God, now you shall have more children among you than among the Jews, who were his chosen people. (Witham)

**Ver. 29.** St. Paul makes another observation upon this example of Ismael and Isaac: that as Ismael was troublesome to Isaac, for which he and his mother were turned out of the family, so *also now* the Jews insulted and persecuted the Christians, who had been Gentiles; but God will protect them as heirs of the blessings promised: they shall be accounted the spiritual children of Abraham, while the Jews, with their carnal ceremonies, shall be cast off. (Witham) --- This, says St. Augustine, is a figure of heretics, (who are the children of the bond-woman) unjustly persecuting the Catholic Church. (Ep. 48.)

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[1] Ver. 10. St. Jerome on this verse, p. 271, dicat aliquis, nos simile crimen in[]urrimus....observantes diem dominicam....Pascha festivitatem, & Pentecostes []ætitiā, & pro varietate regionum, diversa in honore martyrum tempora consti[]uta, &c.

[2] Ver. 20. Confundor in vobis, *Greek: aporoumai*. See 2 Corinthians iv. 8. &c.

[3] Ver. 25. Qui conjunctus est ei, quæ nunc est Jerusalem, *Greek: sustoichei te nun Ierousalem*. See Budæus, Estius, Mr. Legh, &c.

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## GALATIANS 5

**Ver. 1.** *Be not held again under the yoke of bondage*, of the old law. (Witham) --- This verse must be understood in the same manner as the 9th verse of the preceding chapter. See the annotations upon it.

**Ver. 2.** *If you converted from heathenism be circumcised*, it must be by believing and professing it necessary, which is false doctrine, and the *Christ will profit you nothing*: not that the practice of



those ceremonies was at the time sinful, especially for those that had been Jews, but it was an error to judge them necessary for converted Gentiles. Besides, he that judges circumcision necessary, must also judge himself bound to keep all the other ceremonies and precepts of the law. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** The false teachers had insisted on the observance of circumcision and a few other rites only, as necessary for salvation; but St. Paul assures them, that the receiving of circumcision is an open profession of Judaism, and that he that makes this profession, binds himself to the observance of every part of the law, since a curse is pronounced against those that do not keep it in all its parts. If then circumcision be necessary for salvation, the whole law is necessary also. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** If you think that justice cannot be obtained but under the law, you make a renunciation of the justice of Christ: his mediation becomes of no avail to you. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5-6.** *We in spirit* hope for true *justice* by *faith* in Christ; yet not by faith only, but by faith *working by charity*. (Witham) --- Here note with St. Augustine, that faith is not to be idle, but working or doing good works in charity: wherefore not faith alone. (De opere et fide. chap. xiv.)

**Ver. 8, &c.** *This persuasion* of yours *is not from him who calleth you*; is not from God: and *I hope* you will be shortly again of no *other mind* than what I taught you. (Witham) --- This was a Jewish proverb, and alluded to the time of the Pasch, when it was not permitted to eat of any but unleavened bread; during which time the least leaven made the whole mass unclean to a Jew....Some Greek copies read, *Greek: mikra zume olon to phurama zumoi*, when the sense will be, "a little leaven causes the whole mass to rise." (Calmet) --- Hence the introduction of any, however small, share of the ceremonial and Jewish rites, will greatly disfigure the purity and simplicity of the Christian institute. --- *As for me*, my adversaries misrepresent me, when they say I preach circumcision; which if I did, I should not be persecuted as I am by the Jews. I never preach it necessary for Gentile converts, though I have not condemned the use of it for the Jewish converts, provided they do not oblige other converts to it. --- *The scandal of the cross is therefore made void*. The sense is, according to St. Jerome, that the Jews' greatest objection against St. Paul used to be, because he preached that circumcision and the law of Moses need not be observed: another objection against him was, that he preached Jesus, who was crucified on an infamous cross, to be their great Messiah. He reasons then in this manner, that if the Jews think he again preacheth the necessity of circumcision and the precepts of the old law, they will no longer be offended that he preacheth Christ crucified, because they were not so much offended with the latter as with the first. Thus also St. John Chrysostom on this verse. Others expound it thus: If I preach circumcision and the ceremonies of the law, therefore according to my doctrine, the cross of Christ, and justification by the merits of Christ crucified, is abolished, because justification is still to be sought for by the works of the law. --- *I would they were even cut off*: separated from your communion by excommunication. This seems the true sense; so that I need not mention any other exposition. See Corn. a Lapide. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *An occasion to the flesh*; i.e. that you abuse not, by a vicious life, that Christian liberty which Christ hath purchased for you, but be united in the *spirit of charity*. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** All the law, as far as it regards our duty to our neighbour, is contained in this text of the apostle; he says the same in his epistle to the Romans, Chap. xiii. He that loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law.

**Ver. 17.** *So that you* [1] *do not the things that you would*. He does not say, so that *you cannot do*, as others falsely translate; as if men were under an absolute necessity of sinning, or doing ill; which is also contradictory to the foregoing words, *walk by the spirit, and you will not accomplish the works of the flesh*. (Witham) --- Here some suppose, says St. Augustine, that the apostle denieth that we have free liberty of will: not understanding that this is said to them, if they will not hold fast the grace of faith conceived, by which only they can walk in the spirit, and not

accomplish the lusts of the flesh. (St. Augustine, in chap. v. Gal.)

**Ver 19-21.** *Uncleanness, immodesty, luxury.* In the Greek there are but two vices named; *luxury* is not mentioned; and, perhaps, the Latin interpreter put two words to explain one Greek word. (Witham) --- St. Augustine here sheweth that there are other damnable sins besides infidelity.

**Ver. 22.** *The fruit of the Spirit is charity, &c.* There are numbered twelve of these fruits in the Latin, though but nine in the Greek text, in St. John Chrysostom; St. Jerome; St. Augustine, tract. lxxxvii. in Joan. p. 756. The difference may again happen by the Latin interpreter using two words to express one Greek word. It is observed, that *longanimity* and *patience* are in a manner the same; so are *benignity* and *goodness*; and so may be here *continency* and *chastity*. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 17. Ita ut non quæcunque vultis, illa faciatis; *Greek: ina me a an thelete tauta poiete.* Dr. Wells, in his correction to the Protestant translation, leaves out *cannot*.

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## GALATIANS 6

**Ver. 2.** *One another's burdens.* This is not contrary to what is added ver. 5, that *every one shall bear his own burden*, because in the first place the sense is, that we must bear patiently with one another's faults and imperfections; in the second, that every one must answer for himself at God's tribunal. (Witham) --- Every one has his failings and weaknesses, and stands in need of indulgence from his brethren; he must, therefore, grant to them what he so much desires to receive from them. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *Communicate....in all good things:* by this *communication*, is understood an assisting of others in their wants. (Witham) --- Such as are blessed with the goods of this world, should gladly communicate a share of their efforts to the preachers and teachers of the true faith; and this not merely as a return for what they have received, but also that they may be made thereby partakers of their merit. (St. Augustine, lib. 2. evang. quæst. q. 8.)

**Ver. 7.** This is addressed to the avaricious, who, under various pretexts, excused themselves from contributing to the support of their teachers. But they are here informed, that their excuses will not screen them from the anger of God. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8.** *He that soweth in his flesh, &c.* The apostle represents the flesh and the spirit like two fields, on which men sow good or bad seed, according to which they shall reap. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** Works of mercy are the seed of life everlasting, and the proper cause thereof, and not faith only.

**Ver. 10.** *The household of the faith:* those who profess the same true faith. (Witham) --- We are more bound to assist Christians than Jews; Catholics than heretics. (St. Jerome, q. 1. ad Hedibim.)

**Ver. 11.** *What a letter I have written....with my own hand.* St. Jerome understands this of what he is now beginning to write, the rest being written by the hand of another. Others understand the whole letter. (Witham) --- St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, and Theodoret, suppose that the apostle wrote the whole epistle with his own hand, and here excuses himself for writing so ill the Grecian letters, which were so very different from those of his native language. But St. Jerome understands, that he wrote only this latter part of the epistle, as a testimony that the whole came from him. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12-13.** He tells them the false teachers would have them circumcised first, to avoid *persecution* from the Jewish party; and secondly to glory in having made them their proselytes. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** As for my part, I will *glory* in nothing *but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but in Christ crucified. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *But a new creature*; but to be born anew, to receive the spiritual life of grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body*, by the stripes and wounds I have received for preaching the gospel. (Witham) --- Formerly it was not unusual to stamp certain characters on the bodies of soldiers, fugitives, and on domestics, purposely to distinguish them.

There are three principal parts in this epistle. The first is the history of the vocation of St. Paul, chap. i. and ii.; the second is on justification and the abrogation of the law; the third is an exhortation to persevere in Christian liberty, to avoid its abuse, and to perform the various duties of a Christian.

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## EPHESIANS

### THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE EPHESIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Ephesus was a famous city, the metropolis of Asia Minor, upon the Ægean Sea, now called the Archipelago. In it was the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. St. Paul had staid there two years, and preached another year thereabouts. See Acts xx. The chief design of this Epistle was to hinder the Ephesians, and others in the neighbouring cities, from being seduced by false teachers, who were come among them. In the first three chapters he extols the grace of God, in mercifully calling the Gentiles. It was written when St. Paul was a prisoner; (see Chap. iv. 1. and vi. 20.) but whether during his first imprisonment, at Rome, an. 62 [in the year A.D. 62], or in the latter imprisonment, as others judge about an. 65, is uncertain. (Witham) --- Ephesus was the capital of Lesser Asia, and celebrated for the temple of Diana, to which the most part of the people of the East went frequently to worship. But St. Paul having preached the gospel there for two years the first time, and afterwards for about a year, converted many. He wrote his Epistle to them when he was a prisoner at Rome, and sent it by Tychicus. He admonishes them to hold firmly the faith which they had received; and warns them, and also those neighbouring cities, against the sophistry of philosophers and the doctrine of false teachers, who were come among them. The matters of faith contained in this Epistle, are exceedingly sublime, and consequently very difficult to be understood. It was written about twenty-nine years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- Ephesus was the chief city in Asia Minor, much given to superstitions, and not less to debauchery and libertinism. In it was the famous temple of Diana. St. Paul had preached in this place three years; (Acts xx.) so that all, both Jews and Gentiles, heard the word of the Lord, till he was driven away by Demetrius, the silversmith. At his departure, he left Timothy (1 Timothy i.) to maintain the purity of the gospel, and preserve them from the fables, which St. Paul had warned the Ephesians, would be introduced among them by rapacious wolves, and men talking perversely, to lead disciples after them. The Gentile converts held fast to the doctrines they had received from St. Paul: the Jews were the chief innovators. To the former the apostle writes this Epistle, praising their steadfastness, and instructing them more fully in the hidden mysteries of faith, viz. *redemption, justification, call of the Gentiles, predestination*, and the *glorification of Christ, and his body, the Church*. In the fourth, and

succeeding chapters, he exhorts them to the practice of morality, and to fulfill their respective duties of parents, children, masters, servants, &c. and finally reminds all the soldiers of Christ, to be armed with spiritual weapons against all the assaults of the devil. St. Jerome observes that this Epistle, especially the first three chapters, are intricate and difficult; probably owing to the sublimity of the subject. The last three contain the most interesting morality. (Estius. passim.) See also Acts xviii. 19. et seq. and xix. 1. et sequ. --- When Cardinal Pole was consulted by what method the obscure passages of St. Paul's Epistles could be best unfolded, he replied: Let the reader begin with the latter part, where the apostle treats of morality, and practise that which is delivered there; and then let him go back to the beginning, where points of doctrine are discussed with great acuteness and subtilty.

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## EPHESIANS 1

**Ver. 1.** St. John Chrysostom take notice, in his preface to this epistle, that the doctrinal part in the first three chapters is treated in a very sublime manner, with long periods and sentences, which makes the style more perplexed and the sense more obscure than in his other epistles. On this account I shall first give the reader a paraphrase as literal as I can, and then make some short notes on the difficulties in the text. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Blessed by the God*, who, through his Son *Jesus Christ*, made man, hath *blessed us with all spiritual blessings* and gifts; and by his grace, infused into our souls, has given us a title to a happy eternity in heaven. (Witham) --- *In heavenly things; (in cælestibus)* i.e. all spiritual blessings from heaven, or for eternity. This is the object of all the blessings we receive from God; and we ought, according to the first intention of them, to refer them all to eternal or heavenly beatitude. St. Paul distinguishes the blessings which we receive in Jesus Christ from those bestowed upon the Jews, which were temporal and limited to this earth. (Calmet; Challoner)

**Ver. 4-8.** As by his eternal decree, according to the *purpose of his good will* and pleasure, he hath made choice of us to be his *adoptive sons*, and predestinated us to be saved and glorified by the merits and grace of his *beloved Son*, our Redeemer, without any merits of ours to the glorious *praise* and *riches* of his *grace*, by which he hath made us *abound* in *all wisdom* and true *prudence*. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *That he might make known to us*, and to all men, *the mystery of his will* and pleasure in establishing his new law, of calling all Gentiles, as well as Jews, to believe in his Son, made man for us, *in the dispensation of the fulness of times*, (that is, at the time decreed from eternity) *to establish*, to accomplish, and, as it is in the Greek, *to recapitulate all things in heaven and on earth, in Christ, and through him*, and his merits; on earth, by fulfilling all the types, figures, and prophecies concerning the Messias; and in heaven, by filling up the number of his elect. (Witham) --- *The mystery of his will*. The word *mystery* signifies a secret, an unknown design. It was the will of God, to reveal to us the great design he had in the incarnation of his Son, viz. the formation of one great body of true adorers; composed, without distinction, of Jew and Gentile: till (ver. 10) when the time appointed shall come, he will reunite and perfect in or under Christ this one body, composed of the Church triumphant, Angels and saints in heaven, and the Church militant upon earth. (St. John Chrysostom, Estius, &c.)

**Ver. 11.** In Christ *we also are called by lot*; i.e. to this happy lot, this share and state of eternal happiness, (he seems to speak with an allusion to the manner by which the lands of a temporal inheritance was distributed to the Israelites, in Palestine) *that we* (ver. 12) *who are saved, may be to the praise of his glory*; might praise God for ever in the kingdom of his glory; particularly we Jews, who *before hoped* in the Messias to come, and also you Gentiles, who now having heard the gospel, have believed in Christ, and who, together with all Christians, have been now *sealed* as it were *with the holy Spirit* of promise; i.e. by the Spirit promised, and all those spiritual graces

which are an earnest and pledge, which give us an assurance of our future glory and happiness. *For our redemption* from our sins, and in order to the *acquired possession*, to the possession of that glorious happiness which Christ, by his incarnation and death, hath acquired for us. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *In whom you....were sealed*, &c. Having been regenerated in baptism, you have received the Holy Spirit and the supernatural gifts which he communicates, by which he has, as it were, impressed upon you the seal of your sanctification and the pledge of your salvation. It is not an external impression, such as that by which soldiers are marked by their sovereigns, nor circumcision, as of old, but it is a mark within you --- the grace with which you are filled --- which shews itself outwardly by miraculous effects, &c. (Calmet) --- Some refer these words, in whom you were sealed, to the sacrament of *baptism*; others to *confirmation*: both, with the sacrament of holy orders, confer a *character*, or mark, of which St. Paul seems to speak whenever he speaks of God *sealing* us.

**Ver. 15, &c.** *Wherefore....hearing* of your constancy in the *faith of Christ*, and of your charitable *love* to all the *saints*, or faithful, I *give* always thanks to God; I pray that God may be more *revealed* to you, that *the eyes of your heart* may be *enlightened*, (ver. 18) that you may know what ground you have to hope in the transcendent *greatness* of God's *almighty power*, who *raised Christ from the dead*, (ver. 20) and set him on his right hand in heaven, above all the choirs and orders of blessed spirits, putting all things under his feet, making him, as man, head over all his Church militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven: *which Church* is his mystical *body*, *who is filled all in all*, (ver. 23) or as others have translated, *who filleth all in all*; the sense is, that the glory of Christ, as head of all, is filled and increased by the salvation and happiness of all his chosen members, and of all his elect, to the end of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *His power*. The greatest exertion of the power of God, or that action by which he shewed his power most, is the resurrection from the dead, which he exercised in Christ, when he raised him from the tomb, and placed him over all the Angels of heaven; and which shall likewise be exercised over us all, when we too shall be raised from the dead, and constituted members of the triumphant Church, and rewarded with a share of glory proportioned to our merits. These are the hopes to which we are called.

**Ver. 21.** *All principality*. The Fathers agree that there are nine orders of blessed spirits, of which some are specified here, in the Epistle to the Colossians we have the order of *thrones*, to which if we add the cherubim, seraphim, Angels, and Archangels, we shall have nine. Calvin and other heretics strive to bring into doubt, and to corrupt many points of Catholic doctrine, sufficiently clear in holy writ, and sanctified by the general belief of the Universal or Catholic Church.

**Ver. 22.** As Christ is king, and yet men are kings also; so Christ is head of the Church, and yet man may be head thereof also. Jesus Christ is bishop and pastor of our souls; (Hebrews iii.) but is that a reason why there should be no other bishop and pastor of our souls?

#### Notes as to the style or expressions of St. Paul, in this chapter.

**Ver. 3.** *With all spiritual blessings in heavenly places*: literally, in *heavenlies*, [1] or *celestials*, which some expound and translate, in *heavenly things*; but this being expressed just before by *spiritual blessings*, it rather seems to be understood of the glory prepared for *us* in heaven, or in the heavenly mansions; in which sense it seems to me, according to the interpretation both of St. Jerome and of St. John Chrysostom in their commentaries on these words. Estius takes notice that the same expression, *in the celestials*, is used five times in this epistle, and in all of them signifies places above us. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *To the praise of the glory of his grace*; i.e. unto the glorious praise or commendation of his grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *In all wisdom and prudence;* which may be either referred to the wisdom and prudence of God, the giver of grace, or to the gifts of wisdom and prudence bestowed upon the elect. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Which he hath purposed in him;*[2] i.e. in Christ: but in the Greek the sense is, in himself; i.e. in God the Father, who sent his Son. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *In the dispensation of the fulness of times.* It may perhaps be translated, *at the appointed fulness of time*, which is generally expounded to signify at the time decreed from eternity. --- *To establish* (or restore) *all things in Christ.*[3] The Greek is to recapitulate, or, as the Protestant translation, to gather together all things in Christ; which St. Jerome expounds, by a fulfilling at once in Christ all the ancient figures and prophecies of the former law. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *The redemption of acquisition;*[4] i.e. in order to the acquired possession, or to the obtaining of that glory which Christ, by redeeming us, hath acquired for us. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Who is filled all in all.*[5] In the Latin the words have a passive signification, is filled; in the Greek may be signified, who filleth all in all. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. In cælestibus, *Greek: en tois epouraniois*, in supercælestibus. St. Jerome, (p. 324, tom. 4. nov. edit.) *Spiritualia in cælestibus expectanda....thesaurizamus nobis in cælis.* See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. a. p. 765.*

[2] Ver. 9. In eo; but in the Greek, *en auto*, in seipso.

[3] Ver. 10. Instaurare, *Greek: anakephalaïosasthai*, recapitulare. See St. Jerome, p. 330.

[4] Ver. 14. Acquisitionis, *Greek: peripoïeseos*. See St. Jerome and St. John Chrysostom.

[5] Ver. 23. Qui omnia in omnibus adimpletur, *Greek: panta en pasi pleroumenou*; which may either be in the passive or middle voice. St. Jerome, in his exposition, (p. 337) expressly says: Non ait, qui omnia in omnibus adimplet, sed qui omnia in omnibus adimpletur....sicut ergo adimpletur Imperator, si quotidie ejus impleatur exercitus, sic dominus Jesus, &c. See St. John Chrysostom in Lat. edit. (p. 869) and in the Greek, (p. 776. lin. 31) *Greek: dia panton oun pleroutai to soma*, where the whole text requires a passive sense.

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## EPHESIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** He enlivened *you, when you were dead.* These words, he enlivened or restored to life, are necessary to express the literal sense and construction, as appears from the following fifth verse. by what is here translated *offences*, are commonly understood trespasses less grievous than by the word *sins*. (Witham) --- *God hath quickened you, or restored you to life;* these words, expressed in ver. 5, are understood in this: in some editions they are expressed. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** *According to the course of this world,* (i.e. the customs of this wicked corrupt world) *according to the prince of the power of this air, of the spirit,* &c. meaning the devils, who are permitted to exercise their power upon the earth, or in the air. See John xii. 10.; xiv. 30.; xvi. 11. (Witham) --- *Secundum sæculum mundi hujus:* according to the custom of this world. You were dead to the eyes of God, but you live in the eyes of the world: and how do you live? according to the maxims of the world, in idolatry, in crime, in corruption of manners. Corrumpi et corrumpere sæculum est. (Tacitus) (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *Among whom, &c.* St. Jerome (p. 3) refers it to *trespasses* or *sins*. --- *Were by nature*; not by nature according to the state of man's first creation in paradise, but by nature infected with original sin by the fall of our first parents. --- *Even as the rest*; that is, all mankind. (Witham)

**Ver. 4, &c.** *But God....hath raised up together*, both Gentiles and Jews, to life in Christ, remitting our sins by *faith* in him, and by the grace of our merciful Redeemer, by his pure mercy, not by any works of ours, nor merely by the works of the former law. --- *Hath made us* in a condition to *sit together in heavenly places*, to be hereafter crowned in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Quickened us together in Christ.* Faith, baptism, and grace, are pledges of our future resurrection and glorification in heaven. Our present conversion is also a kind of resurrection. The time is come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live. (St. Augustine upon St. John, No. 7.)

**Ver. 8.** Faith is the beginning, foundation, and the root of justification, and the first of all other virtues, without which it is impossible to please God. (Bristow)

**Ver. 9.** *Not of works*, as of our own growth, or from ourselves: but as from the grace of God. (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *Fir we are his workmanship*, not only as to our body and soul, but by a new creation in Christ Jesus, with a new heart by his grace. (Witham) --- St. Paul now compares our conversion to creation, to shew that we had been called and justified without preceding merit. In the same manner as the things which God has drawn out of nothing, cannot glory as if they had contributed anything to their existence. (St. Jerome, hic [on this place].)

**Ver. 11-12.** *Be mindful* that as for you, who are Gentiles, who were called an *uncircumcised* people by the circumcised Jews, that you were *without Christ*, without the hopes or expectation of the Messiah, *alienated from the conversation* of those who were God's elect people, and from the promises particularly made to them, that the Messiah should be of their race: *without God in this world*, i.e. without the knowledge and the worship of God. But now *by Christ*, by believing in him, you who seemed to *be far off*, *are made near by his blood*, (ver. 13) by him who died for all; for he hath brought *peace* to all men, *breaking down* by his incarnation and death that *wall of partition*, that enmity betwixt the Jews and Gentiles, making them *but one*; abolishing that former *law*, of so many *ordinances*, [1] precepts, and ceremonies, *by decrees*, (which may signify by his divine decrees; or rather, as St. Jerome expounds it by the Greek, *abolishing* the old law and its precepts by the precepts and doctrine of the new law) that he might reconcile to God both the Jews and Gentiles, that now they might be one mystical body, to wit, the Church of Christ, of which he is the head. Remember then that you are no longer *strangers and foreigners*, as you wer when the Jews were the only elect people of God: now, by faith and hope, you are fellow-citizens with the saints and with all the elect people of God: you are built *upon the foundation* of the *apostles and prophets*, (ver. 20) who, by their prophecies concerning the Messiah, and by their teaching and preaching of the gospel, are as it were subordinate foundation-stones under Christ, the chief founder and the *chief corner-stone* of his Church; *in whom you also* (Christians, at Ephesus, and all the faithful) *are built up together*, (ver. 22) as parts of a spiritual edifice or temple, where God inhabits. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** Christ destroyed the enmity which, like a wall of separation, stood between Jew and Gentile, and united them into one people. He did this in his flesh, by his own blood, or the sacrifice he made of his flesh on the cross. (Calmet)

**Ver. 19.** You are no longer strangers with regard to God and his holy alliance. You are no longer travellers and vagabonds, without a God, as you were before your conversion; not knowing to whom you belonged, nor finding in paganism either solid foundation or truth, neither hopes for this nor consolation for future life. But now you are become citizens of the same city as the saints, and domestics of the house of God. (Calmet)

**Ver. 20.** The Church is in this place said to be built upon the apostles and prophets; why not then upon St. Peter?

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[1] Ver. 11-12. Legem mandatorum decretis evacuans, *Greek: ton nomon ton entolon dogmasi* (dogmatibus) *katargesas*; i.e. says St. Jerome, (p. 344) *præcepta legalia Evangelicis dogmatibus commutavit*. See St. John Chrysostom, p. 879. Lat. edit. in Savil. p. 787.

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### EPHESIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** *For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner, &c.* The sense seems to be, I, Paul, *am* a prisoner; otherwise the sense will be suspended, and interrupted by a long parenthesis till the 14th verse, where it is again repeated, "for this cause I bow my knees." (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *If yet [1] you have heard.* If yet doth not imply a doubt, but is the same as, for you have heard *the dispensation*. [2] This word, dispensation, is divers times taken by St. Paul to signify the manner by which a thing is done, or put in execution; the sense therefore here is, for you have heard how by the grace of God I have been made your apostle. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *The mystery, &c.* By this mystery, he means what he has already mentioned in the last chapter and what he continues to speak of, to wit, that by the coming of Christ, and the preaching of his gospel, all both Jews and Gentiles, all nations should be united into one Church, by one and the same faith. (Witham) --- *Mystery, &c.* Revelation, the same as he mentions Galatians i. 12.; where speaking of his gospel, he says, For neither did I receive it of man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This revelation seems to have regarded principally three things: 1. The redemption and justification of man by Jesus; 2. the vocation of the Gentiles; and thirdly, a positive command to announce the gospel to them. He speaks particularly of the second and third. (Estius) --- *Made known to me* by revelation, and to the other apostles and prophets. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *As it is now revealed.* [3] St. Paul, as both St. Jerome and St. John Chrysostom take notice, does not absolutely say that this mystery was *not known*, but only *not known as it was* afterwards to the apostles. For whether by this mystery we understand the incarnation of Christ, or the uniting of the Jews and Gentiles into one Church, we cannot doubt but both were revealed to Abraham, to David, to many prophets and just men in the time of the law; but now it was revealed and made known to all. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *That the Gentiles should be coheirs, &c.* This is the mystery which was heretofore unknown, and now revealed. This is what the greatest part of the Jews could never be brought to believe, that the Gentiles should be equally sharers with them of God's promises and blessings. They were strangely scandalized that St. Peter should receive Cornelius, an uncircumcised man, into the same communion. On the like account they persecuted St. Paul. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *I am made a minister, &c.* i.e. an apostle, to preach this same doctrine of the gospel of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *To me, the least of all the saints,* (i.e. of the faithful) is given this mission by the grace of God, and power from the Almighty of working miracles, and other miraculous gifts from him, who created all things in order to *enlighten* [4] or *bring light to all men*, that they may know and be convinced of the *dispensation* and manner in which God will have this mystery now made known and preached to all the world. (Witham)



**Ver. 9.** The Lord has commanded me to teach and declare his wisdom, displayed at this time in the mystery of our redemption; a mystery, which for so many ages, nay even from all eternity, has been locked up in the breast of the Almighty, but which he has at length vouchsafed to reveal. (Menochius)

**Ver. 10.** That *the manifold wisdom of God*, and his other divine perfections of mercy, of justice, &c. may be more known, and seen executed by the coming of his Son, according to his eternal decrees of sending a Redeemer, in whom they are to believe, and have a hope and confidence of their eternal salvation. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Wherefore, I beseech you*, be not discouraged nor *disheartened at my tribulations* and persecutions on the account of the gospel, nor at your own, which ought to be a subject both for you and me to glory in. (Witham)

**Ver. 14-15.** *For this cause I pray and bow my knees to the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity* (or fatherhood[5]) *in heaven and earth is named.* The Greek word oftentimes signifies a family, and therefore may signify, of whom the *whole family in heaven and earth is named*; and thus the sense will be, that God is not only the Father of his eternal Son, but (as not only the Latin text, but even the Greek may signify) of all angelical spirits in heaven, and of all men, especially Christians, made his adoptive sons in baptism. But here may be signified not only a *family*, but those in particular who are honoured with the name and dignity of *fathers*; so that the name which they have of fathers, or patriarchs, is derived from God the Father of all, and communicated to them in an inferior degree. This exposition is found in St. Jerome, in Theodoret, Theophylactus, St. John Damascene, &c. (Witham) --- *All paternity, or the whole family; Greek: patria.* God is the Father both of angels and men: whosoever besides is named father, is so named with subordination to him. (Challoner)

**Ver. 17.** Christ dwelleth in us by his gifts, and we are just by those his gifts remaining in us; and not by Christ's proper justice only, as some modern innovators will have it. (Bristow) --- And this not by *faith* only, but by faith rooted and founded in *charity*, which accomplishes all virtues. (Bristow)

**Ver. 18.** *What is the breadth, &c.* It is not expressed to what must be referred these metaphorical words of breadth, length, &c. Some expound them of the charity which in our hearts we ought to have for one another; others, of the love which Christ shewed towards mankind, in coming to redeem all. (Witham) --- *What, &c.* This thought seems borrowed from Job xi: "Peradventure thou wilt comprehend the steps of God, and wilt find out the Almighty perfectly." The inspired writer then shews us how the Almighty is incomprehensible; for says he, "God is higher than the heavens; and what wilt thou do? he is deeper than hell; and how wilt thou know? The measure of him is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." The apostle, alluding to these words, prays that the Ephesians may have faith and charity sufficient to enable them to comprehend all that is comprehensible of God; as St. Dionysius explains it. But we are not hence to conclude, that there exists such a thing as dimension or size with regard to God, for he is a pure Spirit: but these expressions are merely metaphorical. For by *breadth* we are to understand his virtue and wisdom, which extend over all his creatures: (Ecclesiasticus i.) "he poured out wisdom upon all his words." By *length* is meant his eternal duration: (Psalm ci.) "but thou, O Lord, remainest for ever." By *height* we are taught the infinite superiority of his nature over ours: (Psalm cxii.) "The Lord is high above all nations." And by *depth* we are shewn the incomprehensibility of his wisdom: (Ecclesiastes) "Wisdom is a great depth; who shall find it out?" Hence it appears that the end of faith and charity is, that we may arrive at a *perfect* faith; which may know, as far as it is intelligible, the greatness of his wisdom, his eternal duration, &c. (St. Thomas Aquinas, in Eph.)

**Ver. 19.** *That you may be filled unto all the fulness of God*; i.e. that as God is full of love and charity for all, so may you in an inferior degree, according as you are capable, be filled with charity. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Si tamen audistis, *Greek: eige*, &c. Si tamen and *Greek: eige* do not here express a doubt, but an affirmation, the same as in Latin, si quidem. See St. John Chrysostom on the next chapter, ver. 21. *Greek: log. ig. p. 829. Greek: eige ouk amphiballantos esti, alla kai sphodra diabebaioumenou.*

[2] Ver. 2. Dispensationem, *Greek: oikonomian*, rei gestæ administrationem.

[3] Ver. 5. Sicuti nunc, *Greek: os nun*.

[4] Ver. 8. Illuminare omnes, *Greek: photisai pantas*; not as God doth by interior illuminations, but by preaching.

[5] Ver. 14-15. Omnis paternitas, *Greek: patria*. See St. Jerome on this verse: Deus....paternitatis nomen ex seipso largitus est omnibus....præstat cæteris ut patres esse dicantur. Theodoret, tom. 3. p. 305. Ed. Par. an. 1642. Alii patres, sive corporales, sive spirituales, desuper traxerunt appellationem: *Greek: oi de alloi pateres....another ten prosegorian [il]kusan*. See St. John Damascene, lib. 1. Ortho. fid. chap. ix. Ed. Bas. p. 32. *Greek: touto de isticion*, &c. See Theophylactus, &c.

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## EPHESIANS 4

**Ver. 1.** Here begins the second part of this epistle, in which he exhorts them to the practice of Christian virtues. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *In one hope of your vocation.* The three great reasons that we have to love one another are contained in this verse, because we have but one body, of which Christ is the head. We are all animated by the same spirit, viz. the Holy Ghost, who is given to us all, and we all live in the same hope of eternal happiness. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** This contains some more reasons why Christians should love one another. We are all servants of the same God, believe the same mysteries, and receive the same sacraments, whoever may be the dispenser of them. --- *One faith.* As rebellion is the bane of commonwealths and kingdoms, and peace and concord the preservation of the same; so is schism, and diversity of faith or fellowship in the service of God, the calamity of the Church: and peace, unity, and uniformity, the special blessing of God therein. St. Cyprian, in his book on the unity of the Church, writeth thus: "One Church, for one is my dove. This unity of the Church, he that holdeth not, doth he think he holdeth the faith? He that withstandeth or resisteth the Church, he that resisteth Peter's chair, upon which the Church was built, doth he trust that he is in the Church?" And again, Ep. xl. "There is one God, and one Christ, and one Church, and one chair, by our Lord's voice founded upon Peter. To set up another altar, or to constitute another priesthood, besides the one altar and the one priesthood, is impossible. Whosoever gathereth elsewhere scattereth. It is adulterous, it is impious, it is sacrilegious, whatsoever is instituted by man to the breach of God's disposition. Get ye far from such men: they are blind, and leaders of the blind." St. Hilary also applies this text against the Arians thus: "Perilous and miserable is it that there are now among them as many faiths as wills, and as many doctrines as manners; whilst modes of faith are written as men will, or as they will, so are understood. Whereas the one truth teaches there is but one God, one Lord, one baptism, and also one faith: hence whilst more faiths are made, they begin by falling from that which is the only faith, and end in having no faith at all." (St. Hilary, lib. ad Constantium Augustum.)

**Ver. 7.** *To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* That is, as it hath pleased Christ to bestow his free gifts upon us; to shew, says St. John Chrysostom, that

it was not according to any merit of ours. The words also shew that Christ is the giver and author of graces, and consequently the true God. (Witham) --- We must endeavour by all means in our power to preserve this unity, especially by avoiding jealousy, or being envious of the graces which have been given to our neighbour; considering that they all proceed from the same God, who divides to each one as he pleaseth. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 8.** *He led captivity captive.*[1] St. Jerome and others expound these words of Christ's delivering the pious souls that had died before his ascension, and which were detained in a place of rest which is called *Limbus Patrum* [i.e. *Limbo of the Fathers*; sometimes called *Paradise* (Luke xxiii. 43.), *Abraham's bosom* (Luke xvi. 22.), or *Prison* (1 Peter iii. 19.)]. --- *He gave gifts to men.* Having delivered men from the captivity of sin, he bestowed upon them his gifts and graces. (Witham) --- *Wherefore he*, David, in Psalm lxxviii. makes use of these words, in order to shew that these gifts were gratuitous, and that no person had a right to complain that another had received more: after this the apostle proceeds to shew that Christ even descended to the lower parts of the earth, in order to teach us humility; whence he concludes that we ought to be humble and live in union with our brethren, which is the chief subject of the present chapter. (Tirinus)

**Ver. 9.** *Into the lower parts of the earth.* This cannot signify into the grave only, especially since in that which we look upon as the apostles' creed, we first profess to believe that he was buried, and afterwards that he *descended into hell*. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Some indeed he gave to be apostles, &c.* It is said (1 Corinthians xii. 28.) that *God* (even with the Greek article) *gave some to be apostles, &c.* and here it is said of Christ: another proof that Christ is the true God. (Witham)

**Ver. 13-14.** *Unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age* [2] *of the fulness of Christ*; that is, according to the measure of the full and perfect age of Christ. Of the ancient interpreters, some expound this of what shall happen in the next world, after the resurrection, when all the elect shall have bodies every way perfect; and as some conjecture, (when all who rise by a happy resurrection) shall seem to be about thirty, of the stature and age of Christ when he suffered. But others, especially the Greek interpreters, understand this verse of a spiritual perfection in this life, by which the members of Christ's mystical body *meet in the unity of faith*, and increase in grace and virtue by imitating Christ, and following his doctrine and example. And this seems more agreeable to what follows: *that we may not now be children, tossed to and fro by the wickedness, [3] of men.* The Greek word, as St. Jerome observes, may signify by the *deceit* or fallacy of men; by *illusion*, says St. Augustine. And St. John Chrysostom tells us it is spoken by a metaphor, taken from those who cheat at dice, to gain all to themselves, to draw men into *errors* and heresies. Such, about that time, were the disciples of Simon the magician. (Witham) --- Every one must labour to become perfect in the state in which he is placed, by increasing in the knowledge and love of God, which knowledge and love of God constitute the full measure of a Christian. (St. John Chrysostom) --- St. Augustine also admits to another interpretation of this place, but prefers the former. According to him, it may mean: that all people, at the resurrection, will be raised in such a state as they would have had if they lived to the age of Christ, viz. thirty-three years. (St. Thomas Aquinas) --- This text of the apostle, assuring to the one true Church a perpetual and visible succession of pastors, in the ministry, successors of the apostles, warranted the holy Fathers in the early ages of the Church, as it does Catholics of the present day, to try all seceders by the most famous succession of the popes or bishops of Rome. See this in St. Irenæus, lib. iii. chap. 3; Tertullian, in præscript. Optatus. lib. ii. contr. Parmen.; St. Augustine, cont. ep. Manic. chap. iv., Ep. 165 & alibi.; St. Epiphanius, hæres. 27.

**Ver. 16.** *by what every joint supplieth, &c.* St. Paul compares the Church and mystical body of Christ (as he does elsewhere) to a natural body, whose perfection depends on the harmony, union, and concurrence of all the different parts; and so in the Church, of which Christ is the head, some are apostles, some prophets, &c. and Christ hath been pleased to give them different offices, talents, and gifts, for the edifying and increase of the whole body, which is his Church, that they may no longer be like *Gentiles, ... alienated from the life of God*; from such a life as God

requires they should lead. (Witham) --- The obscurity of this verse may be thus explained: the apostle compares the mystical body of the Church, of which Christ is the head, to the natural body of man; and as the head directs different members to different operations, according to their various properties, so in the Church Christ distributes to each his proper office, that being all intent upon their relative duties, all may grow up in charity and become perfect. (Estius)

**Ver. 19.** *Who despairing*,[4] (without faith and charity) according to the Latin text and some Greek manuscripts; though according to the ordinary Greek, *without grief or sorrow*, (to wit, for their sins) *have given themselves over* to all manner of vices, *unto covetousness*. [5] Some take notice that the Greek word may not only signify avarice, or covetousness of money, but any unsatiable desires or lusts. See Chap. v. ver. 3. and 5. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *Be angry, and sin not*, as it is said Psalm iv. 5. Anger, as a passion of the mind, may proceed from a good motive and be guided by reason; as our Saviour, Christ, (Mark iii. 5.) is said to *have looked about at the Jews with anger*, i.e. with a zeal against their blindness and malice. --- *Let not the sun go down upon your anger*. If moved to anger, return without delay to a calmness of mind and temper. (Witham) --- Be angry when reason or necessity compels you; but even then, so restrain your anger that you neither offend God nor scandalize your neighbour. Moreover, lay it aside as soon as you are able, so that the sun go not down upon your anger. (Jansenius)

**Ver. 29.** *That it may afford grace to the hearers*; i.e. that your speech may contribute to their good and edification. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *Grieve not the Holy Spirit*: not that the Holy Ghost can be contristated. It is a metaphor; and the sense is, sin not against the Holy Ghost. (Witham) --- To contristate the Holy Spirit is a metaphorical expression, which signifies to offend God, or the Holy Ghost, who has sealed us by the sacraments of baptism and confirmation with particular marks, by which we shall be distinguished from others in the day of our retribution. (Sts. Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, &c.)

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[1] Ver. 8. *Captivam duxit captivitatem*. On which words St. Jerome: (p. 364.) *Descendit ad inferna, et sanctas animas, quæ ibi detinebantur, secum ad cœlos victor deduxit*. See 1 Peter chap. iii.

[2] Ver. 13. *In mensuram ætatis plenitudinis Christi*; *Greek: eis metron elikias* (ætatis vel staturæ) *Greek: tou pleromatos tou Christou*. See St. Augustine, lib. xxii. de Civ. Dei, chap. xv. et seq. tom. vii. p. 678.; St. Jerome in Epitaphio Paulæ. tom. iv. part 2. p. 635.; St. John Chrysostom, hom. xi.

[3] Ver. 14. *In nequitia hominum*, *Greek: en te kubeia*, in fallacia: *Greek: kubeia*, est lusus aleæ. See St. John Chrysostom, p. 821. Ed. Sav.

[4] Ver. 19. *Deperantes*. The Latin interpreter seems to have read *Greek: apelpikotes*, as in some manuscripts, but in most other copies *Greek: apelgekotes*, indolentes. See St. Jerome in his Commentary, p. 368.

[5] Ver. 19. *In avaritiam*: *Greek: en pleonexia*, in cupiditate. See ver. 3. of the next chapter.

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## EPHESIANS 5

**Ver. 3.** *Covetousness*. [1] The Latin word is generally taken for a coveting or immoderate desire of money and riches. St. Jerome and others observe, that the Greek word in this and divers other

places in the New Testament may signify any unsatiable desire, or the lusts of sensual pleasures; and on this account, St. Jerome thinks that it is here joined with *fornication* and *uncleanness*. But St. John Chrysostom in the last chapter, (ver. 19. hom. xiii. and on this chap. ver. 3.) shews that by the Greek word is understood *avarice*, or an immoderate desire of riches, when he tells (hom. xviii) that this sin is condemned by those words of Christ, Luke xvi. 13. *You cannot serve God and mammon*. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Nor obscenity*. [2] What is here meant by this word, St. John Chrysostom tells us at large in the *moral* exhortation after his 17th homily; to wit, jests with immodest suggestions or a double meaning, and raillery or buffoonery against the rules of good conversation, scarce made use of by any but by men of low condition and a mean genius, *which is not to the purpose* of a Christian, who must give an account to God of all his words. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols*. It is clear enough by the Greek that the covetous man is called an idolater, whose idol is mammon; though it may be also said of other sinners, that the vices they are addicted to are their idols. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** The apostle here puts them in mind of the general judgment, when the angel of God will, on account of their crimes of avarice, fornication, &c. fall on the children of unbelief; by which are meant the wicked. He had before assured them that the perpetrators of such crimes would be excluded from the kingdom of heaven; and now he moreover informs them, that the severest punishments will be inflicted on such wicked persons. (Estius)

**Ver. 7.** *Be ye not, therefore, partakers with them*: do not imitate their wickedness, or the wrath of the Almighty will likewise fall on you. (Estius)

**Ver. 8.** By *darkness* is here meant the state of infidelity into which they had been plunged so far as to adore stones as God, and committed without remorse the above-mentioned grievous sins. But delivered by Christ from this darkness, they have become light in the Lord, shining in faith and justice. (Estius)

**Ver. 9.** *For the fruit of the light*. So the Latin and divers Greek copies; not the fruit of the spirit, as we read in many Greek manuscripts; and in this Dr. Wells thought fit to change the Protestant translation. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** With solicitude seek out what things are pleasing to God, and carefully perform them. (Estius)

**Ver. 11.** You are light, they are darkness; do you, therefore, shew by the light of your good works how base and detestable their works of darkness are. (Estius)

**Ver. 14.** *Rise, thou that sleepest*. The sense may be taken from Isaiah lx. 1. St. Jerome thinks they may be cited from work not canonical. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *For the husband is the head of the wife*. Though St. Paul here speaks of a man, who is a husband, we may rather translate *man* than *husband*, being the same sentence and the same words as 1 Corinthians xi. 3. where even the Protestant translation has, that the *man is head of the woman*. --- He (Christ) is the saviour of his mystical body, the Church: though some expound it, that the husband is to save and take care of his wife, who is as it were his body. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *As the church is subject to Christ*. The Church then, according to St. Paul, is ever obedient to Christ: and can never fall from him, but remain faithful to him, unspotted and unchanged to the end of the world. (Challoner)

**Ver. 26.** *Cleansing it by the laver [3] of water, in the word of life*. By this washing is generally understood the sacrament of baptism; and by the *word of life*, not the word of the gospel

preached, but the words or form used in the administration of baptism, according to Christ's institution: but this is not so certain. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Not having spot or wrinkle.* St. Augustine and others expound it of the glorious Church of Christ, in heaven: others even of the Church of Christ in this world, as to its doctrines, sacraments, and disciplines, or practices approved by the Catholic Church. (Witham)

**Ver. 28-31.** *He that loveth his wife, loveth himself.* St. Paul would have this a love like that which a man hath for himself, or for his own flesh, when they are now joined in wedlock, and are become as it were one flesh and one person, as a civil life and society. See Matthew xix. 5. The wife is to be considered as a part of the husband, as a member of his *body*, of *his flesh*, and of *his bones*. The words are to be taken with an allusion to what Adam said, (Genesis ii. 23.) *This is now bone of my bones*, &c. And so, according to the apostle, speaking figuratively, the Church, which is the spouse of Christ, is framed as it were of his bones and of his flesh sacrificed on the cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 32.** *This....sacrament, (or mystery)....in Christ, and in the Church.* *This sacrament*, in construction, must be referred to what immediately went before, i.e. to the conjunction of marriage betwixt man and wife; and this is called a great sacrament, or mystery, as representing the union or spiritual nuptials of Christ with his spouse, the Church. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3 and 5. Covetousness, avaritia, *Greek: pleonexia*. See St. Jerome on these verses, who expounds it of an insatiable lust, as to the sins of uncleanness and impurity. (p. 380.) But see also St. John Chrysostom who, by *Greek: pleonexia*, (Chap. iv. 19.) expounds, an immoderate desire of riches: *Greek: chrematon om. ig.* (p. 829.) And here, hom. xvii. p. 847, *Greek: o gar auto chrematon eromen, kai somaton*. And hom. xviii, on the fifth verse, he expounds the word, *Greek: pleonektes, os estin eidololatrias*, qui est idolatra, of him who is, properly speaking, an avaricious man; who adores mammon, or riches, who takes pains to leave an inheritance to others, and deprives himself of it, &c. (p. 853.) *Greek: chruso douleuontes*, 851.

[2] Ver. 4. Scurrilitas, quæ ad rem non pertinet, *Greek: eutrapelia ta oukanekonta*. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. ig.* p. 848 and 849, describes the vice of *Greek: eutrapelia* in these words: *Greek: entha aichrotes, ekei e eutrapelia....e eutrapelia malaken poiei psuchen*, &c. ...*porro touto christianou, to komodein....ei kalon to pragma, ti tois mimois aphietai; ...parasiton to pragma, mimon, orcheston, gunaikon, pornon, porro psuches eleutheras, porro eugenous....ei tis aichros, outos kai eutrapelos*. Where there is filthiness, there is eutrapelia. It is this that makes the mind effeminate....Far be it from a Christian to play the comedian. If this were commendable, why is it left to buffoons? It is the business of flattering hangers-on, or trencher friends, of fools in a play, of debauched women, but far be it from persons of a higher rank, well born, and of good breeding. If any man be void of honour, void of shame, such a one is given to eutrapelia. A man will scarce find it worth his while to consult the Latin translation in Fronto-Ducæus, which in this and many other places is far from being exact. I know that Aristotle, (lib. iv. de moribus. chap. 14, p. 42. Ed. Aurel. Allobrog.) and St. Thomas Aquinas, the doctor of the schools, (lib. ii. Q. 60. a. 5. and 22.; Q. 168. a. 2.) takes eutrapelia in a different sense, when it is a facetious innocent way of jesting, containing rather instructive admonitions; and so, St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, it may be reckoned among the moral virtues; but then, even as Aristotle tells us, it must be without all words of immodesty and buffoonery, which is against good manners: otherwise it degenerates into scurrility.

[3] Ver. 26. Lavacro aquæ in verbo vitæ, *Greek: to loutro tou udatos en remati loutron*, be taken for a bath of water, or the water itself. See Titus iii. 5. Vitæ is now wanting in the Greek. See Estius. St. John Chrysostom, by the word, understands the form of baptism *in the name of the Father*, &c. (Hom. xx.)

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## EPHESIANS 6

**Ver. 2.** *With a promise.* This commandment being delivered with a special promise of a long life, which promise is to be understood conditionally, especially in regard to Christians, i.e. unless it be a greater favour to be taken out of the world young. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Your carnal; temporal masters,* whether Christians or heathens. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Not serving to the eye;* to please men only, but to do the will of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Forbearing threatenings;* forbearing, and remitting the punishments which you might perhaps threaten them with, and they deserve. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Flesh and blood,* which may either signify temptations of the flesh, or raised by mortal men. --- *Principalities and powers;* i.e. devils, or apostate angels, who before their fall were in such ranks of spirits, and who are permitted to *rule* over the wicked in this world of *darkness*. (Witham) --- By which we are to understand the fallen angels. For as by nature, and from their creation, they were the governors of this corporeal world, and were deprived of this their power on account of their pride, they received it (though limited by certain restrictions) in order to tempt man. (Estius) --- *Rulers of the world of this darkness.* By these are meant the devils who exercise their power and authority in our inferior and dark atmosphere, by raising winds, storms, tempests, &c. By darkness may be understood the wicked, in whom Satan reigns as in a citadel. (Menochius) --- Our inferior world is called dark and misty in comparison of the world above, which is always bright, serene, and clear. Our atmosphere is called the cloudy and dark heavenly. Cicero, in his Tuscul Quæst. Prudentius likewise, in Hamartigenia, writes thus:

Non mentem sua membra premunt, nec terrea virtus  
Oppugnat sensus liquidos, bellove laccessit;  
Sed cum spiritibus tenebrosis nocte deique  
Congredimur quorum dominatibus humidus iste  
Et pigris densus nebulis obtemperat aer.  
Scilicet hoc medium cœlum inter et infima terræ  
Quod patet ac vacuo nubes suspendit hiatus,  
Frena potestatum variarum sustinet, ac suo  
Principe Belial rectoribus horret iniquis.  
His colluctamur prædioribus, at sacra nobis  
Oris Apostoli testis sententia prodit. ----- (Estius)

--- *Against the spirits of wickedness:* or wicked spirits in the air, says St. Jerome. Literally, *in celestials*. (Witham) --- *High places.* That is to say, in the air, the lowest of the celestial regions in which God permits these wicked spirits or fallen angels to wander. (Challoner)

**Ver. 14.** *Your loins....with truth,* both as to doctrine and a good life, keeping your baptismal promises. --- *Having on the breastplate of justice,* not only of the particular virtue of justice, but of all virtues in general. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel;* i.e. prepared to walk in the ways of the gospel, as a soldier must be prepared and in readiness to march or fight. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *The shield of faith.* A lively faith working by charity, which will enable you to conquer your greatest enemies, and to escape their fiery darts, their greatest temptations, and attacks. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Who love our Lord Jesus Christ.* Literally, "in incorruption;" with purity of heart and mind. (Witham)

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## PHILIPPIANS

### THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Philippi, a considerable city in Macedonia, so called from Philip, father of Alexander the Great. St. Paul had preached there. (Acts xvi.) Those people had a great veneration for him, and supplied his wants when he was at Corinth, and again when he was a prisoner at Rome, sending to him by Epaphroditus, who is thought to have been the bishop of Philippi. St. Paul sent this letter by him to the Philippians, (written during his imprisonment) from Rome; but whether during his first or second imprisonment, is uncertain. (Witham) --- It is generally believed that St. Paul wrote it about the year 62, in his first confinement. In it he testifies to the faithful his most tender gratitude and acknowledgement for the assistance they had sent him, and a zeal the most ardent for their salvation. He felicitates them on their courage under sufferings for the cause of Jesus Christ, on their good works also, and forcibly excites them to confidence and joy. --- The Philippians were the first among the Macedonians converted to the faith. St. Paul, in this epistle, recommends charity, unity, and humility; and warns against false teachers, whom he calls *dogs*, and *enemies of the cross of Christ*. He also returns thanks for their benefactions. It was written about twenty-nine years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner)

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#### PHILIPPIANS 1

**Ver. 1.** *With the bishops and deacons.*[1] By *bishops* many understand those who were only priests; for the name of priests, at that time, was common to those who were by their ordination priests or bishops, though the order as well as the functions were different. St. John Chrysostom also takes notice, that the name of deacon then signified any minister of Christ. St. Paul also might mean the bishops, or priests and deacons, not only of Philippi, but also of the adjacent places. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *For your fellowship.* This word is divers times used by St. Paul for a contribution of charitable alms, which it may also signify in this place; though others expound it of their being made partakers of the graces of Christ, by the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *In the defence,* &c. being then a prisoner, waiting for his trial; and the defence he could make for himself, and the sentence of the judge. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *That your charity,* &c. It is worthy of remark, that St. Paul does not beg that the Philippians may enjoy temporal blessings, but that they may be rewarded with an increase of spiritual favours; (Calmet) and as he remarks in the succeeding verses, that they may be filled with the fruits of justice.

**Ver. 12.** *Now I desire,* &c. From hence it appears, that what was indeed as the greatest hindrance to the propagation of the Christian religion, eventually proved the most direct method of extending it. St. Paul was not less zealous in prison, and in chains, than when he laboured under no obstacles to his designs: how much the reverse is the conduct of our late reformers!

**Ver. 13.** *In all the court,*[2] or in the whole palace of the emperor, and to all others, or in all other



places at and near Rome. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *And many of, &c.* encouraged by the intrepidity and perseverance of the apostle. (Calmet) --- Knowing that sufferings undergone for the cause of Jesus Christ were most honourable, and the portion truly enviable of all the saints, as by sufferings they were known to be his disciples, and by sufferings they were to purchase that eternal weighty of glory prepared for all that suffer patiently and joyfully for God's sake.

**Ver. 15.** *Some...out of envy and contention publish and preach Christ,* thinking perhaps that this would displease me, or exasperate any persecutors against me; but whatever their motive be, if they preach the true doctrine of Christ, I rejoice. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *I know that this shall turn to my salvation, &c.* It may either signify to his spiritual good and the salvation of his soul, or to his safety and deliverance out of prison: if this was his first imprisonment. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Whether it be by life, or by death.* To live longer, if God pleaseth, or to suffer death at this time, he shews himself resigned to either. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *To live is Christ.* If it be his will that I live, my life shall be spent in his service. --- *To die,* and suffer martyrdom, will be my *gain*, by coming to the enjoyment of Christ sooner. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *This is to me, &c.* His meaning is, that although his dying immediately for Christ, would be his gain, by putting him presently in possession of heaven; yet he is doubtful what he should choose, because by staying longer in the flesh, he should be more beneficial to the souls of his neighbours. (Challoner) --- *What I shall choose I know not:* though my earnest desire is to be dissolved from this mortal body, and to be with Christ, as my greater happiness, yet if it be the will of God that I labour longer, as necessary for your good, and that I again come to you, let God dispose of me according to his holy will. (Witham)

**Ver. 25-26.** *And having this confidence.* In effect St. Paul escaped this first danger, for after having remained two years at Rome, he was taken from his confinement. (Calmet) --- *I know (or am persuaded, as in the Greek) that I shall remain....by my coming to you again.* This is one argument that this epistle was written during his first imprisonment at Rome: yet this is not agreed upon by the interpreters, and especially whether he ever returned again to Philippi. (Witham)

**Ver. 27, &c.** *Whether when I come, and see you, &c.* This implies a doubt of his seeing them again. At least endeavour you to lead a life *worthy of the gospel*, according to the principles of *your faith*; and be not terrified by your adversaries and persecutors: God permits this for your *salvation*, though an occasion of *perdition* to your persecutors: you having the like to combat as you have seen in me, when whipped at Philippi. See Acts xvi. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *The adversaries.* Either by the persecutions of the Jews and Gentiles, or by the doctrine of false brethren.

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[1] Ver. 1. Cum episcopis et diaconis, *Greek: sun episkopois kai diakonois.* St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, &c. take notice, that though the office of bishop and priest was different, yet both these different orders were sometimes expressed by the word bishop, *Greek: episkopos*; sometimes by the word priest, *Greek: presbuteros.* St. Jerome, tom. 4. in Titum. p. 413.: Quia eosdem episcopos illo tempore, quos et presbyteros appellabant, propterea indifferenter de episcopis quasi de presbyteris est locutus. See again, tom. 4, part 2, Epist. ad Oceanum, p. 648. and Ep. ad Evangelium, p. 802. St. John Chrysostom on this place: Tunc nomina erant communia; atque etiam ipse episcopus vocabatur diaconus. (tom. 4. *Greek: log. a.* p. 5. Ed. Savil.) *Tous presbuteros outos eka[].* *Tote gar ekoinoun tois onomasi, kai diakonos o episkopos elegeto.*

[2] Ver. 13. In omni Prætorio, Greek: *en olo to praitorio*.

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## PHILIPPIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** *If there be, therefore, any consolation.* If you have any desire to comfort me in Christ, or for Christ's sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Esteem others better than themselves.* St. Thomas Aquinas (22. q. 162. a. 3.) puts the question, how an innocent man can with truth think himself worse than the most wicked of men? He answers, that a man who has received very extraordinary gifts from God, cannot think these gifts less than what any other has received; but *he* may reflect that he has nothing, and is nothing of himself. And a man truly humble considers only his own sins and failings, and is persuaded that any other person would have made better use of the same graces; which agrees with what follows, (ver. 4) *not considering the things that are his own.* (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *The things that are his.* Self-love and self-interest are the two great sources of divisions. The Christian religion teaches a contrary doctrine. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *Who being in the form [1] of God,* (that is truly, properly, and essentially God from eternity, as the ancient Fathers here observed against the Arians) *taking the form of a servant,* (i.e. taking upon him our human nature) became truly a man, and as man the servant of God, but remaining always God as before, *thought it not robbery,* no injury to his eternal Father, *to be equal,* to be esteemed, and to declare himself equal to God, to be one thing with him: as on divers occasions he taught the people, as we have observed in the notes on St. John's gospel, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *But debased himself:* divested himself of all the marks of greatness, for the love of mankind. The Greek text signifies, *he made himself void;*[2] on which account Dr. Wells, instead of *made himself of no reputation,* as in the Protestant translation, has changed it into *emptied himself;* not but that the true Son of God must always remain truly God, as well as by his incarnation truly man, but that in him as man appeared no marks of his divine power and greatness. --- *Made to the likeness [3] of men,* not only as to an exterior likeness and appearance, but at the same time truly man by uniting his divine person to the nature of man. --- *In shape [4] (or habit) found as a man:* not clothed exteriorly only, as a man is clothed with a garment or coat, but found both as to shape and nature a man; and, as St. John Chrysostom says, with the appearance of a sinful man, if we consider him persecuted by the Jews, and nailed to an infamous cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *God....hath given him a name,* &c. The name or word *Jesus* represents the dignity of him who is signified by the name, and who is exalted even as man, above all creatures in heaven, earth, and hell; all which creatures either piously reverence him, or are made subject to him against their will, that every tongue may confess our Lord Jesus to be now, and to have been always, in the glory of his Father, equal to him in substance and in all perfections. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** If we shew respect when the name of our sovereign is mentioned, may we not express our respect also at the name of Jesus; and if to his name, why not to his cross as well as to the throne of the king?

**Ver. 12.** *With fear and trembling.* That is, be equally upon your guard against presumption and despair. St. Paul is anxious to inspire a just confidence in Jesus Christ, but he is not less solicitous to root out all self-confidence arising from our supposed merits or excellence.

**Ver. 13.** *It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish.* We can neither have a will,

nor begin, nor fulfil any thing of ourselves, in order to a reward in heaven. (Witham) --- Our free-will is not taken away, or we should not be commanded to work; but it is added, with fear and trembling, says St. Augustine, that we might not be proud of our good works. (De grat. et de lib. ab. chap. ix.)

**Ver. 16.** *To my glory, &c.* That is, I beseech you to continue in faith, and comply with the word and doctrine of the gospel, that I may have glory, and rejoice together with you in the day of Christ, when he shall come to judgment. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *and if I be made a victim upon the sacrifice [5] and service of your faith, I rejoice, &c.* The sense of these obscure words seems to be: that I shall rejoice, and you also may rejoice and congratulate with me, if after having first offered up your faith and obedience to the gospel, as an acceptable sacrifice to God, I myself (or my blood, by martyrdom) be also added, and poured out as a second sacrifice upon the other. It is to be understood with an allusion to those sacrifices of the old law called *libations*, consisting of liquid things, as wine, oil, blood, which were poured out, or at least sprinkled, upon other victims and things sacrificed: so that he compares the shedding of his blood to these libations, and their submission to the faith of Christ to the sacrifice before offered to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *To send Timothy.* It appears that St. Paul could not send Timothy to Philippi till some time after his deliverance from prison, about the year 63 of Jesus Christ [the year A.D. 63]. (Tillemont) --- In the succeeding verse, we see the high esteem in which Timothy was held by this apostle.

**Ver. 21.** *All seek the things that are their own;* i.e. many do so. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *That I also.* This did not take place till full two years were expired, in the year 64: (Tillemont) and others are of opinion, that he was in Macedon when he wrote his first epistle to Timothy. (Theo. Atha. Tille.)

**Ver. 25.** *Epaphroditus....your apostle, and the minister of my wants.* Epaphroditus had also laboured after St. Paul, and is thought to have been the bishop of the Philippians; thus he might be called their apostle; though, as others conjecture, the word *apostle* may be here applied to him as one sent by the Philippians to St. Paul with contributions to supply his wants. (Witham)

**Ver. 28.** *And I may be without sorrow;* without the great concern and trouble that I am now in for you. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** *Delivering up his life to persecutions,* and to this danger that he was in by a sickness which was mortal, had not God restored him his health. He came with your charities, to supply that which was wanting on your part, or which I stood in need of; and I am persuaded you desired to do it sooner, if you had met with an opportunity. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 6. In forma Dei, *Greek: en morphe Theou.* See St. John Chrysostom (tom. iv. p. 31. 32. *Greek: log. 5.*) where he shews how many heresies are confuted by these words: and says, *Greek: e morphe tou doulou, e phusis doulou....kai e morphe tou Theou, Theou phusis.* See St. Gregory of Nyssa...3. cont. Eunom.; St. Augustine, lib. 1. de Trin. chap. 1. &c.

[2] Ver. 7. Exinanivit Semetipsum, *Greek: ekenose, evacuavit, a kenos, vacuum.* See St. John Chrysostom, hom. vii.

[3] Ver. 7. In similitudinem hominum factus, *Greek: en omoiomati.* St. John Chrysostom, p. 40. *Greek: log. x.* See Romans viii. in similitudinem carnis peccati.

[4] Ver. 7. Et habitu inventus ut homo, *Greek: schemati euretheis os anthropos.* St. John

Chrysostom, *ibid.* i.e. habitu factus est.

[5] Ver. 17. Sed etsi immolor super sacrificium, et obsequium fidei vestrae, *Greek: alla ei kai spendoma: epi to thusia, kai leitourgia tes pisteos umon: spendesthai*, est libari, eo modo quo sanguis effunditur super sacrificia.

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### PHILIPPIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** *To write.* From hence it would appear, says Grotius, that St. Paul had intended to have finished his letter at the end of the preceding chapter; but something new occurring to him, he added the two following chapter; but something new occurring to him, he added the two following chapters.

**Ver. 2.** *Beware of dogs.*[1] The Jews called so the Gentiles; and St. Paul now applies it to those among the Jews who spread false doctrine, who privately snarled and publicly barked against the true apostles. None deserve sharp reprehension more than heretical preachers. --- *Beware of the concision*, or as some French translations, of false circumcision. St. Paul by derision makes use of this word, which signifies a cutting to pieces, or destruction. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *For we are the circumcision.* We Christians now use the only profitable and commendable spiritual circumcision; which, to the Colossians (ii. 11.) he calls the *circumcision of Christ*, and to the Romans (ii. 29.) *circumcision of the heart in the spirit*. --- *Not having confidence in the flesh*; i.e. in such carnal ceremonies. (Witham)

**Ver. 4-7.** *If any other thinketh he may have confidence in the flesh*, in being of the Jewish race and of their religion, *I more*; i.e. I have greater reasons to glory than they have, being *circumcised of the stock of Israel*, &c. --- *But what things*, &c. as soon as I was miraculously called to the knowledge and faith of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *I may be found in him not having my justice, which is of the law*; i.e. not pretending to be justified either by my own works or by the works of the Jewish law, but by that which proceedeth from *faith in Christ*, and by his merits. (Witham) --- St. Augustine expounds the sense thus: not that justice which is in God, or by which God is just, but that which is in man from God, and by his gifts. (lib. 3. cont. 2. ep. Pelag.)

**Ver. 10.** *That I may know him.* This knowledge of Christ the apostle prefers to all honours and advantages accruing from his adherence to the synagogue.

**Ver. 11.** *If by any means I may attain to the resurrection, which is from the dead*; i.e. may attain to a happy resurrection, when the dead shall rise again. (Witham) --- This manner of expression does not betray any distrust or fear, but merely insinuates the difficulty of the enterprise, the uncertainty of success, and the ardent desire of the apostle, who sought by every means to arrive at this happiness, either by sufferings and labours, or even by martyrdom. (St. John Chrysostom; Estius)

**Ver. 12.** *Not as though I had already attained the happiness I hope for, or am now become perfect* as to that perfection in virtue, which I must always endeavour to increase in; but, like a person still running a race for a prize, *I pursue* and run as well as I can, I stretch myself with perseverance towards[2] *the mark*, forgetting that part of the course which I had made. Let all of us, though perfect as the knowledge of the mysteries we are to believe, be of this mind, that we are still to advance in the way of Christian perfection; and if any of you be of another mind, and think otherwise, God will reveal to you and teach you this truth, that we may all continue in the same rule of doctrine and discipline. We may here take notice with St. John Chrysostom that it is

not enough to believe, or have the true faith, but that we must strive and labour to the end in the way of perfection; secondly that St. Paul did not look upon himself absolutely certain of his salvation: and how much greater presumption would this be in us? (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *I do not count myself.* That is, I do not suppose that vain security is sufficient to put my salvation out of doubt, and that Christ having died, nothing remains for me to do. No; I consider myself as a wrestler at the games, uncertain of success. (Calmet)

**Ver.17.** *Be followers of me,* always in distrust of your own merits, and always eager to advance in perfection, as I am. It is a happy thing when a pastor can thus in all sincerity and simplicity address his flock. --- He exhorts them to follow him in what he had taught them, and in the model of a good life, which he had set before them. He repeats to them, with tears, what he had formerly told them, that many *walk* and conduct themselves as *enemies to the cross of Christ*, to Christ crucified, by abandoning themselves to the pleasures of a sensual life, who glory in things they ought to be ashamed of. He hints at the disciples of Simon Magus, or of the Jewish doctors. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Videte canes....Videte Concisionem, *Greek: Blepete tous kunas....ton katatomen.* The Jewish circumcision at this time, says St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. 1.*) was merely a cutting off of the flesh: *Greek: ouden allo e sarkos tome esti, kai katatome.*

[2] Ver. 14. Ad destinatum, *Greek: kata skopon dioko.* See St. John Chrysostom of the necessity of good works, (*Greek: log. is. p. 65*) and of the uncertainty a man is always in of his salvation. p. 67.

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#### PHILIPPIANS 4

**Ver. 2.** *I beg of.* St. John Chrysostom, Theodoret, and many others, think that these were two ladies particularly famous in the Church at Philippi, for their virtue and good works. Some critics are of opinion that Syntyche was a man. It is certain, at least, that this name agrees amongst the Greek better with a man than a woman; and perhaps the latter of these two may be the husband of Evodia.

**Ver. 3.** *I entreat thee, my sincere* [1] *companion.* St. John Chrysostom expounds it of his fellow labourer or fellow soldier, and says that some pretended that by it was meant St. Paul's wife; but this he absolutely rejects, as do all the ancient interpreters, who teach us that St. Paul was never married, if we except the particular opinion of Clement of Alexandria, (lib. 3. Strom. p. 448. Edit. Heinsii) who at the same time tells us, that St. Paul and those ministers of the gospel who had wives, lived with them as if they had been *their sisters*. The pretended reformers, who bring this place to shew that bishops and priests may marry, will they be for living after this manner? See 1 Corinthians vii. 7, 8. But even Calvin, Beza, and Dr. Hammond, expound this of some man that laboured with St. Paul. (Witham) --- It seems probable that St. Paul is here speaking to one of the persons mentioned in the previous verse. Others think that he is speaking to the gaoler [jailer] whom he converted at Philippi. It seems most probable, however, that St. Paul is here speaking to the bishop of the Church, at Philippi. As to the opinion that he is speaking to his wife, we have elsewhere refuted that sentiment. (Calmet) --- St. Paul says of himself that he had no wife, (1 Corinthians vii. 8.) and all the Greek Fathers are very positive on this point. --- *With Clement.* St. Jerome, Estius, and some others, believe that this Clement was the fourth pope that governed the Church, after Sts. Linus and Cletus: this at least is the common opinion. --- *Those women who have laboured with me in the gospel,* not by preaching, but by assisting other ways to promote the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *But in every [2] thing by prayer, &c.* By the Greek, the sense and construction cannot be *in every prayer*; but in every thing, in all circumstances, have recourse to prayer. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things are true, &c.* Here the apostle enumerates general precepts of morality, which they ought to practise. --- *Whatsoever things are true.* In words, in promises, in lawful oaths, &c. he commands rectitude of mind and sincerity of heart. --- *Whatsoever things are modest.* By these words he prescribes gravity in manners, modesty in dress, and decency in conversation. --- *Whatsoever things are just.* That is, in dealing with others, in buying or selling, in trade or business, to be fair and honest. *Whatsoever things are holy.* By these words may be understood, that those who are in a religious state professed, or in holy orders, should lead a life of *sanctity* and *chastity*, according to the vows they make; but these words being applied to those in the world, indicate the virtuous life they are bound by the divine commandments to follow. --- *Whatsoever things are amiable.* That is to practise those good offices in society that procure us the esteem and good will of our neighbours. --- *Whatsoever things are of good repute.* That is, that by our conduct and behaviour we should edify our neighbours, and give them good example by our actions. --- *If there be any virtue, if there be any praise of discipline:* that those in error, by seeing the morality and good discipline of the true religion, may be converted. And finally, the apostle commands not only the Philippians, but all Christians, *to think on these things:* that is, to make it their study and concern, that the *peace of God might be with them.* (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *Hath flourished again.* Literally, *that you have flourished again, to think or care for me*, which appears by your sending me a supply of money. (Witham) --- From hence it would appear, that the Philippians had in some respect been wanting in attention to this apostle: that their former liberality, which for a time had been slack and dead, had again revived.

**Ver. 11.** *I have learned....to be content therewith.* Literally, *to be sufficient.* I know how to be in a low condition. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *In communicating;*[3] i.e. contributing to relieve my wants. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Giving and receiving;* by my giving your spiritual instructions, and you returning me temporal assistance; and know that these, your charities, are an *odour of sweetness, an acceptable sacrifice to God.* (ver. 18.) (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *May God supply all your wants.*[4] See the Greek, which determines the signification of the Latin. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. Germane compar. *Greek suzuge gnesie.* St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. ig.* p. 76.) expounds it by *Greek: sunergos* and *Greek: sustratiotes.* He tells us some fancied it was St. Paul's wife; but, says he, *Greek: alla ouk estin, &c.*

[2] Ver. 6. Sed in omni oratione, &c. *Greek: all en panti, te proseuche;* no copies, *Greek: pase.*

[3] Ver. 14. Communicantes, *Greek: sugkoinonesantes.* See Chap. i. 5. &c.

[4] Ver. 19. Omne desiderium vestrum; the common Greek copies, *Greek: chreian;* though some *Greek: epithumian;* some *Greek: charan,* gaudium; and some *Greek: pharin,* gratiam.

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## COLOSSIANS

### THE

EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE,  
TO THE COLOSSIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

Colosse was a city of Phrygia, near Laodicea. It does not appear that St. Paul had preached there himself, (see Chap. ii. 1.) but that the Colossians were converted by Epaphras, a disciple of the apostles. However, as St. Paul was the great apostle of the Gentiles, he wrote this epistle to the Colossians when he was in prison, and about the same time that he wrote to the Ephesians and Philippians. The exhortations and doctrine it contains, are similar to those which are set forth in his epistle to the Ephesians. St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that the epistles he wrote in prison seem even more spiritual than the rest: the chief design of which was to hinder them from being seduced by false teachers. (Challoner; Witham) --- The Colossians were first instructed in the faith by Epaphras, who is considered their first bishop. He was a prisoner, at Rome, with St. Paul, when this epistle was written. The intent of it was to disabuse the Colossians of worshipping the Angels; for Cerinthus and others, had taught them to look upon Angels as superior to Christ, whom they looked upon as a mere man; to observe the law of Moses, with all its legal rites and ceremonies. He begins his epistle by insisting chiefly on the exalted state of Christ, saying that he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom all things visible and invisible were created, whether thrones, principalities, or powers, and that in him the divinity essentially exists. From this he proves the inutility of the ceremonies of the law, &c. (Fleury and Calmet) and takes great pains to prevent their relapsing either into paganism or Judaism. (Bible de Vence)

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COLOSSIANS 1

**Ver. 6.** *In the whole world;* i.e. a great part of it. (Witham) --- This epistle was written in the year 62, at which time the gospel had spread itself through the whole world by the preaching not only of the apostles, but of their disciples, and by the noise which this new religion made. (Calmet) --- St. Augustine sheweth with St. Paul, that the Church and Christ's gospel was to grow daily, and to spread all over the world; which cannot stand with what heretics allude of the failure of the Church, nor with their own obscure conventicles. (ep. lxxx. ad finem.)

**Ver. 7.** *Of Epaphras,* who seems to have been their first apostle, and their bishop. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Your love.* Your charity for all men, founded on the love of God. Others understand it of the affection which they had for St. Paul. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 9.** *In all wisdom.* He begins by an admonition against false teachers, who it is likely, says St. John Chrysostom, with their philosophical notions mixed errors and fables. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Worthy of God: Greek: axios tou kuriou.* So St. Ambrose and the Greek doctors; or thus, worthily, pleasing God, and this not by faith only, but *fruitful in every good work.* (Ibid.) --- *God, in [1] all things pleasing him.* This is the construction of the Latin by the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** It is through the blood of Christ, and not by the law of Moses, that we are freed from the power of death. If the law could have saved us, the coming of Christ would have been useless. See then, he says, if it be proper to engage under a law which is so inefficacious. (Calmet) --- From this verse and from ver. 12, et alibi passim, we are taught that we are not only by imputation made partakers of Christ's benefits, but are by his grace made worthy thereof, and deserve our salvation condignly, *ex condigno.* (Bristow)

**Ver. 15.** *The first [2] born of every creature.* St. John Chrysostom takes notice against the

Arians, that the apostle calls Christ the *first-begotten*, or *first-born*, not the first created, because he was not created at all. And the sense is, that he was before all creatures, proceeding from all eternity from the Father; though some expound the words of Christ as man, and that he was greater in dignity. See Romans viii. 29. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Thrones, &c.* are commonly understood to refer to the celestial hierarchy of Angels, though as to their particular rank, &c. nothing certain is known. We may here observe, that the Holy Spirit proportions itself and speaks according to our ideas of a temporal kingdom, in which one authority is subject to another. In the same manner the Angels seem subordinate to one another. (St. Dionysius in Calmet) --- *All things were created by him, and in him*, and [3] *consist* in him. If all things that are were made by him, he himself was not made. And his divine power is also signified, when it is said all things consist or are preserved by him. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *He is the head of the body, the church.* He now speaks of what applies to Christ as man. --- *The first-born from the dead*; i.e. the first that rose to an immortal life. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *In him it was pleasing, that all fulness should dwell.* [4] The greatest plenitude of graces was conferred on him as man, and from him, as he was our head, derived to all the members of his Church. The Protestant translation, followed by Mr. N. by way of explanation adds, *it hath pleased the Father*; but, as Dr. Wells observes in his paraphrase, there is no reason to restrain it *to the Father*, seeing the work of the incarnation, and the blessings by it conferred on all mankind, are equally the work of the blessed Trinity, though the Second Person only was joined to our nature. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *To reconcile all things unto himself,...through the blood of his cross*, (i.e. which Christ shed on the cross) *both as to the things on earth, and....in heaven*: not that Christ died for the Angels, but, says St. John Chrysostom, the Angels were in a manner at war with men, with sinners, as they stood for the cause and glory of God; but Christ put an end to this enmity, by restoring men to his favour. (Witham) --- *In heaven*. Not by pardoning the wicked angels did Christ reconcile the things in heaven, but by reconciling good Angels to man, who were enemies to him before the birth of Christ. (St. Augustine)

**Ver. 24.** *And fill up those things....in my flesh for his body, which is the church.* [5] Nothing was wanting in the sufferings or merits of Christ, for a sufficient and superabundant redemption of mankind, and therefore he adds, *for his body, which is the church*, that his sufferings were *wanting*, and are to be endured by the example of Christ by the faithful, who are members of a crucified head. See St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine. (Witham) --- *Wanting*. There is no *want* in the sufferings of Christ himself as *head*; but many sufferings are still *wanting*, or are still to come in his body, the Church, and his members, the faithful. (Challoner) --- St. John Chrysostom here observes that Jesus Christ loves us so much, that he is not content merely to suffer in his own person, but he wishes also to suffer in his members; and thus we fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ. (St. John Chrysostom) --- The wisdom, the will, the justice of Jesus Christ, requireth and ordaineth that his body and members should be companions of his sufferings, as they expect to be companions of his glory; that so suffering with him, and after his example, they may apply to their own wants and to the necessities of others the merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, which *application* is what is wanting, and what we are permitted to supply by the sacraments and sacrifice of the new law.

**Ver. 25.** *According to the dispensation of God*; i.e. to the appointment of his divine providence. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *The mystery of Christ's incarnation, which hath been hidden, &c.* See Ephesians i. 12. and v. 4, &c. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 10. Ut ambuletis digne Deo per omnia placentes; *Greek: axios tou Kuriou eis pasan*



*areskeian.*

[2] Ver. 15. Primogenitus omnis creaturæ; *Greek: prototokos pases ktiseos.* St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. g.* p. 103. *Greek: ou protoktistos, alla prototokos....oukoun ektistai.*

[3] Ver. 16. In ipso constant; *Greek: en auto sunesteke.* See St. John Chrysostom.

[4] Ver. 19. In ipso complacuit. We may rather understand Deo than Patri. So St. John Chrysostom, p. 105. *Greek: ten thelesin tou Theou, touto gar estin oti en auto eudokese.*

[5] Ver. 24. Adimpleo quæ desunt; *Greek: ta usteremata.* See St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine in Psalm lxxxvi. tom. 4. p. 922. B. restabant Christi passiones in corpore, vos autem estis Christi Corpus, et membra. See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. d.* p. 109.

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## COLOSSIANS 2

**Ver. 4.** *That no man may deceive you.*[1] He means those false teachers and vain philosophers, who deceived them by a sophistical way of reasoning, advancing in this manner their fabulous inventions; it is likely some disciples of Simon the magician. (Witham) --- The false teachers whom St. Paul wished to refute, despising the doctrines of the gospel, which appeared too simple and common, affected mysterious discourses, and examined the doctrine of the apostles, according to the maxims and axioms of philosophers. They also denied that Christ was God. (Tirinus) --- May not this advice be at present applicable to many of our Christian brethren, who are but too often led away by trusting too much to the vain reasonings of man. (Haydock)

**Ver. 7.** *Rooted and built up in him,* who is the head of all, your Redeemer, and author of your salvation, not upon Angels. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Let any man impose upon you.*[2] In the Greek, *make a prey of you,* as thieves that steal things. --- There were two sorts of false teachers among them; they who mixed vain errors from heathen philosophy with the principles of the Christian religion, and they who had been Jews, and were for making them retain those rites and customs which the Jews had among them, and were only from their private human traditions. (Witham) This alludes to the traditions and observances which the Pharisees had added to the law of Moses, and which Christ had blamed; but which these false apostles wished to introduce amongst the Colossians. The ceremonial laws were the elementary instructions given by God to the world, but we are to attach ourselves to the doctrines of Jesus Christ, from whom alone we expect light and justice, and sanctity. (Bible de Vence) --- *According to the rudiments of the world:* by which some expound vain fallacies and false maxims of the first kind of teachers; others the Jewish ceremonies, which are called *weak and poor elements*, or rudiments. (Galatians iv. 9.) This is neither to condemn in general the use of philosophy, which St. Augustine commends, and made use of, nor all traditions delivered by the apostles. See 1 Corinthians xi. and 2. Thessalonians ii. 14. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *For in him* (in Christ) *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead* (of the divinity) *corporally.*[3] That is, in the person of Christ, the Son of God, *really and substantially* united to our human nature. Not *inhabiting*, as in a temple as the Nestorian heretics pretended, nor as by his grace in men's souls, but so as to be personally or hypostatically united to the soul and body of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Buried with him in baptism,* signified by the ceremony of immersion in baptism. See Romans vi. 3. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Blotting out, &c.*[4] This is commonly expounded of the sentence of eternal death

pronounced against sinful Adam, and all his posterity, for having sinned in him. Others would have it to signify only the yoke and obligations of the Mosaic law, which could not of itself remit sins, and occasionally made persons greater sinners. This sentence of death (whether we understand the one or the other) Christ took away, fastening it as it were, to the cross, taking it away by his death on the cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *And despoiling the principalities and powers; the devil and his infernal spirits.* (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink.* That is, for not abstaining from meats, called unclean, for drinking out of a cup without a cover, (see Numbers xix.) or for not keeping the Jewish festivals. For these were but *shadows*, types and figures of future things to be fulfilled in the new law of Christ: *but the body is of Christ*, (ver. 17.) i.e. was the body, the truth, the substance signified by these shadows and types. (Witham) --- He means with regard to the Jewish observations of the distinction of clean and unclean meats; and of the festivals, new moons, and sabbaths; as being no longer obligatory. (Challoner) --- Modern dogmatizers wilfully or ignorantly misapply this text of the apostle, to disprove the fasts and festivals observed in the Catholic Church; but it is evident, as St. Augustine observes, that the apostle is here condemning the legal distinction of clean and unclean meats, and the feasts of the new moon, to which false brethren wanted to subject the Colossians. (St. Augustine, ep. 59. ad Paulin. in solut. quæ. 7.)

**Ver. 18.** *Let no man seduce you.*[5] In the Greek, hinder you from getting the prize. --- *Willing* [6] (by their own will) *in humility, and religion of Angels*, practising a wrong and mistaken humility in regard of the Angels, when you pay them a worship not due to them, pretending them to be the mediators and saviours of mankind, as if they were equal, or greater than Christ, our only Redeemer; walking in things your understand not, these men being deceived by their vain philosophy, and pride of their own imaginations. By this means *not holding*, (ver. 19.) but having shaken off their only true invisible head, Christ Jesus, who is the head of his Church. It is admitted that these false doctors, among the Colossians, had introduced an undue and superstitious worship of Angels, and gave to them even a greater honour than to Christ. They worshipped them as the creators of the world, as mediators with God, even above Jesus Christ, which St. Paul here expresseth by these words, *not holding the head*. These seem to have been some disciples of Simon, and their heresies continued in some churches of Asia even to the fourth age [fourth century A.D.], as we may find by a canon of the council of Laodicea. But there is nothing here nor in that council against a due, i.e. an inferior honour and veneration, nothing like a divine honour, nor injurious to Christ, our chief mediator and only Redeemer, which the Church, from the first ages [first centuries A.D.], paid to saints and Angels. We do not ask grace, we do not offer up sacrifice, we hope not for salvation, but from God only, from Christ, God and man. (Witham) --- *Willing*, &c. That is, by a self-willed, self-invented, superstitious worship, falsely pretending humility, but really proceeding from pride. Such was the worship that many of the philosophers (against whom St. Paul speaks, ver. 8.) paid to Angels or demons, by sacrificing to them, as carriers of intelligence betwixt God and man; pretending humility in so doing, as if God was too great to be addressed by men, and setting aside the mediatorship of Jesus Christ; who is the head both of Angels and men. Such also was the worship paid by the ancient heretics, disciples of Simon and Menander, to the Angels, whom they believed to be the makers and lords of this lower world. This is certain, that they whom the apostle here condemns, did not *hold the head*, (ver. 19.) that is, Jesus Christ, and his mediatorship; and therefore what he writes here no ways touches the Catholic doctrine and practice, of desiring our good Angels to pray to God for us, through Jesus Christ. St. Jerome, (Epist. ad Algas) understands by the *religion* or service of *Angels*, the Jewish religion given by Angels; and shews all that is here to be directed against the Jewish teachers, who sought to subject the new Christians to the observances of the Mosaic law. (Challoner) --- *Walking in the things which he hath not seen*. These false teachers pretended to know the number and names of the Angels, and how to distribute them into different orders and classes, with as much precision as if they had walked through heaven. Instead of following the revelation of the holy Spirit in the gospel, they followed their own spirit, boasting of what it was impossible for them to know. (Calmet) --- But let no one snatch from you the glory of heaven, which should be the reward of your career, and the recompense of your fidelity, deceiving you by

an outward show of false piety and affected humility. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 20.** *If then you be dead with Christ*, or if you be not of this world, why do you act as if you were in it? practising the ceremonies of the law, as if you still expected Christ; all which are hurtful to you. (St. Jerome) --- In your baptism you died with Jesus Christ to all legal observances, and should not therefore suffer any carnal laws to be imposed upon you, as if you were still living in this first state of the world. (Bible de Vence) --- These things have an appearance of humility, if you abstain from them through mortification, and not through any necessity, as if they were unclean. But if we look upon them, and reject them as impure, and despise those who do not follow our example, then these things, so far from being useful, become prejudicial. (Grotius) --- *Why do you yet decree [7] in this manner?* (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Touch not, &c.* That is, why do you permit yourselves to be taught in this manner by those Jewish doctors: why do you touch or eat this, lest you be unclean? such superstitious observations, now at least, when there is no necessity nor obligation for you to observe them, tend to destruction, &c. (Witham) --- The meaning is, that Christians should not subject themselves, either to the ordinances of the old law, forbidding touching or tasting things unclean: or to the superstitious inventions of heretics, imposing such restraints, under pretence of wisdom, humility, or mortification. (Challoner)

**Ver. 23.** *Which things have indeed*, (as such masters teach you) *a shew of wisdom*, in their nice superstitious ways, joined by some of them with extraordinary abstinences, and severities practised on the body in fasting, which they observe, without any honour or regard, even not to the satiating of the flesh; i.e. according to the common expression, with such an excess, as not to allow the body[8] what is sufficient or necessary to support nature, that a man may be able to labour and comply with his duties; but here is nothing against discreet fasting, and self-denials, so much recommended in the holy Scriptures. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 4. Decipiat, *Greek: paralogizetai*, fallaci ratiocinatione.

[2] Ver. 8. Decipiat, *Greek: sulagogon*, prædam furtive abducens. See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. st. p. 118.*

[3] Ver. 9. In ipso inhabitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter, *Greek: katoikei pan to pleroma tes theotetos somatikos*. See St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. st. p. 118.*

[4] Ver. 14. Chirographum decreti; *Greek: cheirographon tou dogmatos*. In the common Greek copies, *Greek: tois dogmasi*, as Ephesians ii. 15.

[5] Ver. 18. Seducat, *Greek: katabrabeueto*. See Mr. Legh's Crit. Sacra.

[6] Ver. 18. Volens, *Greek: thelon*; religione, *Greek: threskeia*. --- Walking, ambulans, *Greek: embateuon*, superbe se ingerens.

[7] Ver. 20. Quid adhuc decernitis, *Greek: dogmatizesthe*.

[8] Ver. 23. Et non ad parcendum corpori, *Greek: kai apheidia somatos*, et in non parentia corporis, vel in crudelitate erga corpus. --- Non in honore ad saturitatem, *Greek: ouk en time pros plesmonen*.

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## COLOSSIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** Here begins the second or the moral part of this epistle. --- *If you be risen*, &c. The remaining part of this epistle has no great difficulties, but excellent instructions, as that to the Ephesians. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Your members, ... fornication, uncleanness*, &c. He considers man's body as made up of sins and sinful inclinations. (Witham) --- It is not to bring back Judaism we practise abstinences and fasts, nor with the same motive as the Jews, but to accomplish the precepts of mortifying the irregular desires of the flesh among which gluttony must find a place. In a mortified body sensuality is more easily subdued. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *The children of unbelief* are either those who perished in Noe's [Noah's] flood, for St. Peter in his epistle give them this title, or they are the inhabitants of Chanaan [Canaan], whom Josue [Joshua] exterminated; for these also are called children of unbelief, in the epistle to the Hebrews, and their crimes were the same as those mentioned here. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8.** *Blasphemy*. [1] It may here signify either the sin of blasphemy against God, or speaking ill of our neighbour by detraction, calumnies, affronts, &c. See St. John Chrysostom. (Witham) --- Now that you live in God, with Jesus Christ, quit not only the above shameful crimes, but also these sins, which, although they excite less horror, will separate you no less from the Author of all sanctity.

**Ver. 10.** *According to the image of him who created him*. We are created in the image of God, inasmuch as our souls are spiritual and immortal, but here we are put in mind to imitate God by sanctity and justice, as God is holy and the fountain of justice. (Witham) --- The image or resemblance of our Creator was effaced by sin, but is retraced by Jesus Christ, who forms in us this new man. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 11.** *Where*, or in which state, when we put on the new man by sanctity and grace, God makes no distinction betwixt *Jew* and *Gentile*, &c. (Witham) --- In the Church of Christ God makes no exception of persons; all are called to the marriage feast, whether Jews (formerly the most favoured people of God) or Greeks, (where were reckoned the most polite, or learned) or Barbarians, or Scythians: (who were esteemed the most cruel and ferocious of men) still these are called; Christ died for all. (Calmet) --- In St. Paul's epistles, by the Greeks are usually designated the Gentiles. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 14.** *Above all these things have charity*, the love of God, and of your neighbour, *which is the bond of perfection*, the end of all virtues, which unites the hearts of all to God. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *The peace of Christ rejoice*: [2] reign, conquer, bear away the prize. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** Employ yourselves in studying and reading the Scriptures; meditating on what our Saviour has done and suffered for you. It is a calumny of our enemies, that we forbid the reading of the Testament. But the Church, fearing lest the faithful should read to their own destruction what was ordained for their salvation, wisely ordains that they should have recourse to their pastors, and receive from them those versions which she approves as most conformable to the Latin Vulgate, which has received the sanction of the holy Catholic Church, and at the same time forbids them those which might corrupt their faith. In this she acts the part of a good and provident mother, conducting her children to the rich and salutary pastures of peace and plenty, and carefully guarding them from others where tempting but noxious weeds luxuriantly grow up, watered with the baneful streams of polluted and poisoned sources.

If pure be the steams from the fountain,  
As purely the river will flow;  
If noxious the stream from the mountain,  
It poisons the valley below.

**Ver. 17.** *Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Let all be done for his honour and glory.

See 1 Corinthians x. 31. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 8. Blasphemiam. St. John Chrysostom, p. 133. *Greek: blasthemias, tas loidoriai.*

[2] Ver. 15. Exultet, *Greek: brabeueto*, palmam referat.

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#### COLOSSIANS 4

**Ver. 1.** Masters should remember that they also have a Master to whom they must reckon, and from whom they must expect the same justice they measure out to others.

**Ver. 3.** *A door of speech*; i.e. of free speech to preach the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Redeeming the time.* This expression occurs also in the epistle to the Ephesians, and seems to insinuate to the faithful to be on their guard not to irritate the Gentiles, nor to provoke them to persecution. Remember, says he, the times are bad; conduct yourselves with prudence; gain time, procure peace, and remain in silence. This was written towards the end of the reign of Nero, as cruel a prince as ever lived. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** The same as John and Mark mentioned in the Acts, xv. 37, 39.

**Ver. 12.** *Epaphras.* He was apostle and bishop of the Colossians, as has been observed. It was he who engaged St. Paul to write to them, fearing lest they should give themselves up to the novelties of the false apostles, after having received the gospel from him in all its purity. (Calmet)

**Ver. 16.** *Read you that which is of the Laodiceans.*[1] Some expound these words of an epistle which St. Paul wrote to the Laodiceans, which is lost, for that now extant is no more than a collection of sentences out of St. Paul. By the Greek text is rather signified a letter writ from Laodicea, and might be a letter sent from the Laodiceans to St. Paul, which he had a mind the Colossians should read. (Witham) --- This opinion does not, however, seem well founded. Hence it is more probable, that St. Paul wrote an epistle from Rome to the Laodiceans about the same time that he wrote to the Colossians, as he had them both equally at heart, and that he ordered that epistle to be read by the Colossians for their instruction; and, being neighbouring cities, they might communicate to each other what they had received from him: as one epistle might contain some matters not related in the other, and would be equally useful for their concern; and more particularly as they were equally disturbed by intruders and false teachers, against whom the apostle was anxious to warn them, lest they should be infected by their pernicious doctrine. (Challoner) --- It is the most common opinion, both amongst the ancients and moderns, that the epistle here alluded to was one written by the Laodiceans to St. Paul, which he sent to Colossus with this, and not one which he himself had written to the Laodiceans. It is however now lost. This exposition agrees best with the Greek. (Calmet)

**Ver. 17.** What St. Paul here addresses to Archippus, gives us reason to presume that he was then bishop of the Colossians, having succeeded Epaphras, who was then prisoner at Rome with St. Paul. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 16. *That of the Laodiceans.* Eam quæ Laodicensium est, *Greek: ten ek Laodikeias.* See St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. ib.* p. 152.) and P. Mauduit dissert. on this place, who endeavours to prove that St. Paul wrote to the Laodiceans.

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## 1 THESSALONIANS

### THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE THESSALONIANS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

St. Paul having preached with success at Thessalonica, the chief city of Macedonia, wrote to the this letter, to confirm them in the Christian faith and in the practice of virtue. This, in order, is the first epistle of St. Paul. He wrote it about the year fifty-two, as it is thought, from Corinth. (Witham) --- St. Paul having preached the gospel in this place, converted some Jews and a great number of Gentiles; but the unbelieving Jews, envying his success, raised such a commotion against him, that he and his companion Silvanus were obliged to quit the city. Afterwards he went to Athens, where he had heard that the converts in Thessalonica were under severe persecution ever since his departure; and lest they should lose their fortitude, he sent Timothy to strengthen and comfort them in their sufferings. In the mean time St. Paul came to Corinth, where he wrote this first epistle and also the second to the Thessalonians, both in the same year, being the nineteenth after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- St. Paul preached the faith in this city, assisted by Silas and Silvanus, whose name is joined with the apostle's in this letter. See Acts xvii. Being driven away from this city by the violence of the Jews, he left Timothy and Silas in Macedonia, to confirm the new converts in their faith. But having afterwards called them to him, and hearing of their constancy and perseverance, he writes this epistle to encourage them and praise them. It is the first in time of all St. Paul's epistles, and filled with the most affectionate expressions of love and tenderness for his spiritual children in Jesus Christ. In the latter part of the epistle, he gives some short instructions concerning the state of souls after death, and the coming of the last day; as his companions had informed him that strange reports concerning these two articles were in circulation at Thessalonica, to the disturbance of the faithful. (Calmet, Estius, and others.) --- The first three chapters are to confirm and comfort the Thessalonians against the temptations of persecution; the other two are to exhort them to live up to the precepts he delivers them.

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#### 1 THESSALONIANS 1

**Ver. 1.** *Paul.* It is observed that St. Paul never calls himself an *apostle* in either of the epistles to the Thessalonians. The reason why he deviates from his ordinary custom on this occasion, probably is, that joining his name with the other two, he did not like to assume a title, though his due, which the others did not possess. (Estius) --- Such condescension to your neighbours' feelings, even in trifles, is highly delicate and praiseworthy. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** The apostle praises the Thessalonians for the progress they had made in the theological virtues [of faith, hope, and charity], and enumerates the profit they had derived from each. Their *faith* had produced *works*; their *charity* rendered their *labour* light and easy, and their *patience* was the fruit of their future hopes, in confidence of which they bore what they had to suffer from their unconverted countrymen. (Estius)

**Ver. 5.** *In power.* The sense is, I have preached the gospel to you, not only in words of persuasion, but have proved it by the power of miracles, in much fulness, or in great abundance. I have also taught you the gospel not by my words only, but by my actions; for you know what kind of a life I led among you. I had no interest but in gaining your souls. And I rejoice to hear you have received it in much power, by the Holy Ghost working within you. (Haydock) --- *And in*

*much fulness.*[1] Some would have the Greek word to signify in a full assurance; but in the style of the New Testament, it may as well signify a fulness, or plentitude. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *From you was spread abroad the word.*[2] The Greek, *was sounded about.* --- *In every place.* In very many places. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 5. In plenitudine multa, *Greek: en plerophria polle.* See Luke i.

[2] Ver. 8. Diffamatus est, *Greek: exechetai.* Insonuit, St. John Chrysostom says, (*Greek: log. b. p. 166.*) *Greek: delon oti osper salpiggos, instar Tubæ.*

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## 1 THESSALONIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** *Vain.* Our entrance among you was not in *vain* fables, or lies; our preaching was not in trifles: (Æcumenius) or rather was not without fruit. Others have spoken of it every where; but why refer you to others when yourselves know that it was every where followed by abundance of good works, faith, patience? &c. (Estius)

**Ver. 3.** *Our exhortation was not proceeding from error.*[1] That is, was not by promoting errors, or uncleanness. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** As we were approved of and chosen by God to announce his gospel, we have tried to correspond with his designs; and we speak in a spirit of disinterestedness, not to please men, but God. Being chosen by God, it is to him we must render an account. Have we spoken to you in words of flattery? Have we disguised the gospel truth, or concealed its austerity? Have we made piety a cloak for avarice? &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *Nor taken an occasion of covetousness.* Not so as to make the gospel a cloak for gain-sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *But we became little,*[2] by our carriage, and by our humility and kindness. In the Greek, made ourselves gentle, good natured, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Because you were become most dear to us.* Literally, *desiring you.*[3] St. John Chrysostom admires the tender expressions of love in St. Paul. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *You are witnesses.* We must necessarily conclude that the apostle speaks this not from vain glory, or personal vanity; but in the just right of defending his own character against the aspersions of enemies, and lest the faith of any might be staggered by the calumnies. In such cases self-praise is not only lawful, but frequently an imperative duty, if confined within the limits of truth. (Haydock)

**Ver. 13.** *The word* [4] *of the hearing of God,* which can only signify the word of God you heard from us. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *To full up the measure of their sins,* after which God's justice would punish them. (Witham) --- The Jews filled up the measure of their iniquities by the opposition they every where manifest to the religion of Christ. The earliest Fathers of the Church testify that they dispersed people into every nation to blaspheme the name of Christ; and hence sprang the evil fame which Christians bore among the pagans. See the apologies of St. Justin, Tertullian, Origen, &c. --- *For the wrath of God is come upon them to the end.* It seems a foretelling of their entire destruction, which happened not long after under Vespasian and Adrian. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Being taken away from [5] you.* Literally, *become desolate*, because of our separation from you. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Satan hindered us.* That is, has raised such an aversion to me among the pagans and Jews of Thessalonica, that my friends do not think it safe I should come among you. I am now detained from you by violence; but when this life is past, you shall form my joy and my crown. I will present you at the tribunal of my Saviour, and say: Behold me and my children; behold the fruits of my labours, the proofs of my fidelity, and my claims for a recompense. (Calmet) --- If the apostle here calls his disciples his hope, joy, glory, why may we not call the blessed Virgin Mary, or other saints, their joy and hope, for the special confidence they have in their prayers?

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[1] Ver. 3. De errore, &c. i.e. ex errore, *Greek: ek planes*, &c.

[2] Ver. 7. Parvuli: and so *Greek: nepioi*, in divers Greek copies; but in the common copies, *Greek: epioi*, placidi.

[3] Ver. 8. Desiderantes vos, *Greek: imeiromenoi umon*. See Legh's Crit. Sacra.

[4] Ver. 13. Verbum auditus Dei, *Greek: logon akoes*.

[5] Ver. 17. Desolati a vobis, *Greek: aporphanisthentes*.

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### 1 THESSALONIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** *Forbearing no longer.* That is, not being able to be at rest, for not seeing you, nor hearing concerning you. (Witham) --- Not bearing to be any longer uncertain and uninformed of your constancy, amidst the tribulations you had to endure, I sent Timothy to strengthen you, that you might not be moved in the difficulties to which we are destined, and which it is appointed for us to undergo. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *That we are appointed thereunto.* That is, meet with trials and troubles in this world, as our Saviour Christ foretold. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *We live.* That is, we live in joy and comfort, if you stand firm in the faith of Christ, as you ought. (Witham) --- The news that you stand steadfast in the Lord, reanimates me under all my sufferings, and as it were raises me to life again from the shadow of death, under which I am placed. O that I could see you, to complete the work of instructing you in the faith, which I have begun.

**Ver. 10.** *That we may see you face.* Though epistles in absence give great comfort, and help to confirm the faith once delivered, it is by preaching that the faith of Jesus Christ and true religion are both begun and accomplished. --- *And may accomplish those things that are wanting to your faith?* That is, give you fuller instructions. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *And may the Lord multiply you.* That is, increase the number of Christians among you. (Witham)

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### 1 THESSALONIANS 4



**Ver. 1.** In this chapter the apostle begins to remind them of their obligation of always striving to increase in virtue. Though he praises them through the whole epistle, he still thinks it necessary to warn them not to be surprised in uncleanness. He repeats what he had taught them before; first, that there is vengeance awaiting the workers of evil; and secondly, that the favour of God is the reward of those who deal with the brethren in simplicity, and preserve themselves from the defilements of the Gentiles. (St. Ambrose, Comment., on this place)

**Ver. 4.** *His vessel.* That is, his own body. See 1 Kings xxi. 5. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *That no man overreach, nor deceive his brother in business.*[1] The Protestant and Mr. N. even in their translations, add, in *any* matter, because some expound it of frauds and circumventions in any kind of business. But this addition of *any*, should be left out, seeing the best interpreters expound it of a prohibition of adultery, and the injury thereby done to another, and of sins of that kind only, which is confirmed by what follows and what goes before. See St. Jerome in chap. iv. ad Ephes. tom. 4. p. 369.; St. John Chrysostom serm. 3 on this place. Here, says he, he speaks of adultery, as before of fornication, &c. See Theodoret, Theophylactus, Estius, Menochius, A. Lapide, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *And that you want nothing of any man's.*[2] This is the sense by the Greek, nor does the Latin here signify to *desire*, but to *want them that are without*; i.e. infidels out of the pale of the Church. (Witham) --- In regard of brotherly love, he advises them to remain quiet, at peace with every one, troubling nobody, nor interfering with the concerns of others, but each one minding his own work. It had been reported to the apostle that there were some at Thessalonica who made religion a pretext for idleness. It is to reprove such persons as these, that we are given to understand in this place that religion will never excuse the neglect of relative duties, either to our neighbours or to ourselves. It is the duty of all to labour, in order to prevent the evils of poverty; for involuntary poverty is a great snare, and a dangerous temptation against salvation. It exposes to ignorance, and forgetfulness of God. Happy are the poor in spirit, but miserable they who are involuntarily so: miserable, not for the wants, the humiliations, or inconveniences of their state, but for the irregularities and disorders of conduct to which they are exposed. It is therefore wise of man to pray, Give me not riches or poverty, but give me only what is sufficient, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *With commandment.*[3] God's command will in a moment raise and bring all to judgment. --- *And the dead, who are in Christ*, in the grace of Christ, shall rise first, not as to time, but in dignity. (Witham) --- *Shall rise first.* Not in order of *time*, for all shall rise in the twinkling of an eye, but first in order of *dignity*. St. John Chrysostom, however, thinks that the elect rise before the reprobate, to go before the Lord; whereas the latter shall come behind him, only to appear before the tribunal of justice. (St. John Chrysostom)

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[1] Ver. 6. Ne quis supergrediatur, neque circumveniat in negotio fratrem, *Greek: en to pragmati.* See St. Jerome: diligenter observa, quia ad castitatem nos provocans, et volens uxoribus tantum esse contentos, dixerit, ne quis supergrediatur, &c. St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. e. p. 186.*) *Greek: entautha peri moicheias phesin, anotero de peri porneias pases.*

[2] Ver. 11. Nullius aliquid desideretis, *Greek: medenos chreian echete.* i.e. nullius opus habeatis.

[3] Ver. 15. In jussu, *Greek: en keleusmati*, from *Greek: keleuo*, in celeusmate, in voce simul clamantium.

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**Ver. 1.** *Of the times and moments.* That is, of the day of judgment, of the end of the world, of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is enough to know the time is uncertain, and that death cometh as a *thief in the night*. (Witham) --- When the judgment shall take place the Angels themselves do not know. Perhaps St. Paul, when wrapt up to the third heaven, may have learnt something on this subject; for he was told many things which he could not announce to man; therefore, he says, I need not write to you: it is unnecessary for us to know it. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *Overtake you.* It is a subject of astonishment, that some people are so childishly afraid of the last day, that they cannot think of it without consternation, lest it should happen in their time. Weak souls! Do they not recollect that death will certainly overtake them, and that will be to them individually the end of the world, and the last day. The whole world then does perish as far as regards them. (Haydock)

**Ver. 5.** *You are the children of light.* That is, there is little danger of thieves in the day time, when it is light. Also watch and have arms to defend you, the coat of mail of faith; the helmet of hope: you are under the protection of Christ, who died for you, and for your salvation. See St. John Chrysostom, p. 293, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** The Christian's panoply is not faith alone, but faith, hope and charity, as we see here.

**Ver. 10.** *Whether we wake or sleep.* That is, whether we be of the number of those whom Jesus Christ shall find still upon earth, when he shall come to judgment, or among those who have slept and returned to dust, it is his will that we should be his. (Theodoret)

**Ver. 14.** *Rebuke, or correct the unquiet.*[1] By the Greek, it signifies the *disorderly*, or those that keep no order. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Always rejoice.* It is usual for St. Paul to recommend joy to the faithful. Cheerfulness is indeed the characteristic of true virtue, which by no means consists in, nor encourages, sourness or moroseness, as some mistaken people imagine. God loves a cheerful giver. Sorrow, which is of this world, killeth. (Haydock)

**Ver. 19.** Do not oppose either the interior gifts of the holy Spirit, which are his graces, nor his exterior gifts of prophecy, &c. Take the regular precautions of prudence, that you be not deceived by those who pretend to be inspired; but when satisfied that the inspiration comes from heaven, do not despise it. Be like good bankers, take the good coin, and reject the counterfeit. (St. Cyril of Alexandria)

**Ver. 21.** *Prove all things.* That is, examine prophecies whether they be true, and the doctrine which you hear from new preachers, and refrain yourselves not only from evil, but from every thing that has the appearance of evil, and which may disedify and scandalize others. (Witham) --- *Hold that which is good.* This we can best learn from the doctrine of the apostles, and the spirit of the Catholic Church. Men can deceive and be deceived, but the Spirit of God, speaking to us by his Church, can neither deceive us nor be deceived.

**Ver. 23.** *Spirit, and soul.* The former marks the understanding, the latter the will: hence these two terms give the two principal faculties of the soul. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 14. *The unquiet:* inquietos, *Greek:* ataktous, inordinatos, sine ordine et regula viventes.

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## 2 THESSALONIANS

THE SECOND  
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE,  
TO THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

In this epistle St. Paul admonishes the Thessalonians to be constant in the faith of Christ, and not to be terrified by the insinuations of false teachers, telling them that the day of judgment was near at hand, as there must come many signs and wonders before it. He bids them to hold firm the traditions received from him, *whether by word or by epistle*; and shews them how they may be certain of his letters by the manner he writes. This epistle was written soon after the former, and also from Corinth, about A.D. 52. (Challoner; Witham) --- From the context we learn that the present is a continuation of the former epistle. He not only rectifies wrong impressions caused by his former letter, but finding that those indolent characters whom he had reprimanded were no ways corrected, he determines to reprimand them still more severely in this letter, which he tells us he writes because he has it not in his power to visit, as he could wish, the Thessalonians.

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**2 THESSALONIANS 1**

**Ver. 5.** *For an example of the just judgment of God.* That is, that the persecutions and troubles you suffer in this world shew the justice of God in punishing men for their sins, even in this life, so that by these temporal pains you may be found worthy of a crown of eternal glory in the kingdom of God. (Witham) --- The afflictions, which are here frequently the portion of the just, are sensible proofs of the rigour with which the Almighty will, at the day of final retribution, pour out his indignation on the wicked. For, if he is unwilling to let the just be free from all temporal punishment, (though he discharges their debt of the eternal) and if he continually exposes them to the derision, calumnies, and persecutions of the wicked, what have not the wicked to apprehend when he shall stretch forth his hand in vengeance? Or, as others explain it, God permits the good to be persecuted here, that one day he may treat the wicked according to the rigour of his justice. He permits them here to fill up the measure of their iniquities, that on the last day he may reward the long suffering of the one, and punish the infidelity of the other. In both the one and the other, the finger of God's justice will clearly manifest itself. If the hopes of the good reached no farther than this life, they would be the most wretched of beings; for here, in general, they are more exposed than any to the injuries of the wicked. Nothing proves more clearly the necessity of a general judgment, than this his conduct to his most chosen servants. For it is impossible that, just as he is, he should permit patience and faith to go unrewarded, or wickedness and injustice unpunished. The Son of God has promised us heaven only on condition that we bear wrongs patiently. (Calmet) --- Here again the apostle teaches the advantages of sufferings which the Thessalonians joyfully underwent, to be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, *Greek: Kataxiiothenai umas*; and ver. 11, *ibid. Greek: axiose*. The apostle teaches here, that nothing defiled shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; and gives us to understand at the same time, that he will one day punish with extreme rigour the cruelty and impiety of persecutors. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 6.** *Seeing [1] it is a just thing.* Literally, *If yet it be just*. St. John Chrysostom takes notice, that we must not expound the text as if St. Paul made a doubt whether it was just or not for God to repay retribution to such as troubled, afflicted, and persecuted his faithful servants, and to punish them when *he shall be revealed* (i.e. at the day of judgment) with *flaming fire*, or with the flames of hell: nothing certainly is more just; as on the contrary, it is just to reward the pious and those who are found worthy of the glorious kingdom of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** Being confounded with the face of the Lord, whom they have rejected, and with the glory

of his power and greatness, which will appear in irresistible splendour and majesty.

**Ver. 10.** This shall be at the last day, when Christ *shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be made* [2] *wonderful* (to be admired and praised) *in or by all them who have believed in that day:* (i.e. the things foretold of that day) *because our testimony* [3] *was believed upon you concerning that day,* i.e. as to the punishments and rewards that shall be given on that day. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Wherefore, also we pray, &c.* By the Greek, the sense and construction cannot be *in*, or on *which day*; and therefore it must be referred to what was said before, that God should *be glorified in his saints*, and so may be translated, *on which* [4] *account we pray, &c.* that *Christ may be glorified in you*, being made saints by his grace, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *That the name of our Lord, &c.* The name of God is glorified by the virtuous lives of Christians, but more especially by that constancy and firmness evinced by the faithful under the hands of the executioner. It is an act of the most perfect charity, to lay down our lives in defence of his truths and the glory of his name, and the most disinterested testimony of our allegiance to him. Nothing appeared more admirable than the constancy of the first Christians, and nothing contributed more to the conversion of the Gentiles than the firmness with which they maintained, even in death, the truths that had been taught them. For, said they, this religion is certainly true, since there is nothing they are not willing to suffer in defence of it. (Calmet) --- *And you in him, &c.* If Christians are any way instrumental in procuring the glory of God, let them not attribute it to themselves, but to God alone, from whom comes every gift. If they procure his glory before men, he at the day of final retribution will clothe them with never-fading robes of immortality, in the presence of men and Angels. If it be glorious for God to be adored by such faithful servants, it is much more glorious Christians to be rewarded by such a Master: for it is the glory of a servant to be faithful to his master, and the glory of the master to recompense his servant. (Estius, Grotius, Theophylactus, &c.)

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[1] Ver. 6. Si tamem justum est, *Greek: eiper dikaion*. See St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. b. p. 226*) *Greek: eiper entautha anti tou epei, &c.*

[2] Ver. 10. Admirabilis fieri in omnibus, *Greek: thaumasthenai en pasi*.

[3] Ver. 10. Quia creditum est testimonium nostrum super vos in illa die, *Greek: oti episteuthe to marturion emon eph umas, en te emera ekeine*.

[4] Ver. 11. In quo, *Greek: eis o*, in quod, but it cannot agree with *Greek: emera*, day.

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## 2 THESSALONIANS 2

**Ver. 1.** *And we, &c.* Some impostors had taken occasion from St. Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians, to teach that the day of judgment was at hand. The apostle here maintains that it certainly will come, but that it will come like a thief in the night. He says nothing of the time when it is to arrive; he merely refutes those who spoke of its taking place immediately. --- *By the coming, &c.* Grotius and some others explain this coming, of the vengeance he took on the Jews by the arms of the Romans. It is true he speaks in many places of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of his coming at the last day, in terms exactly the same. But the context of the whole epistle demonstrates that he is here speaking of the last day. (Calmet) --- *And of our gathering together* [1] *unto him.* Literally, *of our congregation unto him*. That is, that you be not moved by any pretended revelation, nor by any words or letter, as spoken or written by me. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** St. Augustine, writing to Hesychium, declareth that no one from the Scripture can be assured of the day, year, or age [century] when the second coming shall be. (ep. lxxx.) Let us attend to what St. Augustine declares he had learnt from the first Church authorities. At the last judgment, or about that time, will arrive Elias, the Thesbite, the conversion of the Jews, the persecution of antichrist, the coming of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the separation of the good from the bad, the conflagration of the world, and the renovation of the same: that these things will arrive, we are to believe, but in what manner and in what order experience will teach better than reason. It is my opinion that they will come in the order I have related them. (De Civ. Dei. lib. xx. cap. ult.) That the man of sin will be born of the Jewish tribe of Dan, that he will cruelly persecute the faithful for three years and a half, that he will put to death Henoch [Enoch] and Elias, and that great, very great, will be the apostacy, is the general belief. Oh! God, preserve us with thy grace, and do not permit us to lose sight of the dreadful danger that threatens even the elect.

**Ver. 3-4.** *First, &c.*[2] What is meant by this falling away, (in the Greek this apostacy) is uncertain, and differently expounded. St. Jerome and others understand it of a falling off of other kingdoms, which before were subject to the Roman empire; as if St. Paul said to them: you need not fear that the day of judgment is at hand, for it will not come till other kingdoms, by a general revolt, shall have fallen off, so that the Roman empire be destroyed. The same interpreters expound the sixth and seventh verses in like manner, as if when it is said, *now you know* [3] *what withholdeth, &c.* That is, you see the Roman empire subsisteth yet, which must be first destroyed. And when it is added, *only that he now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way;* the sense, say these authors, is, let Nero and his successors hold that empire till it be destroyed, for not till then will the day of judgment come. A. Lapide makes this exposition so certain, that he calls it a tradition of the fathers, which to him seems apostolical. But we must not take the opinion of some fathers, in the exposition of obscure prophecies, where they advance conjectures (which others at the same time reject, or doubt of) to be apostolical traditions, and articles of faith, as the learned bishop of Meaux, Bossuet, takes notice on this very subject, in his preface and treatise on the Apocalypse, against Jurieux. St. Jerome indeed, and others, thought that the Roman empire was to subsist till the antichrist's coming, which by the event most interpreters conclude to be a mistake, and that it cannot be said the Roman empire continues to this time. See Lyranus on this place, St. Thomas Aquinas, Salmeron, Estius, and many others; though A. Lapide, with some few, pretend the Roman empire still subsists in the emperors of Germany. We also find that divers of the ancient fathers thought that the day of judgment was just at hand in their time. See Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Gregory the Great, &c. And as to this place, it cannot be said the fathers unanimously agree in their exposition. St. John Chrysostom [4], Theodoret, St. Augustine in one of his expositions, by this falling off, and apostacy, understand antichrist himself, apostatizing from the Catholic faith. And they who expound it of Nero, did not reflect that this letter of St. Paul was written under Claudius, before Nero's reign. According to a third and common exposition, by this revolt or apostacy, others understand a great falling off of great numbers from the Catholic Church and faith, in those nations where it was professed before; not but that, as St. Augustine expressly takes notice, the Church will remain always visible, and Catholic in its belief, till the end of the world. This interpretation we find in St. Cyril[5] of Jerusalem. (Catech. 15.) See also St. Anselm on this place, St. Thomas Aquinas, Salmeron, Estius, &c. In fine, that there is no apostolical tradition, as to any of the interpretations of these words, we may be fully convinced from the words of St. Augustine[6], lib. xx. de Civ. Dei. chap. 19. t. 7. p. 597. Nov. edit. where he says: *For my part, I own myself altogether ignorant what the apostle means by these words; but I shall mention the suspicions of others, which I have read, or heard.* Then he sets down the exposition concerning the Roman empire. He there calls that a suspicion and conjecture, which others say is an apostolical tradition. In like manner the ancient fathers are divided, as to the exposition of the words of the sixth and seventh verse, when it is said *you know what hindereth;* some understand that antichrist must come first. Others, that the beforementioned apostacy, or falling off from the Church, must happen before. And when St. Paul says, (ver. 7.) *that he who now holdeth, do hold;* some expound it, let him take care at the time of such trials, to hold, and preserve the true faith to the end. When the expositions are so different, as in this place, whosoever pretends to give a literal translation ought

never to add words to the text, which determine the sense to such a particular exposition, and especially in the same print, as Mr. N. hath done on the seventh verse, where he translates, *only let him that now holdeth the faith, keep it until he be taken out of the way.* --- *And the man of sin [7] revealed, the son of perdition, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God.* He is called again, (ver. 8.) *that wicked one....whom the Lord Jesus Christ shall kill with the spirit of his mouth.* By all these words is described to us the great antichrist, about the end of the world, according to the unexceptionable authority and consent of the ancient fathers. It is as ridiculous as malicious to pretend, with divers later reformers, that the pope, and all the popes since the destruction of the Roman empire, are the great antichrist, the man of sin, &c. Grotius, Dr. Hammond, and divers learned Protestants, have confuted and ridiculed this groundless fable, of which more on the Apocalypse. It may suffice to observe here that antichrist, is to be one particular man, not so many different men. That he is to come a little while before the day of judgment. That he will make himself be adored, and pretend to be God. What pope did so? That he will pretend to be Christ, &c. (Witham) --- St. Augustine (de Civ. Dei. book xx. chap. 19.) says, that an attack would be made at one and the same time against the Roman empire and the Church. The Roman empire subsists as yet, in Germany, though much weakened and reduced. The Roman Catholic Church, notwithstanding all its losses, and the apostacy of many of its children, has always remained the same. (Calmet) The two special signs of the last day will be a general revolt, and the manifestation of antichrist, both of which are so dependent on each other, that St. Augustine makes but one of both. What presumptive folly in Calvin and other modern reformers, to oppose the universal sentiments of the fathers both of the Latin and Greek Church! What inconsistency, to give such forced interpretations, not only widely different from the expositions of sound antiquity, but also widely different from each other! The Church of God, with her head, strong in the promises of Jesus Christ, will persevere to the end, frustra circumlatrantibus hæreticis. (St. Augustine, de util. cred. chap. xvii.) --- *In the temple.* Either that of Jerusalem, which some think he will rebuild; or in some Christian Church, which he will pervert to his own worship; as Mahomet has done with the churches of the east. (Challoner)

**Ver. 7.** *The mystery of iniquity already worketh,[8] or is now wrought,* by the precursors of antichrist; i.e. by infidels and heretics. For, as St. John says, there are *many antichrists*, precursors to the great antichrist, and enemies of Christ. (1 John chap. ii.) (Witham) --- *That he who now holdeth, do hold.* That is, let each one remain in the faith which he has received of us, and let him not permit himself to be deceived by any discourse, as coming from us. Or rather, let those who shall then be in the world keep their faith, remaining firm in their belief and attachment to the Church of Christ, until antichrist, that man of iniquity, shall be taken away. (Calmet) --- According to others, it is an admonition to the faithful not to be beguiled during this day of trial by such, as under the garb of religion, and with an ostentatious parade of zeal for the holy Scriptures, seek to deceive them. When the mystery of sin shall be revealed, then shall we plainly discover that apostacy from the Catholic Church is the obvious and certain road to a dereliction of all religious principle; yes, to antichristianism and to atheism. (Haydock)

**Ver. 8.** *Spirit of his mouth, &c.* St. Paul make use of this expression, to shew the ease with which God can put down the most powerful from his seat. He does it likewise to give the Thessalonians a right notion of the man of sin. For as he before told them, he would cause himself to be adored, they might have imagined him more upon an equality with the Almighty. These words, however, quite take away that meaning. *He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.* (Isaiah xi. 4. &c.) (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *God shall send them the operation of error.[9]* That is, says St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril, he will permit them to be *led away with illusions*, by *signs*, and *lying prodigies*, which the devil shall work by antichrist, &c. (Witham) --- God shall suffer them to be deceived by lying wonders, and false miracles, in punishment of their not entertaining the love of truth. (Challoner) --- The end God proposes is the judgment and condemnation of such as reject the proffered light. This is the march of sin, according to St. Thomas Aquinas on this place. In the first place a man, in consequence of his first sin, is deprived of grace, he then falls into further sins, and ends with being eternally punished. Hence it happens that his new sins are a punishment of his former

transgressions; because God will permit the devil to do these things. Deus mittet, quia Deus Diabolum facere ista permittet. (St. Augustine, lib. xx. de Civ. Dei. chap. 19.)

**Ver. 12.** *That God hath chosen you first-fruits.* Called you the first, or before many others, by his eternal decree, to the faith, whilst he hath left others in darkness and infidelity. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Traditions,...whether by word,[10] or by our epistle.* Therefore, says St. John Chrysostom, the apostle did not deliver all things that were to be believed, by writing; (Witham) but many things by word of mouth only, which have been perpetuated by tradition, and these traditions, no less than the writings of the apostles, are deserving of faith. *Greek: Omoios de kakeina, kai tauta estin axiopista.* (St. John Chrysostom, on this place)

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[1] Ver. 1. Et nostræ congregationis in ipsum, *Greek: kai emon episunagoges ep auton.*

[2] Ver. 3-4. Nisi venerit discessio primum, *Greek: e apostasia.* St. Jerome (Ep. ad Algasiam. q. 11. t. 4. p. 209) *Greek: Apostasia*, inquit....ut omnes Gentes, quæ Rom. Imperio subjacent, recedant ab eis.

[3] Ver. 3-4. St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. d. p. 235*) says that by these words, *you know what hindereth*, is probably understood the Roman empire, &c. and Tertullian (lib. de Resur. Carnis. chap. xxiv. p. 340) on those words, *till taken out of the way*, donec de medio fiat, *Quis nisi Romanorum status?*

[4] Ver. 3-4. St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. g. p. 232*) *Greek: ti estin e apostasia autoi kalei ton Antichriston.* See Theodoret on this place.

[5] Ver. 3-4. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat. xv) says, this apostacy is from the true faith and good works: *Greek: aute estin e apostasia.* St. Anselm and others mention both expositions, i.e. from the *Roman empire*, or from *the faith*.

[6] Ver. 3-4. St. Augustine: Ego prorsus quid dixerit, me fateor ignorare....suspiciones tamen hominum, quas vel audire, vel legere potui, non tacebo, &c. Quidam putant hoc de Imperio dictum esse Romano, &c.

[7] Ver. 3-4. *Greek: O anthropos tes amartias, o uiros tes apoleias, o antikeimenos*, &c. ille homo peccati, ille filius perditionis: the Greek articles sufficiently denote a particular man.

[8] Ver. 7. Mysterium jam operatur iniquitatis, *Greek: to musteroi ede ενεργηται.*

[9] Ver. 10. Mittet illis Deus operationem erroris, *Greek: pempsei*, &c. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat. 5. *Greek: sunchorei ginesshai.* See also St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. d. p. 236.*

[10] Ver. 14. St. John Chrysostom, 237. *Greek: enteuthen deilon*, &c.

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## 2 THESSALONIANS 3

**Ver. 1.** *May run.* That is, may spread itself, and have free course. (Challoner)

**Ver. 2.** *From troublesome*, or importunate men. In the Greek, is signified men who act unreasonably, absurdly, &c. (Witham) --- *For all men have not faith.* Faith is a gift of God, which he is not obliged to give but to whom he will. St. Paul here assures us that he finds nothing but obstacles in his great work, nothing but enemies of the truth, and nothing but men who resist the

inspirations and calls of God, opposing the preaching of the gospel. He exhorts them not to be scandalized at what they see him suffer, but to return thanks to God, who has vouchsafed to call them, giving them an understanding and docile heart. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *From evil.* It may either signify evil things, or the evil one, the devil. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** Or, according to the Greek, may the Lord direct and carry your hearts to the love of God, and to the expectation of Jesus Christ.

**Ver. 6.** *Charge*, or declare; or by the Greek, we command. --- *In the name of our Lord.* This may signify a separation by excommunication. (Witham) --- *That you withdraw*, &c. St. John Chrysostom upon this place, St. Augustine, Theophylactus, and others understand St. Paul as speaking of a kind of excommunication. But St. John Chrysostom on ver. 13. and 14. seems to restrain its meaning to a prohibition for the guilty to speak to any body, unless they spoke to him, if their conversation tended to exhort him to repentance. Theophylactus likewise remarks that this punishment was formerly much dreaded, though now not in use.

**Ver. 8.** *Burthensome.* By the Greek, he understands those who being idle, and not keeping themselves employed, lead a disorderly life. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** If I, to whom you are indebted for the preaching of the gospel, have yielded my claims, unwilling to receive any thing from you, and even labouring with my own hands for the necessaries of life, how are those to be borne with who do nothing, and yet will be supported at another's expense? for St. Paul had witnessed amongst them some of this idle disposition. (Estius)

**Ver. 10.** *Not work.* By prying with curiosity into other men's actions. He that is idle, saith St. John Chrysostom, will be given to curiosity. (Witham) --- The apostles, like our Lord, were fond of introducing popular saying or axioms. Another, and not unlike the former, is found in one of the Jewish rabbies, Zeror:

Qui non laboraverit in Prosabbato, ne edat in Sabbato.

**Ver. 12.** *Eat their own bread*, which they work for, and deserve, not that of others. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** Here the apostle teaches that our pastors must be obeyed, and not only secular princes; and with respect to such as will not be obedient to their spiritual governors, the apostle, (as St. Augustine affirmeth) ordains that they be corrected by admonition, by degradation, or excommunication. (Cont. Donat. post Callat. chap. iv. 20. & lib. de correptione & gratia. chap. iii.)

**Ver. 15.** *Do not regard him as an enemy.* A necessary introduction for those whom Providence has placed over others, to admonish and correct them, but with charity and peace; so that we neither be, nor give them occasion to thin we are their enemies. (Witham) --- He is your brother; compassionate his weakness; he is a sick member of the same body of which you are one of the members; the greater his infirmity, the greater should be your charity and anxiety for his cure; the greater excommunication separated the delinquent from the communion of the Church, making him in our regard as a heathen or a publican. But he is not here speaking of this kind, for he allows the faithful to speak to him for his spiritual advantage. (Calmet)

**Ver. 17.** *The salvation of*, &c. The apostle gives them his caution, for fear the faithful might be deceived by fictitious letters. For they had already received one of this kind, which had terrified them, by foretelling that the day of judgment was at hand. This deception he is here anxious to remove, signing the present communication with his own hand, and sealing it with his own seal. For although the rest of the epistle had been written by another, these words to the end were written by himself. (Estius) --- All the civilities of this great doctor of grace terminate in wishing it to his friends. This is his genuine character, because it is the love and continual effusion of his heart. (Bible de Vence) --- *Amen.* This the congregation added after the epistle had been read,



and from this circumstance alone has it found a place here. (Polus synopsis Criticorum, p. 1003, vol. 4.)

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## 1 TIMOTHY

### THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO TIMOTHY.

#### INTRODUCTION.

St. Paul passing through Lycaonia, about the year 51, some of the brethren at Derbe or Lystra recommended to him a disciple, by name Timothy, who from his infancy had studied the Holy Scriptures. St. Paul took him, making him his companion and fellow-labourer in the gospel: and not to offend the Jews, who could not be ignorant that Timothy's father was a Gentile, he caused him to be circumcised. Afterwards he ordained him bishop of Ephesus. (Witham) --- St. Paul writes this epistle to his beloved Timothy, to instruct him in the duties of a bishop, both in respect to himself and to his charge; and that he ought to be well informed of the good morals of those on whom he was to impose hands: *Impose not hands lightly upon any man*. He tells him also how he should behave towards his clergy. This epistle was written about thirty-three years after our Lord's ascension; but where it was written is uncertain: the more general opinion is, that it was in Macedonia. (Challoner) --- After his epistles to the Churches, now follow those to particular persons; to Timothy and Titus, who were bishops, and to Philemon. Timothy was the beloved disciple of St. Paul, whom he frequently styles his son; but it is not certain that they were at all related. After having accompanied the apostle in many of his travels, the latter at last ordained him bishop, and fixed him permanently at Ephesus. Shortly after he wrote him this epistle, to instruct him in the episcopal duties, as he was but young for those great functions. He might be then about thirty-five. He mentions, likewise, in short the chief heresies which were then making mischief at Ephesus, and gives regulations and instructions for different states of persons in the Church. St. Timothy, who had been so long the disciple of St. Paul, and who never left him except when ordered by his master, could not be ignorant of his duties, but it was destined for the use of bishops of every age. Hence St. Augustine says that such as are destined to serve the Church, should have continually before their eyes the two epistles to Timothy and that to Titus.

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## 1 TIMOTHY 1

**Ver. 1.** *Of God, our Saviour.* God the Father is here called our Saviour, as also to Titus, (iii. 4.) being the author of our salvation, as are all the three divine persons. (Witham) --- As this letter was to be read to the faithful, it was proper that St. Paul should speak with dignity and authority; and, as in the course of it he reproveth false apostles who taught from themselves, he reminds them at the beginning of his letter, that he himself had entered the sacred ministry, and was an apostle by the command of God. (Calmet)

**Ver. 2.** *To Timothy, my beloved son* [1] *in faith:* not that St. Paul first converted him, but that by his instructions he was settled in the principles of faith and of the Christian religion. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Not to teach otherwise;*[2] i.e. than what I taught them. (Witham) --- The distinctive mark of a heretic, is the teaching differently from that which they found generally taught and believed in the unity of the Catholic Church before their time. The Greek word admirably expresses this; *Greek: eterodidaskalein*. Had Luther and the other original reformers attended to this, the peace

of the Church would not have been so disturbed.

**Ver. 4.** *Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies,*[3] or disputes about pedigrees from Abraham and David, *which furnish questions rather than the edification of God,* or godly edification.[4] In some Greek manuscripts is read, *dispensation, or economy*; and so the sense may be, which contribute nothing to the explaining the dispensation of grace in the mystery of Christ's incarnation. The construction of this and the former verse is imperfect, when it is said, *as I desired thee*, nothing being expressed corresponding to the word *as*. Some understand it, *As I desired before, so now* in this epistle I desire it of thee again. The same difficulty occurs in the Greek as in the Latin text. (Witham) --- The Jews were accustomed to dispute and make endless questions concerning their origin from Abraham, Isaac, and other patriarchs, and concerning their different tribes, which their captivity had confounded altogether. Hence there was no end of their questions, how, when, why? which gave rise to many fables, to the great disturbance of the faithful. Whereas, they ought to have taken the shortest way to edification, which was to confine themselves to what was of faith. (St. Ambrose)

**Ver. 5.** *The end of the commandment.* By the precept many understand, as it were by way of a parenthesis, all that is here contained from the 3rd to the 18th verse, were *precept* is again repeated. We may understand by *the commandment*, the law of Moses in general, comprehending both the ceremonial part and the moral precepts, which are also the law of nature. The ceremonial part was designed to bring us to Christ by types and figures; and the moral precepts, which were also of the law of nature, or natural reason, were to bring men to observe them by punishments, and so were delivered against wicked criminals, *ungodly*, who worshipped[5] not God; against *the unjust*,[6] (in the Greek, lawless men) Sodomites, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *The law is good.* Do not think I condemn the law of Moses, or those who observe it; it is good, if properly understood and rightly practised. I only blame those who make the law an occasion of disturbance; who, without understanding, pretend to be masters, and teach idle curiosities. (Theodoret)

**Ver. 9.** *The law is not, &c.* He means that the just man doth good, and avoideth evil, not as *compelled* by the law, and merely for fear of the punishment appointed for transgressors, but voluntarily, and for the love of God and virtue; and would do so, though there were no law. (Challoner) --- If all men were just, the law would be unnecessary, as law are made against transgressors. (Calmet) --- It is not the just, but the unjust, that the law threatens, binds, and chastises. The just man obeys it without violence or constraint; he fulfils it with pleasure. (St. Augustine, lib. de Spiritu. &c.)

**Ver. 13.** *Because I did it ignorantly in unbelief,* or in incredulity. Not that we can think it an invincible and altogether an inculpable ignorance, such as would have made St. Paul blameless in the sight of God. It was through his pure mercy that he called St. Paul, when his great sins and false zeal made him a greater object of the divine mercy: and God in him was pleased to make known to all men his wonderful patience, that no sinner might despair. The grace of God was superabounding, or exceedingly abundant in him. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Christ Jesus, the true Son of God, came into the world to save sinners, of whom* (says St. Paul) *I am the chief,* the first, the greatest. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *This precept I commend to thee.* Some understand it a precept of what follows, that he should wage a good warfare against the enemies of God and of his salvation. Others refer it to the precept mentioned before, ver. 5, to wit, that Timothy should charge all the new converts not to give ear to new teachers. --- *Prophecies.* He seems to mean some particular predictions made by some who had the gift of prophecies, and who foretold that he should be a great minister of God. (Witham) --- The apostle reminds his disciple that he did receive him in the number of his disciples, and ordained him a ruler of the Church, in consequence of a prophecy; that is, a

particular inspiration and revelation of the divine will. (St. John Chrysostom)

**Ver. 19.** An evil life is not unfrequently the leading principle of defection from the faith. The heart, not the mind, is generally the first corrupted.

**Ver. 20.** *I have delivered to Satan*; whom I have excommunicated, that they may learn not to blaspheme, or speak against the truth of the faith. (Theophylactus) --- The devil frequently, at that time, took possession of, or afflicted the excommunicated with diseases and other temporal evils. (St. John Chrysostom)

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[1] Ver. 2. Dilecto, *Greek: gnesio tekio*. Some manuscripts, *Greek: agapeto*.

[2] Ver. 3. Ne aliter docerent, *Greek: me eterodidaskalein*, aliud docere.

[3] Ver. 4. Interminatis, *Greek: aperantois*, infinitis, sine fine.

[4] Ver. 4. *Ædificationem Dei*, *Greek: oikodouian Theou*; which, I think, might as well be translated, godly edification. Some few manuscripts, *Greek: oikonomian*.

[5] Ver. 5. Impiis, *Greek: asebesi*, indevotis, non colentibus Deum.

[6] Ver. 5. Injustis, *Greek: anomois*, sine lege.

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## 1 TIMOTHY 2

**Ver. 1.** *Intercessions*, as in the Protestant translation. If men's intercessions to God in favour of others, are no injury to Christ, as our mediator, how can it be any injury to Christ for the Angels and saints in heaven to pray or intercede to God for us? (Witham) --- St. Augustine writes thus on this verse: By *supplications* are meant what are said before the consecration. By *prayers*, are what are said in and after the consecration and communion, at mass, including the Pater Noster [the Our Father]; which St. Jerome also says, our Lord taught his apostles to recite at the daily sacrifice of his body. (lib. iii. cont. Pelag. chap. 5) By *intercessions*, what are said after the communion: and by *thanksgivings*, what both the priest and people give to God for so great a mystery then offered and received. (ep. 50. ad Paulin.) See St. John Chrysostom on this place.

**Ver. 2.** *For kings*, who were then heathens, this being in Nero's time. (Witham) --- Upon the happiness of the king generally depends that of his subjects. We pray for the emperors, says Tertullian, that God would grant them a long life, a secure throne, and a safe family, brave armies, a faithful council, and a just people. In fine, that he would grant them peace, and whatever else they could wish, either for themselves or their empire. (Apologet. cap. 30.)

**Ver. 4.** *All men to be saved*. They contradict this, and other places of the Scripture, as well as the tradition and doctrine of the Catholic Church, who teach that God willeth only the salvation of the predestinated, of the elect, and as they say, of the first-begotten only: and that he died only for them, and not for all mankind. But if it is the will of God that all and every one be saved, and no one resists, or can frustrate the will of the Almighty, whence comes it that every one is not saved? To understand and reconcile divers places in the holy Scriptures, we must needs distinguish in God a will that is absolute and effectual, accompanied with special graces and assistances, and with the gift of final perseverance, by which, through his pure mercy, he decreed to save the elect, without any prejudice to their free will and liberty; and a will, which by the order of Providence, is conditional, and this not a metaphorical and improper will only, but a true and proper will, by which he hath prepared and offered graces and means to all men, whereby they

may work their salvation; and if they are not saved, it is by their own fault, by their not corresponding with the graces offered, it is because they resist the Holy Ghost. (Acts vii. 51.) If in this we meet with difficulties, which we cannot comprehend, the words of St. Paul, (Romans ix. 20.) *O man, who art thou, who replest against God?* may be sufficient to make us work our salvation with fear and trembling. (Witham)

**Ver. 5-6.** *One mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a redemption for all.* Take all these words together, and we may easily understand in what sense the apostle calls our Saviour Christ, the one or only mediator; that is, he is the only mediator, who at the same time is our Redeemer; the only mediator who could mediate betwixt God, the person offended by sin, and men the offenders; the only mediator who reconciled God to mankind by his incarnation and death, by the infinite price of his blood, by his own merits, independently of the merits of any other. All Catholics allow that the dignity and office of mediator in this sense belongs only to our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made man to save us. The sense then of this place is, that as there is but *one* God, who created all, so there is but one mediator, who redeemed all. But yet the name of mediator is not so appropriated to Christ, but that in an inferior and different sense the Angels and saints in heaven, and even men on earth, who pray to God for the salvation of others, may be called mediators, intercessors, or advocates; and we may apply ourselves to them to pray, intercede, and mediate for us, without any injury to Christ, since we acknowledge that all their intercession and mediation is always grounded on the merits of Christ, our Redeemer. The same word for mediator, in the Greek as well as in the Latin, is given to Moses, God's servant. (Galatians iii. 19.) See also Deuteronomy v. 5. The words of our Saviour himself, (Matthew xxiii.) taken according to the letter, contains an express prohibition of being called masters, or fathers; and this reason is given, because all men have one Father in heaven, and because Christians have one master, Christ. Yet no one can justly pretend from thence, that in a different sense, a man may not be called father or master, without any injury to God, or to Christ. (Witham) --- Christ is the one and only mediator of redemption; who gave himself, as the apostle writes, a redemption for all. He is also the only mediator, who stands in need of no other to recommend his petitions to the Father. But this is not against our seeking the prayers and intercessions, as well of the faithful upon earth, as of the saints and Angels in heaven, for obtaining mercy, grace, and salvation, through Jesus Christ. As St. Paul himself often desired the help of the prayers of the faithful, without any injury to the mediatorship of Jesus Christ. (Challoner) --- If there be other mediators among the Angels and saints, they are only so in subordination to the first [to Christ], who by themselves have no right to mediation or favours, and who cannot demand them but through the merits of him [of Christ] who is our only essential mediator. (Estius, Menochius, &c.) Consult Judges iii. 9; 2 Esdras ix. 17; Acts vii. 35. --- *A redemption for all.* Not only for the predestinated, not only for the just, not only for the faithful, but for all Gentiles and infidels: and therefore he says again, (chap. iv. 10.) that Christ is *the Saviour of all men, and especially of the faithful.* See St. Augustine[1] and St. John Chrysostom.[2] (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** How beautifully does St. Paul teach that modesty and chastity are the greatest ornaments of the female sex, not only in the sight of God and of Angels, but also of men, who although by their own neglect they have not always grace and courage sufficient to be virtuous themselves, cannot help admiring virtue wherever they see it in others. Even the pagan fully acknowledges the native attractions of virtue. *Virtus per se placet: Virtue pleases with unborrowed charms.*

**Ver. 11.** *In silence.* See 1 Corinthians xiv. 34. See St. John Chrysostom.[3] (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** St. Paul only means in public. See note on ver. 11. of the next chapter. It would appear from this regulation of the apostle, as well as from the writings of the earliest fathers, that the practice and condemnation of women interfering at all in spiritual affairs, is not new. Tertullian says: We do not permit a woman to teach, to baptize, or to arrogate to herself any part of the duty which belongs to man. (De Veland. Virg. cap. 9.) --- The woman has tried once to teach, when she persuaded Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, and has woefully failed. Let her now be content to remain in silence, and subjection to man; (St. John Chrysostom on this place) as appears also

from the order of the creation. See ver. 13. Seduction began with Eve, a subject of profound humiliation for women; but this ought not to deprive them of confidence in God's mercy, nor take from them the hope of salvation. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 13-14.** *Adam was first formed....and was not seduced.* That is, was not at least seduced first, as the woman. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *She shall be saved by bearing children, &c.* and performing other duties of a wife, with a due submission to her husband, taking care to serve God, and bring up her children in the faith of Christ, in piety, &c. (Witham) --- This would perhaps be more properly rendered, from the Greek, by the *bringing up* of her children in faith, charity, and holiness. This is the duty of the woman; upon the faithful discharge or neglect of which she must expect her salvation, or reprobation, to hang. Thus repairing the evil which the first of all women brought upon man, by seducing him to evil. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 6. See St. Augustine (lib. de Spi. et Lit. tom. x. chap. 33. p. 118) Vult Deus omnes homines salvos fieri....non sic tamen, ut eis adimat Liberum Arbitrium, quo vel bene, vel male utentes, justissime judicentur. Quod cum fit, infideles quidem contra voluntatem Dei faciunt, cum ejus Evangelio non credunt.

[2] Ver. 6. St. Chrysostom (Greek: om. z. p. 277) Greek: *kai o men Christos kai apethanen uper ellauon....[Is oun, phesin ouk episteusan, oti ouk ethelesan, to de autou moros egeneto.*

[3] Ver. 11. In silentio. St. John Chrysostom (Greek: log. th.) Greek: *edidazen apax e gunē, kai panta katestrepse.*

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### 1 TIMOTHY 3

**Ver. 1.** *He desireth a good work.* No doubt but the work, or office, and charge of a bishop is good; but the motive of desiring to be a bishop not always good. However, in those days, the *desire* could scarce be grounded on temporal advantages. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *A bishop* (the same name then comprehended priest) *to be blameless*, as to life and conversation, adorned, (says St. John Chrysostom) with all virtues. See also St. Jerome in his letter to Oceanus. --- *The [1] husband of one wife.* It does not signify, that to be a bishop or priest he must be a married man; nor that he must be a man who has but one wife at a time; but that he must be a man who has never been married but once, or to one wife: because to be married more than once, was looked upon as a mark of too great an inclination to sensual pleasures. It is true, at that time he was to live with her as with a sister. This St. Jerome testifies as to the discipline of the Latin Church. (Witham) --- The meaning is not that every bishop should have a wife, (for St. Paul himself had none) but that no one should be admitted to the holy orders of bishop, priest, or deacon, who had been married more than once. (Challoner) --- *Sober.*[2] The Greek rather signifies *watchful*. --- *Chaste.*[3] There is nothing for this in the Greek text at present, unless in some few manuscripts. Perhaps the ancient Latin interpreter added it, as being signified and comprehended in the words. --- *Teacher:* a doctor, as the Greek signifies. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Not given to wine*, or a lover of wine. This, says St. John Chrysostom, is less than to be a drunkard; for such are excluded from the kingdom of heaven, whoever they be. (1 Corinthians vi. 10.) --- *No striker.* St. John Chrysostom understands not striving, fighting or quarreling even with his tongue. --- *Not covetous* [4] of money, as appears by the Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Ruleth well his own house, &c.* Before he is set over the Church, let him have given proofs of his talents for governing within his own house, by the regularity he has made all his dependants observe. In the infancy of the Church, it was frequently necessary to ordain the most regular fathers of families bishops, for want of others of a sufficient age who had observed perpetual continency. --- *With all chastity.* The Greek implies, grave, sober, temperate; but as this seems to answer what is said Titus i. 6. it seems to be properly understood of chastity. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Not a neophyte.* Not one newly as it were *planted*, or newly instructed in the faith. (Witham) --- That is, one lately baptized, a young convert. (Challoner) --- *He fall into the judgment and condemnation of the devil*, by returning to his evil habits he has so lately quitted. (Witham) --- *Devil*; i.e. into the same punishment to which the devil is condemned; (Theodoret) or into the power of the devil, who will accuse him at the judgment. (Calmet) --- Or again, seeing himself so soon after his conversion raised to the first dignities of the Church, might imitate in his pride the devil, who could not bear the weight of glory in which God had created him. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 8.** *Deacons, &c.* By the Greek, grave, sober, &c. But why does he pass from bishops to deacons, not naming priests? St. John Chrysostom answers, that priests were comprehended under the name of bishops, their functions being much the same, except as to the ordination of the ministers of God. (Witham) --- After speaking of bishops he passes on to deacons, because priests are included in the former title; and every thing that he has said of the first, is applicable to them. (Estius)

**Ver. 11.** *Women, &c.* By the Greek again, sober, grave, &c. By these women are commonly understood such as had made a vow of not marrying, and who assisted at the baptism of women; (Witham) i.e. deaconesses, who were women charged with the assistance, and sometimes with the instruction, of persons of their own sex. (Bible de Vence) --- *Not given to detraction*,<sup>[5]</sup> or calumnies, as in the Greek. A necessary admonition. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *The pillar and ground of the truth.* By the promises of Christ to direct his Church by the infallible spirit of truth; (see John xvi. 7; Matthew xxviii. 20; &c. (Witham)) and therefore, *the Church of the living God* can never uphold error, nor bring in corruptions, superstition, or idolatry. (Challoner) --- That the Church, the pillar and ground of truth, is to be conducted by the constant superintendence and guidance of the Holy Spirit into all truth to the consummation of days, every one whose mind is not strangely prejudiced may easily discover in various places of the inspired writings.

**Ver. 16.** *Mystery of piety*, meaning the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God: and so in most Greek copies, and in St. John Chrysostom we read, *God appeared in the flesh*.<sup>[6]</sup> --- *Taken up into glory*, by Christ's glorious ascension into heaven. (Witham) --- After having spoken of the grandeur and infallibility of the Church, the apostle takes occasion from it to extol the great mystery of love, the incarnation and redemption of man. By this mystery the Second Person of the blessed Trinity became manifested in the flesh, justifying or proving his divinity by the virtue of the Holy Spirit appearing in his miracles, made known to the Angels, who were his messengers to bear the tidings to man, or assisting spirits to wait upon him, as at the nativity, in the desert, the agony, &c. preached to the world, and at length consummated to the world by his ascension into glory. (Calmet and others)

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[1] Ver. 2. Unius uxoris virum, i.e. non bigamum. See St. John Chrysostom, p. 285.

[2] Ver. 2. Sobrium, Greek: *nephalion*. Vigilantem.

[3] Ver. 2. Pudicum: some Greek manuscripts, Greek: *semnon*.

[4] Ver. 3. Cupidum, Greek: *aphilarguron*.

[5] Ver. 11. Non detrahentes, *Greek: me diabolous*.

[6] Ver. 16. Quod manifestatum est; *Greek: Theos ephanerothe en sarki*. See St. John Chrysostom.

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## 1 TIMOTHY 4

**Ver. 1.** *In the last times*. Literally, *last days*; i.e. hereafter, or in days to come. --- *To spirits of error and doctrines of devils*; or, to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as in the Protestant translation. The sense must be, that men shall teach false doctrine by the suggestion of the devil. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Their conscience seared*; hardened: a metaphor from the custom of burning malefactors with a hot iron. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Forbidding to marry, to abstain from meats, &c.* Here says St. John Chrysostom[1] are foretold and denoted the heretics called *Encratites*, the *Marcionites*, *Manicheans*, &c. who condemned all marriages as evil, as may be seen in St. Irenæus, Epiphanius, St. Augustine, Theodoret, &c. These heretics held a god who was the author of good things, and another god who was the author or cause of all evils; among the latter they reckoned, marriages, fleshmeats, wine, &c. The doctrine of Catholics is quite different, when they condemn the marriages of priests and of such as have made a vow to God to lead always a single life; or when the Church forbids persons to eat flesh in Lent, or on fasting-days, unless their health require it. We hold that marriage in itself is not only *honourable*, but a sacrament of divine institution. We believe and profess that the same only true God is the author of all creatures which are good of themselves; that all eatables are to be eaten with thanksgiving, and none of them to be rejected, as coming from the author of evil. When we condemn priests for marrying, it is for breaking their vows and promises made to God of living unmarried, and of leading a more perfect life; we condemn them with the Scripture, which teaches us that vows made are to be kept; with St. Paul, who in the next chap. (ver. 12) teaches us, that they who break such vows incur their damnation. When the Church, which we are commanded to obey, enjoins abstinence from flesh, or puts a restraint as to the times of eating on days of humiliation and fasting, it is by way of self-denial and mortification: so that it is not the meats, but the transgression of the precept, that on such occasions defiles the consciences of the transgressors. "You will object, (says St. John Chrysostom) that we hinder persons from marrying; God forbid," &c. St. Augustine, (lib. 30. cont. Faustum. chap. vi.) "You see (says he) the great difference in abstaining from meats for mortification sake, and as if God was not the author of them." We may observe that God, in the law of Moses, prohibited swine's flesh and many other eatables; and that even the apostles, in the Council of Jerusalem, forbade the Christians, (at least about Antioch) to eat at that time *blood and things strangled*; not that they were bad of themselves, as the Manicheans pretended. (Witham) --- St. Paul here speaks of the *Gnostics* and other ancient heretics, who absolutely condemned marriage and the use of all kind of meat, because they pretended that all *flesh* was from an evil principle: whereas the Church of God so far from condemning marriage, holds it to be a holy sacrament, and forbids it to none but such as by vow have chosen the better part: and prohibits not the use of any meats whatsoever, in proper times and seasons, though she does not judge all kinds of diet proper for days of fasting and penance. (Challoner) --- We may see in the earliest ages [centuries] of Christianity, that some of the most infamous and impure heretics that ever went out of the Church, condemned all marriage as unlawful, at the same time allowing the most unheard of abominations: men without religion, without faith, without modesty, without honour. See St. Clement, lib. 3. Strom.

**Ver. 5.** *It is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer*. That is, praying that they may not, by the abuse we make of them, be an occasion to us of sinning and offending God. (Witham) --- The use of all kinds of meat is in itself good; but if it were not, it would become sanctified by the prayer

which we usually pronounce over it, and by the word of Christ, who has declared that not that which enters the mouth defiles a man. (Calmet)

**Ver. 7.** *Old wives' fables.*[2] Some understand the groundless traditions of the Jews; others the ridiculous fictions of Simon Magus and his followers. In the Greek they are called *profane* fables. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** Some think St. Paul alludes in this verse to the corporal exercises of wrestlers, which procured them but a little short renown, whereas the works of piety have a more lasting reward. (Menochius, Tirinus) --- Corporal exercises of temperance, mortification, &c. are good, but not to be compared with the spiritual virtues of charity, piety, &c. (St. Bernard)

**Ver. 10.** *Of all men*, and especially of the faithful, who have received the grace of faith. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Let no man despise thy youth.* That is, let thy behaviour be such that no one can have occasion to despise thee. He seems then about the age of forty. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Attend to reading*, &c. He recommends to him the reading of the Holy Scriptures; which says St. Ambrose, (lib. 3. de fid. chap. vii.) *is the book of priests.* (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Neglect not the grace.* The Greek seems to imply the gifts of the Holy Ghost, given by the sacraments,[3] *by prophecy*; which may signify, when the gift of preaching or of expounding prophets was bestowed upon thee. --- *With the imposition of the hands of the* [4] *priesthood.* Some expound it, when thou didst receive the order of priesthood, or wast made bishop: but the sense rather seems to be, when the hands of priests of the first order (i.e. of bishops) were laid upon thee, according to St. John Chrysostom. (Witham) --- St. Augustine sayeth that no man can doubt whether holy orders be a sacrament; and that no one may argue that he uses the term improperly, and without due precision, he joineth this sacrament in nature and name with baptism (Cont. Ep. Parmen. lib. 2. chap. xiii.) St. Ambrose on this verse understands in the words *imposition of hands*, all the holy action and sacred words done and spoken over him when he was made a priest; *whereby*, says the saint, *he was designed to the work, and received authority that he durst offer sacrifice in our Lord's stead unto God.*

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[1] Ver. 3. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: om. ib. ou koluomen, me genoito.* St. Jerome, (lib. 1. cont. Jovinian. tom. 4. p. 156) Si nupserit Virgo, non peccavit....non illa Virgo, quæ se semel Dei cultui dedicavit; harum enim si qua nupserit, habebit damnationem. See St. Augustine (lib. 30. cont. Faust. chap. vi.) both as to marriage and meats.

[2] Ver. 7. *Greek: Bebelous.*

[3] Ver. 14. *Gratiam, Greek: charismatos.*

[4] Ver. 14. *Presbyterii, Greek: tou presbuterion.* See Luke xxii. 26. and Acts xxii. 5. where *Greek: presbuterion* is taken for a number of Jewish priests.

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## 1 TIMOTHY 5

**Ver. 1.** *An ancient man.*[1] Here the word presbyter is not take as in other places, for a bishop or priest, but for an elderly man, who is otherwise to be dealt with than young men. (Witham) --- We cannot sufficiently admire the tenderness and prudence of all this saint's counsels. Reproof, under any circumstances, is always sufficiently painful, without being accompanied by harsh and unfeeling words and manners. Age, though not exempt from fault, should always be treated with



tenderness and respect.

**Ver. 2.** A just medium must be observed in the guidance of the sex, avoiding equally an indiscreet severity or an affection too tender and bordering on sensuality. A just diffidence in self is the best security. --- *All chastity* refers to the heart, eyes, ears, words, looks, with the precautions of times and places.

**Ver. 3.** *Honour widows.* To *honour*, here means to relieve and maintain. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Let her [2] learn first, &c.* He gives this as a mark to know if widows deserve to be maintained out of the common stock; if they have been careful of their own family, and to assist their parents, if yet alive. In most Greek copies, and in the Syriac, is read, *let them learn*; i.e. let the children and grandchildren learn to govern their family, and to assist their parents, when they are widows; that, as it is said ver. 16. the Church may not be burthened with maintaining them. (Witham) --- Let her render to her children the same good services she has received from her parents, that she may also expect from them what is her due as mother. (Theodoret)

**Ver. 5.** *She that is a widow indeed, and desolate,* (destitute of help, as the Greek word implieth) may be maintained; and then let her be constant in prayers and devotions night and day. (Witham) --- Every Christian soul is a widow of Jesus Christ, who has been forcibly torn from her: and in her communications with heaven she ought to offer up an afflicted and humbled heart---the heart of a widow. It is thus she will avoid the dangers of the world, and secure true life in unchangeable felicity. (Haydock)

**Ver. 6.** *For she that liveth in pleasure,* (i.e. that seeks to live in ease and plenty) *is dead [3] while she is living,* by the spiritual death of her soul in sin. See St. John Chrysostom with no less eloquence than piety, expounding this riddle, as he terms it, to wit, what it is to be at the same time alive and dead. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *He hath denied the faith,* (not in words, but in his actions) *and is worse than an infidel;* nay, even than brutes, that take care of their young ones. (Witham) --- Faith may be renounced either by words or by actions, when our conduct shews that in our hearts we really do not believe what would otherwise influence our lives. (Calmet) --- We have a horror of the name of apostacy, and fear not its works. Is not this to be a Christian in appearance, and an infidel in heart?

**Ver. 9.** *Not under threescore years of age.* Some think he speaks only of such a widow as was placed over all the rest: but the common exposition is of all such widows as were maintained in that manner, who made a vow of chastity, who assisted the ministers of the Church in looking to the poor, and in the administering baptism to women. --- *Who hath been the wife of one husband;* i.e. hath never been married but once. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** As for the *younger widows*, [4] admit them not into that number; *for when they have grown wanton in Christ,* which may signify in the Church of Christ, or as others translate, *against Christ*; when they have been nourished in plenty, indulging their appetite in eating and drinking, in company and conversation, in private familiarities, and even sometimes in sacrilegious fornications against Christ and their vows, they are for marrying again. See St. Jerome. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Having,* or incurring and making themselves liable to *damnation*, by a breach of their *first faith*, their vow or promise, (Witham) by which they had engaged themselves to Christ. (Challoner)

**Ver. 13.** *Idle, &c.* He shews by what steps they fall. Neglecting their prayers, they give themselves to idleness; they go about visiting from house to house; they are carried away with curiosity to hear what passes, and speak what they ought not of their neighbour's faults. (Witham) --- The young widow that bears a resemblance with this portrait, is not less to be lamented on her own account than feared and shunned on account of others.

**Ver. 14.** *The younger* [5] (widows) *should marry*. They who understand this of a command or exhortation to all widows to marry, make St. Paul contradict himself, and the advice he gave to widows 1 Corinthians vii. where he says, (ver. 40.) *She (the widow) will be happy if she so remain according to my counsel*; and when it is there said, *I would have all to be as myself*. [See the notes on those places.] He can therefore only mean such young widows, of whom he is speaking, that are like to do worse. Thus it is expounded by St. Jerome to Sabina:[6] "Let her rather take a husband than the devil." And in another epistle, to Ageruchia: "It is better to take a second husband than many adulterers." St. John Chrysostom[7] on this verse: I will, or would have such to marry, because they themselves will do it. See also St. Augustine,[8] de Bono viduitatis, chap. viii. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *For some are already turned aside after Satan*, by breaking the vows they had made. "Yet it does not follow, (says St. Augustine in the same place [de Bono viduitatis, chap. viii.]) that they who abstain not from such sins may marry after their vows. They might indeed marry before they vowed; but this being done, unless they keep them they justly incur damnation." "Why is it, (says he again, on Psalm. lxxv.) they made void their first faith? but that they made vows, and kept them not. But let not this (says he) make you abstain from such vows, for you are not to comply with them by your own strength; you will fall, if you presume on yourselves; but if you confide in him to whom you made these vows, you will securely comply with them." How different was the doctrine and practice of the first and chief of the late pretended reformers, who were many of them apostates after such vows? (Witham)

**Ver. 17-18.** *The priests*, or ancient ministers, (i.e. bishops, priests, &c.) deserve a *double honour*; i.e. to be more liberally supplied and maintained by the flock, especially when they labour in preaching the word. --- *Thou shalt not muzzle*, &c. See 1 Corinthians ix. 9. (Witham) --- It is the obligation of the faithful to provide a decent maintenance for their pastors, and the duty of pastors to be content with little. Happy the church where there is no further difference found than between the liberality of the former and the disinterestedness of the latter!

**Ver. 19.** *Against a priest*. The word presbyter[9] is commonly here expounded of bishops and priests; though St. John Chrysostom understands it of men advanced in age. --- *Receive not an accusation*; i.e. do not sit as judge, nor hearken to such information. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Them that sin*, so as to be public criminals, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Without prejudice* [10] for or against any one, not *declining to either side*, holding the scales of justice equally. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Impose not hands lightly upon any man*, in promoting him to be a minister of God by the sacrament of orders, unless he be duly qualified. --- *Neither in this be partaker of other men's sins*, as they make themselves who ordain others rashly. (Witham)

**Ver. 24-25.** *Some men's sins are manifest*, &c. These two verses seem connected with the admonition before given, as to ordaining ministers, some men's sins and evil life being so manifest, that they are certain to be rejected. --- *And some men they follow after*: they appear not till after a trial and examination. --- *In like manner also good deeds*, and good lives of some men, are so manifest, that they are easily admitted. And such as *are otherwise*, (that is, when they are desirous to conceal their virtues) they *cannot be hidden*: by an examination and trial they will appear. (Witham) --- This refers to what he had said before, that he ought not easily to ordain others, but pass his judgment with scrutiny and impartiality. But there are some whom the public voice already condemns; their crimes are manifest: and there are others, though bad, whose crimes cannot be proved without examination. (Calmet) --- St. Basil thinks it refers to the general judgment. Many both good and bad actions are at present manifest: others shall not be known till the day of judgment. Hypocrites are reserved to be judged by the Lord, as we cannot pronounce upon their actions. (St. Basil, lib. de Virgin.)

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[1] Ver. 1. Seniori, *Greek: presbutero*.

[2] Ver. 4. Discat, in moat Greek copies, discant, *Greek: manthanetosan*. Yet St. John Chrysostom in his commentary, (*Greek: log. ig.*) expounds it of the widow.

[3] Ver. 6. St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. ig. p. 301.*) *Greek: touto phusin ainigma, &c.*

[4] Ver. 11. Cum luxuriatæ fuerint in Christo, *Greek: otan gar katastreniasosi tou Christou*. See Apocalypse xviii. 7, 9. It is a metaphor from horses not to be governed. See St. Jerome, Ep. ad Ageruchiam. tom. iv. part 2. p. 741. *Greek: tou Christou*, i.e. contra Christum, says Erasmus and Arius Montanus. In injuriam viri sui Christi, says St. Jerome.

[5] Ver. 14. Volo juniores nubere, *Greek: boulomai neoteras gamein*.

[6] Ver. 14. St. Jerome, (Ep. ad Sabinam, tom. iv. part. 2. p. 669.) maritum potius accipiat quam diabolum. The same author, (Ep. ad Ageruchiam. p. 741.) multo tolerabilius habere secundum virum, quam plures adulteros.

[7] Ver. 14. St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. ie. p. 311.*) *Greek: boulomai, epeide autai boulontai*.

[8] Ver. 14. St. Augustine, (de bono viduitatis, chap. viii.) nubant antequam Deo voveant, quod nisi reddant, jure damnantur. And in Psalm lxxv. Quid est primam fidem irritam fecerunt? voverunt et non reddiderunt. And again St. Augustine, Non sitis pigri ad vovendum. Non enim viribus vestris implebitis: deficientes, si de vobis præsumitis, si autem de illo cui vovistis, vovete, securi reddetis.

[9] Ver. 19. Adversus presbyterum, *Greek: kata presbuterou*. And St. John Chrysostom, (p. 313.) *Greek: ten elikian*.

[10] Ver. 21. Sine præjudicio, *Greek: choris prokrimatos*.

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## 1 TIMOTHY 6

**Ver. 1-2.** *Lest the name and doctrine of the Lord be blasphemed*, or ill spoken of by infidels, when such as were converted refused to be servants. --- *Let them not despise them, &c.* That is, they who were servants under Christian masters, ought to think themselves more happy on that account, being *brethren*, and partakers of the same benefit of faith and grace. (Witham) --- If servants be insolent and disobedient, their infidel masters will blaspheme the Christian religion, as if that were the cause of their disrespectful behaviour. And let them not be arrogant, or aspire to an equality with their Christian masters, under pretence that the profession of the same religion makes them brothers; but rather serve them with greater submission and affection, as partakers of the benefit of the same faith, the same baptism, the same hope, &c. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *But sick about questions*, [1] unprofitable disputes, *blasphemies*, which may either signify against God, or railing one against another, *conflicts*, &c. [2] and dissensions of *men corrupted in* their minds: such is the character and description he gives of those ancient heretics, which applies to heretics in general. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Supposing gain to be piety*. [3] The sense is the same, that they make a shew of piety only for gain-sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *But piety with sufficiency*, or when a man hath what is sufficient to support his necessities, is certainly *great gain*, is accompanied with the most valuable advantages, the treasure of a good conscience, peace of mind, the grace of God, and hereafter a recompense of eternal glory. (Witham) --- That man is certainly rich, however small his possession, if he desire nothing more below, and aspires eagerly after that blessing above, which alone can fill his heart. Mediocrity is an enviable state; it frees us from the dangers of riches, and from the temptations of extreme poverty: with this lot let us be content. Why should we fix our hearts on the fleeting possessions of the day: we had not them yesterday, and to-morrow they will not be ours; for as we were born so we must die.

**Ver. 9.** *For they who wish to become rich.*[4] He does not say, as St. John Chrysostom observes, they who are rich; as persons may be rich, and make good use of their riches to God's honour, and the good of others. But such as would be rich, who see riches, and have their heart and affections upon riches, fall into various temptations of injustice, of pride, and vanity, into hurtful lusts, which drown and plunge[5] men into perdition, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *The root of all evils* is covetousness,[6] or the love of money, as it is in the Greek; a covetous man being ready to sacrifice his soul for money. (Witham) --- This truth is verified and illustrated by the example of Judas, in the gospel; of Ananias and Saphira, in the Acts; of Demas, mentioned by St. Paul in his second epistle to Timothy; and many others, who have made shipwreck of their faith through eagerness to gain riches. Whoever seeks visible and terrestrial goods with great avidity, cannot be supposed to retain much faith in things that are celestial and invisible. He quits a future real and substantial good to seek for a delusive happiness that presents itself, but which will prove a source of present and future evils.

**Ver. 11.** *But thou, O man of God.*[7] This, says St. John Chrysostom, is one of the highest title and commendations that can be given to any man. So are called Samuel, Elias, Eliseus. (1 Kings ii and ix.; 3 Kings xxxiii.) (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Fight the good fight.* Literally, *strive* [8] *a good strife*. St. Paul oftentimes brings this comparison of men striving for a prize. --- *And hast confessed a good confession before many witnesses*, not only when baptized, not only when thou wast ordained a bishop, but by thy constancy and sufferings and persecutions, says St. John Chrysostom, thou we know not the particulars. (Witham) --- Timothy had made profession of his faith at his baptism, at his ordination, and during the whole course of a life which, through many labours and persecutions, had been dedicated entirely to promote the faith. (D. Thomas [St. Thomas Aquinas]) --- Like him let us also combat, if we aspire after the same triumph and prize.

**Ver. 13.** *Under Pontius Pilate, &c.* Some expound it of the words and particular testimony Christ gave when he said he was king, but not of this world, who came to teach the truth. We may rather understand it with others, of all Christ taught and suffered under Pilate, or whilst he was governor of Judea. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *That thou keep the commandment.* Some understand that of fighting manfully; others of loving God; others rather comprehend all that St. Paul had commanded him, and all the instructions given. --- *Unto the coming of our Lord;*[9] which coming, he in due time will shew. This is the construction by the Greek. (Witham) --- This coming will be desirable for Christians who have preserved or recovered their baptismal innocence, and for pastors who have faithfully fulfilled their ministry; but terrible, in the extreme, for all who have lived in the constant neglect and omission of their duties.

**Ver. 16.** *Who only hath immortality;* i.e. is immortal of himself, and by his own nature. --- *Light inaccessible;* to human eyes or understandings. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Charge the rich of this world* not to confide in such uncertain goods; to strive *to be rich in*

good works; to communicate [10] in lending, assisting, giving to others, by which they will lay up an everlasting treasure. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *O Timothy, keep that which is committed [11] to thy trust.* He does not mean his charge of bishop, nor the graces of God, but the true and sound doctrine delivered to him either by writing or word of mouth, according to the common interpretation. See St. John Chrysostom, Vincentius Lirinensis, Commonitorii, chap. xvii. This is confirmed by the following words, *avoiding the profane novelties [12] of words:* (in the Greek empty, vain, babbling). The apostle here condemns new words, which change the doctrine; but sometimes to express the ancient doctrine, new words may be found necessary, as those of trinity, incarnation, consubstantiality, transubstantiation, &c. as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and others observed. See 2 Timothy i. 14. --- *Oppositions of knowledge falsely so [13] called.* St. John Chrysostom understands in particular the errors of the Gnostics, so called from the same Greek word, who were successors of Simon Magus. But they perhaps not having the name when St. Paul wrote, we may rather understand heretics in general, who all pretend to an uncommon knowledge in Scripture, when they follow their own private judgment, and so *fall* from the faith. (Witham) --- Keep the deposit, viz. *of faith*, which has been committed to thee. Throughout this whole epistle the apostle beseeches Timothy, in the most earnest manner, as a guardian of the faith, to preserve it without change. He every where condemns sects, heresies, and changes in faith. It would be well for the modern religionists, to inform us and themselves, why St. Paul is so particular in insisting upon union of faith, under pain of damnation, if it was the intention of Christ that men *should* differ on questions of religion. Let them tell us what St. Paul means, or else say plainly that they differ from the apostle's religion, and have formed their upon a more liberal scale. (Haydock)

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[1] Ver. 4. Languens, *Greek: noson.* Ægrotans; Erasmus, insaniens.

[2] Ver. 4. Conflictationes, *Greek: paradiatribai*, exercitationes.

[3] Ver. 5. Existimantes quæstum esse pietatem, *Greek: porismon einai ten eusebeian.* In the ordinary Greek copies follows, *Greek: aphistato apo ton toiouton*, and so the Protestant translation, from which withdraw thyself. But Grotius and Dr. Wells leave them out, preferring those manuscripts that agree with the Latin Vulgate and with the Syriac.

[4] Ver. 9. Qui volunt divites fieri, *Greek: oi boulomenoi.* St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. iz. p. 321.*) *Greek: ouk aplos eipen, oi ploutountes, all oi boulomenoi.*

[5] Ver. 9. Mergunt, *Greek: buthizousi.*

[6] Ver. 10. Cupiditas, *Greek: philarguria*, amor pecuniæ.

[7] Ver. 11. O homo Dei. See St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. iz. p. 321.*) *Greek: mega axioma*, &c. magna dignitas, &c.

[8] Ver. 12. Certa bonum certamen, *Greek: agonizou ton kalon agona*, which may be by running as well as by fighting.

[9] Ver. 14. Usque ad Adventum Domini, quem, &c. *Greek: mechri tes epiphaneias...en*, not *Greek: on*, and so must agree with adventum.

[10] Ver. 17. Communicare, *Greek: koinonikous.* See *Greek: koinonein*, Romans xii. &c.

[11] Ver. 20. Depositum custodi, *Greek: ten parakatatheken phulaxon.* See St. John Chrysostom on these words.

[12] Ver. 20. Profanas vocum novitates; though all the Greek copies have now *Greek:*

*kenophonias*, vocum inanitates: the Latin interpreter must have read, *Greek: kainophonias*.

[13] Ver. 20. Falsi nominis scientiæ, *Greek: pseudonuma gnoseos*. St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. ie.*) *Greek: tines eautous ekaloun tote Gnostikous*.

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## 2 TIMOTHY

### THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO TIMOTHY.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The main subject and design of this epistle is much the same as the former; in it the apostle again instructs and admonishes Timothy in what belonged to his office, and also warns him to shun the conversation of those who erred from the truth, describing at the same time their character. He tells him of his approaching death, and desires him to come speedily to him. It appears from this circumstance, that he wrote this second epistle in the time of his last imprisonment at Rome, and not long before his martyrdom. See Eusebius, St. Jerome, and others cited by Tillemont, and by P. Mauduit, (Diss. xi.) where this historical fact is discussed at large. (Challoner, Witham)

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## 2 TIMOTHY 1.

**Ver. 3.** *Whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience.* That is, have always served and worshipped the one true God, as my forefathers had done, which was true, even when he persecuted the Christians; though this he did not with a pure conscience, but with a false mistaken zeal; and his ignorance could not excuse him, after he might have known Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Thy grandmother, Lois.* The principal intention St. Paul seems to have had in writing this second epistle to Timothy, was, to comfort him under the many hardships under which he laboured for the faith of Christ. To this end he endeavours first to strengthen his faith, by calling to his mind the example given him in his grandmother, as also in his mother, Eunice. Some likewise think St. Paul is here exhorting Timothy to a desire of martyrdom in the perfect discharge of his ministry, by his own example; as the same writers think it most probable that he was confined in prison at Rome, or at Laodicea, at the time he wrote this epistle. (Denis the Carthusian) --- *Certain [1] that in thee also.* (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *That thou stir up [2] the grace of God.* In the Greek is a metaphor for fire that is blown up again. --- *Which is in thee by the imposition of my hands,* when thou wast ordained bishop. (Witham) --- The grace, which St. Paul here exhorts Timothy to stir up in him, was the grace he had received by imposition of hands, either in his confirmation, or at receiving the sacrament of orders, being a bishop. This verse seems to shew that the imposition of hands is used in these two sacraments, as the essential matter of the sacraments, being the instrumental cause of the grace therein conferred. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 7.** *Of fear.*[3] Of a cowardly fear, and want of courage. --- *Of sobriety.*[4] Though the Protestants here translate of a *sound mind*, yet they translate the same Greek word by *sobriety* in divers other places, as Acts xxvi. 25; 1 Timothy ii. 9 and 15 and chap. iii. 2; Titus i. 8. &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Labour with [5] the gospel.* That is, labour with me in preaching, &c. Or by the Greek, be partner with me in suffering. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *By the illumination of our Saviour.* That is, by the bright coming and appearing of our Saviour. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12.** *I am certain that he (God) is able to keep that which I have committed to him [6] against that day.* That is, to the day of judgment. St. Paul here means that which he had committed, or as it were deposited in the hands of God; to wit, the treasure of an eternal reward, due in some measure to St. Paul for his apostolical labours. This treasure, promised to those that live well, the apostle hopes he has placed and deposited in the hands of God, who will reward him, and repay him at the last day. This is the common interpretation. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Keep the good (doctrine) deposited or committed[7] in trust to thee.* This is different, though the word be the same, from what he spoke of, ver. 12. There he mentioned what he had committed and deposited in the hands of God, here he speaks of what God hath committed, and deposited in the hands of Timothy, after it was delivered to him by St. Paul and the other preachers of the gospel: that is, he speaks of the care Timothy must take to preserve the same sound doctrine, and to teach it to others. See 1 Timothy vi. 20. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *All they who are in Asia, are turned away from me.* That is, all who are of Asia, or all the Asiatics now at Rome, where I am prisoner, have withdrawn themselves from me, now when I am in danger; but he excepts Onesiphorus, who sought him out, assisted and relieved him in his wants. (Witham) --- *Phigellus*, &c. These two, whom St. Paul says were the chief of those in Asia Minor, who had departed from the faith, had become his followers by deceit, in order to become acquainted with the mysteries of religion, taught by him, intending to make use of them, as affording them matter for calumniating him. (Denis the Carthusian)

**Ver. 16.** *Onesiphorus.* This person, also an inhabitant of Asia, seems to have supplied St. Paul with necessaries, as well at Rome during his confinement, as at Ephesus. Timothy being with St. Paul at the latter place, knew better the charities of Onesiphorus there than at Rome, at which place he was not eye witness of them. (Denis the Carthusian)

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[1] Ver. 5. Certus sum, *Greek: pepeismai*, persuasum habeo.

[2] Ver. 6. Ut resuscites, *Greek: anazopurein*, quasi sopitum ignem excitare.

[3] Ver. 7. Timoris, *Greek: deilias*, timiditatis, it is not *Greek: phobou*.

[4] Ver. 7. Et sobrietatis, *Greek: kai sophronismou*.

[5] Ver. 8. Collabora, *Greek: sugkakopatheson*. Mala ferto mecum.

[6] Ver. 12. Depositum meum, *Greek: paratheken mou*. St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. b. p. 336*) says it may be either what St. Paul committed to the trust of God, or what God committed to him: *Greek: e o Theos auto parakatetheto, e en autos to theo*.

[7] Ver. 14. Bonum depositum custodi; *Greek: ten kalen parakatatheken phulaxon*.

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## 2 TIMOTHY 2

**Ver. 1.** *The grace which is in Christ Jesus*; i.e. which is in thee by Christ Jesus. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Before many witnesses.* Some expound it, in the presence of many witnesses; others, of the witnesses and testimonies which St. Paul had brought out of the Scriptures, when he instructed Timothy. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Labour.*[1] The Greek word implies, take pains in suffering; as Chap. i. 8. --- *As a good soldier*, &c. The apostle bringeth three comparisons: 1. of a soldier; 2. of one that strives and runs for a prize; 3. of a husbandman. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *No man....entangleth himself with worldly concerns:* with other affairs of the world: much less must the soldier of Christ, who *striveth*, [2] (better than *fighteth* ) which belongs to the first comparison. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *The husbandman who laboreth* [3] *must first partake.* Both the Latin and Greek texts admit of two interpretations: the sense may either be, that it is fitting the husbandman partake first and before others of the fruits of his labours, or that he must first labour and then partake. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *The Lord will give thee understanding.* [4] In some Greek copies, *may he give thee.* (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *According to my gospel.* He seems to understand his preaching. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *In which I labour,* or suffer, by the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *The elect.* By the elect, we need not always understand those predestinated to eternal glory, but chosen or called to the true faith; and this must rather be the meaning of St. Paul in this place, who could not distinguish between those predestinated to glory and others. (Witham) --- Therefore I announce it with full liberty, suffering willingly all I have to endure for the sake of the elect.

**Ver. 11, &c.** *If we be dead with him,* to sin, or as others expound it, by martyrdom, *we shall live also*, and reign with him in heaven. But *if we deny him*, by renouncing our faith, or by a wicked life, *he also will deny us*, and disown us hereafter. See Matthew x. 33. He continues always faithful and true to his promises. He is truth, and cannot deny himself. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *If we believe not;* i.e. if we refuse to believe in God, or if after having believed, we depart from our faith, the Almighty still continues faithful; he is still what he was. Our believing in him cannot increase his glory, nor can our disbelief in him cause any diminution thereof, since it is already infinite. (Estius) --- The sense may be: when we renounce God, and refuse to believe in him, will he be less powerful to punish us? or, will his menaces be less true or less efficacious? He will effect his world without us, for he will infallibly bring about the salvation of his elect. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 14.** Give this admonition to all, especially to the ministers of the gospel, that they may expose themselves willingly to suffer every thing for the establishment of the faith in Jesus Christ. --- *Testifying.* Call God to witness the truths which you announce to the faithful; and for your part, do not amuse yourself with disputes about words. In the Greek it is thus translated by many: Warn them of these things, by conjuring them in the name of the Lord not to amuse themselves with disputes about words. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *Thyself approved*, [5] or acceptable to God. --- *Rightly handling.* [6] In the Greek, cutting or dividing the word of truth, according to the capacities of the hearers, and for the good of all. (Witham) --- The Protestant version has, dividing *the word of truth*. All Christians challenge the Scriptures, but the whole is in the *rightly handling* them. Heretics change and adulterate them, as



the same apostle affirms, 2 Corinthians xi. and 4. These he admonishes us (as he did before, 1 Timothy vi. 20.) to avoid, for they have a popular way of expression, by which the unlearned are easily beguiled. "Nothing is so easy," says St. Jerome, "as with a facility and volubility of speech to deceive the illiterate, who are apt to admire what they cannot comprehend." (Ep. ii. ad Nepot. chap. 10)

**Ver. 16.** *Vain speeches*, or vain babbling.[7] He seems to hint at disciples of the magician [Simon Magus], and their fables. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Like a cancer*:[8] others say a canker or gangrene, a distempler that eats the flesh and parts affected. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Saying: That the resurrection is past already.* It is uncertain what these heretics meant. Some say they held no resurrection, but that by which some died and some were born. Others that they admitted no resurrection but that by baptism from sin. Others that they called what is related in the gospel, that *many bodies of the saints rose*, at Christ's death, the only resurrection. (Witham) --- The fall of Hymenæus and Philetus, who seduced by the false reasonings of Simon Magus had abandoned the faith of the Church, convinced St. Paul of the great importance of opposing the profane novelties of heretics. It is for this that he insists so much on this subject, as well in this as in his first epistle to Timothy. The ancients expressly tell us, that Simon the magician did not believe in the resurrection of the body, but only that of the soul; meaning its resurrection from sin to grace. (Epiphanius)

**Ver. 19.** *But the sure foundation of God* and of the Christian faith standeth firm, though some fall from it, and will stand to the end of the world, the Church being built on a rock, and upon the promises of Christ, which cannot fail. *Having this seal: the Lord knoweth who are his.* The words are applied from Numbers xvi. 5. The sense is, that the faith and Church of Christ cannot fail, because God has decreed and promised to remain with his Church, and especially to protect his elect, to the end of the world. *To know his*, here is not only to have a knowledge, but is accompanied with a love and singular protection over them, with such graces as shall make them persevere to the end. --- *And let every one that nameth (or invoceth) the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity.* Several understand these words, which are similar to those Numbers xvi. 26. *depart from the tents of these wicked men*, to be as it were a second seal, or part of the seal of God's firm decree, inasmuch as the elect by his grace, or when they are prevented and assisted by his grace, will always depart from iniquity; will remain firm in faith, and in the practice of good works: so that this may rather be an effect of the former seal, i.e. of God's decree to protect his elect, than a different seal. (Witham) --- Whatever effects hell may make by its agents, the eternal edifice, of which the elect are living stones, is immoveable, being founded on the immutable decree of divine election, and upon the efficacious and infallible means, which separate the children of the wicked Adam, to bring them and to unite them to Jesus Christ.

**Ver. 20.** *In a great house there are, &c.* Though St. John Chrysostom by a great house, understands this world, and seems to think that in the Church there are non but precious vessels of gold and of silver, yet this is only true of the perfect part of the Church, as it comprehends the elect only. The common exposition, by the *great house*, understands the Catholic Church of Christ here upon earth, in which are mixed both vessels of gold and of earth, both good and bad; both the faithful that will be saved, and others that will be lost by not persevering in the faith and grace of Christ. Every one's endeavour must be to *cleanse himself from these*, to depart from the ways of iniquity, by the assistances of those graces which God offers him, that so he may be a vessel unto honour, not troubling himself about the mysteries and secrets of predestination, but believing and knowing for certain, that if he be not wanting on his part, he can never be lost: and therefore let him follow the admonition of St. Peter, 2 Peter i. 10. "Wherefore, brethren, labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your vocation and election: for doing these things, you shall not sin at any time." (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** Man, we see here, hath free-will to make himself a vessel of salvation or reprobation;

though salvation be attributed to God's mercy, the other to his justice, neither repugnant to our free-will, but working with and by the same, all such effects in us, as to his providence and our deserts are agreeable. (Bristow)

**Ver. 22.** *Youthful desires* of any kind, not only of luxury and intemperance. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Fit to teach* [9] and instruct others. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *If at any time* [10] God may touch the hearts of those who believe not, or who lead a wicked life. (Witham) --- In the Greek it is *Greek: mepote*, lest; that is, correct those who resist the truth, in hopes that God will some time bring them by repentance to the knowledge of the truth. The Greek does not express a fear that they will repent, but a certain doubt, mixed with strong hope and earnest desire of their conversion. Conversion from sin and heresy is the gift of God, yet we see good exhortations and prayers are available thereto; which would not be the case if we had not free-will. But these exhortations, to be profitable, must be made as the apostle says, *Greek: en praoteti*; i.e. with modesty and meekness. Si forte det Deus illis meliorem mentem; i.e. ut perveniant ad agnitionem ejus veritatis, quam nunc oppugnant.

**Ver. 26.** *By whom they are held captives* [11] *at his will*: for sinners wilfully put themselves under the slavery of the devil, and wilfully remain in it. The Greek signifies, that they are taken alive in the devil's nets. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. *Greek: Kakopatheson*; and ver. 9, for laboro, *Greek: kakopatho*.

[2] Ver. 4. Qui certat in Agone, *Greek: ean athle tis*.

[3] Ver. 6. Laborantem Agricolam, oportet primum de fructibus percipere, It has the same ambiguity in the Greek.

[4] Ver. 7. Dabit, *Greek: dosei*, which Dr. Wells prefers, though in more Greek copies be found *Greek: don*, det.

[5] Ver. 15. Probabilem, *Greek: dokimon*.

[6] Ver. 15. Recte tractantem, *Greek: opthotomounta*.

[7] Ver. 16. Vaniloquia, *Greek: kenophonias*.

[8] Ver. 17. Ut cancer, *Greek: os gaggraina*.

[9] Ver. 24. Docibilem, *Greek: didaktikon*. See 1 Timothy iii. 2. which is there translated doctorem, and it signifies one fit to teach.

[10] Ver. 25. Ne quando, *Greek: mepote*, quasi, si quando.

[11] Ver. 26. Captivi tenentur, *Greek: ezogremenoi*.

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## 2 TIMOTHY 3

**Ver. 1.** *Know*. Do not be troubled at the many evils, persecutions, and heresies, which rise up against the Church. There have ever existed such since the Church was first established, and such ever will exist. Did not Jannes and Mambres rise up against Moses? (Calmet) See 1

Timothy iv. 1.; 2 Peter iii. 3.; Jude 18. --- *That in the last days.* It only signifies hereafter. And the advice St. Paul give to Timothy, (ver. 5.) *now these avoid;* shews that some of those false teachers should come in St. Timothy's days. We may observe that few agree exactly in translating or expounding the sense of so many Greek or Latin words, which express the vices of such heretics; but the difference is so small, that it need not be taken notice of. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** St. Cyprian, expounding these words, says: "Let not faithful man, who keepeth in mind our Lord's and apostle's admonition, marvel, if he see in latter times proud and stubborn men, enemies of God's priests, go out of the Church to attack the same, since both our Lord and his apostle have predicted that such things would be."

**Ver. 5.** *Having an appearance indeed of piety,* in some things, as we may see heretics affect to be thought more exact than the Catholics in some things, by which the devil more easily deceives souls, but denying by their lives the power, virtue, and force of piety. (Witham) --- *These avoid.* St. Paul having in the preceding verses described the vices and enormities which were to reign in the world in the latter days, here warns Timothy, that already people given to such extravagancies were in the world, and that consequently in regard to Timothy, those days were already come. (St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, &c.) --- How many crimes are covered with the cloak of knowledge, and the exterior of piety, and what mischief arises to religion from such base and hypocritical conduct: it cannot be too severely attacked, as we see in Christ's comportment towards the Pharisees.

**Ver. 6.** *Of this sort, &c.* Here St. Paul gives a true description of heretics, and evil men; such as they have existed in every age. For there never existed a time, either under the Old or New Testaments, in which such have not appeared. Even in the apostle's time, we behold heresies and disorders in the Church. We see them increase rapidly after their decease. Simon, the magician, seems to have been dead when St. Paul wrote this epistle, which was but a short time before his martyrdom. But he had left a great number of disciples behind him, known by the numerous sects, the Gnostics, the Simonians, the Encratians, &c. &c. into which, after the death of their master, they were split. (Calmet) --- *Who creep [1] into houses and lead captive silly [2] women, &c.* That is the custom of almost all heretics. See St. Jerome to Ctesiphon, tom. iv. part 2. p. 477. Nov. edit. where he brings a number of instances, from Simon Magus to his time. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.* These words, in construction, agree with the aforesaid women. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Jannes and Mambres.* The names of the magicians, who in Egypt, resisted Moses, says St. John Chrysostom, and though not mentioned in the Scriptures, their names might be known by tradition. (Witham) --- Since the Old Testament does not mention these magicians of Pharaoh, who opposed Moses, it seems probable that St. Paul either learnt their names by a particular revelation, as St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, and Tirinus think, or by some tradition of the Jews, agreeably to the opinions of Theodoret, Grotius, Estius, &c. Others think he might have found their names in some ancient histories, which have not reached our time; or perhaps from the apocryphal book of Jannes and Mambres, mentioned by Origen and Ambrosiaster. Certain it is, that in St. Paul's time the name of these two famous magicians were very well known; this it is by no means necessary in this instance to have recourse to a particular inspiration. The Orientals say that were many magicians who opposed Moses. Among others, they mention Sabous and Gadous, who came from Thebias; Graath and Mospha, from some other country. They wished, as they inform us, to imitate the miracle by which Moses turned his rod into a serpent, by throwing their canes on the ground, and ropes filled with quicksilver. These ropes began to move a little, one twisting with another, on account of the heat of the earth warmed by the sun. But the rod of Moses in a moment broke them to pieces. (Calmet) --- These magicians are called by different names. The Greek has Jannes and Jambres. Some ancient writers, Jannes and Mambres; as St. Cyprian, Optatus, (chap. 7.) Born. &c. The Jews call that Joanne, or Johanna, whom the Greeks name Jannes; and that called by the Jews Jambres, the Greeks

name Mambres. The Hebrews would have them to be the sons of Balaam, the soothsayer, and the masters of Moses in the sciences of the Egyptians. (Calmet)

**Ver. 9.** *But they shall proceed no farther.* How doth this agree with ver. 13. where it is said, that *seducers shall grow worse and worse?* or with what he said in the last chapter, (ver. 17.) that *their talk spreadeth like a cancer?* We may answer, that the heretics became worse, and seduced very many in all ages, but the providence of God always put a stop to their progress, so that they could never prevail against the Church, as they hoped and proposed to do. (Witham) --- St. Paul shews what will be the fate of all heresies; and the annals of the Church prove good his words, that they will appear to flourish for a time, and then will die away and be forgotten.

**Ver. 14.** *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, &c.* St. Paul here gives particular advice to his disciple, St. Timothy, who had been long since instructed in all the truths and mysteries of the Christian faith, who had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of prophecy, of interpreting the Scriptures, who was a priest, a bishop of Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia, whose office it was to instruct, direct, and convert others. He tells this great bishop, that *the holy Scriptures* are able, and may conduce or can *instruct him unto salvation*, (ver. 15.) unto his own salvation and that of others. (Witham) --- The apostle here entreats his disciple, and bid him all future Christians, to adhere to the true deposit of doctrine. He teaches with Catholics, that all Scripture is profitable; but not with Protestants, that Scripture alone is necessary and sufficient.

**Ver. 16.** *All scripture divinely inspired is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, or admonish, to instruct others in justice,* and in the ways of virtue, that thus he who is a man of God, a minister of the gospel, may be perfect and instructed unto every good work. But when our adversaries of the pretended reformation, undertake from these four verses to shew, first, that every ignorant man or woman is hereby warranted to read and put what construction his or her private spirit, or private judgment, suggests upon all places of the holy Scriptures; and secondly, that the Scriptures alone contain all truths which a Christian is bound to believe; or at least, that the Scriptures teach him all things necessary to salvation, without regard to the interpretation and authority of the Catholic Church: I may at least say (without examining at present any other pretended grounds of these assertions) that these consequences are very remote from the text and sense of St. Paul in this place. As to the first, does this follow; the Scriptures must be read by Timothy, a priest, a bishop, a man of God, a minister of the gospel, whose office it is to instruct and convert others, therefore they are proper to be read and expounded by every ignorant man or woman? Does not St. Paul say elsewhere, (2 Corinthians ii. 17.) that *many adulterate* and corrupt *the word of God?* does not St. Peter tell us also, (2 Peter iii. 16.) that in St. Paul's epistles *are some things....which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other scriptures, to their own perdition?* See the preface to [the Gospel of] St. John, where reasons are brought for which it was requisite that the Church should put some restraint to the abuse which the ignorant made of reading the Scriptures in vulgar tongues. As to the second consequence, does it follow: every Scripture divinely inspired is *profitable* for St. Timothy, for a priest, a bishop, a man of God, a minister and preacher of the gospel, to teach and instruct, and conduce to bring both him and others to salvation; therefore they contain all things that a Christian need to believe? &c. Is not every Christian bound to believe that the books in the canon of the New and Old Testament are of divine authority, as in particular these two epistles of St. Paul to Timothy? Where does the Scripture assure us of this? But of this elsewhere. (Witham) --- Every part of divine Scripture is certainly *profitable* for all these ends. But if we would have the *whole* rule of Christian faith and practice, we must not be content with those Scriptures which Timothy *knew from his infancy*, (that is, with the Old Testament alone) nor yet with the New Testament, without taking along with it the traditions of the apostles and the interpretation of the Church, to which the apostles delivered both the book and the true meaning of it. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 6. Qui penetrant, *Greek: endunontes.*

[2] Ver. 6. Mulierculas, *Greek: gunaikaria:* nunquam pervenientes, *Greek: medapote*

dunamena, which agrees with Greek: *gunaikaria*.

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## 2 TIMOTHY 4

**Ver. 1.** *I charge thee* (literally, *testify to thee*) *before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead*; i.e. all those that have been dead for so many ages since the beginning of the world; and the living, i.e. those who shall be found living at the end of the world, but who shall die, and be presently raised again. See 1 Corinthians xv. 52. --- *By his coming*.<sup>[1]</sup> The sense by the Greek seems to be, who shall judge them *at or by* his coming, rather than *I charge thee by his coming*, as others translate. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *In season*,<sup>[2]</sup> *out of season*; i.e. whether the hearers are willing to hearken to thee or not. Or, as others understand it, whether it be convenient or inconvenient for thee to signify that the ministers of God must not desist from preaching, whatever troubles they are under. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Having itching ears*,<sup>[3]</sup> i.e. the hearers have such ears, running after novelties and such doctrine as favours their passions. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Be thou vigilant*, &c. It may either be expounded, *watch in all things*; or, *take pains in all things*. The latter seems the true construction. (Witham) --- *An evangelist*; a diligent preacher of the gospel. (Challoner) --- *Fulfil thy ministry*.<sup>[4]</sup> So even Dr. Wells, in his amendments to the Protestant translation, which hath, *make full proof of thy ministry*. See Luke I. 1. See also St. John Chrysostom on this place. --- *Be sober*. There is nothing for this in the Greek, nor in St. John Chrysostom. The Latin interpreter seems to have added it, as being contained in the other Greek words in this verse. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *I am even now ready to be sacrificed*.<sup>[5]</sup> Literally, to be immolated. See Philippians ii. 17. --- *The time of my dissolution* (literally, resolution) *is at hand*. This makes many judge that this letter was written during his last imprisonment; but the sense perhaps may be, that being old and worn out with labours, he could not live long. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *I have fought a good fight*, or *strived a good strife*.<sup>[6]</sup> The Latin and Greek may signify any kind of striving for a prize. --- *I have kept the faith*, not only the Christian faith, the been faithful in my office. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *A crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me*. These words confirm the Catholic doctrine, that good works performed with the assistance of God's grace, deserve and are meritorious of a reward in heaven: it is what is signified, 1. by *a crown of justice*, 2. from *a just judge*, 3. which he will *render* or give as a *reward*. Yet we own with St. Augustine that we have no merit, but what is also a gift of God from his grace and mercy, and grounded on his promises. (Witham) --- "A crown of *justice*," which the Protestant translate, of righteousness; but let us see how the learned St. Augustine, 1400 years ago, expounds the apostle's meaning: "How should he repay as a just judge, unless he had first given as a merciful Father?" (De grat. et lib. arb. chap. vi.) See Hebrews vi. 10. *God is not unjust, that he should forget your works*; the the Protestants change into, God is not unrighteous.

**Ver. 9.** *Demas hath*, &c. The Demas here mentioned, is the same that was at Rome with St. Paul in his first voyage, in 61 or 62, and of whom he makes mention in his epistle to the Colossians, (iv. 14.) also in that to Philemon, ver. 24. He was perverted in this last voyage, in 65, and abandoned his master in the time of danger. It is not ascertained whether he entirely renounced his faith, or whether God gave his grace to rise from his fall; or whether the love of the world, with which St. Paul here reproaches him, was only a passing fault, and an effect of pure human infirmity. St. Epiphanius (hæres. 51.) presumes that he renounced the faith, and was

engaged in the heresies of Cerintus, Ebion, and others, who held Jesus Christ to be no more than a mere man. Many moderns, Grotius, Menochius, Cornel.[Cornelius a Lapide?], &c. believe that he returned with St. Paul: and Estius himself seems to think that he was the same Demas of which St. Ignatius speaks, writing to the Magnesians, calling him a *worthy bishop of God*. But this is founded on a false supposition, that this letter was written during his first confinement at Rome, or at least before St. Paul wrote his epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. (Calmet) --- *Loving this world*; i.e. his safety, and to avoid persecutions. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Crescens into Galatia, Titus, &c.* These two did not abandon the faith, but only left St. Paul to preach the gospel, with his consent. Crescens went from Rome into Galatia, or into Gaul, as it is found written in the Greek. Theodoret, Eusebius, St. Epiphanius, &c. say that Galatia, in the Greek, is often put for Gaul, in profane authors. On this account it is said by some, that Crescens preached in Gaul. Adon makes him founder of the Church of Vienne, in Dauphine; an opinion still prevalent in that city. The feast of St. Crescens is kept by the Latin Church, on the 27th of June. (Calmet) --- As to Titus, it cannot be doubted but he went into Dalmatia for the purpose of the ministry, and by the order of St. Paul. Thence it seems most probable that he went into Crete, where he governed the Church as bishop, and there died. (Theodoret, St. John Chrysostom, Theophylactus, Estius, &c.)

**Ver. 11.** *Luke.* St. Luke was always much attached to St. Paul. It is thought he accompanied him to the time of his martyrdom. When St. Paul says Luke *alone* was with him, we must understand that no other disciple was at that time with him; not that the faithful of Rome, whose faith was so lively and charity so ardent, had abandoned him in this time of danger. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. x. p. 610.) --- *Mark.* This is John Mark, cousin of Barnabas, of whom mention was made, Acts xiii. 12. &c. also Colossians iv. 10. He rather wavered in faith at the beginning, but was afterwards much attached to the apostle. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** *Tychicus.* Theodoret and some others have inferred from this verse, that Timothy was not at Ephesus at this time; otherwise St. Paul would have here said, *I have sent Tychicus to thee*. Timothy, in quality of bishop of Ephesus, had the inspection of the whole province of Asia; hence St. Paul might have presumed, that Tychicus would not be able to find him in that city. But these reasons do not appear sufficiently convincing. Tychicus might have been the bearer of this epistle; then St. Paul might say, *I have sent him to carry it*. Or St. Paul might have sent him before, and here tells Timothy of it; because, on account of the distance of Rome from Ephesus, he might not have yet heard of his arrival. Mention has been made of Tychicus before, Acts. xx. 4.; Ephesians vi. 71.; Colossians iv. 70. (Calmet)

**Ver. 13.** *The cloak [7] which I left at Troas.* It is expounded a cloak by St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, &c. Others think he may mean some coffer, or trunk, in which were his books and some things that he valued. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *The Lord will render [8] to him.* We read *shall render*, not only in the Latin and Syriac, but also in divers Greek manuscripts which Dr. Wells again prefers before the ordinary Greek copies, in which we read, *The Lord render or reward him*, as in the Protestant translation. If that was the true reading, we must take the words by way of a prophecy, and not as an imprecation or curse. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *At my first defence,* or trial, when I appeared before Nero and my judges, *no man stood with me*; all, or almost all, abandoned me in that danger: *may it not be laid to their charge.* (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The Lord stood, &c.* All agree that Nero is here meant by the lion. St. John Chrysostom thinks that St. Paul was set at liberty after this first justification of his conduct, but that having afterwards converted the cupbearer of Nero, he was by him beheaded. (St. John Chrysostom, hom. x. p. 611.) --- But the Lord assisted and fortified me on this occasion by a vision, in which he assured me that he would prolong my life for the more perfect preaching of the gospel. (Bible de

Vence) --- The times predicted by the apostle in this epistle, (ver. 3. and 4.) are now arrived; and the warnings he gives to Timothy and to all preachers of the word, should be sedulously attended to: *preach the word: be instant in season and out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke with all patience and doctrine.* There will arrive a time when men will not bear sound doctrine; eager in the extreme to hear what flatters, they will have recourse to a variety of teachers not lawfully sent or ordained, calculated to *tickle their ears*: Assentatores populi, multitudinis levitatem voluptate quasi titillantes. (Cicero) In the same sense Plutarch says: *Greek: ta ota apoknaiousin.* It is yours, adds St. Paul, *Greek: os kalos stratiotes Christou Iesou*, [2 Timothy ii. 3.] as a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, to oppose yourself as a wall to all these evils, to attend every branch of your ministerial duty, not to yield to either opponents or dangers, and to see that the gospel is both preached and practised in all its purity. Thus may the Church find in you, and in her other ministers, what she is soon to lose in me, knowing as I do that my course is nearly run. --- *That by me the preaching may be accomplished, (or fulfilled) and that all the Gentiles may hear it.* This is an argument that he wrote this letter in his first imprisonment. --- *And I was delivered from the mouth of the lion;* that is, according to the common exposition, from Nero. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you.* These words are a fervent prayer, with which St. Paul divers times concludes his epistles; such is the prayer of the priest, when he turns about at mass, with *Dominus vobiscum*, the people answering, *et cum Spiritu tuo.* (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Per adventum, *Greek: kata ten epiphaneian.*

[2] Ver. 2. *Greek: Eukairos akairos,* Tempestive, intempestive.

[3] Ver. 3. Prurientes auribus, *Greek: knethomenoi;* if it agreed with teachers, it should be *Greek: knethomenous.*

[4] Ver. 5. Ministerium tuum imple, *Greek: plerophoreson.* St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: log. th. p. 371*) *Greek: toutesti, pleroson;* and so again, (ver. 17) *prædicatio impleatur.* *Greek: plerophorethe, toutesti,* says St. John Chrysostom p. 376, *Greek: plerothe.* St. John Chrysostom doubtless understood Greek as well as Erasmus or Mr. Legh, who therefore need not have accused the Latin interpreter as if he knew not Greek, so as to distinguish betwixt *Greek: plerophorein* and *Greek: pleroun.*

[5] Ver. 6. Jam delibor, *Greek: ede spendomai.* See St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: om. th. p. 372*) that *Greek: sponde,* libamen, is more than *Greek: thusia,* hostia.

[6] Ver. 7. Certamen certavi, *Greek: ton agona egonismai,* It is not expressed by *Greek: machomai* and *Greek: mache.*

[7] Ver. 13. Penulam, *Greek: phelonen,* some manuscripts *Greek: phailonen,* and *Greek: phailonen.* St. John Chrysostom, (*Greek: om. 1. p. 375.*) *Greek: entautha ton imation legei;* though he takes notice, that some understood *Greek: glossokomon, entha ta biblia.*

[8] Ver. 14. Reddet, *Greek: apodosei,* in some manuscripts though in more, *Greek: apodoe.* The commentary of St. John Chrysostom agrees with the Latin.

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**TITUS**

THE  
EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE,

## TO TITUS.

### INTRODUCTION.

The design of this epistle is much the same as in the two former to Timothy. He had made this his beloved son Titus, chief bishop of Crete; in which island were formerly a hundred cities, on which account it was called Hecatompolis. It is now called Candy. We have a commentary of St. Jerome on this epistle, tom. iv, p. 409. E. B. (Witham) --- Titus was an uncircumcised Gentile: we know not on what occasion he attached himself to St. Paul. It is however certain that he was a great utility to St. Paul in the government of the Church. --- St. Paul having preached the faith in the island of Crete, left his beloved Titus there to finish the work which he had begun. Afterwards the apostle, on a journey to Nicopolis, a city of Macedonia, wrote this epistle to Titus; in which he directs him to ordain bishops and priests for the different cities, shewing him the principal qualities necessary for the bishop, also gives him particular advice for his own conduct to his flock, exhorting him to hold to strictness of discipline, but seasoned with lenity. It was written about thirty-three years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner)

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### TITUS 1

**Ver. 1.** *According to the faith of the elect of God;* that is, of the Christians, now the elect people of God. --- *Truth, which is according to piety:* because there may be truth also in things that regard not piety. By *truth*, St. John Chrysostom here understands the truth of the Christian religion, as distinguished from the Jewish worship, which consisted in a great measure in the figures and types of truth. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Who [1] lieth not,* or who cannot lie, being truth itself. --- *Hath promised;* that is, decreed to give life everlasting to his faithful servants. --- *Before the times of the world.*[2] Literally, before secular times. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Manifested his word.* St. Jerome understands the *word incarnate*; others, the word of God preached, which St. Paul says, *was committed to him*, &c. See St. John Chrysostom, p. 383. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *To Titus, my beloved,* (in the Greek, my true and[3] genuine son,...*grace and peace.* In the present ordinary Greek copies is added *mercy*, which the Protestant translators followed; but it is judiciously omitted by Dr. Wells, as not found in the best manuscripts nor in St. John Chrysostom's Greek edition, nor in the ancient Greek and Latin Fathers. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *That thou shouldst,*[4] &c. The sense cannot be, that he was to change any thing St. Paul had ordered, but to settle things which St. Paul had not time to do; for example, *to establish priests* [5] in the cities, that is to say, bishops, as the same are called bishops ver. 7; and, as St. John Chrysostom and others observe, it is evident from this very place, that the word *presbyter* was then used to signify either priests or bishops. If St. Jerome here meant that bishops were only placed over priests by ecclesiastical and not by divine institution, as some have expounded his words, his singular opinion against so many others is not to be followed. (Witham) --- That the ordaining of priests belongs only to bishops, is evident from the Acts and from St. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus. It is true, St. Jerome seems to express himself as if in the primitive Church there was no great difference between priests and bishops, yet he constantly excepts giving holy orders, (ep. 85) as also confirming the baptized, by giving them the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands and holy chrism; (dial. cont. Lucif. chap. iv.) which pre-eminence he attributes to bishops only. To assert that there is no distinction between a priest and bishop is an old heresy, condemned as such by the Church. See St. Epiphanius, hæc. 75.; St Augustine, hæc 53.



**Ver. 6.** *Without crime.* See the like qualifications, 1 Timothy iii. (Witham) --- These words if taken in their strictest meaning, do not seem to have all the force St. Paul meant them to have. For it is not sufficient that a bishop be free from great crimes; he ought, moreover to lead such a life as to draw others by his example to the practice of virtue. (Calmet) --- If we consult all antiquity we shall find, that if in the early infancy of the Church some who had been once married were ordained to the ministry, we shall find that after their ordination they abstained from the use of marriage. See St. Epiphanius, lib. iii. cont. hæres. and lib. iii. hæres. 59.

**Ver. 7.** *Not proud.*[6] The Greek word is of an extensive signification, which the Protestants have translated *self-willed*. The Latin interpreter (2 Peter ii. 10.) for the same Greek word has put, *pleasing themselves*; as it were never pleased with others, the unhappy disposition of a proud man. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Continent*:[7] though both the Latin and Greek word signify in general, one that hath abstained, or contained, and overcome himself: yet it is particularly used for such as contain themselves from carnal pleasures. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *For there are also many.* St. Paul here alludes principally to the Jews, who were of the circumcision, from whom St. Paul suffered much during the greater part of his life. They constantly enforced the necessity of the new converted Gentiles observing the law of Moses, and of their being circumcised, if they wished to be saved. There were many Jews of this description in Crete; to resist whom, St. Paul here tells Titus he ought to appoint bishops remarkable for their zeal and learning. (Josephus; Socrates, lib. ii. chap. 38. Hist. Eccles.) --- *Especially they who are of the circumcision*; which shews who were chiefly the false teachers. (Witham)

**[Ver. 11.** *Whole houses.*[8]]

**Ver. 12.** *One of them, a prophet of their own.*[9] He does not mean a true prophet, but as the pretended prophets of Baal were called prophets. St. Paul understands Epimenides, a poet of Crete, who by some pagan authors was thought to know things to come; but Aristotle says, he knew only things past, not to come. The ill character he gave of the Cretians was, that they were *always liars, evil beasts, slothful bellies*, addicted to idleness and sensual pleasures. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *This testimony*, or character, says the apostle, *is true*, by public fame of them, and therefore they *must be rebuked sharply*,[10] their condition and dispositions requiring it; which, therefore, is not contrary to the admonition he gave to Timothy, to be gentle towards all. (2 Timothy ii. 24.) (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Jewish fables, and commandments of men.* False traditions of the Jewish doctors, which were multiplied at that time. Calvin pretended from hence, that holydays and fasting days, and all ordinances of the Catholic Church were to be rejected as null, because they are the precepts of men. By the same argument must be rejected all laws and commands of princes and civil magistrates, as being the precepts of men. Fine doctrine! He might have remembered what St. Paul taught, (Romans xiii.) that all power is from God; and what Christ said, (Luke x. 16,) "He that hears you, hears me," &c. He might have observed that the men the apostle here speaks of, had *turned* [11] *away themselves* from the Christian *faith*. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *All things are clean to the clean.* That is, no creature is evil of its own nature; and the distinction of animals, clean and unclean, is now out of date, as are the other ceremonies of the Jewish law. And that to *these unfaithful, defiled men, nothing is clean*, because their consciences are defiled when they make use of them against their conscience. (Witham) --- St. Paul here tells Titus, to be particularly on his guard against those who wished to introduce among Christians a distinction of meats, and to preach up the necessity of divers purifications prescribed by the Mosaic law. All kinds of meats, he says, are clean to those who preserve their hearts free from sin; it is not what enters into the body defiles a man. But to eat with unwashed hands; to eat swine's flesh, or meat that has been offered to idols: these things in themselves are indifferent

actions, though particular circumstances may make them criminal. (1 Corinthians viii. 4, 5, 6, &c.) (Calmet) --- *But to the defiled*, &c. On the contrary, the man whose soul is defiled with sin, or who lives in infidelity, never can possess purity of heart; whatever legal washings or purifications, whatever sacrifices or ceremonies of the law he may make use of, all these cannot wash away the stains of the soul. (Estius, Menochius, Tirinus)

**Ver. 16.** *They confess that they know God.* He speaks not therefore of those who were properly infidels, without the knowledge of the true God; so that it is foolish to pretend from hence, that every action of an infidel must be a sin. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Qui non mentitur, *Greek: o apseudes.*

[2] Ver. 2. Ante tempora sæcularia, *Greek: pro chronon aionion.*

[3] Ver. 4. Dilecto filio, *Greek: gnesio tekno.*

[4] Ver. 5. Ut corrigas, *Greek: epidiorthose*, ut supercorrigas.

[5] Ver. 5. Per civitates presbyteros, *Greek: presbuterous.* St. John Chrysostom, (p. 387) *Greek: tous episkopous.*

[6] Ver. 7. Non superbum. St. Jerome says, non tumidum, *Greek: me authade.* See Cornelius a Lapide and Legh's Critica. (2 Peter ii. 10.)

[7] Ver. 8. Continentem, *Greek: egkrate.* The Protestant translate the verb, (1 Corinthians vii. 9.) If they cannot contain, let them marry.

[8] Ver. 11. Universas domos, *Greek: olous oikous.*

[9] Ver. 12. Propheta, *Greek: prophetes.* Cretenses, semper mendaces, malæ bestiæ, ventres pigri; *Greek: Kretes, aei pseustai, kaka theria, gasteres argai.* Aristotle, lib. iii. Rhetor. chap. xvii. Epimenides ille de futuris non vaticinabatur: *Greek: peri ton esomenon ouk emanteueto, alla peri ton gegonoton.* --- *Greek: Kretixeiin* was proverbially used for uttering falsehood, and it was a received adage, and very illiberal on the inhabitants of Crete, Cappadocia, and Cilicia.  
*Greek: Kretes, Kappodokes, Kilikes, tria Kappa Kakista.*

[10] Ver. 13. Dure, *Greek: apotomos*; a metaphor from surgeons cutting.

[11] Ver. 14. Adversantium se a veritate, *Greek: apostrephomenon.*

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## TITUS 2

**Ver. 1.** *Sound doctrine.* It is not sufficient to teach sound doctrine, says St. Jerome, if it be not at the same time taught in a manner worthy of itself; that is, if he who teaches it by his words belies it in his actions. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 2.** *Be sober.* The Greek Fathers, Theodoret, and Theophylactus, translate the word, *sober, attentive, or vigilant.* But Latin interpreters understand it of sobriety, in the literal meaning of the word. Old men oftentimes under pretense of weakness, drink wine to excess. The ancients called wine the milk of old men; hence *aquilæ senectus* has passed into a proverb, to designate an old man who drinks much and eats little. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *In holy attire.*[1] See 1 Timothy ii. 9. The Greek word is sometimes used to signify the whole constitution, or state of a man's health in all the parts of his body: here it is taken for a woman's whole exterior carriage, her gait, gesture, looks, discourse, dress, that nothing appear but what is edifying. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Love their husbands.* This is the first lesson he wishes to be given to young women; that they should always manifest a love, an attachment, respect and obedience to their husbands. But it must be a chaste love. Vult eas amare viros suos caste; vult inter virum et mulierem esse pudicam dilectionem. (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 5.** *Discreet, chaste, sober.* In the Greek is nothing for *sober*. The Latin interpreter seems to have added it, as another signification of one of the Greek words. See 1 Timothy iii. 2. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *In gravity:* to which is added in the Protestant [translation] *sincerity*,[2] from some Greek copies; but it is left out by Dr. Wells, as being not in the best Greek manuscripts nor is it in the Amsterdam edition, (1711.) (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Servants to be obedient.* Servants owe respect and submission to their masters in every thing not contrary to the law, or the will of God. Hence they are strictly forbidden to murmur at their commands, to show any repugnance to obey them, or to censure their conduct. To avoid these evils, they ought to consider their masters as Jesus Christ himself, and their commands as those of God himself: which St. Paul often inculcates in other places in his epistles. (Ephesians vi. 5, 6.; Colossians iii. 23.) (St. Jerome)

**Ver. 10.** *Not defrauding.*[3] St. Jerome puts, *not stealing*. The Greek signifies private thefts. Dr. Wells, *not by filching*. --- *That they may adorn (or give honour to) the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things;* by whom we may understand God, i.e. Christ, God and Man, or God as common to the three divine persons. (Witham) --- Thus ought they to shew forth in their whole conduct that strict love of justice and sanctity which the Catholic faith inspires into those who profess it, and live up to the admirable rules it prescribes; thus alone can they be said to do honour to their religion, when they practically perform what they speculatively believe.

**Ver. 11.** *For the grace of God, our Saviour, hath appeared to all men.* In the Greek: For the saving grace of God, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *We should live soberly,*[4] *justly, and piously.* St. Jerome puts (as in other places for the same Greek word) *chastely, justly, and piously*. The words comprehend man's duty to himself, to his neighbour, and towards God. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Waiting for the blessed hope;* for the happiness of the blessed in heaven, promised and hoped for. --- *And coming of the glory of the great God,*[5] *and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The title of great God, says Dr. Wells, is here referred to our Saviour Jesus Christ, by Clement of Alexandria in protreptico, chap. vi. He might have added, and by the general consent of the Greek and Latin Fathers. St. John Chrysostom cries out: "where are now they who say that the Son is less than the Father?" St. Jerome in like manner: "where is the serpent Arius? where is the snake Eunomius?" And that this title of great God is here given to Jesus Christ, may be shewn from the text itself, especially in the Greek; for the *glorious coming, and appearance*, in other places of St. Paul, is always used to signify Christ's coming to judge the world. Secondly, inasmuch as one and the same Greek article falls upon the *great God, and our Saviour Christ*; so that even M. Simon, in a note on these words, says the construction is, *and the coming of Jesus Christ, the great God, our Saviour*, and blames Erasmus and Grotius for pretending that this place is not a confutation of the Arians. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *A people, particularly acceptable.*[6] St. Jerome translates an egregious or eminent people. He says in the Septuagint it corresponds to *segula*, which signifies a man's *proper possessions*, which he has purchased or chosen for himself. Budeus says it signifies what is *rare*

and *uncommon*; and it is well translated by the Protestants, *a particular people*. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. In habitu sancto, *Greek: in katastemati ieroprepeis*. Scapula, our of Dioscorus, says *Greek: katastema* is *constitutio naturalis corporis*. See St. Jerome p. 426.

[2] Ver. 7. In some Greek [copies] is added *Greek: aphtharsian*, sincerity

[3] Ver. 10. Non fraudantes, *Greek: me nosphizomenous*, non suffurantes.

[4] Ver. 12. Sobrie, juste, et pie. St. Jerome in his commentary, *caste juste, et pie*. So he generally translates *Greek: sophron, sophronos, &c.*

[5] Ver. 13. Adventum gloriæ magni Dei, et Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi; *Greek: epiphaneian tes doxes tou megalou Theou kai Soteris emon Iesou Christou*. St. John Chrysostom, (p. 401. lin. 43.) *Greek: pou eisin oi tou Patros, elattona ton uion legontes*. St. Jerome, "Ubi est serpens Arius? ubi est Eunomius coluber?" St. Paul uses *Greek: epiphaneian* for the coming of Christ to judgment. The same Greek article is put thus, *Greek: tou megalou Theou, kai Soteris*, and not *Greek: kai tou Soteris*.

[6] Ver. 14. Acceptabilem, *Greek: periousion a perieimi*. St. Jerome says, Egregium, præcipuum. See Deuteronomy vii. 6.; Exodus xix. 5.; Psalm cxxxiv. 4.; Israel in possessionem sibi. See also St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: log. i.* p. 492. linea 4ta.

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### TITUS 3

**Ver. 1.** *Princes and powers*. At the time St. Paul wrote this epistle to Titus, there were many Jews, particularly the disciples of Judas of Gaulan, who maintained that the Hebrews were under no obligation of obeying any other than God, or at most the rulers of their own nation. St. Paul here admonishes them, that in conformity with the example and instruction of our divine Saviour, they ought likewise to obey every other temporal prince set over them by the Almighty, provided they commanded nothing contrary to the law of God. (St. Jerome, Estius, Menochius) --- Piety teaches, and pastors should enforce three duties towards princes: submission to their authority, obedience to their laws, and a disposition of heart to meet all their just desires.

**Ver. 3.** We may see in this portrait of a child of Adam, drawn by the hand of a master, what we should have been without Jesus Christ, and what we perhaps have been, as often as he has abandoned us to ourselves. Whoever cannot read in this his own depravity, has never studied as he ought his own heart.

**Ver. 4.** *The goodness and kindness*. Literally, *humanity of our Saviour*. By *humanity* [1] some expound Christ's appearing in his human nature, but by the Greek is meant the love of God towards mankind. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Not by the works, &c.* St. Paul in this verse alludes to the sacrament of baptism. This text is brought by divines to prove that baptism, like every other sacrament, produces its effect by its own power, (or, as it is termed in the schools, *ex opere operato*) independently of any disposition on the part of the receiver. We are saved, says the apostle, not by the works of justice, or any good works we have performed, but our salvation must be attributed solely to the mercy of our Saviour, God, manifested to us by the *washing itself of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost*. --- *by the laver of regeneration, &c.*[2] That is, baptism, by which we are born anew the adoptive children of God, by the *grace of the Holy Ghost, whom he hath poured, &c.* (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** All presumption of human merits, which have not the grace of Jesus Christ for their principle, is here completely confounded; and the whole glory of our salvation is justly attributed to the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ. A new birth, new creature, new spirit. The effusion of the water upon the body in baptism, is a figure of the salutary effusion of the holy Spirit in the soul to renew it, and to make it a child of God.

**Ver. 7.** This admirable, and I may say divine adoption, is the sole foundation of a Christian's hope, as the eternal life of the blessed is the sole end of this adoption.

**Ver. 8.** *It is a faithful saying.* He means what he has already said, of our being justified by the grace and mercy of God. --- *And of these things I will have thee to affirm* [3] *earnestly.* The sense is not, *I would herein confirm thee*, (as Mr. N. translates, without attention to the Greek, which in so many places shews us the literal sense of the Latin text) but that he would have his disciple, Titus, to confirm and settle others in the belief of these truths, *that*, as it follows, *they may be careful to excel in good works.* (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *A man that is, &c.* Many ancient copies have this passage thus, *Avoid a heretic after one reprehension.* St. Irenæus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, &c. and many ancient Greek copies, omit a *second reprehension.* They thought once warning a heretic sufficient; a second correction only served to render him more insolent, and more obstinate in his false opinions. Certainly the faith of Christ has been so firmly established, that a man instructed in Scripture and tradition cannot conscientiously remain a heretic; he must be well aware of the crime of disunion; his own judgment, as St. Paul says, must condemn him.

**Ver. 11.** *Knowing that he that is such a one is subverted:*[4] a metaphor, from a house that is thrown down, even to the foundation, by the Greek. He speaks of heretics whose obstinacy seems evident, for no one is properly a heretic but who is obstinate in his errors. --- *And sinneth, being* [5] *condemned;* or, condemned by his own *judgment*, when his ignorance cannot be a sufficient plea for him. (Witham) --- Other offenders are judged and cast out of the Church by the sentence of the pastors of the same Church. Heretics, more unhappy, run out of the Church of their own accord; and by so doing, give judgment and sentence against their own souls. (Challoner)

**Ver. 14.** *Let our men* (that is, all Christians) *also learn to excel in good and charitable works*, by furnishing to others, for necessary uses, according to their wants. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** There is no tie so tender or so strong as that of faith and charity. Nothing unites us truly together, but that which unites us all to God and to Jesus Christ, by an union of the same sentiments of faith, the same emotions of love, and the same inclinations of grace.

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[1] Ver. 4. Benignitas et humanitas, *Greek: chrestotes kai philanthropia.* See Estius.

[2] Ver. 5. Lavacrum, *Greek: loutron.* See Ephesians v. 26.

[3] Ver. 8. De his volo te confirmare, *Greek: peri touton boulomai se diabebaiousthai:* on which St. John Chrysostom says, (*Greek: log. st. p. 406.*) *Greek: toutesti, tauta dialegesthai;* I would have to declare these things, &c.

[4] Ver. 11. Subversus est, *Greek: exestruptai,* eversus est.

[5] Ver. 11. Proprio iudicio condemnatus, *Greek: autokatakritos.*

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## PHILEMON

### THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO PHILEMON.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Philemon was a rich man, of high birth. He had been converted by St. Paul, when he was preaching at Ephesus, or by his disciple Epaphras. His house was become not unlike a church. Onesimus, his slave, far from profiting by the excellent example set before him, became more wicked; he plundered his master, and flew to Rome, where St. Paul was detained in prison for the first time. He received the poor fugitive charitably, and wrote to his master in his behalf. --- The letter seems to have been written in the year sixty-one, during St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. It contains, as St. John Chrysostom observes, divers profitable instructions, and marks of St. Paul's charity towards a poor fugitive servant. Erasmus says Cicero never wrote with greater eloquence. (Witham)

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#### PHILEMON 1

**Ver. 1.** *Our....fellow-labourer*, or coadjutor. He calls him so, because of the charity and zeal with which he promoted the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *And to the Church*, or congregation of the faithful *which is in thy house*. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Thy charity and faith....in the Lord Jesus,[1] and towards all the saints*. In the Greek is towards Jesus Christ, and towards all the saints. By the saints he seems to mean, as elsewhere, all Christians; so that the sense may be, of thy faith towards Christ, and of thy charity towards all the saints or Christians. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *That the communication.[2] That is, charitable contributions, done with a lively faith, may become evident,[3] and the good works known, which are in you; that is, done among you*. This seems the sense of the following verse, where St. Paul expresseth his joy in hearing of Philemon's charity towards the saints. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Wherefore, though I might have much confidence, &c.* Now St. Paul disposeth Philemon to grant his request, I am persuaded I might command thee, and thou wouldst not take it amiss. (Witham) --- *To command thee, &c.* As an apostle of Jesus Christ, I have the power even of ordering thee to forgive Onesimus, and to receive him again into favour; likewise as Paul, the aged, respect and regard being always due in a particular manner to *old men*; or again, as a prisoner of Jesus Christ, suffering here out of love for Jesus Christ and the faithful: I might here make use of all these different reasons to induce thee to pardon a poor fugitive slave, but I will not; I merely as a poor humble suppliant, forgetting all the dignity due to my apostleship, my grey hairs, or my chains, beseech thee to pardon him. Nor can i for a moment doubt of obtaining my request, when I consider the great charity thou hast in Jesus Christ towards all the saints. (Calmet, Haydock)

**Ver. 9.** *I rather beseech thee, thou being such a one,[4] as Paul*. That is, united to him in spirit, by the same faith and charity; I am therefore confident thou wilt not refuse the request of Paul, now an aged man, and a prisoner, for the sake of Jesus Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *I beseech thee, &c.* He at length tells Philemon what his request is, and names the

person Onesimus, but in such terms as shew how much St. Paul has this affair at heart, and that he will look upon the favour he asks as done to himself. It is, that thou wilt pardon Onesimus, whom I look upon and love as *my son*, and a most dear son, *whom I have begotten*, a prisoner, and *in my chains*. (Witham) --- How great is the ingenuity shewn by St. Paul in this epistle, in obtaining for Onesimus the pardon of his master, Philemon. Having in the preceding verse endeavoured by every argument which a real tenderness and compassion could inspire, and making use of every expression that could conciliate the favour of Philemon, to obtain his charitable request, he in this verse for the first time dares mention *Onesimus* by name; a name which he was sensible must sound harsh in the ears of one who had received an injury from him. See how he endeavours to prevent so unhappy an effect, by adding to the name every epithet that could any way tend to soften all feelings of asperity, and excite compassion and pity. *I beseech thee then for my son, whom I have begotten, and that in my chains*. (Calmet) --- The pardon I crave is not for your *slave*, but for my *son*. If in all antiquity there be any thing in the persuasive kind of eloquence truly admirable, it is this short epistle in which there are contained almost as many arguments as words.

**Ver. 11.** *Who heretofore was unprofitable to thee*, in taking and spending what belonged to thee, yet now, after a sincere conversion, *is profitable* [5] *both to me and thee; to me*, by the services he has done me in prison; and the joy I have had by his conversion; and also *to thee*, because I know thou wouldst have been glad to have rendered me all possible services thyself, and he has done them *for thee*; he hath supplied thy place. For these reasons I could have wished to have detained him with me: but I have sent him back, thou being his master, nor would I do any thing in regard of thy servant, without thy advice and consent, that if thou thinkest it fitting to send him back again to me, and to give him his freedom, it may be without any constraint upon thee, without any necessity, thy voluntary and charitable act and deed. (Witham) --- St. Paul here makes an allusion to the word *Onesimus*, signifying *useful* in the Greek. He was before unprofitable, he says, to thee, contrary to the import of his name; but now he is truly an Onesimus, or *useful*, both to you and to me; to you indeed, by his conversion, and the resolution he now makes to serve you faithfully the remainder of his life; to me also, by the services he renders me in my chains. (Calmet) --- St. Jerome observes that some hypercritics pretended that this subject was not deserving the solicitude of an apostle, and on that account questioned its author; but this reasoning is unworthy of those who adore a God who did not refuse to die for rebellious and impious slaves. It shews pastors how solicitous they should always be for the salvation of the meanest of their flock; yes, though they may appear obdurate, and dead and buried in the pit of sin.

**Ver. 12-15.** *Do thou receive him as my own bowels*. That is, as myself. Perhaps by the permission of God's providence (who never permits evil, but for some greater good) he *departed* from thee for a little while,[6] *that thou mightest receive him for ever*, being now after his conversion in a way of being made partaker with thee of the same eternal happiness. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** Receive him *not now as a servant*, but also as a *most dear brother, especially to me*. Nay I may say, how much more dear even to thee, both in the flesh, having been a Gentile as thou thyself wast, and having been also a servant in thy family. And secondly, he ought now to be dear to *thee in our Lord*, he who was thy servant, being now united to thee by the same faith, and by an union of charity. See Estius. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *If, therefore, thou count me a partner*,[7] as a brother in Christ, as a member of Christ with thee, *receive him as myself*. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *If he hath wronged thee in any thing*, as he confesses, *put it to my account*, to my debtor, *I will repay it*, and satisfy thee for it. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *I, Paul, have written*, and testified this *with my own hand*. Some think he wrote the whole letter, with his own hand, to make it more acceptable to Philemon. --- *Not to say to thee, that thou owest me thy own self*, the eternal salvation of thy soul, by thy conversion to the faith of

Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *Yea, brother: may I enjoy thee in the Lord, enjoy the fruits of thy friendship and love for me, and rejoice with thee. In this refresh my bowels in the Lord, grant me this satisfaction. I have written freely, and with confidence in thy obedience; that is, ready compliance, in giving him and me more than I ask, to wit, his freedom. After this, he was made a deacon, and, as some say, a bishop and a martyr. See St. Jerome, and Tillemont in his art. 45. on St. Paul, and his notes 70, 71. (Witham)*

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[1] Ver. 5. *Charitatem tuam et fidem, quam habes in Domino Jesu, et in omnes Sanctos; Greek: pros ton kurion lesoun, kai eis pantas tous agious.*

[2] Ver. 6. *Ut communicatio, Greek: e koinonia* See St. Paul, 1 Corinthians i. 9. &c.

[3] Ver. 6. *Evidens; most Greek copies, Greek: energes, efficax, but in some, Greek: enarges.*

[4] Ver. 9. *Cum sis talis ut Paulus senex, Greek: toioutos on os Paulos presbutes.*

[5] Ver. 11. *Greek: Onesimos, utilis, but he useth Greek: achrestos and Greek: euchrestos. See Cornelius a Lapide.*

[6] Ver. 15. *A little while. Literally, ad horam, Greek: pros oran.*

[7] Ver. 17. *As a partner, ut socium, Greek: koinonon.*

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## HEBREWS

### THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE HEBREWS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Catholic Church hath received and declared this Epistle to be part of the Canonical Scriptures of the New Testament, though some doubted of it in the first ages [centuries], especially in the Latin Church, witness St. Jerome on the 8th chap. of Isaias; Luther and most of his followers reject it, but the Calvinists and the Church of England have received it. Others, who received this Epistle in the first ages [centuries], doubted whether it was written by St. Paul, but thought it was written by St. Barnabas, or by St. Clement, or St. Luke, or at least that St. Paul only furnished the matter and the order of it, and that St. Luke wrote it, and St. Paul afterwards read it and approved it. It was doubted again, whether this Epistle was first written in Hebrew (that is, in Syro-Chaldaic, then spoken by the Jews) or in Greek, as Estius pretends. The ancient writers say it was written in Hebrew, but that it was very soon after translated into Greek either by St. Luke or St. Clement, pope and martyr. Cornelius a Lapide thinks the Syriac which we have in the Polyglot to have been the original; but this is commonly rejected. See Tillemont on St. Paul, Art. 46, and note 72; P. Alleman on the first to the Hebrews, &c. St. Paul wrote this letter about the year 63, and either at Rome or in Italy. See Chap. xii. 24. He wrote it to the Christians in Palestine, who had most of them been Jews before. This seems the reason why he puts not his name to it, nor calls himself their apostle, his name being rather odious to the Jews, and because he was chosen to be the apostle of the Gentiles. The main design is to shew that every one's justification and salvation is to be hoped for by the grace and merits of Christ, and not from the law of Moses, as he had shewn in his Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans, where we many



observe this kind of difference: To the Galatians he shews, that true justice cannot be had from *circumcision* and *the ceremonies of the law*: to the Romans, that even the moral *precepts and works of the law* were insufficient without the grace of Christ: and in this to the Hebrews, he shews that our justice could not be had from *the sacrifices of the old law*. As to the chief contents: He exhorts them to the faith of Christ, by shewing his dignity and pre-eminence above the Angels, and above Moses, Chap. i, ii, iii.; that Christ's priesthood was above that of Aaron, from the 4th to the 8th chap. ver. 6; that the new law and testament is preferable to the old, from thence to the middle of chap. x.; he commends faith by the example of the ancient Fathers, Chap. xi. and in the beginning of the twelfth; then he exhorts them to patience, constancy, brotherly love, &c. The like exhortations are mixed in other parts of this Epistle. (Witham) --- We must here remark, that our separated brethren, relying solely upon tradition, admit in general this Epistle into their canon of Scriptures, though they are necessitated to allow that for some centuries great doubts were entertained on the subject. According to Mr. Rogers, in his *Defence of the Thirty-nine Articles*, whilst several among the Protestants have rejected as apocryphal the Epistle to the Hebrews, that of James, the 2nd and 3rd of John, and Jude, others have as strenuously maintained that they ought to be admitted into the sacred canon. The Catholic Church admits them as deuterio-canonical books, and of equal authority with the proto-canonical books....After the arguments had been justly weighed on both sides, they seem to have been admitted by the general consent of the Latin Church, as they had all along been admitted by the Greek Church. The canon, as it now stands, both of the Old and New Testament, we find enumerated in Pope Innocent's letter to Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse, an. 405 [the year A.D. 405], in St. Augustine, (lib. ii. de doct. christ. chap. viii.) and in the decrees of an African Council, an. 419 [the year A.D. 419], consisting of 217 bishops, who declare that in giving a catalogue of the Holy Scriptures, they only confirm and ratify what they have received from their Fathers. This canon is attributed to the third Council of Carthage, an. 397 [the year A.D. 397]. Dr. Cosin, an eminent Protestant divine, tells us in his canon of Scripture, p. 4, "that to know the books of Scripture, there is no safer course to be taken than to follow the public voice and the universal testimony of the Church." The sixth of the thirty-nine articles gives a similar rule, which excludes private judgment. And "what is this," asks Hooker, "but to acknowledge ecclesiastical tradition?" The mind of man, naturally fickle and unsettled, stands in need of a guide in the road to eternal life. I shall never hesitate, says a spirited author, to take for my guide the Catholic Church, which contains in herself the authority of past and future ages. The Syriac version of the Old and New Testament, which is deservedly allowed to be of greatest antiquity and authority, comprises the same deuterio-canonical books as the canon of the Council of Trent; a convincing proof that the Church of Syria, immediately after the times of the apostles, considered them as part of the sacred canon, no less than the Catholics of the present day. For a very satisfactory account respecting the authenticity and inspiration of this Epistle, as also for an excellent commentary with notes moral, doctrinal, and critical, see a late work entitled, *An Explanation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews*, by the Rev. Henry Rutter. --- What can be the reason why Protestants admit the deuterio-canonical books of the New and reject those of the Old Testament? --- This Epistle merits the particular attention of Christians of every denomination, since it points out to them their various duties in respect to the necessity of faith and the practice of a holy life. In opposition to the Socinians, it tends to shew not only the divinity of Jesus Christ, but also that his death was a true and real sacrifice of atonement for the sins of mankind. See Chap. i, ver. 5, &c. In opposition to other sectarists, it proves that the bloody sacrifice of Christ, once offered on the cross, though a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice of redemption, does not exclude the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass, by which he is a *priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech*. See Chap. v, &c. It is no less applicable to Catholics, in order to confirm them in the faith once delivered to the saints, and to point out the dreadful consequences of abandoning that religion which Jesus Christ came to establish in the world. *The just man lives by faith; but if he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Let us, therefore, hold fast the confession of our hope, without wavering, or forsaking our assembly*, the Catholic Church, as many have done to follow Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and other separatists. *But we, says the apostle, are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them who have faith unto the saving of the soul.* (Hebrews x. 39.)

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## HEBREWS 1

**Ver. 1.** *At different times,[1] and in many ways.* The first word signifies that God revealed the incarnation of his Son, as it were, by parcels, and by degrees, at different times, and to different persons, to Adam, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, &c. The latter word expresseth the different ways and manners, as by angels, by immediate inspirations, and revelations, by types, figures, and ceremonies.[2] --- *Last of all*, by his Son, this true, natural, eternal Son, of whom we must always take notice, that being both true God, and true man, by the union of the divine and human nature to one and the same divine person, St. Paul speaks of him sometimes as God, sometimes mentions what applies to him as man, sometimes as our Redeemer, both God and man. This must necessarily happen in speaking of Christ; but when we find things that cannot be understood of one that is a pure or mere man only, or that cannot be true but of him, who is truly God, these are undeniable proofs against the errors of the Arians and Socinians. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.* Heir is here not taken for one that succeeds another at his death, but for the same as Master or Lord. And though Christ be inseparably God and man, yet this applies to him, as man, because, as God, he was not constituted in time, but was always from eternity, Lord of all things, with the Father and the Holy Ghost: *by whom also he made the world.* That is, all created beings, and in such a manner, that all creatures were equally produced by the three divine persons. See John i. 3. and the annotations on that place. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Who being the splendour,[3] or brightness of his glory,* not as beams or rays are derived from a lightsome body, but by a necessary and eternal communication of the same substance, and of the whole light; in which sense the council of Nice [Nicaea] understood the eternal Son of God to be *light from light*. This partly helps us to conceive the eternal generation of the Son from the Father, because the brightness is at the same time with the sun, though all comparisons fall short of this mystery. (Witham) --- We may here observe the two natures of Christ. As God, he is the Creator of all things; as man, he is constituted heir of the goods of God. Not content to possess the inheritance of his Father in his own person, he will have us as coheirs to share it also with him. May we so live as to hear one day that happy sentence: *Come, ye blessed of my Father*, &c. --- *And the figure of his substance.*[4] In the Greek is the *character* of his substance; which might be translated, the *express image*. There are different ways by which a thing may be said to be a *figure* or image of another: here it is taken for such a representation of the substance of the Father, that though the Father and the Son be distinct persons, and the Son proceed from the Father, yet he is such a figure and image, as to have the same nature and substance with the Father, as the Catholic Church always believed and declared against the ancient heretics, and particularly against the Arians. Their words may be partly seen in Petavius, lib. ii. de Trin. chap. 11.; lib. iv. chap. 6.; lib. vi. chap. 6. being too prolix for these short notes. And this may be understood by the following words concerning the Son: *and upholding or preserving all things by the word of his power.* As he had said before, that all things were made by him, so all things are preserved by him, equally with the Father. See Colossians i. 16, 17. See also ver. 10. of this chapter, and the annotations on John i. 3. (Witham) --- *Figure*. This does not exclude the reality. So Christ's body in the eucharist, and his mystical death in the mass, though called a figure, image, or representation of Christ's visible body and sacrifice upon the cross, yet may be and is the self-same substance. (Bristow) --- *Sitteth on the right hand of God*, both here, in St. Mark, chap. xvi. and in the apostles' creed, express what agrees with Christ, as our Redeemer, God made man by his incarnation, and who as man is made the head of his Church, the judge of the living and the dead; and so St. Stephen said, (Acts vii.) *I see the heavens open, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.* (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Being made so much better, &c.* The Arians pretended from hence that Christ was *made*, or created. But the apostle speaks of Christ as man, and tells us that Christ, even as man, by his ascension was exalted above the Angels. --- *As he hath inherited a more excellent name.* That

is, both the dignity and name of the Son of God, of his *only Son*, and of his *true Son*. See 1 John v. 20. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* These words, though commonly expounded of the eternal generation of the Son of God in the day or moment of eternity, yet may be truly applied either to Christ made man by his incarnation, or to Christ risen from the dead, as they are used by St. Paul, (Acts xiii. 33.) because the same Christ both these ways is the Son of God. It was the only true and natural Son of God, who was made flesh, who was made man, who rose from the dead; and the eternal Father manifested his eternal Son by his incarnation, and shewed him triumphing over death by his resurrection. --- *I will be to him a father, &c.* Although these words might be literally spoken of Solomon, yet in the mystical sense (chiefly intended by the Holy Ghost) they are to be understood of Christ, who in a much more proper sense is the Son of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Let all the Angels of God adore him.* These words seem to be cited out of Psalm xcvi. 7. according to the Septuagint. And they seem to be an invitation, and a command to the Angels to adore Jesus Christ, when at the end of the world he shall come to judgment. This is one of the proofs which St. Paul here brings, to shew that the Angels are inferior to Christ, because they are commanded to adore him. (Witham) --- God shews the superiority of his divine Son over the Angels, in ordering the latter to adore him. Wherever the person of Christ is, there it ought to be adored by both men and Angels, therefore in the blessed sacrament [of the Eucharist].

**Ver. 7.** *Maketh his Angels,[5] spirits: and his ministers, a flame of fire.* St. Augustine, on Psalm ciii., and St. Gregory, hom. xxxiv. in Evang., would have the sense and construction of the words to be, who maketh the blessed spirits to be also his Angels, or messengers to announce and executed his will: (messengers and Angels signify the same in the Greek) Calvin and Beza by *spirits*, here understand the *winds*, as if the sense was only, who maketh the winds and *flames of fire*, that is, thunder and lightning, the *messengers* and instruments of his divine will, in regard of men, whom he punisheth. But this exposition agrees not with the rest of the text, nor with the design of St. Paul, which is to shew Christ above all the Angels, and above all creatures. St. Paul therefore is to be understood of Angels or angelic spirits: but then the sense may be, who maketh his Angels like the winds, or like a flame of fire, inasmuch as they execute his divine will with incredible swiftness, like the winds, and with a force and activity not unlike that of fire. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** *But the Son.* That is, to his Son Jesus Christ, he saith, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, and lasts for eternity. --- *A sceptre, or rod of equity, is the sceptre of thy kingdom.* That is, O Christ, God and man, head of thy Church, judge of all mankind, thou shalt reward and punish all under thee with justice and equity, as *thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee.* Many here understand *God* first named, to be in the vocative case, and that the sense is: therefore *thee, O God, thy God*, hath anointed: thus Christ is called God. Others take *God* in both places to be in the nominative case, and to be only a repetition of *God the Father*; and the sense to be, thee Christ, *God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above them that are partakers with thee*: by which spiritual unction, some understand graces infused into Christ's soul at his incarnation, by a greater plenitude of graces than was ever given to any saints whom he made partakers of his glory in heaven; others expound it of an unction of greater glory given to Christ in heaven as man, because by his sufferings and merits he had destroyed and triumphed over sin. See Estius, Cornelius a Lapide, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 10, &c.** *And again: thou in the beginning, O Lord, hast founded the earth, &c.* The text, as well as the authority of interpreters, shew these words to be still spoken of the Son of God, of Christ, who was both true God and man. And thought part of Psalm ci. from which these words are taken, contain a prayer to God for the restoring of the city of Jerusalem, yet in this psalm is chiefly signified the glory of Christ, and of his Church, which will be spread over all nations. See St. John Chrysostom, Estius, Cornelius a Lapide, &c. --- *As a vesture shalt thou change them, &c.* The apostle, in the second verse of this chapter, had said that the world was made by the

Son of God: now he tells us that all created things shall wax old like a garment, shall decay and perish, (at least from their present state and condition) shall be changed; but thou, who art both God and man, art always the same, without decay or change. (Witham) --- The apostle here applies the work of the creation to the Son of God, and thus furnishes a clear and striking proof of his divinity, against the Unitarians. To elude this proof, some of them pretend that these verses have been fraudulently added; but they are found in all the Greek copies, and in all ancient versions of this epistle. Others try to give forced interpretations to these verses, but the words are convincingly clear to all who do not purposely shut their eyes.

**Ver. 13-14.** *Sit on my right hand, &c.* The ancient Jews themselves understood this 109th psalm of their Messiah, nor could they answer Christ's words, (Matthew xxii. 45.) when he shewed them by these same words, that their Messiah was not only the Son of David, but also the Lord of David, of whom it was said: *the Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool.* See also 1 Corinthians xv. 52. and in this epistle, Chap. x. 13. --- *Are they not all ministering spirits?* &c. The apostle, in this chapter, not only shews how much the dignity of Christ is superior to that of the highest Angels, but also his divinity; and that he is both true God and true man, as the ancient Fathers took notice against the Arians. (Witham) --- The holy Angels, says St. Augustine, to whose society we aspire, help us without difficulty, because their notion is pure and free. (De Civit. lib. 11. chap. xxxi.) Having then Jesus Christ for our advocate and mediator at the right hand of God, and his Angels for our guardians, ministering spirits, what can we wish for more?

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[1] Ver. 1. Multifarium, *Greek: polumeros*; which signifies, that God revealed the coming of his Son as it were by parts and parcels, or by degrees, first revealing some things and then others.

[2] Ver. 1. Novissime, *Greek: ep echatou*, which reading Dr. Wells prefers before that in the ordinary Greek copies, which have *Greek: ep echaton ton emeron*, followed by the Protestant translation and Mr. N.

[3] Ver. 3. Splendor gloriæ, *Greek: apaugasma*, refulgentia, effulgentia, &c.

[4] Ver. 3. Figura substantiæ, *Greek: karakter tes upostaseos*. Hypostasis signifies persona, subsistentia, and also substantia.

[5] Ver. 7. *Greek: O poion tous Aggelous autou pneumata*, not *Greek: ta pneumata*, the Greek article being put before Angels, and not before spirits, may seem to favour that exposition, which compares Angels to the winds and to a flame of fire.

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## HEBREWS 2

**Ver. 1.** *Lest perhaps we should let them slip away*, [1] or run out, like water out of leaking vessels, which is lost, and cannot be take up again. According to the letter it is, *lest we run out*; the sense must be, lest we do not sufficiently attend to these truths. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *For if the word spoken by the Angels, &c.* That is, if the law delivered to Moses by Angels, became firm and was to be obeyed, and the transgressors punished, how much more is this true of the new law delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and preached by his disciples that heard him, and which hath been confirmed by so many miracles, and by so many gifts of the Holy Ghost, which the believers have received? (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** The miraculous powers of the Almighty bestowed in the early ages [centuries] of the Church, for the establishment and propagation of the faith, became afterwards less frequent, as

there was less need of them; but they have ever been totally withdrawn, as some pretend, nor has there passed a single age from that of the apostles down to the present time, in which several most evident and stupendous miracles have not been wrought in the Catholic Church.

**Ver. 5.** *God hath not put in subjection to the Angels the [2] world to come.* By the world to come, is meant the Church of Christ to the end of the world, and succeeding to the state of those who served God under the old law. The former world, under the law of Moses, might be said to be subject to Angels, by whom that law was delivered; but the church of the new law is subject to Christ, its author and publisher. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *But one;* to wit, the author of the 8th Psalm said, *what is man, &c.* that it, man, or mankind, considered in his own frail nature, corrupted by sin, guilty of eternal death, that thou shouldst be mindful of him, restore him to thy favour, and bestow such graces upon him? But the words of the psalm, and of St. Paul in this place, though they may be understood of every man, yet are to be taken as particularly spoken of Christ as man, or of the human nature of Christ, exalted by the real union with the divine person of the Son of God. (Witham) --- If the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ spoke in this manner, when visited by the eternal word, with what humility ought a sinner to say: What is man?

**Ver. 7.** *Thou hast made him a little less than the Angels.* Man's nature, even the human nature of Christ in itself, is inferior to the nature of Angels, though raised to a degree of dignity above other creatures. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *He left nothing subject to him.* He speaks here of Christ, to whom God hath made all creatures subject, whether in heaven, earth, or hell; whether they have been, or shall be hereafter, as to the judge and the head of all. --- *But now we see not as yet all things subject to him.* This will only be at the end of the world. At present the devils and the wicked make opposition against Christ and his elect. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *But we see (by faith) Jesus,* who as man, by his sufferings and death, was made less than the Angels, nay, despised as the last of man; now, by his glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the submission all nations pay to him, who believe in him and worship him, *crowned with glory and honour.* And he submitted himself willingly to all those sufferings, even to the death of the cross, that by *the grace of God he might taste death for all;* or, as we read in the Syriac version, *for every man:* therefore not only for the predestinate or the elect, who are saved. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *For it became him, &c.* He gives the reasons for which the Son of God would become man and suffer death, not that this was absolutely necessary, but a convenient means to manifest the goodness, the wisdom, and the justice of God, by the incarnation and death of his Son; that having decreed to bring many sons, or *children,* to eternal glory, he was pleased to send his divine Son to become man, and so to consummate the *Author* [3] of man's *salvation by suffering;* i.e. to make him a perfect and consummate sacrifice of expiation for the sins of all men, and to satisfy the justice of God in the most perfect manner. (Witham) --- By *suffering,* Christ was to enter into his glory, (Luke xxiv. 26.) which the apostle here calls being made perfect. (Challoner) --- In this and the above verses we may observe three different states of Jesus Christ. The first, that of his humiliation by his passion and death; the second, that of his glory at his resurrection and ascension into heaven; the third, that of his consummated glory in heaven after the last judgment. In his first state, viz. his passion, he was made not only less than the Angels, but as the last of men; *novissimus virorum.* In his second, all power was given to him in heaven and earth; but this power he will not fully exercise till after the general judgment, when all things, without exception, will be made subject to him; and this is the third state, the permanent state of his glory, which is never to end. To thy sovereign power, O divine Jesus, subject my mind, will, and heart, and make my hitherto rebellious heart in all things conformable to thy sacred and loving heart.

**Ver. 11.** *For both he who sanctified*, (i.e. our Redeemer, who sanctifieth, or has obtained sanctification for all, by sacrificing himself on the cross) *and they who are sanctified*, are *all of one*; have the same human nature, and are from the same first parent Adam, whose Son, (Christ) as man, was; on which account he calls men his brethren. See John xx. 17. and Psalm xxi. 23. in which is a clear prediction of Christ's sufferings, where it is said: I will declare thy name to my brethren, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** Christians are the disciples and children of Jesus Christ, begotten upon the cross, and offered with him and through him to his Father. Happy they who ratify this offering and consummate this sacrifice, by works of mortification and penance!

**Ver. 14.** *That, through death, he might destroy the power of him who had the empire of death*, who, by tempting men to sin, had made them slaves to him and to eternal death; so that they lived always slaves to the devil, under a miserable fear of death, and liable to eternal death. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** The devil, by exciting men to sin, made them liable to the temporal and eternal death? he was, therefore, the prince of death, both as to soul and body. Jesus Christ, the life and source of life, has by his death destroyed sin and vanquished the devil; he has, at once, triumphed over the prince of death, and death itself; and by the assurance which he has given us of eternal life, has delivered us from the terrible apprehensions of dying. To a good Christian, death is the termination of misery and the beginning of eternal happiness; why, therefore, should we be afraid to die? We ought rather, with St. Paul, to say: I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.

**Ver. 16.** *For nowhere doth he take hold of the Angels*.<sup>[4]</sup> Literally, that he apprehendeth, or layeth hold on the Angels; that is, according to the common interpretation, we nowhere find that he hath united their nature to his divine person to save them, though a great part of them had also sinned and fallen from heaven. But he taketh *the seed of Abraham*; i.e. he became man of the seed or race of Abraham, to redeem or save mankind. (Witham) --- *Nowhere*, &c. That is, he never took upon him the nature of Angels, but that of the seed of Abraham. (Challoner)

**Ver. 17.** *To be made like to his brethren* in all things; (sin always excepted) i.e. to be tempted, to suffer, to die, that having the true nature of a suffering man, he might become *a merciful high priest*, fit to compassionate us in our sins, in our temptations and sufferings. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Ne forte pereffluamus, *Greek: mepote pararnomen*.

[2] Ver. 5. Orbem terræ futurum, *Greek: ten oikoumenen ten mellousan*.

[3] Ver. 10. Authorem salutis eorum per passionem consummare, not consummari, *Greek: teleiosai*.

[4] Ver. 16. Nusquam enim Angelos apprehendit, sed semen Abrahæ apprehendit, *Greek: epilambanetai*, assumit, vel assumpsit.

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### HEBREWS 3

**Ver. 1.** *The....high priest of our profession*. That is, of the faith we confess, or profess. Christ is also here called our *apostle*, i.e. sent by his Father. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ is not only our apostle, he is the doctor, the legislator or the religion we profess. He is our high priest, who offered himself in sacrifice for the sanctification of his Church, and who is now exercising at the right hand of his Father the office of the priesthood in our behalf, both in heaven and on earth.

We here see our dignity: we have a God for the apostle and high priest of our religion.

**Ver. 2.** *Faithful to him, &c.* To be made, may apply to Christ as man; but here the sense is, who made him head over all his Church. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Of greater glory, &c.* The apostle shews Christ to be greater than Moses several ways. 1. Christ is as much above Moses, as an architect above the house which he has made; for Christ (who, as God, made all things) is the builder of that very house, that is, of the house of Israel, of which Moses was only a part of a member. 2. Moses was only employed in the house, as a *servant*, to give testimony to others, as he was ordered. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *Christ, as a Son in his own house: which house, or Church of the faithful are we:* and Christ is our only Lord and Master, equally with the Father, and the Holy Ghost; but we are all members, and profitable members, *if we retain firm confidence in him, and the glory of hope, or a glorious hope unto the end.* (Witham) --- Hitherto St. Paul endeavours to detach the Hebrews from Moses and the law, to attach them to Christ and his gospel. What follows, is an exhortation to persevere in the faith, lest we come to be cast off like the Jews.

**Ver. 8.** This alludes to the 17th chapter of Exodus, where the history of provocations and contradictions of the Israelites is related at large.

**Ver. 11.** *As I have sworn in my wrath:[1] if they shall enter into my rest.* But if here implies the same as *they shall not.* See Mark viii. 12. And that this is the sense here, appears by the 18th verse, where it is expressly said, *they should not enter into his rest;* i.e. to rest in the land of Chanaan [Canaan], promised to them. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Take heed, &c.* Not to imitate their incredulous obstinacy, lest you never enter into the place of eternal rest, by departing from God by sin. (Witham) --- To abandon Christ is to abandon God, since Christ is God. He who denies the Son, believes not the Father, who has wrought so many miracles to sanction his mission. (1 John ii. 23.) It is of little consequence to eternity whether it be the doctrine of faith or life of faith we reject, if persons are equally lost by either practical or speculative infidelity.

**Ver. 13.** *To day.* The duration of the present life may be accounted but a day, which God destines for the trial of our faith and obedience; we ought, therefore, to labour hard during the short time of the present day, that we may live and reign with God for all eternity. We cannot too often entertain this truth in our hearts, if we wish to square our lives after the gospel. The heart of man becomes insensibly hardened to Christian truths, when its natural corruption is not courageously attacked.

**Ver. 14.** You have already been *made partakers* of the benefits of Christ, at your conversion and baptism, to *the beginning of his substance*, [2] by which seems to be understood the faith of Christ. (Witham) --- If to subsist in Jesus Christ, to be washed in his blood, to be animated with his spirit, to be nourished with his flesh, is but a sketch, a seed of that union with him which on a future day is to be effected, how comes it that we are so attached to this earth, how can we hazard for such a mere trifle such immense felicity?

**Ver. 15.** From the 6th and 14th verses we learn the great happiness conferred on us at baptism; but all this, happily, we are taught is dependent on faith, on the foundation of our spiritual and divine being.

**Ver. 16.** Let us not flatter ourselves with having quitted Egypt by our baptism, unless we also quit that opposition, and that disobedience of our heart to the laws and maxims of the gospel. The Israelites, under the guidance of Moses, left Egypt for the promised land, and after travelling in the desert for the space of two years, found themselves on the confines of that so much desired country; but the possession of it was denied them, and they were left to perish in the desert,

because they distrusted God's promises, and were incredulous to his word. All that happened to this chosen people, says St. Paul, was a figure of what was to happen to us. Here then we may read our destiny, if, like them, we prove ungrateful to God.

**Ver. 17.** *Whose carcasses were laid, or buried in the desert?* None of those who were reckoned up (Numbers xiv.) entered the land of Chanaan [Canann], except Josue [Joshua] and Caleb; but then we may take notice, that none were there numbered under twenty years of age, nor the Levites, nor the women. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 11. Si introibunt, *Greek: ei eiseleusontai*.

[2] Ver. 14. Initium substantiæ ejus, *Greek: ten archen tes upostaseos*. See Chap. xi. 1. Est fides sperandarum substantia rerum, *Greek: elpizomenon upostasis*.

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## HEBREWS 4

**Ver. 1.** *Let us, therefore, fear, &c.* St. Paul continues his exhortation to them, not to be like the incredulous Jews, and so to be excluded from the place of eternal rest. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *To us....hath been declared, as well as to them.* That is, as the riches of the country of Chanaan [Canaan], was told by Josue [Joshua] and Caleb to the people, but they would not believe them; so the happiness of the kingdom of heaven has been preached by us to you: but the word they heard (literally, *the word of hearing*) *did not profit them, not being mixed, or received with faith*: let not this be your case. (Witham) --- As the want of a firm faith was the cause of the punishment of the Israelites, of their privation of a promised inheritance, so Christians will be eternally excluded from the kingdom promised them, unless they steadily believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. The reason why so few profit of the word, is because few take care to meditate on it, to digest it, and as it were, incorporate it with themselves by proper considerations.

**Ver. 3, &c.** It is faith that opens heaven; but faith animated by charity, nourished by good works, and perfected by mortification of the senses. God only enters into his rest after the accomplishment of his works, and shall we expect to enter before we accomplish what he has given us to do? Let us fear, but in hoping; let us hope, but in labouring. --- *The works....were finished.*[1] This place is the same, and equally obscure in the Greek as in the Latin text. The apostle here examines what David, as a prophet, could mean, when he said of some: they shall not enter, or, *if they shall enter into my rest*. His argument is this: David could not prophesy of that *rest*, by which God, after he had created all things, (Genesis ii. 2.) is said to have rested *the seventh day*, when he had finished the works of creation. Nor could David speak of that other time of *resting*, which was promised and given to the Israelites, when, having conquered all their enemies, they were introduced by *Jesus*, or Josue [Joshua], into the promised land of Chanaan [Canaan]; for these two rests were passed long before his prophesy: therefore David must speak of some rest that was to come afterwards, when he said: *To-day, if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts, &c.* Therefore it must needs follow that some *day of rest*, some sabbatism, as he calls it, after his time, must remain for the *people of God*, that should not harden their hearts: and from hence he concludes that David had in view that eternal rest of happiness which the Messiah was to obtain for us, a rest without end in the kingdom of heaven. --- *Let us hasten, therefore*, or as it is in the Greek, *let us make it our endeavour*, to gain that place of *rest*, by our persevering in faith and good works, and take heed not to be excluded with the unbelievers. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *For the word of God is living, &c.* Some understand by *the word of God*, the eternal word, or Son of God: (to whom may apply all in the 12th and 13th verses) but others rather



expound it of the words, promises, and menaces of God, either foretold by the prophets, or preached by the apostles. (Witham) --- All this language is metaphorical, but perfectly well understood by the Jews. In their sacrifices, the Levites made use of a two-edged knife to separate from the victim what was for God, what was for the priests, and what was for the people. Thus in sacrificing sinners to the justice of God, Jesus Christ, like a two-edged knife, will separate what is for God, and what is for man; i.e. whatever is good or evil in the whole of man's conduct.

**Ver. 13.** *In his sight, or to the eyes*, must signify in the sight of God. (Witham) --- If the word of God in Jesus Christ be so terrible, what will Jesus Christ be himself, when he comes to judge us according to the severity of his justice?

**Ver. 14.** *Having, therefore*, as I told you before, *a great high priest*, Christ, who ascended into heaven, who can compassionate our infirmities, let us with a firm confidence approach the throne of grace, by faith, hope, charity, and good works. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** Let us often contemplate Jesus Christ on his two thrones, that of his *mercy*, and that of his *justice*; of his mercy, where at present he is seated as our compassionate high priest, to bestow on us the riches of his grace; of his justice, where he will one day sit as judge, to examine most rigorously both our faith and our practice. Our separated brethren pretend to prove from this text that we need no help of saints to obtain any favour. But by this argument they may as well take away the helps and prayers of the living for one another. For we do not require the help of either the saints in heaven, or of our brethren on earth, through any mistrust of God's mercy, but on account of our own unworthiness, convinced that the prayer of a just man availeth more with Him, than the desire of a grievous sinner; and of a number making intercession together, rather than of one alone. This they cannot deny, except they deny the holy Scriptures. Neither do we come less to Him, or with less confidence, when we come accompanied with the prayers of Angels, saints, priests, or just men, with us, as they fondly imagine and pretend; but with much more confidence in his grace, mercy, and merits, than if we prayed ourselves alone. (Bristow)

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[1] Ver. 3. Operibus ab institutione mundi perfectis, *Greek: kai toi ton ergon apo kataboles kosmou genethenton.*

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## HEBREWS 5

**Ver. 1.** *Every high priest.* He speaks first of the office of priests in general, before he speaks of Christ's priesthood. A priest is chosen and preferred before other men, as qualified for the divine ministry, to offer up gifts, oblations, sacrifices, in order to obtain forgiveness for his own sins and those of the people, who, by the experience he has of his own infirmities, may *compassionate* others who offend through frailty or ignorance, every priest (excepting our Saviour Christ) being a sinner. Nor must he take upon himself rashly and inconsiderately, for temporal motives, this sacred ministry, formidable (says St. Gregory) even for the shoulders of Angels; he must consult God by prayer, follow the advice of his spiritual guides and pious parents; by these means to know whether he has a call from God to this ministry, as Aaron had. (Witham) --- The priest and pastor should never forget that he is a man and a sinner; that he is honoured with this divine ministry, to offer sacrifice both for his own sins and for the sins of the faithful; that prayer should be his delight, the altar his centre, and the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ his supreme felicity. "This sacrifice of the Eucharist," says St. Augustine, "has succeeded to all the ancient victims that were immolated of old, to signify the future sacrifice." (lib. 10. chap. xx. de Civit. Dei.) As to the word *mass*, it was in use to signify this holy sacrifice of the altar above thirteen hundred years ago. See the second Council of Carthage, canon 3.; St. Jerome upon the Prov. chap. xi.; St. Ambrose, lib. 2. ep. 14. *Missa facere cœpi*; I began to say mass. It was introduced into this country [Great Britain] with Christianity itself. See Ven. Bede's history, chap. xxvii. & b. 4. chap.

**Ver. 4.** See in 3 Kings xiii.; 2 Paralipomenon xxvi.; and 1 Kings xiii. the manifest punishments of the Almighty on laics that impiously and sacrilegiously attempted the ministry of priests. In the Christian dispensation, archbishop Cranmer, the very soul of the pretended reformation, dictatorially pronounces, "he that is appointed to be a bishop or priest, needeth no consecration:" words quoted by Dr. Stillingfleet from his own handwriting, in his *Irenicum*, p. 391, 2nd. ed. But the Catholic Church has given a very different decision, which is confirmed by the testimony of Scripture, apostolical tradition, and the unanimous consent of the Fathers. See Acts vi. 6. and xiii. 3. and xiv. 22.; 1 Timothy iv. 14. &c. See in the history of Socrates, who lived in the fifth century, how the usurpation of Ischyrras, in taking upon himself the name and office of a priest without receiving *holy orders*, was reprobated as a crime worthy of death. (lib. 1. chap. xxvii. Ed. Val.)

**Ver. 5.** *So also Christ, as man, did not glorify himself, by assuming this dignity of high priest, but had it conferred upon him by the divine decrees of his eternal Father, who said to him: Thou art my Son, and thou art a priest forever, &c. (Witham)*

**Ver. 6.** Some may perhaps wonder why St. Paul does not dwell more in this epistle on the eucharistic sacrifice; but until the Hebrews understood the *bloody* sacrifice on the cross, they could not be supposed to understand the *unbloody* sacrifice of the altar. The holy Fathers observe, that the sacrifice of Melchisedech, (Genesis xiv. 18.) offered in bread and wine, prefigured the unbloody sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ at his last supper. See Clement of Alexandria, lib. 4. Strom. chap. viii.; St. Cyprian, lib. 2. ep. 3. ad Cæul.; Eusebius of Cæsarea, lib. 5. Dem. Evang. chap. iii.; St. Jerome, ad Marcel.; St. Augustine, ep. 95. ad Inn. Pap.; St. Ambrose; St. Epiphanius; St. John Chrysostom; &c. apud Bellarmine, lib. 1. de missa. chap. vi. Hence it follows, that the holy Eucharist is truly and properly a sacrifice as well as a sacrament, as the paschal lamb or passover of the old law was both a sacrament and sacrifice. For either our Saviour offered sacrifice at his last supper under the forms of bread and wine, or he cannot be called a *priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech*. For the different orders of priests are chiefly distinguished by their sacrifice; (see ver. 1.) and if it be supposed that our Saviour only offered a bloody sacrifice, he would with more propriety have been called a priest according to the order of Aaron, and not of Melchisedech. See St. Augustine, lib. 16. de Civitat. Dei. chap. xxii.

**Ver. 7.** *Who in the days of his flesh, of his mortal and suffering condition, even with strong and fervent crying out, and tears, offering up as man, prayers and supplications to him, to God, who could save him from death; to wit, in the garden of Gethsemani, and on the cross, yet with a perfect resignation and conformity of his human will to the divine will, was heard for his reverence.*[1] I leave this translation, which is in the Rhemes Testament, very literal from the Latin Vulgate, and which cannot be said to be any ways disagreeable to the Greek. As to the sense, there are two expositions in the best interpreters. St. John Chrysostom and many others understand, that he was heard as to every prayer that he made absolutely, and not conditionally only, (as when he prayed that the cup of his sufferings might pass from him) and he *was heard for that reverence*, reverential regard, and just consideration which the eternal Father had for him, who was his true Son. This interpretation agrees better with the Greek text, in which is left out the word *his*. Others by his *reverence*, understand that he was heard on account of that reverential fear, that respectful submission and piety, which he always had towards his eternal Father. And if it be asked in what Christ was not heard, and in what he was heard: he was not heard when he said, let this cup of sufferings, or this death, pass from me, because it was not what he asked and prayed for with an absolute desire, but only thereby expressed the natural fear which, as man, he had of death, and therefore presently added, but *not my will but thine be done*, expressing what he knew to be the divine will. And to shew this, St. John Chrysostom on these words, brings all those sentences by which our Saviour, Christ, had declared that he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again; that no one taketh it from him, but that he laid it down of himself. See John x. 18. and St. John Chrysostom, hom. vii. p. 475. But Christ

was heard in all he prayed for with an absolute will, according to what he said to his Father, *I know that thou always heareth me.* (John xi. 42.) He was heard as to all that he asked with an absolute will, either for himself or his Church. (Witham) --- What excellent dispositions these of Jesus Christ in his sacrifice, which we learn from his apostles. How truly worthy are these tears both of our love and our adoration! Hence it appears, that Jesus Christ in his prayer both in the garden and on the cross shed tears, though the evangelists are silent on this head. (Menochius)

**Ver. 8.** He that was truly the Son of God, and knew all things, learnt practically, and taught us perfect obedience in suffering and dying a cruel death on the cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *And being consummated*, or perfected as man in all kinds of virtues, and at the same time true God by his divine person, became the author of salvation to all those who both believe in him and obey him. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** There is but one eternal Pontiff, one universal Priest given by God all others are his vicars, but not successors, whom he associates to his priesthood, to continue those same functions on earth which he himself exercises in heaven, and which had been prefigured in Melchisedech.

**Ver. 11.** *Of whom*, i.e. of his high priesthood, according to the order of Melchisedech, we have mighty things to say, and very hard to be expounded or understood by you, at least many of you, who, though you ought to be masters after the gospel hath been so long preached, and even by the apostles of Christ, yet you are weak as to understanding it; (the Greek also signifies slothful and negligent) you stand in need of being taught the first elements and principles of the Christian faith, like children, who are rather to be fed with milk than with more solid meats. How many are there now in the like condition, who are for reading and expounding all the holy Scriptures according to their own way of thinking? (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 7. Exauditus est pro sua reverentia, *Greek: eisakoustheis apo tes eulabeias.* Even the last Protestant translation, though much more exact than any of the former, puts, *and was heard in that he feared.* If the Rhemes translation, which I have not changed, be obscure, I much doubt whither theirs can be better understood. I will not suppose that they mean with Calvin, that Christ was so abandoned on the cross as to be driven to despair, and that he feared and felt the punishments of the damned, from which he begged to be freed, and was heard. Beza, says Calvin, was the first author of this exposition, that is, of this blasphemy. I will rather suppose that the Protestant translators only meant, that Christ, as man, feared death. How then *was he heard in that he feared?* not so as to be freed from death, and shortly after to rise and ascend triumphant into heaven. Dr. Wells, in his amendments to the Protestant translation, has changed it in this manner, *was heard* so as to be delivered from *his fear*; and in his paraphrase expounds it thus, *namely, by an Angel sent on purpose to strengthen him*; so that he expounds this text of the fear and prayer of Christ in the garden, from which *fear* he was freed at the appearing of the Angel. (Luke xxii. 43.) I pretend, notwithstanding, that the Protestant translation, *was heard in that he feared*, though we take it with the additions made by Dr. Wells, *was heard* so as to be delivered from *his fear*, is far from being exact, nor can it be looked upon as a proper and literal translation from the Greek text, *Greek: apo tes eulabeias.* First, where is there any thing in the Greek for *he feared*, or *his fear*? or that *he* was delivered from *his fear*? This is to add in the text itself a particular exposition, which at the same time is contrary to what divers interpreters take to be the literal sense of these words, *Greek: apo tes eulabeias*, who by *Greek: eulabeias* understand that great respect and regard which was *in the Father* towards Christ, because he was his Son. St. John Chrysostom understood the force of the Greek text as well as any one, and this seems the meaning of these his words: (*Greek: log. e*, p. 475, linea 20. Ed. Sav.) *Greek: tosaue en autou e eulabeia, os kai apo toutou aideisthai auton ton theon.* Nor does the Latin translator of St. John Chrysostom, Mutius Scholasticus, in the edition of Fronto Ducaeus, seem to have mistaken the sense of St. John Chrysostom, where we find, (hom. viii. p. 1478) *tanta fuit ejus reverentia, ac pietas, ut ideo eum revereretur Deus.* Others indeed expound it of the

reverential and godly fear, or piety, that was in Christ, as man, towards God, his Father, and that his prayers were heard on this account: but this will not justify the Protestant translation, *that he was heard in that he feared*, not the paraphrase of Dr. Wells, *so as to be delivered from his fear*, as if by *Greek: eulabeias* were understood merely a natural fear and apprehension. I find Mr. Legh, in his *Critica Sacra*, on the word *Greek: eulabeias*, says that the Syriac version has *from fear*: but he is mistaken, as may be seen in Walton's Polyglot: the Syriac has only, *he was heard*, without any mention at all of any kind of fear, which is left out. Mr. Legh says, Nazianzen [St. Gregory of Nazianzus] and Theodoret follow this sense. He cites not the words nor the places. It must be again his mistake. Theodoret has nothing like it in his commentary on this passage, nor St. Gregory (orat. xxxvi.) where cites these words of St. Paul. It is true *Greek: eulabeias*, especially in profane authors, has sometimes the same signification as *timor*, or *metus*. It is, says Scapula, *timiditas circumspecta*; but also, even in profane writers, the same as, *religio, pietas in Deum*. See also what examples Scapula brings on *Greek: eulaboumai* and *Greek: eulabes*; on which he says, *apud Ecclesiasticos Scriptores, et in Test. Novi libris, circumspectus et cautus circa ea quæ ad cultum divinum pertinent, religiosus, pius, ut Luc. 2.* I know also, that in Hebrews xi. 7. it is said of Noe [Noah], *metuens*, in the vulgar Latin, for *Greek: eulabetheis*; and Acts xxiii. 10. *Tribunus timens, Greek: eulabetheis*; but neither do these two examples shew that in this place, where mention is made of our Saviour Christ, *Greek: eulabeia* can be properly and literally translated by *fear*, or that the sense is that Christ *was heard so as to be delivered from his fear*. For first, this exposition of fear and apprehension of death agrees not with the common exposition of the ancient Fathers, neither with St. John Chrysostom and those who follow him, nor with the others, as I have shewn already. Secondly, this translation agrees not with the Protestant translation in other places. As for the *substantive, Greek: eulabeia*, it is only found in one other place in the New Testament, to wit, Hebrews xii. 28. *Greek: meta aidous, kai eulabeias*, where the Protestant translation has *with reverence and godly fear*; and for the adjective, *Greek: eulabes*, where old Simeon is called *Greek: eulabes* in the common Greek copies, (Luke ii. 25.) they have translated, a *devout man*. Acts viii. 2. the men that buried St. Stephen, *Greek: andres eulabeis*, are translated *devout men*, as also Acts ii. 5. Thirdly, the ancient Arabic version signifies *propter reverentiam ejus*, and the Ethiopic *ob justitiam ejus*, as they are in the translations of Walton, which agree with the Latin Vulgate, but not with that sense in which the English Protestants have translated the Greek. In fine, it must be observed that *Greek: apo* here, according to these versions, bears the sense of *ob* or *propter*, and not of *ab* or *ex*, of which signification see many examples in Estius. (Witham)

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## HEBREWS 6

**Ver. 1-2.** *Wherefore leaving the word, &c.* This is to be taken as connected with what he had said in the last chapter, (ver. 12.) of the elements, or *rudiments* of Christian faith, concerning which, though some seemed not sufficiently instructed, yet he thinks it here enough to name them, and pass them over: to wit, 1. *Penance*, or the dispositions of a sincere repentance. 2. *Faith*, when they are come to the years of being instructed. 3. The *doctrine of baptisms*, which he expresseth in the plural number, either because all the faithful must be baptized once, if we speak of Christian baptism; or he means that persons ought to know they cannot receive Christ's baptism over again. Or, in fine, he means that the baptisms of the Jews, which they so frequently repeated, could not make them justified. 4. The doctrine of *imposition of hands*, by which is commonly expounded that which is given in the sacrament of confirmation. 5. *Of the resurrection of the dead*. 6. *Of the judgment*, by which God would judge all mankind. Of these things he supposeth them already instructed. (Witham) --- We see here the order in which the apostles taught the Christian doctrine to the catechumens: 1. They excited them to sorrow for their sins. 2. They required of them acts of faith in God and his Son Jesus Christ. 3. They explained the nature of Christ's baptism, its virtue, and difference from the baptism of [John] the Baptist and others. 4. After baptism, they laid their hands on them, that they might receive the strengthening grace of the Holy Ghost in confirmation; and finally, they excited them to perseverance, by the

hope of a glorious resurrection, and of eternal life, and by setting before their eyes eternal damnation as the consequence of apostacy.

**Ver. 3.** *And this we will do*, meaning what he said in the first verse, that his design was to proceed to *things more perfect*, which, after some admonitions, he comes to in the next chapter, when he speaks of the priesthood of Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 4. &c.** *For it is impossible*, [1] &c. This is an obscure place, differently expounded, which shows how rash it is for the ignorant to pretend to understand the holy Scriptures. Many understand these words, *it is impossible*, &c. of the sacrament of penance, or of returning to God by a profitable repentance, especially after such heinous sins as an apostacy from the true faith. But then we must take the word *impossible*, to imply no more than a thing that is very hard to be done, or that seldom happens, as when it is said, (Matthew xix. 26.) that *it is impossible* of rich men to be saved: and (Luke xvii. 1.) *it is impossible that scandals should not come*. For it is certain that it is never impossible for the greatest sinners to repent by the assistance which God offers them, who has also left the power to his ministers to forgive in his name the greatest sins. But others (whose interpretation seems preferable) expound this of baptism, which can only be given once. The words here in the text very much favour this exposition, when it is said, *who were once enlightened*. For baptism in the first ages was called the sacrament of *illumination*. See St. Denis de cœlesti Hierar. chap. iv.; St. Gregory of Nazianzus; &c. The following words also agree with baptism, when they are said to have been *made partakers of the Holy Ghost*; to have *tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*; all which signify the interior graces, the miraculous gifts, and *power* of working miracles, which they who were baptized frequently received in those days. --- They cannot be *renewed again unto penance*. That is, they cannot be *renewed* again by baptism, which is also called a *renovation*. (Titus iii. 5.) Their sins may indeed be forgiven them in the sacrament of penance, but this is not a *renovation* like that in baptism, in which both the guilt, and all pain due to past sins, is remitted; whereas in the sacrament of penance, though the guilt, and the eternal punishments due to sins be remitted, yet many times, temporal punishments, to be undergone either in this world or the next, still remain due to such as have been great sinners, to them who by relapsing into the same sins, have crucified *again to themselves the Son of God, making a mockery of him*; i.e. who, insensible of the favours received, have ungratefully renewed sin; to take away which Christ suffered, was mocked, crucified, &c. (Witham) --- Macknight observes that Beza, without any authority from ancient manuscripts hath inserted in his version *Si, If they shall fall away*, that this text might not appear to contradict the Calvinistic doctrine of the assurance of salvation. The English translators have followed Beza, The biblical student will be glad to find Dr. Wells, in his elegant edition of the New Testament, frequently restoring and preferring those readings which agree with the Latin Vulgate. The same just tribute is paid to the Vulgate by Walton, Mills, Gerard, Griesbach, Harwood, and others. Indeed the Vulgate has been declared authentic in a general council, and probably expresses more of the true reading of the original or autograph, than any Greek edition that is now to be found, and certainly much more than modern versions, which are stained more or less by the preconceived sentiments of the translators. --- *For the earth that drinketh in the rain*, &c. He bringeth this comparison, to give them a horror of abusing God's graces and favours, and of making themselves guilty of hell fire. (Witham)

**Ver. 9, &c.** *We trust better things of you*, &c. That is, though I have admonished you in this manner, I hope the best, especially knowing how charitable many of you have been to your Christian brethren. (Witham) --- Faith begins the work of salvation; good works from a principle of charity continue it; perseverance in virtue, and patience under afflictions complete it. To assert the contrary is not to derogate so much from the work of man, as from the grace of God, which is the cause and ground of all that is good in man. "Mark," says St. Augustine, "that he to whom our Lord gave grace, hath our Lord, also his debtor. He found him a giver in the time of mercy: he that him his debtor in the time of judgment." (In Psalm vi.) --- It is certain God, who is not unjust, will reward these good works, if you continue in the same, *to the accomplishing of hope even to the end*. [2] for the obtaining the happiness you hope for. Be not therefore *slothful*, and negligent; it is by *faith, patience*, and perseverance, that you will *inherit God's promises*. (Witham)

**Ver. 13, &c.** *For God promising to Abraham*, to bless all nations in his seed; i.e. by the coming of Christ, *swore by himself*, having no greater to swear by, &c. He shews them how certain they may be of eternal happiness, unless they be slothful. First, it is God himself, who hath promised to make them happy. Secondly, he promised it with an oath; and these are two unchangeable things in God, who cannot lie. And the oath was: *unless blessing, I will bless thee*, &c. The sense is, unless I give thee great blessings, let me not be esteemed the true God. By this God hath given the *strongest consolation* to us, who have fled from the imperfect works of the former law of Moses, by believing and hoping in Christ. This hope is as a *sure and firm anchor* of our souls, amidst all persecutions and dangers, which will make us enter in, *even within the veil*, as it were into that part of the temple called the holy of holies, which was a figure of heaven, into which Christ *Jesus* himself *entered* first, by his glorious ascension after his sufferings. He entered as our *high priest*, and to prepare us there a place. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 4. Impossible, *Greek: adunaton*. See Cornelius a Lapide and Estius, who say of this exposition of baptism, Sic omnes Græci, et Latinorum maxima pars. Baptism is often called, *Greek: photisma*. See St. Gregory of Nazianzus, orat. xxxix. in Sta Lumina.

[2] Ver. 11. Ad expletionem spei usque ad finem, *Greek: pros ten pleorophorian*. See the signification of this word, Luke i. 1.

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## HEBREWS 7

**Ver. 1.** *This Melchisedech*. If we look for the construction, *Melchisedech* may be joined with what follows, (ver. 3.) *continueth a priest for ever*. (Witham) --- The excellency of this personage was so transcendent, that some of the ancients took him to be an Angel, and some the Holy Ghost. This the Fathers condemn; for had he not been a man, a king, and a priest, he would not have been so worthy a type of our Saviour.

**Ver. 2.** *King of justice*, according to the signification of the word *Melchisedech*, and *of peace*, signified by the place *Salem*, of which he was king. By *Salem* is commonly expounded Jerusalem, though St. Jerome thinks it was a town in Samaria afterwards called Sichem. This king was also a priest of the Most High; i.e. of the true God. He blessed Abraham, after he had defeated Chodorlahomor and the other kings; (Genesis xiv.) and Abraham gave him the tithes of all things which he had taken from his enemies. He is said (ver. 3.) to have been *without father, without mother, without any genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life*, inasmuch as we have no account in the Scripture of these particulars. He is said in Genesis to have brought out, inasmuch as he was a priest, that is, to have offered up a sacrifice to God of bread and wine. The apostle here shews two things, that Melchisedech was greater than Abraham, and that he is a figure of Christ, *who is a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech*. (Psalm cix. 4.) (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Without father*, &c. Not that he had no father, &c. but that neither his father, nor his pedigree, nor his birth, nor his death, are set down in Scripture. (Challoner) --- Not that he was without father and mother, says St. Jerome, (ep. cxxxvi.) for Christ himself was not without a Father according to his divinity, nor without a Mother in his humanity; but because his genealogy is not given in Genesis, as of the other patriarchs is, but he is abruptly introduced without any mention of either his birth or death. In Melchisedech all was prophetic and figurative of Jesus Christ; and Abraham undoubtedly in this patriarch saw Jesus Christ in spirit, and exulted that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed in him. *Abraham, your father, greatly desired*, says our Lord to the Jews, *to see the day of my coming: he saw it, and was filled with joy*. (John viii. 56.)

**Ver. 4.** Consider how great this man (Melchisedech) was, and greater than our great patriarch, Abraham: 1. Because Abraham, of his own accord, paid tithes to this priest of all the chief things he had: which was to own himself inferior to him: as the rest of the Jewish people are inferior to the sons of Levi, the descendants of Aaron, who being raised to the dignity of the priesthood by the command of God, have a right to take tithes or tenths of the people; and so are honoured above the rest. 2. This Melchisedech blessed, or gave a benediction to our great father Abraham, to whom the promises of blessing all nations was made. Now he that gives a blessing to another, must be better or greater than he to whom the blessing is given; therefore Melchisedech was greater than Abraham. 3. To shew another pre-eminence of the priesthood of Melchisedech (which was a figure of the eternal priesthood of Christ) above the priesthood of Aaron, the apostle takes notice that the sons of Levi, the priests of the ancient law, to whom tithes were to be paid, were no more than mortal men, always dying, whereas the Scripture only witnesseth of Melchisedech that he liveth; he is represented as one that hath neither beginning nor end of his days. This agrees chiefly with Christ, who by the psalmist is called, a priest for ever. And, though Christ also died for us, for it was chiefly by his death that he offered his sacrifice, yet he presently rose again, and continues for ever a priest, without a successor as to his priesthood, and as to the sacrifice of expiation for the sins of mankind. His priesthood, his sacrifice, and oblation for our redemption, lasts for ever. 4. Another reason that shews the priesthood of Melchisedech (and of our Saviour, Christ) to be above the Aaronical priesthood, is, that not only Abraham, but even Aaron and Levi, and all their successors, may be said in the person of Abraham to have paid tithes to Melchisedech, because we may consider them as yet in the loins of Abraham, from whom they descended; though it cannot be said, in like manner, that Christ himself was in the loins of Abraham, because though he was Son of Abraham, yet his conception was not in the ordinary way of human generation, but by the operation of the Holy Ghost. See St. Augustine, lib. x. de Gen. ad lit. chap. 20. tom. 3. p. 270. nov. edit. 5. St. Paul (ver. 11.) brings another reason to shew that the priesthood according to the order of Melchisedech was more perfect, because true justice and sanctification could not be given either by the priesthood of Aaron or by the law of Moses, which began as it were together; for if the former law and sacrifices offered by the priests of Aaron, had been sufficient for man's justification and salvation, there would have been no necessity of a new priesthood according to the order of Melchisedech. Of this St. Paul speaks elsewhere to the Romans. And, as there is a new priesthood, so there is a new law, by which the former is no longer in force. 6. He takes notice of this difference from the former priesthood, that they were priests of the tribe of Levi, but that Christ, the priest according to the order of Melchisedech, is of the tribe of Juda. 7. Another difference is, that the former law, and all belonging to it, consisted of carnal precepts, (ver. 16) in outward ceremonies and sacrifices, with promises of temporal blessings and a long life in this world; but the new law and sacrifice of Christ, is according to the power of an indissoluble and never-ending life, conferring inward graces, with the remission of sins, by which men are justified and saved, with promises of eternal happiness. 8. He tells us that Christ's priesthood was confirmed by God himself with an oath: not so the priesthood of Aaron. This second testament therefore is much better, and more excellent. 9. The former testament brought nothing to perfection. (ver. 19.) It had nothing but types and figures of what was to be fulfilled under the priesthood of Christ. The priests died, and succeeded one to another; and there was need of different sacrifices, which they were to offer daily for their own sins and for the sins of the people; but Christ was innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, (ver. 26) could not sin, but by suffering once has redeemed all, has satisfied for the sins of all mankind, and by this one sacrifice can save all that come to him by faith, hope, and love; he lives for ever to make intercession for us, as our Mediator and Redeemer. As he remains for ever, he is a priest for ever; and by virtue of that one sacrifice on the cross, all that believe in him and obey him may be saved, and be happy for eternity. Christ's sacrifice and oblation on the cross, is that one sacrifice of the new law which remains and will be continued by his ministers, the priest of the new law, to the end of the world, the manner only being different, but not the sacrifice. This is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, delivered to the faithful in the Council of Trent,[1] (session 22. cap. 2.) where it is declared, that in the Mass is continued the same sacrifice and oblation which Christ offered, who is still the chief priest, in whose name only his ministers, the bishops and priests, speak and act as his instruments. The Victim that is

offered is also the same, to wit, the body and blood of Christ, after a spiritual and unbloody manner, according to his command at his last supper. The oblation at the Mass is indeed a true and proper sacrifice, yet not a new or different sacrifice of expiation for the sins of mankind, but an application of Christ's satisfactions and merits, which, though of infinite value, and more than sufficient to satisfy for the sins of the whole world, yet by the will of God are to be applied to us by faith, by the sacraments, by the same sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, offered at the mass, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** After giving a decided preference to Melchisedech, and his priesthood, over the Levitical priesthood, St. Paul proves the abrogation of the latter, and even of the law, by the introduction of a new priesthood, according to the order of Melchisedech.

**Ver. 20.** The old law was good in itself, being established by God, who does nothing in vain; but it was weak and imperfect, and the shadow and figure of that which was to come. It was preparatory to a more perfect dispensation under Jesus Christ, who, as our new high priest, was to finish by the gospel what Moses began by the law.

**Ver. 23.** *Many priests, &c.* The apostle notes this difference between the high priests of the law, and our high priest, Jesus Christ: that they being removed by death, made way for their successors: whereas our Lord Jesus is a priest for ever, and hath no successor; but liveth and concurreth for ever with his ministers, the priests of the New Testament, in all their functions. Secondly, that no one priest of the law, not all of them together, could offer that absolute sacrifice of everlasting redemption, which our high priest, Jesus Christ, has offered once and for ever. (Challoner)

**Ver. 25.** *Make intercession.* Christ, as man, continually maketh intercession for us, by representing his passion to his Father. (Challoner)

**Ver. 27.** Jesus Christ offered himself but once in a *bloody* manner on the cross; but, besides this bloody offering, he still continues to offer himself in an *unbloody* manner. This he does both in heaven and upon earth; in heaven, by presenting his sacred humanity continually to his Father; and on earth, by daily offering himself, under the appearance of bread and wine, on our altars. Hence this eucharistic sacrifice is both a commemoration and continuation of the sacrifice of the cross. To understand this, it must be observed, that the essence of a sacrifice includes several actions, the principal of which are the immolation of the victim, and the *oblation* of the victim when immolated. Now the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, ended only as to the *bloody* immolation; the same victim is still immolated mystically, by the separate consecration of the bread and wine, and continues as the oblation. Jesus Christ, in quality of the eternal high priest, has carried his victim, i.e. his body, into heaven, and there offers it continually to his Father. He continues also his sacrifice here on earth, by the ministry of his priests: who to the end of time will offer to God the same immolated victim, present on our altars under the appearance of bread and wine --- a sacrifice infinitely perfect, since a God is the priest, and a God the victim. The chief-priest who offers it is a God-man; the victim offered is a Man-God: a God the victim, offered by a God the priest! Behold a sacrifice truly worthy of God --- a sacrifice capable of atoning not only for our sins, but for the sins of ten thousand worlds. What confidence then ought Christians to have in such a sacrifice! How solicitous ought they to be to assist daily at these awful, or, to use St. John Chrysostom's expression, these tremendous mysteries! Let us now examine the sentiments of learned Protestant divines: "It is certain," says Dr. Grabe, "that Irenæus and all the Fathers, either contemporary with the apostles, or their immediate successors, whose writings are still extant, considered the blessed Eucharist to be the sacrifice of the new law, and offered bread and wine on the altar, as sacred oblations to God the Father; and that this was not the private opinion of any particular Church or teacher, but the public doctrine and practice of the universal Church, which she received from the apostles, and they from Christ, is expressly shewn by Irenæus, and before him by Justin Martyr and Clement of Rome." (Nota in Irenæum. p. 323.) --- "The elements being really changed from ordinary bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, mystically present, as in a sacrament, and that by virtue of the consecration, not by the



faith of him that receives, I am to admit and maintain whatsoever appears duly consonant with this truth, viz. that the elements so consecrated are truly the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, inasmuch as the body and blood of Christ are contained in them. ... And the sacrifice of the cross being necessarily propitiatory, and impetratory both, it cannot be denied that the sacrament of the Eucharist, inasmuch as it is the same sacrifice with that upon the cross, is also both propitiatory and impetratory." (Thorndike Epil. p. 44 and 46.) --- "The holy Fathers frequently say, that in the Eucharist is offered and sacrificed the very body of Christ, as is evident in almost innumerable places." (Bp. Forbes' de Euch. lib. iii. chap. 2. sect. 10.) --- "The sacrifice of the supper is not only propitiatory, and may be offered up for the remission of our daily sins, but likewise is impetratory, and may be rightly offered for the obtaining all blessings. Although the Scripture does not plainly and in express words teach this, yet the holy Fathers with universal consent have thus understood the Scripture, as has been demonstrated by many; and ll the ancient liturgies prescribe, that in time of the oblation, prayers be offered for peace, &c. as is evident to all." (Bp. Forbes' de Euch. lib. iii. chap. 2. sect. 12.) --- "The Church, commemorating the sacrifice of Christ with the usual rites and words, in this also sacrificeth and offereth that which is her own, given to her by Christ; that she placeth before the eyes of God; by that she beseecheth God; and it is the same sacrifice that Christ offered; the same one, true, and singular sacrifice, as St. Augustine calls it; a sacrifice of memory according to Eusebius; a spiritual sacrifice, according to others. After that the faithful offer themselves according to the example of Christ, &c. In all this what is there new, what deformed, what hurtful? But minds once distracted, distract all things into a depraved meaning, and then are glad to find a hint for it in any of the schools." (Grotius of Christian sacrifice.) --- To these we may add the authority of Ed. Burke, in his speech to the electors of Bristol: "The mass is church service in the Latin tongue, not exactly like our liturgy, but very near, and contains no offence whatever against the laws of good morals." (p. 29.)

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[1] Ver. 4. Una eademque est Hostia, idem nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui seipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa. (Sess. 22. cap. 2.) Canon 1. Si quis dixerit in missa non offerri verum et proprium sacrificium, &c. anathema. Canon 3. Si quis dixerit missæ sacrificium tantum esse laudis, et gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti, &c. Anathema sit.

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## HEBREWS 8

**Ver. 1.** *Of the things spoken [1] the sum is.* This word, *sum*, many expound, as if St. Paul said: I will sum up, and give you an abridgment or recapitulation of what I have said. But St. John Chrysostom and others, by the Greek would rather understand the chief, or greatest thing of all, when he adds, that Christ is our *high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens.* (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *A minister of the holies.* Literally, *of the holy places, and of the true tabernacle:* he adds *true*, to signify that though he speaks with an allusion to the sanctuary, and the priests of the former law, yet that Christ hath now entered into the true holy of holies; that is, into heaven, of which the Jewish sanctuary was only a type or figure. --- *Which the Lord hath pitched, and not man;* i.e. all the parts of the Jewish sanctuary was the work of men's hands; but heaven, the habitation prepared for the saints, is the work of God. (Witham) --- The Old Testament was a figure of the New; but the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon, where in particular an image and figure of the Christian Church, ver. 5. The Church triumphant in heaven is the true sanctuary; the Church militant on earth is the true tabernacle; and Jesus Christ is the sovereign priest of both the one and the other, and exercises his priesthood both in heaven and upon earth.

**Ver. 3.** *For every high priest, &c.* That is, as all priests are ordained to offer up to God some gifts and sacrifices; so Christ, a priest for ever, has now in heaven *something to offer* to his eternal

Father; to wit, the infinite merits and satisfactions of his death and passion. This he doth in heaven, and also by the ministry of his priests on earth, who offer the same in his name. (Witham) --- This is the daily sacrifice of Christians, foretold plainly by Malachias, chap. i. 10. 11. This is also clearly mentioned in St. Justin Martyr, *Dia. cum Tryphone.*; Tertullian, *co. M. lib. iii. chap. 21.*; St. Irenæus, *lib. iv. chap. 32.*; St. Cyprian, *lib. i. adv. Jud.*; Eusebius, *lib. i. Dem. Evan.*; St. John Chrysostom, in *Psalm xcv.*; St. Augustine, *lib. xviii. de civ. Dei. chap. 35, &c. &c.* For authorities see annotations on chapter x. of this epistle. The apostate Courayer, who pretending to remain a Catholic, ended by becoming a Socinian or Unitarian, taught that persons were at liberty to deny the real presence, and admit with Catholics a *commemorative* or *representative* sacrifice, but a true and real offering of a victim, really present, and actually offered to God by the priest. "By his *last sentiments*, (published by Dr. Bell) it appears, says the *New Gen. Biogr. Dict.* edited by Chalmers, an. 1814 [the year A.D. 1814], vol. lxxx. art. *Courayer*, that although he professed to die a member of the Roman Catholic Church, he could not well be accounted a member of that, or of any other established Church. In rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, he became nearly, if not quite, a Socinian, or modern Unitarian; he denied also the inspiration of the holy Scriptures, as to matters of fact; and as to baptism, seems to wish to confine it to adults. In 1811 a more full exposure of his sentiments was published by Dr. Bell, in a posthumous work of Courayer, *on the Divinity of Jesus Christ*, 8vo. a publication we have little hesitation in saying ought never to have appeared. It could not be wanting to illustrate the wavering, unsettled character of the author. The creed of innovators is never fixed; and when once they cast off the authority of the Church, they are carried about, like children, with every wind of doctrine." [See *Ephesians iv. 11-14.*]

**Ver. 4.** *If then he were on earth, he would not be a priest.* He speaks of a priest according to the custom of the Jews, where none were priests but of the tribe of Levi, and Jesus Christ was of the tribe of Juda: and if the law of Moses was to continue, there would not be wanting priests to offer sacrifices according to their worship, though such priests were only employed about things that were types<sup>[2]</sup> and shadows of heavenly things in the new law after Christ's coming, and of the sacrifices by which he offered himself on the cross. And this God doubtless revealed to Moses, when he said to him: take heed "thou make all things according to the pattern which was shewn thee on the mount." (Witham) --- *Earth, &c.* That is, if he were not of a higher condition than the Levitical order of earthly priests, and had not another kind of sacrifice to offer, he should be excluded by them from the priesthood, and its functions, which by the law were appropriated to their tribe. (Challoner)

**Ver. 5.** *Who serve unto, &c.* The priesthood of the law and its functions were a kind of an example, and shadow of what is done by Christ in his Church militant [on earth] and triumphant [in heaven], of which the tabernacle was a pattern. (Challoner)

**Ver. 6.** *But now Christ, the Messiah, being come, hath ordained a more excellent ministry and priesthood, being the great Mediator betwixt God and man of a better and more excellent testament, accompanied with greater graces and blessings, and established with better and more ample promises, not of temporal blessings, as the former, but of eternal happiness.* (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *For if that first testament had been faultless:* if it had not been imperfect, and all those sacrifices and ceremonies insufficient for the justification, salvation, and redemption of mankind, there would have been no need of a second. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *For finding fault with them.* It is not said here, blaming the law, says St. John Chrysostom, which in itself was good, just, and holy, (see *Romans vii. 12.*) but blaming the breakers and transgressors of it; not but that men were saved in the time of the law, who by God's grace believed in their Redeemer that was to come, and lived well. And the mercies of God were so great, even towards sinners, that he made them a solemn promise, clearly expressed in the prophet Jeremias, (*Chap. xxxi. 31. &c.*) *The days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant,...not according to the covenant (or not such a one) as I made to their fathers, at the time when I took them as it were by the hand to lead them out of....Egypt, &c. with signs and*

prodigies: I then made choice of them to be my people, but they were always transgressing against this testament, this covenant, which I had made with them: and for their transgressions I neglected them, punished them from time to time, and, what was the greatest punishment of all, permitted such ungrateful and obstinate offenders to run on in their own sinful ways to their own ruin. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *For this is the testament which I will make with the house of Israel, and with all nations, as I promised to Abraham, I will give (literally, by giving) my laws into their mind, and I will write this new law, not as the former, in tables of stone, but in their hearts, and to them I will be a merciful God, and they shall be my elect people.* (Witham) --- The Jews were like slaves, and God ruled them as a master; Christians are his children, and God rules them as a father: and so great is the efficacy of this divine teacher, that by means of a short and easy catechism, children are now taught to know God more perfectly than the first sages of antiquity by their abstruse and erudite disquisitions. We moreover observe under the new law the grace and spirit of love, engrafted in the hearts of the faithful by the Holy Ghost working in the sacraments and sacrifice of the new law to that effect....This covenant was made at the last supper, and ratified the next day by the death of the Testator on the cross, when he exclaimed, "consummatum est," all is consummated. [John xix. 30.]

**Ver. 11.** *They shall not teach, &c.* So great shall be the light and grace of the new testament, that it shall not be necessary to inculcate to the faithful the belief and knowledge of the true God, for they shall all know him. (Challoner) --- *All shall know me, &c.* This seems to signify that by the truths which Christ preached, and which the apostles published to all nations, the faithful in the new law should have a greater knowledge of God, of the true manner of worshipping him, and of heavenly things, and also greater and more abundant graces than they had before Christ's coming. They shall also serve God with greater fidelity, by considering his mercy in sending them a Redeemer to free them from the slavery of sin and damnation, of which they stood guilty. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** In calling this testament a *new one*, *he hath made the former old*. This is to put the Hebrews in mind that the former law, as to its ceremonies and sacrifices, is now to be laid aside, and the new law or testament to be received and complied with. (Witham) --- Thus the first alliance was to end according to the testimony of Scripture itself, and make place for the second, which is infinitely more perfect. To be fully satisfied of this, it is merely necessary to compare the one with the other. (Bible de Vence.)

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[1] Ver. 1. Capitulum super ea quæ dicuntur, *Greek: kephalaion epi tois legomenois*. Beza and others reprehend here the ancient Latin interpreter. They have as much reason to blame the Greek original. St. Augustine observes that the Latin interpreter was more solicitous to follow exactly the sense than to write proper Latin.

[2] Ver. 4. Exemplari et umbræ deserviunt, *Greek: upodeigmati, kai skia latreuousi*. It signifies, that they served God by those things that were *types* and *figures* of more perfect and *heavenly things*.

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## HEBREWS 9

**Ver. 1.** *The former.*[1] In the ordinary Greek copies is expressed the *former tabernacle*; but even the Protestant translators have abandoned that reading, and understand the former testament or *covenant*, which they have put in a different character. --- *Worldly sanctuary*, or a temporal sanctuary, to last only for a time, like the things of this world. (Witham) -- The word ordinances (*Greek: dikaionomata*) is frequently used for the laws and ordinances of God, because the

observance of the laws is the justification of man; see particularly in the 118th Psalm, the legal rites justified in regard to the outward policy of the Jews.

**Ver. 2.** *First tabernacle.* By this word is signified, the sanctuary or place for worshipping God, ordained by Moses, which was an oratory to be moved from place to place with the Israelites, which they kept afterwards, and had a resemblance of it in the temple. This tabernacle consisted of two parts, which St. Paul here calls the first and second. The first part was called the *holy*, which was separated from the rest of the temple by a *veil*. In this first part were the *candlesticks*, i.e. one candlestick, as it is called, Exodus xxv. 37. having seven branches in which were placed lamps; and a *table*, on which were placed twelve loaves, according to the number of the Jewish tribes, to be changed every week. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *And after the second veil*, or partition, was the second or inward part, or that part called the holy of holies. (Witham) --- The first veil was at the entrance of the holy place, and separated it from the outward court; the second veil separated the holy place from the holy of holies.

**Ver. 4.** *Having the golden censer.* What is meant by this is uncertain, no mention being made of a golden censer in either part of the tabernacle made by the order of Moses, which the apostle here speaks of. Some say that the high priest, when he entered once a year into the holy of holies, made use of a golden censer, which he left there: but this is merely a conjecture. Others think that by the golden censer is meant the altar of perfumes, or where perfumes were burnt, which was, as it were a large censer, and is called by the same Greek word by Josephus, the historian; but then there occurs a difficulty, that this altar was in that first part called the holy, not in the holy of holies, to which the same interpreters answer, that this altar was placed just at the entrance into the holy of holies, and so may be looked upon as belonging to the holy of holies: not does the text say it was in the holy of holies, but only *having*, &c. as a town may be said to have fortifications which are not within the town itself. --- *And the tables of the testament*, or covenant. The ark was certainly in the holy of holies, in which<sup>[2]</sup> was the golden urn, with a measure of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the testament, or the tables of stone, on which were engraven the ten commandments. Noting but these tables were within the ark: (see 3 Kings viii. and 2 Paralipomenon v. 10.) so that when it is said, *in which was the golden urn and the rod of Aaron*, the meaning seems to be, that they were indeed in the holy of holies with the ark, but not within the ark. (Witham) --- In the Greek it is easy to confound the word *Greek: thusiasterion*, which signifies altar, with *Greek: thumiaterion*, which means censer. It was placed adjoining the inward veil, so that the clouds of the incense filled the holy of holies; and hence it is mentioned by St. Paul as contained therein. --- The apostle describes these things as they were in the tabernacle of Moses constructed in the desert. (Bible de Vence) --- We see with what great and continued respect and veneration the manna and Aaron's rod, &c. were kept by the Jews, and shall not Christians be allowed to preserve with equal respect the monuments of God's mercies, and tokens of Christ's passion? See St. Cyril, (lib. iv. cont. Julianum) where he defends against the apostate, the keeping and honouring the cross on which Christ died. See also in St. Jerome (ep. xvii. chap. 5.) and in St. Paulinus, (ep. 11.) what reverence the faithful in those early periods of the Church paid to the sepulchres of Christ and his martyrs, as also to their relics. "We reverence and worship [honour]," says the latter, "the sepulchres of the martyrs; and, if we can, we apply the holy ashes to our eyes and mouth."

**Ver. 5.** *And over it* (the ark) *were cherubims of glory* or glorious cherubims, (in what shape they were represented, is not certain) *overshadowing the propitiatory*, or seat of mercy, which was all of gold, of the same size as the ark, and like a cover to it. Just over this propitiatory were placed the two cherubs, spreading their wings looking towards one another, and upon the propitiatory. See Exodus xxxvi. and xxxvii. From this place God made known his presence, and the effects of his mercy to this people. Here he was said to be seated on the cherubims, and that the ark was his footstool. Psalm xcvi. *Adore his footstool*; i.e. prostrate before his ark. These two images of cherubs, shew that God did not absolutely forbid images at that time, when the people were so addicted to idolatry, but only to adore them. (Witham) --- How futile is it to object from the commandment that it is forbidden to use holy images in the Church, when we here behold even

amongst the people most prone to idolatry, most gross in their ideas of spiritual things, and to whom the precept was specially given not to make any graven *idols*, the same God commanding these images of angels to be made and set in the most holy place of the tabernacle or temple.

**Ver. 6.** *The rites of the sacrifices.* The priests, as the tells us, entered every day, that is, by turns, (see Luke i. 5.) to make the offering of incense morning and night, also to change the loaves, take care of the lamps, &c. But we must not think that they offered in that place victims or holocausts of sheep, lambs, oxen, &c. This was not done in any part of the sanctuary, neither before nor after the building of the temple, but in a place or court adjoining the tabernacle, upon a large altar of five cubits long and as many broad. See Exodus xxvii. and xxxviii. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Into the second part of the sanctuary, (i.e. the holy of holies) no one entered but the high priest, and he but once a year, on the feast called of expiation, to make an aspersion of blood upon the ark and round about, which he offereth for his own and the people's ignorance, or ignorances, as in the Greek; that is, for all his and their sins. See Leviticus x. (Witham) --- He offered that blood of a calf for his own sins and those of his family, and the blood of a goat for the sins of the people. (Leviticus xvi.)*

**Ver. 8.** *The Holy Ghost signifying this.* Here the apostle begins to tell us in what manner the sanctuary was a figure of things in the new law of Christ. The holy of holies was a figure of heaven, and this prohibition of any one going into it, was to signify that the way to heaven was not *to be made manifest*, nor to be opened, as long as the former tabernacle and law subsisted; that it was not to be opened till Christ, the high priest of the new testament, first entered, by shedding his blood on the cross, and by his glorious ascension. (Witham) --- But when Christ expired, the veil of temple was rent asunder, to shew that the way to heaven was now laid open to mankind.

**Ver. 9-10.** *Which is a parable of the time then present; or, unto the present time, as in the Greek. By the present time, according to the common exposition, is not meant the time of the new law, as some would have it, but the time of the former law; so that the sense is, which parable or type was a representation of things as they were to be performed, and to last during the time of the law, which was before present. --- According to which.* Some understand, according to which time; others, according to which parable, type, or typical worship of the former law, *gifts and sacrifices* are (i.e. were, and are) still offered by those who adhere to the Jewish law and ceremonies, which cannot of themselves make such worshippers perfect in conscience; i.e. can never give true interior sanctification, being only in meats, and drinks, and baptisms, &c. These words must not be referred to gifts and sacrifices, but to the worshipper; (literally, server) and the sense is, that to the priests, who worshipped and served God in the sanctuary and in offering sacrifices, was not prescribed an interior purity and sanctity, as in the new law, but only that legal sanctity which consisted in abstaining from such meats or drinks as were called unclean, or made them unclean. See Leviticus x. 9. where the priests are forbidden to drink wine when they were to enter into the tabernacle of the testimony. --- *In divers washings, &c.* These precepts and ceremonies were only to last *till the time of their correction*, by the coming of Christ under the new and better law and testament. (Witham) --- *Of correction; viz. when Christ should correct and settle all things. (Challoner)*

**Ver. 11.** *Christ coming [3] is a high priest of the good things to come; of things which we hope for in heaven. --- He has entered by a more perfect tabernacle; i.e. not passing, like the priests of the former law, into a tabernacle made by human art and hands, but by the tabernacle of his own body or flesh, says St. John Chrysostom, framed by the Holy Ghost. (Witham)*

**Ver. 12.** *By the blood of goats, &c.* This is another difference and pre-eminence of Christ above the priests of the law of Moses, that they could only offer the blood of beasts; but Christ entered into heaven by the effusion of his own precious blood in his sufferings, and on the cross, by this having found an eternal redemption for mankind, having satisfied for the sins of all men in the sight of God, which the former priests, with all their sacrifices, could not do. (Witham) --- *Eternal redemption.* By that one sacrifice of his blood, once offered on the cross, Christ our Lord paid

and exhibited, once for all, the general price and ransom of all mankind; which no other priest could do. (Challoner) --- The force of the apostle's reasoning is to convince the Jews of the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, and of the virtue of the Christian sacrifice.

**Ver. 13-14.** *For if the blood of goats, &c.* Another main difference betwixt the sacrifices in the old, and that of Christ in the new law. Those imperfect carnal sacrifices could only make the priests and the people reputed clean, so that they were no longer to be treated as transgressors, and liable to punishments, prescribed and inflicted by the law: but the sacrifice of Christ has made our consciences interiorly clean, and sanctified them even in the sight of God. Having offered himself unspotted to God by the Holy Ghost, the divine Spirit of the Holy Ghost moving Christ as man to make this oblation of himself, though free from all sin, and incapable of sinning. And being this oblation, made by him, who was God as well as man, it was an oblation of infinite value, which repaired the injury done to God by sin, and redeemed mankind from the slavery of sin. (Witham) --- Here we have an abstract of the passion of Jesus Christ, or of the sacrifice of the cross. We see who is the priest, and who is the victim; we see the virtue and efficacy of this sacrifice, and why it was offered; also by what signs we may know whether we partake of it, viz. if dying to sin and to the world, we live to God, and serve him in spirit and truth. Calvin makes Jesus Christ a priest and mediator, according to his *divinity*; but in that case Christ would be inferior to his Father, not only as man, but according to his divinity: for the priest is inferior to the God to whom he offers sacrifice, which is an expression of supreme excellence. See Dr. Kellison's survey of the Protestant religion.

**Ver. 15.** *And therefore he is the mediator of the new testament.* [4] The mediator, so as to be our Redeemer, which applies only to our Saviour, Christ. Moses is called a mediator betwixt God and his people. See Galatians iii. 19. and 1 Timothy ii. 5. &c. The saints in heaven, and men on earth, may be called mediators in an inferior and different sense: but Christ alone is the mediator who reconciled God to men, by satisfying for their sins, and by a redemption from the slavery of sin. This sense, in which Christ is the mediator of the New Testament is expressed in these following words: *that by means of his death, for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former testament, they who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance*; that is, Christ by his death, redeemed all men. He names in particular the sins of those under the former *testament*, to shew them that the sacrifices of the Mosaic law could not of themselves obtain a remission of sins, so that all saved from Adam, or that shall be saved to the end of the world, have their sins forgiven, and obtain salvation by virtue of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross. He paid the ransom of their sins, and is the Redeemer of all. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *For where there is a testament, the death of the testator, &c.* The same Greek word, corresponding to the Hebrew word *Berith*, is often used both in the books of the old and new Scriptures. The ancient Latin interpreter puts for it *testamentum*, a *testament*: but others would rather have the Hebrew and Greek word to signify any agreement, bargain, alliance, or *covenant*, which last word is generally put in the English Protestant translations, followed also by Mr. N. We do not deny but the Hebrew and Greek word have this signification, but not exclusively: this place of St. Paul shews evidently that they also signify what both in Latin and English is called a *testament* or *last will*, which is only of force by the death of the testator. The Protestants, therefore, here find themselves obliged to translate *testament*, contrary to their custom, and to apply this word not only to the promises and blessings God made to Christians, of which Christ is the mediator, and which were confirmed by his blood and by his death, but also to the former alliance and promises or blessings God made to the Israelites, when he chose them to be his elect people, and gave them his law and his commandments under Moses. It is true God is immortal in his own nature, cannot die, and therefore cannot make a testament that shall be confirmed by his own death. But as for the new alliance, or New Testament, as here it must be called, it was confirmed by the death of the Son of God; that is, of God made man, by which it is true to say that God died for us, though he did not die, nor could die, as God. And as for the former alliance, or *first testament*, as it is called here, (ver. 18.) that, says St. Paul, (which was only a figure of the *second* or *new testament*) was not made nor ratified *without the blood* of so many victims as used to be offered and sacrificed. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *This is the blood of the testament, which God hath enjoined unto you;* (Exodus xxiv.) that is, this is to confirm that testament. Christ made use of the like words, when he bequeathed us the divine legacy of his Body and Blood, at his last supper, saying: (Matthew xxvi. 28.) *This is my blood of the new testament.* And as the words of Exodus were understood of the true blood of the victims offered, so the words of Christ signify the true blood of Christ, there really present in the sacrament, in a spiritual manner, and to be shed in a bloody manner upon the cross. (Witham) --- The correspondence of words, in dedicating both testaments, proveth the real presence of blood in the cup or chalice.

**Ver. 22.** St. Paul speaks here of legal purifications and remissions, which (ver. 10.) he calls *carnal justices and ordinances*, (ver. 13.) *purifying the flesh*. How then, it may be asked, were sins remitted under the law? I answer, by true repentance, joined with faith and hope in the promised Messias. As to the cleansings and expiations of the Mosaic law, they were generally effected by water and animal blood, and were typical of the real cleansing of the conscience by the water of baptism, and by the blood of Jesus Christ. The flowing, therefore, of the pure water and blood from the wound in Christ's side, denoted that the real expiation was now complete, and the cleansing font set open; and on this account, they are appealed to by St. John, as two of the three terrestrial witnesses, whose testimony is so efficacious for the confirmation of our faith, that the crucified Jesus was the Christ foretold by the prophets. [John xix. 34; 1 John v. 6, 8.] And thus "the old law confirms the new, and the new fulfils the old." (St. Paulinus)

**Ver. 23.** *It is, or was necessary that the patterns of heavenly things* (i.e. the former tabernacle and sanctuary) *should be cleansed with these*; that is, by the blood of such victims then offered. --- *But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices.* By the heavenly things, may be understood the faithful, who are the members of Christ's Church, to whom heaven is prepared, and who must be cleansed by better sacrifices; that is, by the blood of Christ, and by his sacrifice on the cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *Should offer himself, &c.* He takes notice that Christ, by virtue of his sacrifice, and his dying once on the cross, satisfied for the sins of all men that even were from the beginning of the world. It was decreed from eternity that the Son of God should come to redeem mankind: the ransom that was not yet paid was accepted; and all might be saved who believed in their Redeemer, who was to come, and who, by the graces that God offered and gave them, lived well. (Witham) --- Christ shall never more offer himself in sacrifice, in that violent, painful, and bloody manner, nor can there be any occasion for it; since by that one sacrifice upon the cross, he has furnished the full ransom, redemption, and remedy for all the sins of the world. But this hinders not that he may offer himself in the sacred mysteries in an unbloody manner, for the daily application of that one sacrifice of redemption to our souls. (Challoner)

**Ver. 26.** He came at *the end of the ages*, as it were in the last age of the world, to the putting away or abrogating of sin. (Witham) --- Though less, viz. a single tear, might have satisfied the justice of God, nothing less than his own precious blood could satisfy the charity of Jesus Christ. By his death, as St. Augustine observes, Christ has bound the devil in a chain, so that he can tempt us no further than we are able to resist: he may bark, he may tempt, he may solicit us; but he can bite none, except those that wilfully cast themselves within his reach. (Serm. 1. post Trin.)

**Ver. 28.** *To exhaust the sins of many.* That is, of all, according to the style of the Scriptures. When he came first, he took upon him the load of our sins; but at his second coming, at the end of the world, he will come in a quite different manner, not as laden with our sins, not after the similitude of a sinful man, not to redeem us, but with great power and majesty to judge all men. (Witham) --- *To exhaust.* That is, to empty or draw out to the very bottom, by a plentiful and perfect redemption. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Habuit & prius, Greek: eiche e prote.* Though almost all Greek copies have *Greek:*

*skene*, tabernacle: yet even the Protestant translators add in a different print, *covenant*, as if *Greek: diatheke* was understood. Ibid. [Ver. 1.] Sanctum sæculare, *Greek: kosmikon*. This Greek word is only found in one other place in the New Testament, Titus ii. 12. *sæcularia desideria*.

[2] Ver. 4. *Habens thuribulum aureum*, *Greek: chrusoun echousa thumiaterion*. Josephus useth the same word for the altar of perfumes, lib. 6. The Jewish War, chap. vi. and lib. 3. Jewish Antiquities, chap. vii. Ibid. [Ver. 4.] In qua, *Greek: en e*. It may signify the same as cum qua.

[3] Ver. 11. *Christus assistens*, *Greek: paragenomenos*, which may signify being come, and present. Ibid. [Ver. 11.] Tabernaculum, *Greek: skenes*, by which St. John Chrysostom expounds his body or flesh, *Greek: ten sarka entautha legei log. ie. p. 513*.

[4] Ver. 15. *Novi Testamenti*, *Greek: diathekes kaines*. The Protestant translators here found it necessary to put, not covenant, as in other places, but testament, even when the apostle speaks of the first, or old *Greek: diatheke*, (Ver. 18. and 20.) might they not then as well have translated *Testament* in the last chapter, especially when mention was there made of the New Testament in the prophecy of Jeremias? might they not as well have translated, (Galatians iv. 24.) *for these are two testaments*, as *these are two covenants*? and so in other places, where there is the same Greek word *Greek: diatheke*. Mr. N. has followed the Protestant translation. The Septuagint put *Greek: diatheke* for the Hebrew word *Berith*, which indeed is expounded to signify *fædus* or *pactum*; that is, any agreement, alliance, or covenant, which in the Greek is rather *Greek: suthke* than *Greek: diatheke*. See Scapula. We may, I believe, safely say that *Berith* also signifies testament, or a last will and testament, till they who are translating it by covenant, can show us some other Hebrew word for testamentum, which I think they have not hitherto done. I find that Mr. Legh, in his Crit. Sac. on the primitive Hebrew words, writes thus: *Berith* signifieth both *Greek: suntheken*, a compact or covenant between parties, as Aquila translateth; and *Greek: diatheke*, a testament or disposition of one's last will, as the Septuagint translate. He cites in the Margin Drusius and Mercerus.

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## HEBREWS 10

**Ver. 1.** *The law having a shadow* [1] *of the good things to come*. The apostle continues till the 19th verse to shew the insufficiency of the former law, as to the redemption and salvation of mankind. By the *good things to come*, some understand heaven itself, and the happiness of the elect there, of which the law was but a shadow, whereas we have a much more perfect *image* and knowledge of heaven in the new law, than they who were under the former law. Others by *good things to come*, understand the blessings of interior graces, with a remission of our sins in the sight of God, and true sanctification, of which all the sacrifices and sacraments of the old law, without faith in Christ, were but a *shadow*: and now in the new law we have an express image of them, i.e. we have these blessings themselves. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Then they would have* [2] *ceased to be offered*. That is, if they could have made the worshippers perfect; to wit, in such a manner as the one sacrifice of Christ, who was the Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world, by making a full reparation to the divine justice for the sin of Adam, and of all his offspring. For we must take notice that he compares the sacrifice of Christ, which wrought a general redemption, with the sacrifices of the former law, which could never make any sufficient atonement to the majesty of God offended by sin, and which, by the decree of heaven, were to cease as soon as Christ's sacrifice of a general redemption was made: for then the worshippers would be so cleansed from sin, that they would stand in need of no more, but that the merits and satisfactions of Christ, their Redeemer, should be applied to them according to the order of God's providence; that is, by faith in Christ, by his sacraments, by a true repentance, and the practice of virtue and good works. (Witham) --- If they had been of themselves perfect to all the intents of redemption and remission, as Christ's death is, there



would have been no occasion of so often repeating them; as there is no occasion for Christ's dying any more for our sins. (Challoner)

**Ver. 3-4.** *But in them a remembrance of sins is made every year. For it is impossible that with the blood of oxen and goats sins should be taken away.* The sacrifices of the former law, even that great sacrifice on the day of expiation, when victims were offered for the ignorances or sins of the priests, and of all the people, were only types and figures of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, it was impossible that they themselves should take away sins, like that one oblation of Christ, though in them was made a remembrance of sins, and of the same sins for which so many victims had been offered. (Witham)

**Ver. 5-9.** *Therefore, Christ as it were, coming into the world, he saith, by the psalmist, (Psalm xxxix. 7. 8.) Sacrifice and oblation thou didst not desire, &c. That is, such sacrifices as were offered in the former law, they could not please thee, appease thy anger, nor make a sufficient reparation for sin. --- But a [2] body thou hast fitted to me. Thou didst decree I should be made man, to suffer and die upon a cross to redeem mankind. And I as willingly understood the work of man's redemption. --- Behold I come: in the head of the book it is written of me.[3] That is, in the volumes of the Scriptures. --- He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. That is, he taketh away what I first mentioned, the imperfect sacrifices of the law of Moses, that to them might succeed the sacrifice of Christ. (Witham)*

**Ver. 10.** The source and primary cause of our sanctification is the will of God, *who so loved the world as to give us his only Son*; the *meritorious* cause of our sanctification is the voluntary oblation of Jesus Christ, sacrificed for us upon the cross. Methodists shamefully misrepresent the tenets of Catholics, as if we excluded Christ from the work of our salvation, or hoped to be saved not by the merits of Christ, but by our own.

**Ver. 14.** *By one oblation [5] he hath perfected or consummated for ever them that are sanctified,* or justified, because this one oblation was sufficient to sanctify all men. He repeats this, to shew them the excellency of Christ's sacrifice above those of the former law. (Witham)

**Ver. 15-18.** *The Holy Ghost also doth testify to us,* and assures us of this, by the prophet Jeremias, (Chap. xxxi. 33.) in the words above cited, (Chap. viii. ver. 8.) when he promises to give a new testament, and that he will remember no more their sins. --- *Now where there is remission of these, there is no more an oblation for sin.* That is, there is no need of any other oblation to redeem us from sin, after the price of our redemption from sin is paid. There is no need of any other different oblation; all that is wanting, is the application of the merits and satisfactions of Christ. No need of those sacrifices, which were ordered in the law of Moses. To convince them of this, is the main design of St. Paul in this place. The pretended reformers, from several expressions of St. Paul in this chapter, think they have clear proofs that no sacrifice at all ought to be offered after Christ's one sacrifice on the cross; and that so many sacrifices and oblations of masses, are both needless and against the doctrine of the apostle, who says, that Christ by *one oblation hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* (ver. 14.) And again, *that where there is a remission of sins, now there is no more an oblation for sin.* This objection, which is obvious enough, was not first invented by the Calvinists against them they nickname Papists: the same is found in the ancient Fathers; and by their answers, and what they have witnessed concerning the daily sacrifice of the mass, they may find their doctrine of a religion without a continued sacrifice evidently against the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church from the first ages [centuries] of the Christian religion, till they came to be reformers, not of manners, but of the Catholic belief. Hear St. John Chrysostom (hom. xvii.) in his commentary on this very chapter: "What then, saith he, do not we offer up (or make an oblation) every day? We offer up indeed, but with a remembrance of his death. And this oblation is one, and not many. How is it one, and not many? ...because, as he that is offered many times, and in many places, is the same body, not many and different bodies, so is it one sacrifice. He (Christ) is our high priest, who offered this sacrifice, by which we are cleansed: we now offer up the same....He said: Do this in remembrance of me. We do not offer a different sacrifice, but the very same, as then our high priest." St. John Chrysostom

here says, and repeats it over and over again, that we offer up a *sacrifice*. 2. That we offer it up *every day*. 3. That the sacrifice which we daily offer is *one and the same oblation*, one and the same *sacrifice*, which our high priest, Christ, offered. 4. That in offering this sacrifice, which in *all places, and at all times*, is the same body of Christ, and the same sacrifice, we do, and offer it, as he commanded us at his last supper, with a remembrance of him. Is this the practice, and is this the doctrine of our dear countrymen, the English Protestants? But at least it is the constant doctrine, as well as practice, of the whole Catholic Church. The council of Trent, as we have already cited the words, (chap. vii.) teacheth the very same as St. John Chrysostom who never says, as some one of late hath pretended, that what we offer is a *remembrance only*, but is his *body and blood*, so the sacrifice is to be performed with a remembrance of his benefits and sufferings, by his priests and ministers, but at the same time is a true and propitiatory sacrifice, the priests daily sacrifice, and offer up the same sacrifice, the manner only being different. The sacrifice and mass offered by Peter, is not different in the notion of a sacrifice or oblation from that of Paul, though the priests and their particular actions be different: the same sacrifice, according to the prophecy of Malachias, (chap. i. ver. 11.) shall be offered in all nations to the end of the world. This doctrine and practice is not only witnessed by St. John Chrysostom but generally by the ancient Fathers and interpreters, as we have taken notice in short in the annotations on St. Matthew. See St. Ignatius, in his epistle to the people of Smyrna; St. Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Tryphon; St. Irenæus, lib. 4. chap. xxxii. and xxxiv.; Tertullian, lib. de Velandis Virg.; Eusebius lib. 1. de demonst. Evang. chap. ult.[last]; St. Jerome, ep. ad Evangelu.; St. Ambrose, in Psalm xxxviii. and on 1 chap. of St. Luke; St. Augustine, lib. 16. de civ. Dei. chap. xxii. lib. cont. Advers. legis chap. 22. and lib. ix. Confess. chap. xii.; St. John Chrysostom, hom. lx ad Pop. Antiochenum et hom. lxxii. in Matt.; The first general council of Nice [Nicaea]. --- But from this *one oblation* on the cross and *remission of sins*, obtained by our Saviour Christ, will our adversaries pretend insisting on the bare letter, that Christ has done all for us, and that we need do nothing, unless perhaps endeavour to catch hold of the justifying cloak of Christ's justice by faith only? At this rate the love of God and of our neighbour, a life of self-denials, such as Christ preached to every one in the gospel, the practices of prayer, fastings, almsdeeds, and all good works, the sacraments instituted by our Saviour Christ may be all safely laid aside; and we may conclude from hence, that all men's sins are remitted before they are committed. Into what extravagances do men run, when their private spirit pretends to follow the letter of the Holy Scriptures, and when they make their private judgment the supreme guide in matter of divine faith? It is very true, that Christ hath paid the ransom of all our sins, and his satisfactions are infinite; but to partake of the benefit of this general redemption, the merits and satisfaction of Christ are to be applied to our souls, and this by the order of Providence is to be done not only by faith but by other virtues, by good works, by the sacraments, and by repeating the oblation and the same sacrifice, the manner only being different, according to the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church from the apostle's time. (Witham) --- Where there is a full remission of sins, as in baptism, there is no more occasion for a *sin-offering* to be made for such sins already remitted; and as for sins committed afterwards, they can only be remitted in virtue of the one oblation of Christ's death. (Challoner)

**Ver. 19.** *Having therefore, brethren, a confidence.* Here begins as it were the second part of his epistle, in which the apostle exhorts the Hebrews to the practice of Christian virtues, to a firm hope, and *confidence* of entering with Christ into the holy of holies; i.e. into heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *A new and living way;* that is, having a new way, which he hath traced out and opened us, by entering himself first into heaven, *through the veil*, i.e. through *his flesh*, or by taking upon him, our flesh or human nature. He speaks with an allusion and comparison with the high priest of the former law, who to enter into the sanctuary, was to pass through the veil of separation. He compares Christ's flesh or body to this veil, inasmuch as Christ entered into the sanctuary of heaven by his sufferings in the flesh, and by the death of his body on the cross; or, inasmuch as the divinity of Christ was hidden from us by the veil of his human nature, as the sanctuary was hidden from the people by its veils. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *And a high priest;* i.e. and having a great priest, to wit, Christ, *over the house of God*, that is, over the Church, or over all the faithful, both in the Church militant on earth and in the

Church triumphant in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Let us draw near* with a full and firm faith, our hearts being cleansed and *sprinkled* from sin. He again alludes to that ceremony, by which the high priest of the Jews on the feast, called of expiation, sprinkled the people with the blood of the victim offered. (Witham) --- *Greek: En plerophoria pisteos.* The Protestant version gives erroneously, *in full assurance of faith.* See Ward's Errata.

**Ver. 25.** *Not forsaking our assembly.*[6] St. John Chrysostom understands the assemblies of Christians, where they met to celebrate the divine mysteries. Others expound it of not leaving the faith and communion of the Catholic Church by turning apostates: this is confirmed by the following words: *for if we sin wilfully,...there is now left no sacrifice for sins.* The Novatian heretics understood no pardon for sins after baptism. St. John Chrysostom and others understood no second baptism, wherewith to be cleansed in the same manner as before; but the most probable interpretation, and most agreeable to the text and doctrine of St. Paul, seems to be, that now remained no sacrifice for sins, i.e. no other sacrifice but that of Christ, which the apostate renouncing, by quitting and abandoning his faith, thereby cuts himself off from the very groundwork and foundation of salvation, as long as he continues in his apostacy. So that nothing remains for him but a dreadful expectation[7] of God's just and severe judgments. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *If we sin wilfully.* He speaks of the sin of wilful apostacy from the known truth; after which, as we cannot be baptized again, we cannot expect to have that abundant remission of sins, which Christ purchased by his death, applied to our souls in that ample manner as it is in baptism; but we have rather all manner of reason to look for a dreadful judgment; the more, because apostates from the know truth seldom or never have the grace to return to it. (Challoner)

**Ver. 28-29.** *A man making void, &c.* He brings this comparison from the manner that transgressors were dealt with under the law of Moses, to shew how much greater punishments Christians deserve when they are ungrateful to Christ after much greater benefits, when they may be said to have *trodden under foot the Son of God* by despising him, who was the author of their salvation, by shedding his blood upon the cross. (Witham) --- What is here said of the crime of apostacy, may in some measure be applied to every deadly sin committed after baptism or the sacrament of penance; for a Christian by returning to sin, treads under foot the Son of God, despises the adorable blood by which he was sanctified, and offers a heinous affront to the spirit of grace. Apostacy, though enormous, like all other sins can be forgiven by true repentance; but the apostle declares, there is no victim for the guilt of a person who perseveres and dies in apostacy.

**Ver. 31.** Man is mortal, and therefore cannot extend his vengeance beyond death; God is immortal, and, as he lives eternally, can punish eternally; and he who during life despises a God who died for him, will at death experience the rigour of a God always living to punish him.

**Ver. 32.** *But call to mind the former days, &c.* After having laid before them the severity of God's judgments, he comforts them with the hopes they may have of their eternal salvation, from what they had already suffered soon after they received the light of the gospel, and were *illuminated* by baptism. (Witham)

**Ver. 36.** He encourages them to *patience* in the short time of this mortal life. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *Yet a very little while,* and the judge that *is to come*, and who is to judge every one, *will come.* (Witham) --- *Greek: O erchomenos,* he who is coming. It is observed by commentators, that this is the appellation given by the Jews to the Messias. See Matthew xi. 3. and xxi. 9.

**Ver. 38.** *But my [8] just man,* he that liveth according to the doctrine I have taught, liveth by faith, which is the groundwork and foundation of a good life. --- *But if he withdraw himself,* and fall from this faith of Christ, *he shall not please my soul.* It is a Hebrew way of speaking, and as it were in

the person of God. (Witham) --- Luther and Calvin teach that faith alone is sufficient for justification, and they define this faith to be *an assured confidence that their sins are forgiven them wholly by Christ's passion*. No text, however, in Scripture teaches that a man is justified by faith *only*. In Romans, (ii.) Luther makes St. Paul say that a man is justified by faith *only*, without the works of the law: the authorized Protestant version has omitted the word *only*, foisted into the German translations. Solifidians [Those who pretend justification by faith alone] vainly cite this text, as its obvious meaning is, that neither the works of the *written* law, done by the Jew, nor the works of the law of *nature*, done by the Gentiles, before either of them believe in Christ, can without faith in Christ justify any one. Saving faith is a faith working through charity in Jesus Christ, a faith which includes hope, love, repentance, and the use of the sacraments. Hence St. James (Chap. ii.) declares, that a man may have faith but not works, but that faith without works will not save him. St. Paul teaches the same, 1 Corinthians xiii. 2. "If I should have *all faith*, so as to move mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing;" where we should observe the word *all* faith.

**Ver. 39.** *But we are not the children of withdrawing;*[9] i.e. we are not such as withdraw ourselves in this manner from the true faith to perdition, but remain constant in the faith and law of Christ. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Umbram,...non ipsam imaginem rerum, *Greek: skian, ouk auten ten eikona*. It seems hard to take *Greek: eikona* for the things themselves represented; but only to signify, expressam imaginem.

[2] Ver. 2. Alioquin cessassent offerri. In the ordinary Greek copies, *Greek: epei an ouk epausanto prosperomenai*; but in other manuscripts *Greek: ouk* is left out.

[3] Ver. 5. Corpus autem aptasti mihi; *Greek: soma de katartiso moi*; i.e. according to the Septuagint but in the Hebrew *aures perfodisti*, or as in the Latin, (Psalm xxxix. 7.) *perfecisti mihi*. How these different expressions agree, see Estius, Cornelius a Lapide, &c.

[4] Ver. 7. In capite libri, *Greek: en kephalidi bibliou*. The Greek and Latin seems to signify no more than in the volume, or book itself; *Greek: kephalis*, says Suidas, *Greek: oper tinos eilema*, alicujus involucrum, ab *Greek: eileo*. No need of translating, in the front of the book.

[5] Ver. 14. Una oblatione, &c. *Greek: mia prosphora*. See St. John Chrysostom (*Greek: log. iz. p. 523. lin. 20. et seq.*) *Greek: ti oun emeis kath ekasten emeran ou prosperomen; prosperomen men, all anamnesin poioumenoi tou thanatou autou. kai mia estin aute, kai ou pollai....ton gar auton aei prosperomen....osper pollachou prosphomenos en soma esti. kai ou polla somata, outo kai mia thusia* (et unum, sive idem sacrificium) *o Archiereus emon ekeinos esti, o ten thusian kathaiousan zmas prosnegkon. ekeinen prosperomen kai non, ten tote prosenechtheisen, &c.*

[6] Ver. 25. Non deserentes collectionem nostram, *Greek: me egkataleipontes ten episunagogen eauton*, collectionem, congregationem.

[7] Ver. 27. Ignis æmulatio, *Greek: puros zelos*, thus attributing zeal and rage to an inanimate thing.

[8] Ver. 38. Justus meus, *Greek: dikaios*; in some Greek manuscripts, *Greek: mou*, as also in the Septuagint Habacuc ii. 4.

[9] Ver. 39. Non sumus substructionis filii, *Greek: ouk esmen upostoles*, subaudi *Greek: uioui*.

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## HEBREWS 11

**Ver. 1.** All this chapter is a commendation and recommendation of faith, which *is the substance* [1] *of things hoped for*, giving as it were a substance in our minds to such things as we are in hopes and in expectation of hereafter, and making them present to us before they come to pass. --- It is also a sure *conviction* [2] *of things that appear not*. For when God has revealed things, and we believe them upon the divine and infallible authority of the revealer, we have a greater certainty of them than any demonstration can afford us. By this virtue of faith, they of old, our forefathers, *obtained* [3] *a testimony* from God that their actions were pleasing to him. (Witham) --- Faith is the basis, the foundation supporting hope; for unless there be faith, there cannot possibly be any hope. (Menochius)

**Ver. 3.** The faith so highly commended here is not that *special faith* of sectarists, by means of which persons of various and contradictory tenets pretend to assure themselves that their sins in particular are pardoned for Christ's sake, but a firm and lively belief of all that God has revealed or promised.

**Ver. 4.** *A sacrifice*. [4] Literally, *a greater sacrifice* than his brother *Cain*, offering to God the best and fattest cattle he had, *by which he obtained a testimony* (a mark of God's approbation) *that he was just*, and his piety pleasing to God. St. Jerome, from a tradition among the Hebrews, thinks that this mark was, that fire descended from heaven upon Abel's sacrifice and not upon that of Cain. --- *And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh*. *By it*, in construction, may be either referred to his faith or to his sacrifice. Some expound it, that by reason of his faith, or of his sacrifice, his memory still lives after his death, and he is commended by all good men. Others think that the apostle alludes to the words which God spoke to Cain, (Genesis iv. 10) "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth," and that in this manner he is said to have spoken after his death. (Witham) --- Men of all religions, whether true or false, have offered sacrifices, as being the supreme act of religion; and therefore we may conclude, that what is so general and universal, must have come from the instinct and light of our nature, and be a kind of first principle implanted in us by God himself.

**Ver. 5.** *Enoch* [Enoch] *was translated*, so as not to die nor see death. In Ecclesiasticus (Chap. xlv.) he is said to be translated into paradise. By these words, *that he should not see death*, it is the general exposition of the ancient interpreters, that he is not dead; but in what place, or in what manner God preserveth him, we know not. See St. Augustine, lib. de pec. orig. [on Original Sin] chap. xxiii.; St. John Chrysostom; &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** He proves the *Enoch* [Enoch] was translated by faith, or on account of faith, thus: *Enoch was translated because he pleased God; now he could not please God but by faith; therefore by faith he was translated*. (Menochius)

**Ver. 7.** *Having received an answer....moved with fear*; [5] i.e. with a religious fear: by the Greek, prepared the ark, by which he condemned the rest of the incredulous world, who would not take warning nor believe. (Witham) --- *Noe* [Noah] warned impenitent sinners of impending judgments; but unbelievers and scoffers, they only laughed at *Noe's credulity*: thus worldlings, who laugh at the simplicity of the few, who work out their salvation with fear and trembling, will one day see their error, when the former shall perish in their infidelity, and the latter shall triumph in the midst of a falling world.

**Ver. 8.** *By faith he that is called Abraham, &c.* He commends his faith, who believing God, left his own country, lived in Chanaan [Canaan] as in a strange country, waiting for the promise and for a city, whose builder and maker is God; i.e. for an habitation in the kingdom of heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** The Patriarchs, who lived to a great age, dwelt not in fixed dwellings, but in moveable

tents, as pilgrims; whereas their descendants, the period of whose existence is greatly curtailed, pass their time in building and planning as if they were never to die. This earth is a place of our exile, heaven is our true country: let us then live here as strangers and pilgrims, looking forward with anxious desires for our true country, the land of the living, in the bosom of our God.

**Ver. 11.** *By faith also Sara, &c.* Though Sara [Sarah] seemed at first incredulous, yet she presently believed, and conceived Isaac when she was past the age of having children. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Hid as dead:* dead in a manner in that respect, and incapable of having children by Sara [Sarah]. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *All these died* in the faith of God's promises; that is, of their posterity, being to be introduced into the promised land of Chanaan [Canaan], but chiefly into the happy country of heaven. For had they only aspired and wished for the country of Chaldea, out of which Abraham came, they had time enough to have returned thither. (Witham) --- A metaphor taken from sailors, who, after a long and dangerous voyage, no sooner descry their native country, but they hail it with transports of joy: this in Virgil:

*Italiam, Italiam, primus conclamat Achates.*

Thus the Patriarchs, when beholding at a distance, and through faith, their heavenly country, hailed it with joyous and repeated accents, eagerly desiring to reach the envied port.

**Ver. 17.** *By faith Abraham....offered up Isaac;* i.e. was ready and willing to do it, when Isaac was his only son, by whom God had promised to give him a numberless progeny, but by faith he considered that God, who had miraculously given him a son, could if he pleased raise him to life again. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *Whence also he received him for a parable.*[7] Some understand by this, that both Abraham and his son became hereby an example of a perfect obedience to God, which all nations should admire. St. John Chrysostom, says, that Abraham received again his son safe in a figure, by being ordered to sacrifice for him a ram, which was a figure of Isaac. Others, that Abraham received again his son Isaac, who was a figure of Christ sacrificed on the cross, and risen again. Christ carried the cross on which he was to suffer, as Isaac carried the wood up to the mountain where he was to have been offered. (Witham) --- *Parable;* that is, as a *figure* of Christ slain and coming to life again. (Challoner)

**Ver. 21.** *Jacob....worshipping the top* [8] *of Joseph's rod,* or staff of command, or of his sceptre. See Genesis xlvii. Jacob, by bowing to Joseph and his sceptre, acknowledged and revered the power of Joseph, whom Pharaoh called the saviour of the world: and it is probable that Jacob, by the spirit of prophecy, knew Joseph to be a figure of Christ, and his power to be a figure of the spiritual power of the Messias. (Witham) --- The apostle here follows the ancient Greek Bible of the seventy interpreters [the Septuagint], (which translates in this manner, Genesis xlvii. 31.) and alleges this fact of Jacob, in paying a relative honour and veneration to the top of the rod or sceptre of Joseph, as to a figure of Christ's sceptre and kingdom, as an instance and argument of his faith. But some translators, who are no friends to this relative honour, have corrupted the text, by translating it, *he worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff;* as if this circumstance of leaning upon his staff were any argument of Jacob's faith, or worthy the being thus particularly taken notice of by the Holy Ghost: (Challoner) Besides, if Jacob's staff, and not Joseph's rod or sceptre, had been spoken of, the Greek would have been *Greek: autou, suæ,* not *Greek: autou, ejus:* but this relative honour or worship is not pleasing to them.

**Ver. 22.** *Concerning his bones.* That is, that when the Israelites should leave Egypt, they should take with them his bones, to be buried in Chanaan [Canaan] with his ancestors. This shews he had faith on God's promises, that he would give the Israelites the land of Chanaan. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *By faith Moses....was hid three months, &c.* It is not improbable what Josephus relates, (lib. ii. Jewish Antiquities, chap. 5) that the parents of Moses, by revelation from God, or by some

extraordinary marks, were persuaded that he should deliver the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, and conduct them into the land of promise. (Witham)

**Ver. 24-26.** *By faith Moses....chose rather to be afflicted with the people of God, than to be honoured as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and to enjoy short sinful pleasures in the court of the king. --- Esteeming the reproach of Christ:* by which seems to be signified, that Moses, to whom Christ and his sufferings were revealed, chose rather to endure such reproaches and contradictions from his brethren, the Israelites, as Christ was to suffer from the Jews, than to have all the short pleasures of what is called a happy life. See St. John Chrysostom, hom. xxvi. --- *For he looked unto the reward;* not any temporal reward or advantage in this life, but a reward from God in heaven, or rather where God himself would be his reward. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *He left Egypt.* Some understand this, when he fled to Madian, after he killed the Egyptian; but it was rather fear than faith which made him flee at that time. We may rather expound it of his going away with all the people, when by faith he trusted that God would deliver him and the people from the known fierceness of king Pharaoh, as it also happened. --- *For he endured, as seeing him that is invisible.*[9] That is, seeing by the eyes of faith the invisible God to be his protector, he endured and overcame all difficulties with courage and constancy. (Witham)

**Ver. 30.** The following examples are clear enough, if we look into the history and particular actions of those here named. It was a faith in God's mercies and promises that gave them courage, resolution, and perseverance amidst all dangers and difficulties, against all afflictions and persecutions, that made them despise the short happiness of this mortal life, in hopes of an immortal happiness hereafter. Yet they who are so much commended and approved for their faith, received not the great promise of entering into the kingdom of heaven; and they who lived and died well, were indeed in a place of rest, but their souls were not admitted to the beatifical vision, to see and enjoy God in heaven, till our blessed Saviour [Jesus Christ], at his ascension, entered first, and opened as it were heaven's gates for others to enter. In this God provided something better for us, who, after his coming, if we die without sin, and without any temporal punishments due to sin, our souls are presently happy with God in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 37.** *Greek: Melon* signifies a sheep; *Greek: melote* signifies a sheep skin, with the wool on it. This, or a goat skin, was the usual covering of poor people, and as such was adopted by the ancient prophets, mortified to all the luxuries of life. Thus Elias [Elijah] is called *vir pillosus*, a hairy man, not for his beard or hair, but for his shaggy or hairy covering.

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[1] Ver. 1. Substantia, *Greek: upostasis*, subsistentia.

[2] Ver. 1. Argumentum, *Greek: elegchos*. Convictio, ostensio. It does not seem well translated *evidence*, as by the Protestants and Mr. N. because faith is an obscure knowledge, though it be the most certain, because of the infallible authority of God, who has revealed those obscure mysteries.

[3] Ver. 1. *Greek: Emarturethesan*, testimonium consecuti sunt. This expression, which is repeated ver. 4, 5, and 39, signifies an approbation or commendation.

[4] Ver. 4. Pluriman hostiam, *Greek: pleiona thusian*, majorem.

[5] Ver. 7. Metuens, *Greek: eulabetheis*, which signifieth a fear with reverence. See Hebrews v. 7.

[6] Ver. 12. Et hoc emortuo: the ordinary Greek copies have, *Greek: kai tauta nenek romenou*; i.e. secundum hæc, or in this respect dead, being incapable of having children by Sara.

[7] Ver. 19. Eum in parabolam accepit, *Greek: en parabole*, in typo, in similitudine. St. John

Chrysostom says, *Greek: toutestin en upodeigmati*.

[8] Ver. 21. Adoravit fastigium virgæ ejus, *Greek: prosekunesen epi to akron tes rabdon autou* *epi* does not change the signification. See St. John Chrysostom and Estius.

[9] Ver. 27. Invisibilem enim tanquam videns sustinuit: *Greek: ekarterese*, i.e. sustinuit non Deum, sed animositatem regis.

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## HEBREWS 12

**Ver. 1.** *Laying aside every weight*; [1] i.e. all that may hinder us when we run in the way of virtue.--- *To the fight proposed to us*. In the Greek it is ore clear: *let us run the proposed race*. He compares the condition of Christians to those who run a race, who fight or strive for a prize in the Olympic games, who strip themselves, and make themselves as light as possible, the better to run and fight. (Witham) --- This Christian's life is both a race and a combat. In baptism we enter the lists; therefore we must fight in running to Jesus Christ, for he is the term, the goal, and the prize. To run will, we must be as light and disengaged as possible; and the same if we hope to combat with success. We should look up to the battles fought by our captain, Jesus Christ, and contemplate the glory he now enjoys on that account; for this he means to share with us, if we imitate his virtues: let us then rejoice to suffer with our Captain (*Greek: archagon* ) here, and we shall be glorified with him hereafter.

**Ver. 2.** *Who having joy* [2] *proposed to him, underwent the cross*. The sense seems to be, who by reason of the joy he had to perform the will of his eternal Father, for which he knew he should be exalted above all creatures, underwent willingly the ignominy and death of the cross. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *You have not yet resisted unto blood*. Though you have met with some persecutions, you have not yet shed your blood for his sake who laid down his life, and shed every drop of his blood for you. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *You have forgotten the consolation, &c.* He puts them in mind, that it ought to be a subject of great comfort to them, that God calls them his children, *his sons*, and treats them as his true and legitimate children, when he admonished them to live under the discipline and obedience to him, when, to correct their disobedient and sinful ways, he sends the afflictions and persecutions in this world, which they ought to look upon as marks of his fatherly tenderness; for this is what a prudent kind father does to his legitimate children, of whom he takes the greatest care: and not to use these corrections, is to neglect them, as if they were [3]illegitimate children. *We reverence the father of our flesh*, (ver. 10.) our parents in this world, when they instruct and correct us, how much more ought we to *obey the Father* and Creator of spirits, (i.e. of our souls) that being truly sanctified by him, we may live and obtain life everlasting. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** In these last four verses we may observe as many subjects of consolation under afflictions. God, our Father, is the author of them; the chastisement he inflicts is the proof of his love; it is the sign or mark of our divine adoption; it is a necessary condition of our being adopted.

**Ver. 11.** It is true all discipline, all corrections, and sufferings in this present life, are disagreeable to our nature, because they bring not joy, but trouble and grief with them; yet afterwards, they who have been exercised with them, will reap *the most peaceable fruit of justice*, eternal peace and happiness in heaven. (Witham) --- We must not judge of sufferings by the smart they occasion, but by the fruits of peace, justice, and eternal glory they produce in such as submit to them with patience.

**Ver. 12-14.** *Wherefore life up the* [4] *hands, &c.* Be fervent in piety, walk firmly in the way of



virtue, *make straight* [5] *steps*, without declining to one side or the other, without halting or going astray, and strive to be healed from your sins by his grace. --- *Follow* and seek *peace*, as much as lies in you, with all men, and [6] *purity* of life, *without which no man shall see* and enjoy God. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Be wanting to the grace of God*, by resisting and abusing his favours, or by falling from the grace of God received. --- *Lest any root of bitterness*, &c. He means scandalous wicked persons, by whom others are infected, defiled, and corrupted. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Or profane person, as Esau*, who had so little regard for the blessing and inheritance of his father, that he sold his right of first-begotten for one mess of broth, and afterwards *found no place for repentance, although with tears he had sought for it*; that is, he could not make his father repent or change what he had once done, though he endeavoured with his tears and lamentable outcries. Or if any one will have repentance referred to Esau himself, still the Novatian heretics can have no advantage in favour of their error, when they deny that sinners can repent, because Esau's tears might only be for a temporal loss, not for God's sake, nor for the guilt of his sins, so that he wanted the dispositions of a true penitent and of a contrite heart. (Witham) --- *Greek: Bebelos*, profane, like Esau, who for a trifling meal could forfeit his right of primogeniture [first-begotten], and the honour of priesthood thereto attached. Oh, how many give up all right to a heavenly and eternal inheritance for even a mere trifling consideration! An dhow will they one day, with Esau, regret the same inflexibility on the part of God, their Father!

**Ver. 17.** *He found*, &c. That is, he found no way to bring his father to repent, or change his mind, with relation to his having given the blessing to his younger brother, Jacob. (Challoner)

**Ver. 18.** *For you are not come to a mountain*, [7] &c. That is, to a mountain on earth that can be touched; to wit, to Mount Sinai, where the law was given to Moses, where the mountain seemed all on fire, with dreadful thunder and lightning, whirlwinds, darkness, tempests, sounding of trumpets, voices, &c. which they who heard excused themselves, begging that Moses only, and not God, might speak to them, for they could not without exceeding consternation think of what was then said; that if any man, or even beast, should touch the mountain, he should be stoned to death. (Exodus xix. 15.) Nay Moses himself, trembling, was frightened. This particular is nowhere mentioned in the Scripture, but the apostle might know it by revelation, or by some tradition among the Jews. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *But you are come to Mount Sion*, where not a law of fear, like that of Moses, but a new law of love and mercy hath been given you, preached by our Saviour himself, and by his apostles, testified by the coming of the Holy Ghost, and by the effusion of God's spirit upon the believers. Here you are called to the city of the living God, (to the Christian Church on earth) and even to the celestial Jerusalem, there to be for ever happy in the company of may millions of Angels; *to the church of the first-born, who are written in heaven*, (ver. 23.) to be happy with those who have been chosen by a special mercy of God, and blessed with an endless happiness; to be there in the presence of God, the judge of all men, with all the celestial spirits and souls of the just and perfect in the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ is the mediator of this new testament, the redeemer of mankind by his death on the cross, by the sprinkling and effusion of his blood, which speaketh better than that of Abel: the blood of Abel cried to heaven for vengeance, and the blood of Christ for mercy and pardon. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** *Refuse not* then to hearken to him; for if the Jews escape not God's severe judgments, for being deaf to his admonitions, given by an Angel to Moses on Mount Sinai, and by him to the people, much less shall we escape, if we turn away our minds, and harden our hearts against the instructions of our Redeemer, who came from heaven to speak to us, and teach us the way to our eternal salvation. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *Whose voice then moved the earth*, by such signs and prodigies on Mount Sinai: *but now he promiseth, saying by the prophet Aggeus* [Haggai]: *yet once; and I will move not only the*

*earth, but heaven also.* These words of the prophet are commonly understood of Christ's first coming at his incarnation, when at his birth a star appeared, Angels were sent, and sung his praises, when the heavens opened at his baptism, when the earth trembled at his resurrection, when the sun and moon were darkened at his death, &c. Yet others expound these words of Christ's coming to redeem mankind, so as to comprehend all the time of the law of grace, and even his second coming to judge all men, at the end of the world, of which may particularly be understood those words, (ver. 27.) of *the translation of the moveable things*; that is, of the elements, and of the heavens changed to a more perfect state. See here St. John Chrysostom; St. Augustine, lib. 18. de civ. Dei. chap. xxxv. p. 517. Nov. Editionis. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** Some refer these words to the tabernacle, to the ark, the altar, and other parts of the Jewish religion; which, as figures were to be altered and to be replaced by the more lasting and more perfect dispensation of the gospel. (Estius)

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[1] Ver. 1. Omne pondus, *Greek: panta ogkon*, omnen sarcinam.

[2] Ver. 2. Curramus ad propositum nobis certamen, *Greek: trechomen ton prokeimenon emin agona*, without *Greek: pros*, ad. Certamen is not only pugnando, but contendendo cursu, &c.

[3] Ver. 5. Ergo adulteri, et non filii, *Greek: ara nothoi este, kai ouch uioi*, adulterini, non germani filii.

[4] Ver. 12-14. Remissas manus, *Greek: pareimenas*, which signifies hands hanging down in a lazy posture.

[5] Ver. 12-14. Gressus rectos facite, *Greek: trochios orthas poiesate*, which is to advance in a straight line, not turning aside, or tottering.

[6] Ver. 12-14. Sanctimoniam, *Greek: agiasmon*.

[7] Ver. 18. Ad tractabilem montem, *Greek: pselaphomeno orei*. palabilem.

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## HEBREWS 13

**Ver. 2.** *And hospitality do not forget, ... some being not aware* [1] *of it, have entertained Angels.* They imagined they received men, when they were Angels. The Latin interpreter followed exactly the Greek, though the expression be unusual in both languages. It is meant of Abraham, (Genesis xviii. 2.) and of Lot, Genesis xix. 1. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *As being yourselves also in the body.* That is, liable to troubles and afflictions as long as you are in a mortal body. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Marriage honourable in all.* [2] It is doubtful both in the Latin and Greek, whether the sense be, marriage is honourable, or let it be accounted honourable, as it rather seems to be by the rest of the text. Again it may be doubted whether the sense be honourable in all persons, or in all things, and in all respects; as it seems to be the obvious signification that persons do nothing to dishonour their state, as they do who violate by adulteries the fidelity they owe to one another, who regard not the sanctity of this sacrament, who love not each other, who take not care of the education of their children. It does not follow from hence, that all persons without any exception, even those who have already made a vow to God to lead a single life, may lawfully marry. Such persons, by pretending to marry, incur their damnation. See 1 Timothy v. 12. (Witham) --- Or, *let marriage be honourable in all.* That is, in *all things* belonging to the marriage

state. This is a warning to married people, not to abuse the sanctity of their state, by any liberties or irregularities contrary thereunto. Now it does not follow from this text that all persons are obliged to marry, even if the word *omnibus* were rendered, *in all persons*, instead of *in all things*: for if it was a precept, St. Paul himself would have transgressed it, as he never married. Moreover those who have already made a vow to God to lead a single life, should they attempt to marry, would incur their own damnation. (Challoner) --- As marriage is a great sacrament, (Ephesians v.) married persons should be careful to honour and respect it, by chaste and prudent behaviour; (see 1 Peter iii. and 1 Thessalonians iv.) but it too often happens that by criminal incontinence they change a great sacrament into a great sacrilege.

**Ver. 5.** *I will not leave thee, neither will I forsake thee.* It is an exhortation to covetous persons not to be too solicitous, but to trust in Providence. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Remember your prelates, &c.* who have been placed over you to be your guides and directors in what belongs to the service of God; he seems to mean the two Sts. James, the apostles, who perhaps had already suffered martyrdom for the gospel. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever.* That is, Christ is the same merciful and powerful advocate and protector, in regard of all that serve him faithfully to the end of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *With various and strange doctrines.* Such as the disciples of Simon Magus had begun to teach; nor with the false doctrine of those among you, who would make you subject to the ceremonies and sacrifices of the former law, which never of themselves profit those who walk in them, so as to give true sanctification, and which now are no longer obligatory. (Witham) --- The grace of Jesus Christ is the true support of our hearts, and this grace is conveyed to us by means of the sacraments, especially the holy Eucharist. Hence St. Ignatius addresses the Ephesians as follows: "Brethren, stand fast in the faith of Jesus Christ; in his passion and resurrection; breaking that one bread, which is the *medicine* of immortality, the antidote against death, and *the means of living in God* by Christ Jesus; the *medicament* that expels all evil."

**Ver. 10.** *We, Christians, have at present an altar,[3] and consequently a sacrifice, whereof they have no power to eat,* who serve the tabernacle, confiding in the law and in Moses, not in Christ and the gospel. He does not say, we had an altar. (Witham) --- St. Paul has often mentioned the high priest and victim; here he tells us we *have* an altar, and of course a sacrifice. Let us then go out of ourselves to offer to God by, with, and in Jesus Christ, this his beloved Son, in the holy Eucharist, for this is a victim of praise worthy of God, and let us not forget to offer ourselves to our eternal Father daily, in union with our great high priest and victim, Jesus Christ; 1st, on the cross; 2ndly, in the Eucharist; and 3rdly, in heaven, the immaculate Lamb slain as it were from the beginning before the throne of God.

**Ver. 11.** This is commonly interpreted of the sacrifice of the Eucharist, by which is continued (though in a different manner) Christ's sacrifice on the cross, of which he speaks in the following words, telling them that *the bodies of those beasts*, with the blood of which the sanctuary was sprinkled on the feast of expiation, (see Leviticus xvi. 29. and xxiii. 27. and Numbers xxix. 8.) were *burnt without the camp*, not eaten as the other victims. Wherefore Jesus, when he fulfilled this figure, and offered himself on the cross, a sacrifice of expiation for the sins of all mankind, and to obtain for them true *sanctification*, was pleased to *suffer out of the gate* of Jerusalem. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Let us go forth, therefore, to him without the camp.* It is an exhortation to them to be willing to suffer with Christ reproaches, persecutions, and death itself, if they desire to partake of the benefit of Christ's redemption. (Witham) --- *Bearing his reproach.* That is, bearing his cross. It is an exhortation to them to be willing to suffer, with Christ, reproaches, persecutions, and even death, if they desire to partake of the benefit of his suffering for man's redemption. (Challoner)

**Ver. 14-15.** *We have not a permanent city* in this world, but are like pilgrims or banished men, *seeking* for our happy country of heaven; but in the mean time must offer to God a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which is done chiefly in the holy sacrifice of the Eucharist, also by confessing *his name*, and praying to him with our lips and hearts; and by a kind of sacrifice of charity, by *doing good* to every one, and of *communication* to others; literally, *of communion*, or union with our neighbours. (Witham) --- When we read in the psalms, and in the old Scripture, of a sacrifice of praise, we may look upon it as a prophecy of the Christian Eucharist or sacrifice of praise, of which St. Augustine says: "What is a more holy sacrifice of praise, than that which consisteth in thanksgiving, which the faithful offer now in the sacrifice of the Church." (lib. 1. cont. Advers. leg. and proph. chap. xviii.) And again chap. xx. "The Church from the time of the apostles, by an uninterrupted succession of prelates, offers to God in the body of Christ the sacrifice of praise."

**Ver. 16.** *For by such sacrifices God's favour is obtained*,<sup>[4]</sup> and a recompense or a reward from him. (Witham) --- The Protestant version, God is well pleased: If God be well pleased and shew favour for them, then are they meritorious, and faith alone is not the sole cause of God's favour to man.

**Ver. 17-18.** *Obey your prelates*, &c. Join the sacrifice of obedience to your bishops and pastors, whom God has placed over you, who must render an account even of your souls, i.e. whether they have discharged their duty towards you, and whether it be not by their neglect that you have remained in your sins. Follow their commands and instructions, with such a ready willingness, that you do not contristate them, but that you may be a subject of comfort and joy to them, in their heavy and dangerous employments. --- Fail not to *pray for me*, who am such a minister of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 20-21.** *Who brought, or raised from the dead, the great pastor of the sheep*, of all the faithful, *Jesus Christ, in the blood of the everlasting testament*: in the testament that is to last for ever, not for a time, like the former testament made to the people of Israel. These words, *in the blood*, may either be joined with *brought from the dead his son*, as man, by the merits of his blood, which he had shed on the cross, as it is said Philippians ii. 8. Or they may be joined with the *great pastor*, and then the sense will be, that God raised Jesus Christ, who, by his blood shed on the cross, became the great shepherd of all the faithful. Working in you by his grace *every good work*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *Bear with the word of consolation*, with what I have written to exhort and comfort you in a very few words, considering the importance of the subject, and the sublime mysteries. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Our brother, Timothy, is set at liberty*. From which we may conjecture that Timothy had been a prisoner, though it is not known where, nor on what occasion. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Per hanc enim latuerunt quidam Angelis hospitio receptis, *Greek: dia tautes gar elathon tines xenisantes Aggelous*, i.e. hospitio recepiendo Angelos. The Latin has exactly followed the Greek.

[2] Ver. 4. Honorabile connubium in omnibus, *Greek: timios o gamos en posi*.

[3] Ver. 10. Habemus altare, *Greek: thusiasterion*, sacrificatorium: *Greek: thusiasterion* is not used for the oblation itself.

[4] Ver. 16. Promeretur Deus. This word is taken passively in several good Latin authors. See Grotius.

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## JAMES

### THE CATHOLIC EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES, THE APOSTLE.

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#### ON THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The seven following Epistles have been called *Catholic* or general, not being addressed to any particular Church or person, if we except the Second and Third of St. John. They are called also *Canonical*, having been received by the Church as part of the canon of the New Testament, and as writings of divine authority. It is a matter of fact allowed by every one, that five of these epistles, to wit, this of St. James, the Second of St. Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, that of St. Jude, as also the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John, were doubted of, and not received *always* and every where in the three first ages [centuries], till the canon and catalogue of Scripture books was examined by tradition, and determined by the authority of the Catholic Church, the supreme judge of all controversies in matters of faith and religion, according to the appointment of our Saviour, Christ, expressed in many places in the holy Scriptures. But I could never learn upon what grounds they who deny the Catholic Church and General Councils to be of an infallible authority, and who deny Christ's promises to guide his Church in all truth to the end of the world, can be certain which Scriptures or writings are canonical, and which are not. I could never understand what construction to put on the sixth of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England. We there meet with this declaration: *In, or by the name of the holy Scripture we understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.* These I have mentioned were certainly for some time doubted of; they are still doubted of by some of the late reformers: Luther, the great doctor of the reformation, is not ashamed to say that this epistle of St. James is no better than *straw*, and *unworthy of an apostle*. These writings therefore, according to the said declaration, ought not to be accounted and received as canonical; and yet before the end of the said sixth article, it is again declared, that *all the books of the Old and New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.* And in all New Testaments of the Church of England, all these are received for canonical in the same manner as the four gospels, without any remark or advertisement to the contrary. --- The first of the seven epistles was written by St. James, surnamed the *lesser*, and *James of Alphaeus*, (Matthew x. 3.) one of the twelve apostles, called the *brother of our Lord*, (Galatians i. 19.) who was made bishop of Jerusalem. His mother is thought to have been Mary, sister to the blessed Virgin Mary, and to have been married first to Alphaeus, and afterwards to Cleophas; to have had four sons, *James, Joseph, Simon, (or Simeon) and Jude*, the author of the last of these epistles. All these four being cousins-german, are called *brothers of our Lord*, Matthew xiii. 55. How great a veneration the Jews themselves had for this apostle and bishop of Jerusalem, see not only Hegesippus apud Eusebius, lib. ii. hist. chap. 23. and St. Jerome de viris illustribus, also the same St. Jerome in Galatians i. 19. (tom. iv, p. 237, lib. 1. cont. Jovin. tom. iv, part 2, p. 182.) but even Josephus, (lib. xxviii. Jewish Antiquities, chap. 8.) where he calls him *the brother of Jesus, surnamed the Christ*. This epistle was written about the year 62. The chief contents are: 1. To shew that faith without good works will not save a man, as St. Augustine observed, lib. de fid. et oper. chap. iv.; 2. He exhorts them to patience, to beg true wisdom, and the divine grace; 3. He condemns the vices of the tongue; 4. He gives admonitions against pride, vanity, ambition, &c.; 5. To resist their disorderly lusts and desires, which are the occasions and causes of sin, and not Almighty God; 6. He publisheth the sacrament of anointing the sick with oil; 7. He recommends prayer, &c. St. Jerome, in a letter to Paulinus, (t. iv. part 2, p. 574.) recommends all these seven epistles in these words: James, Peter, John, and Jude, published seven epistles....both short and long, short in

words, long as to the content; *Jacobus, Petrus, Joannes, Judas, septem epistolas ediderunt...breves pariter et longas, breves in verbis, longas in sententiis.* (Witham) --- St. Gregory of Nazianzus remarks, that the faithful were not agreed as to the number of these epistles; some admitted seven and some only three, viz. this of St. James, the first of St. John, and the first of St. Peter:

*Greek: Katholikon Epistolon*

*Tines men epta phasin, oi de treis monas*

*Chrenai dechesthai ten Iakobou mian,*

*Mian de Petrou, tente Ioannou mian.* --- Naz. Carm. de Script. Canon.

We shall state at the beginning of each epistle, the reason why they have been adopted into the canon of Scripture. (Calmet) --- The object of these epistles was, according to the remark of St. Augustine, to refute the rising errors of Simon Magus, the Nicolaites, and other such heretics, who abusing the liberty of the gospel, and perverting the meaning of St. Paul's words in his epistle to the Romans, pretended that faith alone, without good works, was sufficient for salvation; although St. Paul expressly requires Christians, a faith working by charity, Galatians v. 6. and 1 Corinthians xiii. where he uses these emphatic words: "If I should have all faith, so as to remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." (St. Augustine, lib. de fide et operibus, chap. xiv. (Calmet) --- As to what regards the authenticity of St. James' epistle, although Luther with his usual boldness asserts that many with good reason denied this epistle to be canonical, and affirmed that it was unworthy the pen of an apostle, yet, admitting that some individuals in the first ages [centuries] of the Church doubted of its authority, we are nevertheless assured from certain monuments that it was always considered as sacred and inspired both by the Latin and Greek Churches. This is evident from the sixtieth canon of the council of Laodicea; from the forty-seventh of the council of Carthage, in 397; from Origen, hom. vii. in Josue; from St. Athanasius in synopsi, Epiphanius hæresi 76; from St. Jerome, ad Paulinum Epis.; from St. Augustine, lib. ii. de Doc. Chris. chap. viii; from St. Gregory of Nazianzus, tom. iii, p. 98; from Amphilochus, apud St. Gregory of Nazianzus, tom. ii. p. 194; from Innocent I. Epis. ad Decentium; from Rufinus, Exposit. Symboli; and from Gelasius I. who in the fifth age [century], in a council of seventy bishops, at Rome, settled the canon of the genuine books of the holy Scripture, and distinguished them from what are spurious. (Cal. et Habert de Sacr. Ext. Un.) --- St. Jerome and St. Augustine quote frequently this epistle as the undoubted work of this apostle; and since their time, its authenticity has never been called in question by Catholics. It is believed St. James wrote this epistle in Greek, as he quotes the Scripture according to the version of the Septuagint, as Chap. iv. 6; and as this language was commonly spoken in the East by the dispersed Jews, to whom he wrote. his style is concise and sententious, like that of Solomon in his proverbs, and like the maxims of the Orientals even to the present day. (Calmet)

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## JAMES 1

**Ver. 1.** *James, a servant of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Some have doubted whether the author of this epistle was St. James, the apostle, because he does not call himself an apostle. By the same weak argument we might reject all the three epistles of St. John and his Apocalypse, and the epistle of St. Jude. Nor does St. Paul give himself this title in those to the Thessalonians, to the Philippians, to Philemon, or to the Hebrews. --- *To the twelve tribes, which are dispersed.* Literally, *which are in the dispersion.* That is, to the Jews converted in all nations. --- *Greetings.* [1] Literally, *salvation.* Which comprehendeth much the same as, when St. Paul says, *grace, peace, mercy, &c.* (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Into divers temptations.* The word *temptations*, in this epistle, is sometimes taken for trials by afflictions or persecutions, as in this place; sometimes for a tempting, enticing, or drawing others into sin. (Witham)

**Ver. 3-4.** *The trying of your faith worketh patience.* St. Paul seems to assert the reverse:

(Romans v. 3.) when he says, *patience worketh a trial*. They are easily reconciled. Here St. James teacheth us, that patience is occasionally obtained, and strengthened by sufferings, the meaning of St. Paul is, that patience worketh, sheweth itself, and is found perfect in the sight of God by trials. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *And upbraideth not*. That is, God does not think much, nor reproach us with the multitude of his benefits and favours: and if he puts sinners in mind of their repeated ingratitude, it is for their good and conversion. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Let not that man think that he shall receive*. He that has not a lively faith and firm hope, wavering with a distrust of God's power or goodness, must not imagine to receive what he so faintly asks. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** Such a one, is as it were a *double-minded man*, [2] divided betwixt God and the world, halting betwixt two, and becomes *inconstant in all his ways*, always rising and falling, beginning and relapsing. (Witham)

**Ver. 9-12.** *The brother of low condition*. Literally, *humble*. [3] See Luke i. 48. The sense is, that a Christian, of never so low and poor a condition, may *glory*, and rejoice even in his poverty, that he is not only the servant, but even the adoptive son of God. *But the rich, in his being low*. Some word must be here understood to make the sense complete. If we understand, let the rich man glory, it must be expounded by irony, by what follows, of his passing away like a flower. But others rather understand some other word of a different signification; as, let the rich man lament the low condition that he must come to; for he must quickly fade away like grass. --- *The beauty of the shape thereof* [4] *perished*. So the Hebrews say, the *face* of the heavens, the *face* of the earth, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *God is not a tempter* [5] *of evils, and he tempteth no man*. Here to tempt, is to draw and entice another to the *evil* of sin, which God cannot do. The Greek may also signify, he neither can be tempted, nor tempt any one. But every one is thus tempted by the evil desires of his corrupt nature, which is called *concupiscence*, and which is not properly called a sin of itself, but only when we yield to it. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *When concupiscence hath conceived*, (man's free will yielding to it) *it bringeth* [6] *forth sin*, our perverse inclinations become sinful, and *when any grievous sin is completed*, or even consented to, it *begetteth death*, it maketh the soul guilty of eternal death. It may not be amiss here to observe with St. Gregory, &c. that there are three degrees of temptations: the first, by *suggestion only*; the second, by *delectation*; the third, by *consent*. The first, the devil, or our own frail nature, tempts us by a suggestion of evil thoughts in our *imagination*: to have such thoughts and imaginations may be no sin at all, though the things and objects represented be never so foul and hideous, though they may continue never so long, and return never so often. The reason is, because we cannot hinder them. On the contrary, if our will remains displeased with them, and resist them, such a resistance is meritorious, and by the mercies of God will purchase us a reward. Second, these representations may be followed with a delight or delectation in the senses, or in the body only; and if by an impression made against the will, which we no ways consent to, there is again no sin. There may be also some neglect in the person tempted, by not using sufficient endeavours to resist and repel those thoughts, which if it be only some small neglect, the sin is not great: but if the person tempted hath wilfully, and with full deliberation, taken delight in evil thoughts, either of revenge, or of fornication, or adultery, or about any thing very sinful, such a *wilful delight* is a grievous and deadly sin, though he hath not had a will or design to perform the action itself. The reason is, because he then wilfully consents in mind and heart to a sinful delight, though not to the execution or action. And the sin may be great, and mortal, though it be but for a short time: for a temptation may continue for a long time and be no sin; and there may be a great sin in a short time. The reason again is, because we are to judge of sin by the dispositions and consent of the will, not by the length of time. Third, when the sinner yields to evil suggestions and temptations, so that his will fully consents to what is proposed, and

nothing can be said to be wanting but an opportunity of putting his sinful desires in execution, he has already committed the sin; for example, of murder, of fornication, &c. in his heart, as our blessed Saviour taught us. (Matthew v. 28.) (Witham)

**Ver. 16-17.** *Do not err*, nor deceive yourselves by yielding to temptation; beg God his supporting grace, for every good gift is from him. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *By the word of truth.* Some, with St. Athanasius, understand the eternal word made man. Others commonly understand the word of the gospel, by which we have been called to the true faith, &c. --- *Some beginning [7] of his creatures*, (or as the Greek signifies) such a beginning as are the *first-fruits*; and perhaps St. James may so call the Jews, as being the first converted to believe in Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *You know*, or you are sufficiently instructed in these things. --- *Let every man be swift to hear* the word of God, *but slow*, or cautious in speaking, especially *slow to anger*, or to that rash passion of anger, which is never excusable, unless it be through a zeal for God's honour, and against sin. (Witham) --- St. James in this epistle does not aim at a regular discourse: he proposes a diversity of moral sentences, which have not much connection with each other. He here instructs the faithful how to behave in conversation. He recommends to them modesty and prudence in their discourses; and rather to be fond of hearing much, than of speaking much; and of practising the truth, than of preaching it to others. "For not those who understand the law, nor those who preach it, are justified before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified before God." (Romans chap. ii. 13.) (Calmet) --- A wise man is known by the fewness of his words. *Sapiens verbis innotescit paucis.* (Regl. St. Bernard, chap. vii.) With hearing, the wise man will become wiser. (Sen. [Seneca?] lib. ii. de Ira. chap. 28.) --- Anger is a short madness. The best cure is to permit it to subside, and to let our reason have time to reflect upon the propriety of doing what we are at first inclined to. The first motives to anger are frequently indeliberate, and consequently not sinful; but we must be careful to resist as soon as we perceive them, lest they should become too violent, and obtain the consent of our will. (Calmet) --- Learn of me, says our Saviour, because I am meek and humble of heart. (Matthew chap. xii. 29.) If, says St. Francis de Sales, being stung and bit by detraction and enemies, we fly out, swell, and are enraged, it is a great that neither our humility nor meekness are true and sincere, but only apparent and artificial. It is better, says St. Augustine, writing to Profuturus, to deny entrance to just and reasonable anger, than to admit it, be it ever so little; because, being once admitted, it is with difficulty driven out again; for it enters as a little twig, and in a moment becomes a beam: and if it can once but get the night of us, and the sun set upon it, which the apostle forbids, it turns into a hatred, from which we have scarcely any means to rid ourselves; for it nourishes itself under a thousand false pretexts, since there was never an angry man that thought his anger unjust. (St. Francis de Sales, Introduction to a devout life, p. 3. chap. viii.)

**Ver. 20.** *The anger of man*, &c. Let us not then be angry with each other on the way to eternal life, but rather march on with the troop of our companions and brethren meekly, peaceably, and lovingly; nay, I say to you absolutely and without exception, be not angry at all, if it be possible, and admit no pretext whatsoever to open the gate of your heart to so destructive a passion: for St. James here tells us positively, and without reservation, "the anger of man works not the justice of God." (St. Francis de Sales, Introduction to a devout life, p. 3. chap. viii.) --- The patient man is better than the valiant; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh cities. (Proverbs chap. xvi. 32.) The anger of man is the daughter of pride, the mother of enmities, the enemy of peace and harmony, and the source of stubbornness and blindness of mind and heart. The justice of God is humility, meekness, charity, peace, docility, and forbearance. How great the contrast!

**Ver. 21.** *All uncleanness.*[8] The Greek shews that hereby is meant a sordid, filthy uncleanness, infecting and defiling the soul. --- *The engrafted* [9] *word.* The word and doctrine of Christ, by the labours of his preachers, and chiefly by his divine grace engrafted and fixed in your souls. (Witham)



**Ver. 23.** *He shall be compared to a man, &c.* The sense is, that it is not enough for a man to examine and look into his interior, and the state of his conscience in a negligent and superficial manner, no more than one that goes to a looking-glass, but does not take care to take away the dirt or spots which he might discover. (Witham)

**Ver. 25.** The law of Christ, called here *the perfect law of liberty*, as it is distinguished from the Jewish law of fear and slavery, is as it were a looking-glass, which may make us know ourselves, and discover and correct our failings. (Witham)

**Ver. 26.** *If any man think, &c.* He here blames those hot disputes, which seem to have been frequent amongst the converted Jews, concerning the necessity of observing the legal rites. In vain, says he, do you pique yourselves upon the rigorous observance of the law, and your zeal to unite its ceremonial rites with the practice of the gospel. If you be void of the essence of Christianity, which is charity, prudence, and moderation, your religion will avail you nothing. (Calmet) --- This may also be understood of those devotees who are fond of making a parade of their virtues, and who, as St. Gregory says, (hom. xii. in Mat.) afflict their bodies indeed with fasting, but for this they expect to be esteemed by men. (Haydock) --- A man must not imagine *himself to be religious*, and perfect in the way of virtue, unless he governs and bridle *his tongue* from oaths, curses, calumnies, detractions, lies, of which more in the third chapter. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *Religion pure and unspotted, &c.* St. James may use the word *pure*, as a proper admonition to the Jews, who were generally mostly solicitous to avoid *legal* uncleanness, such as were incurred by eating meats forbidden in their law as unclean, by touching a dead body, &c. He therefore tells them that the Christian religion is known by acts of charity, by visiting and assisting widows, the fatherless, and such as are under afflictions, and in general by keeping our consciences interiorly clean, unspotted, and *undefiled from this world*, from the corrupt maxims and sinful practices so common in this wicked world. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Salutem, *Greek: chairein*, salvari, salvos esse.

[2] Ver. 8. Duplex animo, *Greek: aner dipsuchos*, quasi habens duas animas, dubius, incertus, potius quam hypocrita.

[3] Ver. 9. Humilis, and in humilitate, *Greek: tapeinos, tapeinosei*. See Luke i. 48.

[4] Ver. 11. Decor vultus ejus, *Greek: euprepeia tou prosopou*; the Hebrew says, faciem, cœli, terræ, gladii, &c.

[5] Ver. 13. Deus enim intentator, i.e. non tentator; by the Greek, *Greek: apeirastos*; which may signify intentabilis, qui non potest tentari.

[6] Ver. 15. Generat mortem, *Greek: apokuei thanaton*; *apokuein* is fætum emittere, and generare, as it is also here again used ver. 18.

[7] Ver. 18. Initium aliquod creaturæ ejus, *Greek: aparchen tina*. See Romans xi. 16.; 1 Corinthians xv. 20. and xvi. 15. &c.

[8] Ver. 21. Immunditiam, *Greek: ruparian*, from *Greek: rupos*, sordes, spurcitia.

[9] Ver. 21. Insitum verbum, *Greek: emphuton logon*.

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**Ver. 1.** *With respect of persons.* This partial respect of persons is several times condemned both in the Old and New Testament. St. James here speaks of it as it was committed in the *assemblies*, by which many understand the meetings of Christians, in[1] synagogues and places where they celebrated the divine service, or met to keep the charitable feast, called Agape. Others expound it of meetings where causes were judged. If it be meant of Church meetings, the apostle might have even greater reason to condemn such a partiality at that time than at present; for when the poorer sort of people, of which was the greatest number of converts, saw themselves so neglected and despised, and any rich man when he came thither so caressed and honoured, this might prove a discouragement to the meaner sort of people, and an obstacle to their conversion. But if we expound it of meetings where causes were judged betwixt the rich and others of a lower condition, (which exposition the text seems to favour) the fault might be still greater, when the judges gave sentence in favour of great and rich men, biassed thereunto by the unjust regard they had for men rich and powerful. This was a transgression of the law: (Leviticus xix. 15.) *Respect not the person of the poor, nor honour the countenance of the mighty. But judge thy neighbour according to justice.* See also Deuteronomy i. 17. (Witham) --- *Respect, &c.* The meaning is, that in matters relating to faith, the administering of the sacraments and other spiritual functions in God's Church, there should be no *respect of persons*: but that the souls of the poor should be as much regarded as those of the rich. ([Deuteronomy?] Chap. i. 17) (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *Are become judges of (or with ) unjust thoughts,*[2] when against justice you favour the rich. Or, if in Church assemblies you discover a wrong and partial judgment in you minds and *thoughts*, by the high value and esteem you shew to the rich on account of their riches, and the contempt you have of poverty and of the poor, when they are perhaps more deserving in the sight of God, *who hath chosen them who are rich in faith*, whom he hath made his adoptive children, and heirs of his kingdom. These are much the greater riches: this is a dignity far surpassing that of the greatest king or emperor. And you have less reason to shew such distinguishing marks of honour and esteem for the rich of this world, since it is they who by might and violence oppress you, draw you to judgment-seats: and they are less worthy of your honour and esteem, when by their scandalous behaviour they blaspheme, or cause to be blasphemed and ill-spoken of, the good and holy name of God, which is invoked upon you. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *If then you fulfil the royal law,...thou shalt love, &c. you do well.* By these words, the apostle explains what he had said before of the particular respect paid to rich and powerful men, that if these were no more than some exterior marks paid them without any injustice or interior contempt of such as were poor, so that they took care to comply with that royal precept given to every one by Almighty God, the King of kings, *thou shalt love thy neighbour*, that is, every one without exception, as *thyself*; in this *you do well*; and the respect of persons was less blameable. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Is become guilty of all.* It is certain these words are not to be taken merely according to the letter, nor in the sense which at first they seem to represent, as if a man by transgressing one precept of the law transgressed and broke all the rest: this appears by the very next verse, that a man may commit murder by killing another, and not commit adultery. And it is certain, as St. Augustine observes, that all sins are not equal, as the Stoic philosophers pretended. See St. Augustine, Epist. clxvii, (nov. ed. tom. 2, p. 595) where he consults St. Jerome on this very place out of St. James, and tells us that such a man may be said to *be guilty of all*, because by one deadly sin he acts against charity,[3] (which is the love of God and of our neighbour) upon which depends the whole law and all its precepts; so that by breaking one precept, he loseth the habit of charity, and maketh the keeping, or not breaking of all the rest, unprofitable to him. Secondly, it may be added, that all the precepts of the law are to be considered as one total and entire law, and as it were a chain of precepts, where by breaking one link of this chain the whole chain is broken, or the integrity of the law, consisting of a collection of precepts. Thirdly, it may be said, that he who breaks any one precept, contemns the authority of the lawgiver, who enjoined them all, and under pain of being for ever excluded from his sight and enjoyment. A sinner, therefore,

by a grievous offence against any one precept, forfeits his heavenly inheritance, becomes liable to eternal punishments, as if he had transgressed all the rest: not but that the punishments in hell shall be greater against those who have been greater sinners, as greater shall be the reward in heaven for those who have lived with greater sanctity and perfection. (Witham) --- *Guilty, &c.* That is, he becomes a transgressor of the law in such a manner, that the observing of all other points will not avail him to salvation; for he despises the lawgiver, and breaks through the great and general commandment of charity, even by one mortal sin. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12.** *By the law of liberty; i.e. by the new law and doctrine of Christ.* (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *For judgment without mercy, &c.* It is an admonition to them to fulfil, as he said before, the royal precept of the love of God and of our neighbour, which cannot be without being merciful to others. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* (Matthew v. 7.) --- *And mercy exalteth itself above judgment.* Some understand this as a confirmation of God's infinite mercies, out of Psalm cxliv. 9. where it is said that his "mercies are over all his works;" that is, though all his perfections be equally infinite, yet he is pleased to deal with sinners rather according to the multitude of his mercies than according to the rigour of his justice. Others expound these words of the mercy which men shew to one another, and that he exhorts them to mercy, as a most powerful means to find mercy; and the merciful works done to others will be beneficial to them, and make them escape when they come to judgment. (Witham) --- Similar to this are the words of old Tobias to his son: "Alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the most high God, to all them that give it." (Tobias iv. 11, 12.) "Blessed are the merciful," says our divine Judge, "for they shall obtain mercy." (Matthew v. 7.) (Calmet) --- And the definitive sentence of Christians, at the day of judgment will be favourable or not, as they have complied in life with the calls of charity. [Matthew xxv. 31-46.]

**Ver. 14, &c.** *Shall faith be able to save him?* He now comes to one of the chief points of this epistle, to shew against the disciple of Simon, the magician, that faith alone will not save any one. We may take notice in the first place, that St. James in this very verse, supposes that a man may have faith, a true faith without good works. This also follows from ver. 19. where he says: *Thou believest that there is one God: thou dost well.* And the same is evident by the words John xii. 42. where it is said, *that many of the chief men also believed in him, (Christ)....but did not confess it, that they might not be cast out of the synagogue.* Now that faith alone is not sufficient to save a man, St. James declares by this example: If any one say to the *poor and naked, go in peace, be you warmed and filled,* and give them nothing, *what shall it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works is dead, &c.* i.e. such a faith, though it be not lost and destroyed, yet it remains in a soul that is spiritually dead, when it is not accompanied with charity and grace, which is the life of the soul, and without which faith can never bring us to eternal life. In this sense is to be understood the 20th and 26th verses of this chapter, when faith is again said to be dead without good works. This is also the doctrine of St. Paul, when he tells us that a saving faith is a faith *that worketh by charity,* Galatians v. 6. When he says, that although faith were strong enough to remove mountains, a man is nothing without charity. (1 Corinthians xiii. 2.) When he teacheth us again, that *not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.* [Romans ii. 13.] St. John teacheth the same (1 John iii. 14.) *He that loveth not, remaineth in death.* But of this elsewhere. (Witham) --- Grotius in this place makes a very candid and remarkable profession of his faith, very different from that of his associates in the pretended reformation, called Solifideans [who pretend one is justified by faith alone]: "There are some who say, 'My works indeed are not as they ought to be,' but my faith is firm, my salvation is therefore out of danger. This opinion, which has sprung up in this our unhappy age, and recommends itself under the name of reformed doctrine, ought to be opposed by every lover of piety, and all who wish well to their neighbour's salvation....no faith has ever availed any man, unless it were accompanied by such works as he had time and opportunity to perform." His words are: "Opera quidem mea non recta sunt, sed fides recta est, ac propterea de salute non periclor....Renata est hoc infelici sæculo ea sententia et quidem sub nomine repurgatæ doctrinæ, cui omnes qui pietatem et salutem proximi amant, se debent opponere....cœterum nulla cuiquam fides profuit,

sine tali opere, quale tempus permittebat," &c. In vain do we glory in our faith, unless our lives and works bear testimony of the same. Faith without charity is dead, and charity cannot exist without good works. He who bears the fruits of Christian piety, shews that he has the root, which is faith what the soul is to the body. See the remainder of this chapter.

**Ver. 18.** *Some men will say: Thou hast faith, and I have works. Shew me thy faith, &c.* He confutes the same error, by putting them in mind that one can shew that he has faith, which is an interior virtue, only by good works, and that good works in a man shew also his faith; which is not to be understood, as if good works were merely the marks, signs, and effects of faith, as some would pretend, but that good works must concur with faith to a man's salvation by an increase in grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The devils also believe, and tremble.* St. James compares indeed faith without other virtues and good works, to the faith of devils: but comparisons must never be stretched farther than they are intended. The meaning is, that such a faith in sinners is unprofitable to salvation, like that of devils, which is no more than a conviction from their knowledge of God; but faith which remains in sinners, is from a supernatural knowledge, together with a pious motion in their free will. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *Was not Abraham....justified by works?* We may observe, that St. James here brings the very same examples of Abraham and Rahab, which it is likely he knew some had misconstrued in St. Paul, as if the great apostle of the Gentiles had taught that faith alone was sufficient to salvation. But St. Paul neither excludes good works done by faith, when he commends faith, excluding only the works of the law of Moses, as insufficient to a true justification. See Romans iii. 27. And St. James by requiring good works does not exclude faith, but only teacheth that faith alone is not enough. This is what he clearly expresseth here in the 22nd and in the 24th verse. *Man, says he, is justified, and not by faith only.* And (ver. 22.) *seest thou that faith did co-operate with Abraham's works, and by works faith was made perfect.* In fine, we must take notice, that when St. James here brings example of Abraham offering his son Isaac, to shew that he was *justified by works*, his meaning is not that Abraham then began first to be justified, but that he then received an increase of his justice. He was justified at least from his first being called, and began then to believe and to do good works. It is true his faith was made perfect, and his justice increased, when he was willing to sacrifice his son. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. In conventum vestrum, *Greek: eis ten sunagogen umon.* Synagogue is also taken for a meeting of kings, judges, &c. See Matthew x. 17.

[2] Ver. 4. Judices cogitationum iniquarum: it is the same in the Greek, *Greek: kritai dialogismon poneron:* the sense is, Judices inique cogitantes.

[3] Ver. 10-11. St. Augustine, Ep. lxxvii. num. 16. p. 600. An forte quia plenitudo legis charitas est, qua Deus, proximusque diligitur, in quibus præceptis charitatis tota lex pendet et prophetæ, merito fit reus omnium, qui contra illam facit ex qua pendent omnia.

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### JAMES 3

**Ver. 1.** *But not many masters, teachers, and preachers.* An admonition to al those who are not called, or not qualified to undertake this high ministry, let they incur a greater condemnation. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *For in many things we all offend,[1] fall into many, at least failings. --- If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.* He that in all occurrences can govern his tongue, has

attained to a great degree of perfection. --- *He is able also with a bridle to lead about he whole body.* He alludes to the comparison in the following verse; and the sense is, that when he has once perfectly subdued this unruly adversary, it may be presumed he can govern himself as to other passions, and *the whole body* of his actions. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *If we put bits, &c.* By the help of a bridle, a skillful rider can turn and guide horses never so headstrong and unruly. An experienced pilot sitting at the helm, steers the course of the vessel in a storm, turns and guides the ship what way he thinks most proper; so must a man learn, and use his utmost endeavours to bridle and govern his tongue. (Witham)

**Ver. 5-6.** *The tongue is indeed a little member, yet doth great things:[2] causeth great evils and mischiefs, when it is not carefully governed; as a little fire,[3] it kindleth and consumeth a great wood.* It is a *world of iniquity*, the cause of infinite evils, dissensions, quarrels, seditions, wars, &c. It defileth the whole body, even the body politic of kingdoms. This *fire*, kindled *by hell*, sets all in a flame during the course of our lives, (literally, *the wheel of our nativity*) from our cradle to our grave. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Is tamed, &c.* The wildest *beasts* may be *tamed*, lions and tigers, and *the rest*,[4] and so managed as to do no harm. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *But the tongue no man can tame,* without the special assistance of God. (Witham) --- Wherefore we are to understand, says St. Augustine, that as no one is able of himself to govern his tongue, we must fly to the Lord for his assistance. (St. Augustine, ser. 4. de verb.; Matthew vi. --- It is an *unquiet evil*,[5] which cannot be stopt [stopped]. It is full of *deadly poison*, which brings oftentimes death both to men's bodies and souls. (Witham)

**Ver. 9-13.** *By it we bless God, &c.* Such different effects from the same cause, as of *blessing God*, and *cursing* men, created to the likeness of God, seem contrary to the ordinary course of nature; from a *fountain* from the same source doth not *send forth* both *sweet* and *bitter* streams. --- *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you?* &c. This seems to be connected with the admonition given at the beginning of the chapter, *be not many masters*; let none pretend to this but who have wisdom and knowledge, which also may be known by their prudent and *mild conversation*.

**Ver. 14-16.** *But if you have bitter zeal.* He hints at that bitter, false zeal, which many teachers among the Jews, even after their conversion, were apt to retain against the converted Gentiles, pretending with *lies*, and against the truth of the Scriptures, that they are not to be made partakers of the blessings brought to all nations by the Messiah. --- *Glory not*, boast not in this pretended *wisdom*, which descendeth not *from above*, from God, but which is *earthly, sensual, diabolical*, from an evil spirit, which foment these jealousies and divisions; and where there are such emulations and divisions, there is nothing but *inconstancy*, and all kind of evils. (Witham)

**Ver. 17-18.** *But the true wisdom, which is from above,...is chaste, and pure, peaceable, modest,* free from such divisions, tractable, easy to be *persuaded* [6] of the truths foretold in the Scriptures, &c. Now the fruit and effect of such justice, piety, and sanctity, is sown in peace, with peaceable dispositions, in those who with sincerity seek true peace, and who hereby shall gain the reward of an eternal peace and happiness. (Witham) --- St. Paul gives a similar character of charity. (1 Corinthians chap. xiii.) "Charity is patient, is kind,...is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil,...believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." --- *Easy to be persuaded.* A good lesson for those devotees, who are not few in number, who are so obstinate and so wedded to their own opinions and ways, as to be unwilling to be controlled, even by those whom God has placed over them, for the direction of their souls. (Haydock) --- *Without judging.* That is, it does not condemn a neighbour upon light grounds, or think evil of him. It puts the best construction upon every thing he says or does, and never intrudes itself into the concerns of others. (Calmet) --- "Judge not, and you shall not be judged," says the Saviour of our souls; "condemn not, and you shall not be condemned." (St. Luke, vi. 37.)

"No," says the holy apostle, (1 Corinthians iv. 5.) "judge not before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart."

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[1] Ver. 2. Offendimus, *Greek: ptaïomen*, we stumble, rather than fall.

[2] Ver. 5. Et magna exaltat, *Greek: megalauchei*; which is not only magnifice loqui et gloriari, but also magna facere.

[3] Ver. 5. Quantus ignis, for quantulus by the Greek, *Greek: oligon pur*.

[4] Ver. 7. Et cæterorum, by which the ancient interpreter had read *Greek: ton allon*, though in the present Greek copies we read, *Greek: kai enalïon*, et Marinorum.

[5] Ver. 8. Inquietum malum; so in divers Greek manuscripts, *Greek: akatastaton*, though in others, *Greek: akatacheton*, quod coerceri non potest.

[6] Ver. 17. Suadibilis, *Greek: eupēithes*; which may either signify easy to be persuaded or who can easily persuade.

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#### JAMES 4

**Ver. 1.** *Whence are wars [1] and contentions*, in all kinds, but from your lusts and disorderly passions, coveting to have and enjoy what you have not, as to pleasures, riches, honours, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *You covet, and have not.* Though God has promised that whosoever asks shall receive, (Matthew vii. 8.) yet no wonder you receive not, *because you ask amiss*, by asking such temporal things as would be prejudicial to your soul, or because you ask not with humility, devotion, and perseverance. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Adulterers*: which is here taken in a figurative sense for those who love creatures more than God, the true spouse of their souls; who reflect not that the love and friendship of this world is an enemy to God, and the true manner of serving him. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Do you think that the scripture saith in vain: To envy doth the spirit covet, with dwelleth in you?* [2] This verse is obscure, and differently expounded. By some, of an evil spirit in men, by which they covet and envy others for having what they have not. Others understand God's spirit inhabiting in them; and then it is an interrogation, and reprehension, as if he said: Doth God's spirit, which you have received, teach or excite you to covet and envy others, and not rather to love and wish their good? And to enable men to do this, God is not wanting, who gives us greater grace, especially to the humble that ask it, though he resists the proud. (Witham) --- It is not evident to what part of Scripture St. James here alludes, the exact words are nowhere in the sacred writings. That which seems the most like this text, and the most adapted to his subject, is a passage from Ezechiel, "I will set my jealousy against thee:" (Ezechiel xxiii. 25.) i.e. I have loved thee with the love of jealousy, and I will revenge upon thee my slighted affections. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6.** *But he giveth greater grace.* The Holy Spirit which dwelleth in you, giveth you graces in proportion to your fidelity in complying with them, and according to your humility and the love which you bear to your neighbour. (Calmet) --- St. James may also mean by these two verses, to exhort the Jews and Gentiles, who were rather jealous of each other, to nourish no jealousy against one another, not be troubled at the blessing which their neighbour enjoyed from the

bountiful hand of the Almighty. The will God deal to us with a more liberal hand, and will bestow upon us greater graces in proportion as we lay aside all ill-will towards our neighbour. But that he will withhold his hand from the envious man, because he resists the proud, and give his grace to the humble. Glory is the exclusive property of heaven; whoever, therefore assumes it to himself, makes God his enemy. There is nothing in man since his fall; there is nothing in holy writ which does not preach to us this truth. --- N. B. These last words, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," are only in the Septuagint edition. Proverbs iii. 34. The Hebrew and Vulgate read in this place, "He shall scorn the scorers, and to the meek he will give grace." (Calmet)

**Ver. 7.** *Be subject therefore to God;* humble yourselves in his sight, considering your own nothing. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Purify your heart* from the love of creatures, so that your affections be not divided betwixt God and this world, like persons of *two minds* [3] or two souls. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Be afflicted* [4] *and mourn*, and deplore your sins against his divine majesty; punish yourselves, and think not that a mere change of life is sufficient after so many sins committed. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Detract not one another*, (nor judge rashly) *brethren*. Though he spoke so much against the evils of the tongue, he give them a special admonition against the vice of detraction, so common in the world, as also against rash judgments, which happen so frequently where there are dissensions and divisions. He that detracteth, judgeth, and rashly condemneth his brother, may be said to detract and judge the law, inasmuch as he seem to condemn and condemn the law, by which these sins are forbidden; when, instead of obeying and complying with the law, he rather takes upon himself to act as a judge,[5] without fear of the law and of God, the only lawgiver, who is to judge all our actions, and who alone is able to destroy, or to free us and deliver us from the punishments we have deserved. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *To-day or to-morrow*, &c. An admonition against that presumption, when persons forget the uncertainty of life, and the vanity of all things in this world, which vanish like a vapour, and can never be relied upon, so as to count upon years and the time to come. All things here appear and disappear in a moment. Take heed, therefore, not to *glory* or boast *in your arrogancies*; (ver. 16.) literally, *pride*; like the rich man, (Luke x.) who thought of nothing but a long and merry life, and was cut off that very night. And being now admonished, reflect that it is sinful to know what is good, what is your duty, and not to comply with it. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *For what is your life? it is a vapour*. We frequently meet with three beautiful comparisons in holy writ. "Remember that my life is but wind....As a cloud is consumed, and passeth away; so he that shall go down to hell, shall not come up." (Job vii. 7, 9.) "Man is like to vanity, his days pass away like a shadow." (Psalm cxliii. 4.) Similar expressions also frequently occur in profane authors.

Nemo tam Divos habuit faventes

Crastinum ut possit sibi polliceri. *Seneca*.

With reason then did our Saviour say, "Be you then also ready, for at what hour you think not, the Son of Man will come." (Luke xii. 40.) (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 1. Unde bella et lites? *Greek: polemoi kai machai*, as also ver. 2, litigatis et belligeratis, *Greek: machesthe, kai polemeite*. I see no reason to translate it, by lawsuits and pleadings, as Mr. N.

[2] Ver. 5. Ad invidiam concupiscit Spiritus, qui habitat in vobis: *Greek: pros phthonon epipothei to pneuma o katokesen* (habitavit) *Greek: en umin*. Ven. Bede expounds it, nunquid Spiritus Gratiae....hoc concupiscit ut invidetis alterutrum?

[3] Ver. 8. Duplices animo, *Greek: dipsuchoi*.

[4] Ver. 9. Miseri estote, *Greek: talaiporesate*.

[5] Ver. 11. Parens....exterminabitur, *Greek: phainomene, aphanizomene*.

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## JAMES 5

**Ver. 1-6.** Go now *rich men*, &c. In the first six verses, he gives admonitions to those among the Christians who were rich, not to rely on riches, nor value themselves on this account. You must look upon your riches and treasures as if they were already *putrefied* and corrupted, your gold and silver eaten and consumed with rust: and their rust shall rise in *testimony* and judgment against you, for not making better use of them. As your coin is eaten with rust, so shall your bodies be hereafter as it were eaten and consumed by fire. You heap up to yourselves a treasure in the day of wrath, while through covetousness, and hard heartedness, you defraud *labourers* of their *hire*, living at the same time in feasting and luxury, as *in the day of slaughter*. That is, feasting as men are accustomed to do, on the days when victims are slaughtered, offered, and eaten with great rejoicing. Others expound it, as if you were feeding, and making yourselves fit sacrifices and victims for God's anger and indignation. (Witham) --- *You have feasted*, &c. The Greek is, "you have lived in delicacies and debaucheries, and have feasted upon your hearts as for the day of sacrifice:" *Greek: Etruphesate, kai espatalesate ethrepsate tas kardias umon os en emera sphages*. That is, you have fattened yourselves with good cheer and sensual pleasures, like victims prepared for solemn sacrifice. (Calmet) --- Others among you have unjustly oppressed, accused, and brought to condemnation *the just one*, by which seems to be understood just and innocent men, who are divers times deprived of their fortunes, and even of their lives, by the unjust contrivances of powerful wicked men. (Witham)

**Ver. 7-11.** *Be patient*, &c. He now in these five following verses turns his discourse from the rich to the poor, exhorting them to patience till the coming of the Lord to judgment, which *draweth near*; his coming to judge every one is at his death. Imitate the patience of the husbandman, waiting for fruit after that the earth hath received the timely and *early* [1] rain soon after the corn is sown, and again more rain, that comes later to fill the grain before it comes to be ripe. This seems to be the sense by the Greek: others expound it, till he receive the early and latter fruits. (Witham) --- *Behold the judge standeth before the door*. This expression is synonymous with that in the foregoing verse. "The coming of the Lord is at hand." This way of speaking is not uncommon in Scripture. Thus God said to Cain: "If thou hast done evil, shall not sin forth with be present at the door?" St. James is here speaking of the approaching ruin of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. (Calmet) --- Call to mind for your encouragement the trials and constancy[2] *of the prophets: the patience of Job*, after which God rewarded him with great blessings and property, and *you have seen the end of the Lord*; that is, what end the Lord was pleased to give to Job's sufferings. But St. Augustine, Ven. Bede, &c. would have these words, *the end of the Lord*, to be understood of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross, for which God exalted him, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *but above all things....swear not*, &c. This earnest admonition is against all kind of oaths in common conversation, (not against oaths made on just and necessary occasions) and in the very same words, as our blessed Saviour warned all people against this sin of swearing. (Matthew, chap. v.) How unaccountably is this commandment of God contemned? And what a dreadful account will some day be exacted for so many oaths, curses, and blasphemies, which are now so common, that we may rather wonder at the patience of God and that already exemplary punishments have not fallen upon whole cities and kingdoms for this continued profanation of the holy name of God? (Witham) --- St. James here repeats the injunctions of our



Saviour, *not to swear at all*. (Matthew v. 34.) See the annotations in that place.

**Ver.14-15.** *Is any man sick among you?* [3] or in danger of death by sickness, *let him call, or bring in the priests of the Church, &c.* The apostle here enjoins the constant use of the sacrament, called extreme unction, or the last *anointing with oil*, instituted, (as were all the sacraments of the Church) by our Saviour Christ, and which is here fully and clearly delivered in plain words, expressing, 1. the persons to whom this sacrament is to be administered; 2. the minister; 3. the form; 4. the matter; 5. the effects. As to the first, *is any man sick among you?* This sacrament then is to be given to every believing Christian, who is in danger of death by sickness. 2. *Bring in the priests*, one or more, they are the ministers of this sacrament. The Protestant translation has the *elders*; yet in their book of common prayer, he who is called in to assist and pray with the sick, is called either the minister, the curate, or the priest, never the elder. Dr. Wells has not changed the word *elders* in his translation; but in his paraphrase he expounds it of those ministers of the church who are above deacons. 3. *And let them pray over him.* Besides other prayers, the form of this sacrament is by way of prayer, *let the Lord forgive thee, &c.* 4. *Anointing him with oil.* The oil with which he is anointed by the priest, is the outward visible sign, and the matter of this sacrament, as water is the matter of baptism. 5. *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, &c.* All the sacraments of the new law have their virtue from the merits of our Saviour, Christ, and therefore must be ministered and received with faith in our Redeemer. (Witham) --- *Is any man sick?* &c. The Greek expression in this place is equivalent to, "Is any one dangerously ill amongst you?" *Greek: Asthenei tis en umin.* The primary intention of this sacrament of extreme unction, is to confer a special grace upon the dying Christian, to strengthen him in his last and dreadful conflict, when the prince of darkness will exert his utmost to ruin his poor soul. But besides this, it was also intended to free man from venial sin, and likewise from mortal, if guilty of any, provided he were contrite and not able to have recourse to the sacrament of penance. But the sacrament of penance being the only regular means of obtaining pardon for mortal sin committed after baptism, a person must first have recourse to this sacrament, if he be able, as necessary preparation for the sacrament of extreme unction. Other effects of this sacrament are, that it lessens the temporal punishment due to sin, and restores health to the worthy receiver, if it be expedient for the good of his soul. (St. Augustine, serm. 215. C. Theol. Petav. Habert. Bailly, &c. de Extrem. Unct.) --- How great then is the folly of such persons as are afraid to receive this sacrament, imagining it to be the irrevocable sentence of impending dissolution? whereas one of the very effects of this sacrament is to restore health, if it be expedient for the soul; and who would wish for health upon any other conditions? (Haydock) --- The anathemas pronounced by the council of Trent against those who deny the existence of this sacrament, are sufficient to establish the belief of it in the minds of Catholics. See session 14. canon 1. 2. and 3. of the council of Trent. It may be proper, however, to observe, in confirmation of our belief of this sacrament, that whenever the ancient Fathers have had occasion to speak of extreme unction, they have always attributed to it all the qualities of a sacrament, as St. John Chrysostom who proves from this text of St. James the power which the priest has to forgive sins; (lib. 3. de Sacerdotio.; St. Augustine, ser. 215) not to mention Origen, who wrote at the beginning of the third century, (hom. ii. in Levit.) enumerating the different ways by which sins are forgiven in the new law, says, "That they are remitted when the priest anoint the sick with oil, as is mentioned in St. James." When Decentius, bishop of Eugenium in Italy, in 416, wrote to Innocent I. upon this sacrament, he makes no question whether it was a sacrament, but only consults him concerning the manner of administering; whether a bishop could give it, or whether priests were the only administerers of this sacrament, as St. James says, "Let them call in the priests of the Church;" and whether it could be given to penitents before they had been reconciled by absolution. To the former question, the pope replied there could be no doubt, as St. James could never mean that bishops were excluded as being higher than priests; but that the word presbyter was then used indiscriminately for both bishops and priests. (Haydock) --- As to the next question, whether penitents could receive this sacrament before absolution, he answered in the negative. "For," says he, "can it be thought that this one sacrament can be given to those who are declared unworthy of receiving the rest?" (Innocent I. in epist. ad Decent. chap. viii.; Habert. de Extre. Unct. --- If it be objected that mention is not more frequently made of this sacrament in the writings of the ancients, we will answer with Bellarmine, that many of the

mysteries were kept secret, to preserve them from the ridicule of the infidels. That in the times of persecution it was more difficult to administer this sacrament and less necessary, as the greatest part of Christians died not by sickness but by martyrdom. (Theo. Petav. de Extre. Unc.) --- Ven. Bede in Luke ix. speaketh thus: "It is clear that this custom was delivered to the holy Church by the apostles themselves, that the sick should be anointed with oil consecrated by the bishop's blessing." --- *Let him bring in, &c.* See here a plain warrant of Scripture for the sacrament of extreme unction, that any controversy against its institution would be against the express words of the sacred text in the plainest terms. (Challoner) --- And *the Lord*, by virtue of this sacrament, or if you will, sacramental prayer, *shall raise him up*, shall give him spiritual strength and vigour to resist the temptations which at that hour are most dangerous. He shall also *raise him up*, by restoring him his corporal health, when God sees it more expedient for the sick man. --- *And if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him*, not merely by prayer, but by this sacrament. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *Confess, therefore, your sins, &c.* Divers interpreters expound this of sacramental confession, though, as the authors of the annotations on the Rheims Testament observe, this is not certain. The words *one to another*, may signify that it is not enough to confess to God, but that we must also confess to men, and not to every man, but to those whom God appointed, and to whom he hath given the power of remitting sins in his name. I cannot but observe that no mention at all is made, "in the visitation and communion of the sick," in the Protestant common prayer book, of this comfortable passage out of St. James, of calling in *the priests of the Church*, of their *anointing him with oil....* and that *his sins shall be forgiven him*. Perhaps having laid aside that sacrament, it seemed to them better to say nothing of those words. But such a confession as is practised by all Catholics, is at least there advised. "The sick person," saith the book of common prayer, "here shall be moved to make a special confession of his sins....After which confession, the priest shall absolve him after this sort. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent, forgive thee....and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, " &c. Here is a special confession, or a confession of particular sins; here is a power of forgiving sins in God's name, acknowledged to be given to the Church, and to priests; here are the very same words used by every Catholic priest in the sacrament of penance. This is clearly ordained in their liturgy: how far it is complied with, I know not. (Witham) --- *One to another*. That is, to the priests of the Church, whom (ver. 14.) he had ordered to be called for, and brought in to the sick: moreover, to confess to persons who had no power to forgive sins, would be useless. Hence the precept here means that we must confess to men whom God hath appointed, and who, by their ordination and jurisdiction, have receive the power of remitting sins in his name. (Challoner) --- *Pray for one another*. Here is recommended prayer in general, as a most necessary Christian duty. He encourages them to it by the example of Elias [Elijah]. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *He who causeth a sinner to be converted, &c.* St. James concludes his epistle with a work of charity, one of the most acceptable to Almighty God, and most beneficial to our neighbour, when any one becomes instrumental in converting others from their errors, or from a wicked life; for it is only God that can convert the heart. But he who with a true and charitable zeal, animated with the love of God and of his neighbour, makes this the chief business of his life, has this comfort here given him, that this will *cover* in the sight of God *a multitude of sins*, which he may have contracted through human frailty. The Church of England, when they modelled the articles of their reformation, received this epistle of James as canonical. They profess to follow the holy Scriptures as the only rule of their belief: they find in the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter these words: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil....and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." In these words they find all that they themselves require, to be a sacrament of the new law; to wit, a precept or injunction, clear and unlimited as to time, a visible sign, with a promise of invisible grace, in remitting sins, the minister of it, and the persons specified who are to receive it. They also found this practised at the time of the reformation by the Universal Church, by all Catholics, both in the east and west, both by the Latin and by the Greek Churches; and that all Christian Churches received it as a sacrament; and yet they thought fit to lay it quite aside, as if it was neither a sacrament nor a holy ceremony, nor a pious custom fit to be retained. They must

have judged that they had convincing proofs both to contradict in other things the judgment and belief of the Catholic Church, and also in this particular; as to which latter case, I shall examine the reasons which they bring. I presume it may be needless to insist upon the groundless imagination of Wycliff, and some heretics about that time, who denied this to be a sacrament, fancying it was prescribed by St. James, because the oil of Palestine was a sovereign remedy to cure diseases. If so, any physician, any old woman or nurse to the sick, might have applied oil full as well, if not better than the priests. Calvin, and the reformation writers, give us the following reasons or conjectures, that this anointing, as well as that, (Mark vi. 13.) was only to be used for a time, by those who had the gift of curing diseases miraculously; so that like other miraculous gifts, (as the speaking of tongues, prophesying, &c.) it was but to last during the first planting of the Christian faith. Dr. Fulk, against the Rheims Testament, and Mr. Baxter, &c. affirm boldly, that Christ "appointed his apostles to anoint those with oil whom they cured." And Dr. Hammond says, "that the anointing with oil, was a ceremony used by Christ and his apostles in their miraculous cures." They assert this, as if it was taught by Scripture itself. They are no less positive that this anointing soon ceased, and was laid aside with the gift of miraculous cures, given sometimes to the first Christians at their baptism, or when they received the Holy Ghost in the sacrament of confirmation. Dr. Fulk, besides this, is positive that "the Greek Church, never to this day received this anointing and praying over the sick as a sacrament." These are their arbitrary, groundless, and false expositions, which they bring against a clear text of the holy Scriptures. It might be sufficient to oppose the judgment and authority of the Church to their private judgment. But to answer in short each particular: we find by the evangelists, (Matthew x. 8.; Mark vi. 13.; Luke x. 9.) that Christ gave to his twelve apostles, and afterwards to his seventy-two disciples, in their first mission before his death, (which was only into the cities of Israel) a power of *casting out devils, of raising the dead, or curing diseases* in his name. And St. Mark tells us, *that they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick with oil, and cured them.* But when Dr. Fulk and others add, that our Saviour appointed, ordered, or commanded them to anoint with oil those whom they cured, no such thing is said, nor insinuated, neither by St. Mark nor by any of the evangelists, nor any where in the holy Scriptures. And how Dr. Hammond could tell us that this "anointing with oil was a ceremony used by Christ himself," I cannot imagine. As for the apostles and disciples, they might cure many, making use of oil, and many without it by laying hands upon them, by a prayer, or by calling upon the name of Jesus, as the seventy-two disciples returned to him with joy, (Luke x. 17.) saying, *Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name.* Neither is it judge probable by the interpreters that the apostles, in their miraculous cures, were tied up or confined to the use of oil: especially since we find that after Christ's resurrection, in their second mission to all nations, Christ foretells (Matthew xvi. 18.) that they who believe in him, shall have this miraculous gift of healing the sick, but mentions only the laying of hands upon them: *they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall be well.* Besides had Christ appointed or given orders to his disciples to make use of oil in such miraculous cures, it would scarce have happened but we should have some examples of it in the Acts of the Apostles, where so many miraculous cures are related to have been done by St. Peter, by St. Paul, and others, but no mention of this ceremony of oil. We agree with our adversaries that this gift of miraculous cures, of which St. Paul speaks, (1 Corinthians xii.) was common only for a short time, like the other gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were necessary, as St. Augustine takes notice, at the first planting of the Christian faith; and so that anointing with oil, merely a sit was made use of in miraculous cures of the body, soon ceased, perhaps even before our Saviour's death; but we believe our Saviour appointed water to be the matter of the sacrament of baptism, so he would have oil to be the matter of the sacrament of the sacrament of extreme unction, which he instituted to strengthen the souls of the sick, against the dangers and temptations at the approach of death, and of which St. James here speaks near upon thirty years after Christ's ascension. And the anointing in St. Mark, used in corporal diseases, may be looked upon as a figure of the sacrament of extreme unction in St. James, as the frequent washings or baptisms, as they are called, of the Jews, and especially the baptism of St. John [the Baptist], was a figure of the baptism of Christ. The miraculous gift of healing, as well as other gifts of the Holy Ghost, was often given with the sacraments, which were to be always continued, and not to cease, with those gifts. We may also take notice, that neither they who had this gift of healing, had any command or advice to make use of it to all that were sick, nor were all that were sick ordered to seek for a cure of those who

had this gift; whereas here St. James orders every one to send for the priests of the Church to anoint him, and pray over him for spiritual relief. St. Timothy had frequent infirmities, as we read 1 Timothy v. 23. nor yet did St. Paul, who had that gift, cure him. The same St. Paul *left Trophimus sick at Miletum*. (2 Timothy iv. 20.) Epaphroditus, St. Paul's *companion in his labours*, was sick, when he had St. Paul with him, *even unto death*; that is, so as to be at the point of death (Philippians ii. 27.); nor yet did St. Paul, but God, restore him to his health. And if St. James had spoken of a miraculous restoring of corporal health by that anointing, he should rather have said: bring in those who have the gift of healing; for we may reasonably suppose that may had this gift who were not priests, and we have no reason to suppose that all priests had this gift. Our adversaries tell us with great assurance, that this anointing mentioned by St. James was soon laid aside; which, say they, we may gather from the silence of the writers in the three following ages [centuries]. To this merely negative argument the Catholics answer: 1. That it is enough we have the tradition and practise of the Church, witnessed by the writers in the ages [centuries] immediately succeeding. 2. That the greatest part of the writings in those ages [centuries] are not extant. 3. The writers of those times seldom mentioned those things which were sufficiently known among the Christians by daily use, especially what related to the sacraments and mysteries of the Christian religion, which (as it appears by the writings that they were able to preserve) they made it their particular endeavour to conceal from the heathens, who turned them to derision and contempt. In the mean time, had not this anointing been always retained and continued, the ages [centuries] immediately following would not have conspired every where to practise it, and to look upon it as a sacrament. Not to insist on the authority of Origen,[4] in the beginning of the third age [century], hom. ii. in Levit.) who numbering up the different ways by which sins are forgiven in the new law, says, that they were remitted when *priests anoint the sick with oil*, as in the epistle of St. James; St. John Chrysostom[5] in the end of the fourth age [century], (in his third book de Sacerdotio, tom. i. p. 384. Nov. Ed. Ben. written before the end of the fourth age, about the year 375) says, that *priests* (and his word expresseth sacrificing priests, not elders) *have now* a power to remit *sins*, which he proves from those words in St. James, *Is any man sick among you?* &c. This shews, as do also Origen's words, that this custom was then continued in the East, in the Greek Church, and that it was believed a sacrament, of which the priests only were the ministers. Innocent I.[6] in his answers to Decentius, bishop of Eugenum, in Italy, at the beginning of the fifth age, in the year 416, calls this anointing and prayer over the sick, set down in St. James' epistle, *a sacrament* in the same sense as other sacraments in the new law. See Labbe's Councils, tom. ii. p. 1248. And as to what Innocent I. and Ven. Bede relate of a custom by which lay persons, when a priest could not be had, anointed and prayed over a person in danger, it was only to testify their desire of having the sacrament: as it was likewise a pious custom in some places for sinners to make a confession to a layman, not that they then looked upon it as a sacrament, but only that they hoped God would accept of their private devotions and humiliations, when they could not have a priest to administer the sacraments to them. It is needless to mention authors in the following ages [centuries]. St. Gregory (Sacramentarium. fer. 5. in Cœna Dni.) describes the ceremony of blessing oil to be used in the anointing of the sick. Theodore, made archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 668, among other decrees, ordains that sick persons receive the holy unction, set down by St. James. The Capitularia of Charles the great, say that no one, when about to depart out of this world, ought to want the anointing of the sacrament of oil. The same is ordained in the council of Chalons, the year 813, canon 48; by a council at Aix la Chapelle, the year 830, canon 5; by the council of Mayence, in the year 847, canon 26, &c. Now since we find this anointing made use of as a sacrament at least from the fourth age [century], let our adversaries tell us when this anointing prescribed by St. James was left off, and when and how it came to be taken up again. They have no manner of proofs for either; and yet we have a right, as the authors of the annotations on the Rheims Testament observe, to demand clear and convincing proofs in this case, when the Scripture seems so clear for us and against them. Dr. Fulk affirms boldly, that *this anointing was never to this day received in the Greek Church as a sacrament*. This only shews how little credit is to be given to him. He might have found great reason to doubt of his bold assertion, since neither Photius, in the ninth age [century], nor Michael Cerularius, in the eleventh, ever objected this difference betwixt their Greek and the Latin Church, at a time when they reckoned up even the most minute differences either in doctrine or discipline, so as to find

fault with the Latins for shaving their beards. He might have found it by what happened at the time of the council of Lyons, in the thirteenth age [century], when the pope, in his letter to the emperor of Constantinople, wrote that the Latin Church, and all in communion with him, acknowledged seven sacraments, which the Greeks never blamed. He might have observed that same when the Greeks and Armenians came to an union in the council of Florence, in the fifteenth age [century]. The same Dr. Fulk, who wrote about the year 1600, could scarce be ignorant of the ill success the *Augsbourg confession* met with among the Greeks, to whom, when the Lutherans had sent copies of their faith and of their reformation, Jeremy, the patriarch of Constantinople, with a synod of the Greeks, condemned their articles, and among other points, declared that they held "in the orthodox Catholic Church seven divine sacraments," the same as in the Latin Church, *baptism....and the holy oil*. Had Dr. Fulk lived a little longer, he must have been more and more ashamed to find other Greek synods condemning him and all the said reformers. For when Cyrillus Lucaris, advanced to the see of Constantinople by the interest of the French Calvinists, began to favour and support the doctrine of the Calvinists, the Greeks in several synods under their patriarchs, (in the years 1639, 1642, 1671, and 1672) condemned Cyril and the new doctrine of the said reformers, and expressly declared that they held seven sacraments. See M. Arnauld, tom. iii. Perpetuite de la Foy; and the dissertations of M. Le Brun, tom. iii. p. 34, and 572, disert. 12, where he shews that all the churches of the East, and all the Christian churches of the world, though separated from the communion and subordination to the Pope, agree with the Latin Church, as to the sacrifice of the Mass, as to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and as to the seven sacraments. (Witham) --- If, with holy Scripture, we must allow that charitable persons on earth may prove instrumental, under God, to their neighbour's salvation, why are we to deny this to the saints in heaven, whose charity for man is much greater?

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[1] Ver. 7. Temporaneum et Serotinum. In most Greek manuscripts *Greek: ueton proimon kai opsimon*, pluviam priorem et posteriorem.

[2] Ver. 10. Exemplum accipite, exitus mali, et laboris, et patientiæ, *Greek: kakopatheias kai makrothumias*. There is nothing in the Greek for laboris, which the Latin interpreter may have added to express the full sense.

[3] Ver. 14-15. Infirmatur, *Greek: asthenei tis*; infirmum, *Greek: kamnonta*, laborantem; alleviabit, *Greek: egerei*, suscitabit.

[4] Ver. 20. Origen, in hom. ii, in Levit. (p. 68. Ed. Par. in the year 1574) where he numbers the different ways by which sins are remitted in the new law, and speaking of penance, says, In quo impletur et illud quod Apostolus dicit, Si quis autem infirmatur, vocet presbyteros ecclesiæ.

[5] Ver. 20. St. John Chrysostom, *Greek: iereis....echousin exousian*, habent potestatem.

[6] Ver. 20. Innocent I. Pœnitentibus istud infundi non potest, quia genus est Sacramenti, nam quibus reliqua Sacramenta negantur, quomodo unum genus putatur concedi? By charisma, Innocent I. understands, oleum ad unguendum.

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## 1 PETER

### THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PETER, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

This first Epistle of St. Peter, though brief, contains much doctrine concerning faith, hope, and charity, with divers instructions to all persons of every state and condition. The apostle commands submission to rulers and superiors, and exhorts all to the practice of a virtuous life, in imitation of Christ. This epistle was written with such apostolical dignity, as to manifest the supreme authority with which its writer, the prince of the apostles, had been invested by his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. He wrote it at Rome, which figuratively he calls Babylon, about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- St. Peter, otherwise called Simon, son of John or Jonas, was from Bethsaida, a city of Galilee. He was married, and lived at Capharnaum, and was employed with his brother Andrew, as fishermen, when our Lord called them. St. Peter on every occasion testified a more than usual zeal for his Master, and hence our Lord shewed him a very particular and very marked attention. He would have Peter present at his transfiguration; (Luke ix. 28.) and at another time declared that he [Peter] was a rock, upon which he [Jesus Christ] would build his Church, against which the gates of hell should never prevail. (Matthew xvi. 18.) Although St. Peter had the misfortune or weakness to deny Jesus Christ in his passion, our Lord, after his resurrection, gave him fresh proofs of his regard. (Matthew xvi. 7.) He continued him in his primacy over all, and appointed him in the most explicit manner visible head of his Church, when thrice asking Peter: "lovest thou me more than these?" and St. Peter as often answering, Christ said to him: "feed my lambs, feed my sheep." (John xxi. 15.) --- This epistle was always received in the Church as *canonical*, and as written by St. Peter, prince of the apostles. It is commonly agreed that it was written from Rome, which St. Peter calls Babylon, (Chap. v. 13.) and directed to those in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, &c. (ver. 1.) who were before Jews or Gentiles, and had been converted to the Christian faith. It is certain this letter was not written till after the true believers had the name of Christians. (Chap. iv. 16.) Many think it was written before the year 49; but this is not certain. Others judge not till after the year 60, and some not till a short time before he wrote his second epistle. See Tillemont, t. i. Art. 31. on S. Pet. and tom. ii. on S. Mark, p. 89.) The main design is to confirm the new converts in the faith of Christ, with divers instructions to a virtuous life. (Witham) --- Grotius, Erasmus, and Estius, discover in this epistle, a strength and majesty worthy the prince of the apostles. Est autem epistola profecto digna Apostolorum Principe, plena autoritatis et majestatis Apostolicæ: verbis parca, sententiis referta.

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## 1 PETER 1

**Ver. 1.** *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers dispersed.* Literally, *of the dispersion*; i.e. to the Jews or Gentiles now converted, who lived dispersed in those countries, chosen or elected[1] according to the foreknowledge and eternal decree of God unto *the sanctification of the spirit*. (Witham) --- *Asia* is taken for one of the four quarters of the globe, or for Asia Minor, or for that province of Asia Minor of which Ephesus is the capital. It is in this latter sense it appears here to be understood, since Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia are also contained in the provinces of Asia Minor. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 2.** *Unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;* i.e. to be saved by the merits of his death and passion. (Witham) --- All the three divine Persons conspire in the salvation of the elect. The Father as principle of their election, by his eternal prescience; the Son as victim for their sins, and the source of all merit; the Holy Ghost as the spirit of adoption and love, animating and sanctifying them, and leading them to glory.

**Ver. 4.** *Reserved in heaven for you.* Literally, *in you*; that is, it is also in you by reason of that lively faith and hope, which is in you, of enjoying Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *At the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Literally, *in the revelation*; i.e. when he shall be revealed, manifested, and appear at the day of judgment. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Searching into what time, or manner of time.* The ancient prophets with longing and ardent desires, obtained to know of the Holy Ghost, the *spirit of Christ*, the time and the glory that followed those sufferings, by Christ's resurrection and ascension. All these were revealed to them, and they saw that they ministered things to you, not to themselves; that is, that these things they were ministers of, in prophesying about them, were not to happen in their time, but are not come to pass, as they have been preached to you. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *The Holy Ghost being sent down from heaven, on whom the Angels desire to look.*[2] This place is differently expounded. Some refer these words, *on whom the Angels desire to look*, to Jesus Christ, who was named in the foregoing verse; some to the Holy Ghost, who, being one God with the Father and the Son, the Angels are happy in seeing and loving him. See Estius and the Greek text. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *The loins of your mind girded.* It is a metaphor, to signify they must live in such a manner as to be always prepared for heaven, as persons used to gird their garments about them, when about to walk or run, or to undertake any labour. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *As children of obedience;* i.e. as obedient children. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *From your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers.* St. Peter teacheth what St. Paul repeats in many places, that it was in vain for them to hope to be saved by the ceremonies and precepts of the former law, to which their forefathers had added many unnecessary and groundless traditions. They could only hope for salvation by believing in Christ, by the price of whose precious blood they were redeemed from their sins, as they had heard by the word of the gospel preached to them. His doctrine is the same with that of St. Paul, of St. James, of St. John, and of the other apostles, that to be saved it is not enough to have faith or hope in Christ, but it must be a faith joined and working by charity, obeying the law of Christ in the spirit of charity with a sincere and brotherly love of every one, without setting our hearts upon the vanities and corruptible things of this world, remembering that all flesh is as grass, or the flowers of the field, which wither and pass away in a very short time. Thus presently vanish all riches, honours, pleasures, and all the glory of this life, but the word of God and his promises will bring us to happiness which will last for ever. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** Thus this new birth, common to you all, should form between you an union much more stable and solid than that formed in you by the ties of blood. (Bible de Vence)

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[1] Ver. 1. Electis, *Greek: eklektois*. It is certain this word does not only signify those who are predestinated to eternal glory, but those who are chosen or called to believe; as John vi. Christ says, that he had *elect* or chosen his twelve apostles, and yet one of them (Judas) was a devil. The Jews were called the elect people of God, as now are all Christians; nor can we think that all to whom St. Peter wrote, were predestinated to glory. Ibid.[Ver. 1.] Advenis dispersionis; i.e. dispersis in Ponto, &c.

[2] Ver. 12. In quem desiderant Angeli prospicere. The Greek manuscripts and copies at present have *Greek: eis a*, in quæ, which is commonly expounded to agree with the mysteries revealed to the prophets, and which the Angels rejoiced and were delighted to see fulfilled by the coming of Christ. It seems as if the ancient interpreter had read *Greek: eis o*, agreeing with *Greek: pneuma*, spiritum; or perhaps *Greek: eis on*, to agree with *Greek: theon*, understood. These changes of a letter might easily happen. It appears that not only divers Latin interpreters, but also some of the Greek Fathers brought these words to shew the divinity of the Holy Ghost, as St. Athanasius, Epist. i. ad Serap. p. 653. Edit. Ben.

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## 1 PETER 2

**Ver. 1.** *Wherefore laying aside all malice.* St. Peter having put them in mind of the great benefit of Christ's coming to redeem us from sin, exhorts them to avoid sin, to lead a life worthy of their vocation, to follow Christ's doctrine, and imitate his example. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Desire the rational [1] milk without guile,* or deceit. Without guile, in construction, does not agree with *new-born children*, but with milk, as appears by the text. The sense is, follow the pure doctrine of the gospel, without mixture of errors. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** Whoever has a relish for Jesus Christ, has also for his word; and such as have a relish for neither, are truly deplorable. Let us pray then that God would feed us with his word, and with the holy Eucharist, that contains his body and blood, his soul and his divinity, that we may thereby grow up to salvation.

**Ver. 4.** *The living stone, rejected, &c.* Christ is the chief foundation of his Church, the *corner-stone* of the building, whom the Jews, and other obstinate unbelievers, reject to their own condemnation and destruction. See Isaías xxviii. 16.; Matthew xxi. 42.; Acts iv. 11.; Romans ix. 32. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *You also....a holy [2] priesthood;* and, as he saith again, (ver. 9.) *a royal priesthood.* 1. Because they had ministers of God, who were truly and properly priests, of whom Christ is the chief. 2. Every good Christian in a less proper sense may be called a priest, inasmuch as he offers to God what in a less proper and metaphorical sense may be called sacrifices and oblations; that is, the sacrifice of an humble and contrite heart, (Psalm l.) the sacrifice of self-denials and mortifications, or prayer, almsdeeds, &c. And it is called a *royal priesthood*, as Christians may be called metaphorically kings, by governing their passions, or because they are invited to reign with Christ in his kingdom, to sit on his throne, &c. See Apocalypse iii. 21. &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Whereunto also they are [3] set,* or placed, i.e. by God's permission; not that God is the cause of their sins or damnation, (whose will is that every one be saved) but his justice has appointed and decreed punishments against those who, by their own wilful malice, refuse to believe and to follow his doctrine: their *stumbling* against this *stone* is wilful and obstinate. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *You are....a purchased people,* whom Christ purchased, bought and redeemed with the price of his precious blood. --- *That you may declare his [4] virtues;* i.e. the excellencies and perfections of God, who hath called you, and now made you his people, which you were not, at least in this matter before, neither you that were Jews, nor especially you that were Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *I beseech you....to refrain,* &c. from all unlawful and disorderly passions, that the Gentiles not yet converted may have nothing to blame in your lives and conversation, but may be edified and induced to praise God. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *In the day of visitation.* God is said to visit his people, sometimes by afflictions and punishments, and sometimes by graces and favours. Some think St. Peter here, by the *day of visitation*, means the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and that the sense is, that the heathen Romans seeing your peaceable dispositions and pious conversations, may have a favourable opinion of the Christian religion, and be converted. Others, that you and they to whom the gospel is preached, may glorify God when he visits them with graces and favours, whether exterior or interior. (Witham) --- Be careful not to give occasion to scandal. Detraction is the life of the world, and piety is most exposed to its shafts, because it most condemns the maxims of its followers.



**Ver. 13.** *To every human creature*,<sup>[5]</sup> to every one whom the order of Providence has placed over you, whether it be to emperors or kings, who have the supreme power in kingdoms, or to governors of provinces; obey your temporal princes, though heathens and idolaters, (as the Roman emperors were at that time enemies to the Christian religion) in all that is not sinful and against the law of God: for this is the will of God, and all power is from God. See Romans xiii. In like manner (ver. 18) servants must be subject and obey their masters, though they be infidels. See 1 Corinthians vii. By this you will silence the ignorance and calumnies of foolish men, who pretended that the Christian religion taught them to be disobedient to princes, and to be subjects of Christ only, their supreme spiritual king. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *As free*; to wit, from the slavery of sin, but take care not to make this Christian freedom and liberty *a cloak for malice*, as they do, who pretend that this makes subjects free from their obedience to temporal princes and magistrates; or servants free from the obedience due to their masters, even when they are *froward*,<sup>[6]</sup> ill-humoured, or cross to them. (Witham) --- There were some heretics in the days of St. Peter, as there are at present, who under pretext of evangelical liberty seek to be free from all even lawful subjection, and thus set themselves above the ordinances of both civil and ecclesiastical power.

**Ver. 19.** Take notice that *this is praiseworthy*, an effect of God's grace, a thing acceptable to God, when you suffer injuries patiently; whereas it is not glory, nothing that deserves commendation or reward, either before God or man, to suffer for doing ill, as a malefactor, who deserves punishments. But it is glorious and meritorious for you to suffer as Christians, and for the Christian faith: be not then ashamed to suffer in this manner. These sufferings are marks of God's favour towards you, and you have the example of Christ, which you must imitate. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** Christ, who was incapable of sinning, did not *revile* <sup>[7]</sup> them that reviled him; he suffered all with patience; he willingly gave himself up to Pontius Pilate, that judged him, and condemned him *unjustly* <sup>[8]</sup> to the death of the cross: and remember that all he suffered was to satisfy for your sins, that he bore our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. Remember always this great benefit of your redemption, and of your being called to believe in him, and to be eternally happy by following his doctrine; that all of you were as sheep going astray, lost in your ignorance and in your sins, but that by his grace and by his merits you are now called and converted to Jesus Christ, the great pastor and bishop of your souls. You are happy if you live under his care, inspection, and protection. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Rationabile sine dolo lac: *Greek: to logikon adolon gala*: both the adjectives agree with milk.

[2] Ver. 5. *Greek: Ierateuma agion basileion*. See St. Ambrose, in Psalm cxviii.; St. Augustine, lib. x. de lib. chap. 6. &c.

[3] Ver. 8. In quo et positi sunt: *Greek: eis o*, in quod, *Greek: etethesan*, which cannot agree with *Greek: logos*, or *Greek: githos*, but seems to agree with the whole sentence, which is to be understood of God's permission and punishment for their obstinacy.

[4] Ver. 9. Virtutes ejus, *Greek: tas aretas*, not *Greek: dunameis*, and so should not be translated powers, as by Mr. N.

[5] Ver. 13. Omni humanæ creaturæ, *Greek: ktisei*, which the Protestants here translate, to every ordinance; but they translated, creature, Mark xvi. 15.; Colossians i. 15.

[6] Ver. 16. Dyscolis, *Greek: skoliois*, pravis, curvis, &c.

[7] Ver. 23. Cum malediceretur, non maledicebat, *Greek: loidoroumenos*, convitiis appetitus;

improperly translated, cursed, by Mr. N.

[8] Ver. 23. Judicanti se injuste. In the present Greek we read *Greek: dikaïos*, juste, as also some Latin Fathers read. St. Augustine, (tract. 21. in Joan.) Commendabat autem judicanti juste; and so the sense is, that he commanded and committed his cause to God, the just judge of all.

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## 1 PETER 3

**Ver. 1.** *Let wives, &c.* In the first six verses he gives instructions to married women. 1. By their modest and submissive dispositions to endeavour to gain and convert their husbands, shewing them such a respect as Sara did, (whose daughters they ought to esteem themselves) who called Abraham her lord, or master; (Genesis xviii. 12.) 2. To be modest in their dress, without vanity; 3. That women take the greatest care of the *hidden man*, i.e. of the interior disposition of their heart, which he calls *the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit*; 4. *Not fearing any trouble*, when God's service or the duty to their husbands require it. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Husbands, &c.* His advice to husbands: 1. To carry themselves towards their wives with knowledge, prudence, and discretion; 2. Not in any imperious manner, but treating their wives with respect and honour, though a wife be the weaker vessel both in body and mind; 3. Considering themselves and their wives to be joint heirs with them of God's graces and favours, both in this world and the next; 4. That their prayers and duty to God be not hindered, neither by too great a fondness and compliance, nor by disagreements and dissensions. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Be ye all of one mind.* These instructions are not only for man and wife, but for every one, to whom in general these virtues are recommended. And every one's duty is comprised in these few words of Psalm xxxiii. "Turn away from evil, and do good....The eyes of the Lord are upon the just....But the countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil things," &c. Nothing can hurt you, and you need fear no menaces, no terrors, if with zeal you follow and adhere to what is good. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Always ready to satisfy,[1] &c.* St. Peter would have every Christian, according to his circumstances and capacity, ready to give general reasons of his faith and hope of salvation, both to infidels and heretics that refuse to believe. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Christ....being put to death indeed in the flesh, dying on the cross for our sins, but brought to life by the spirit.[2]* By the *spirit* here some understand Christ's divine spirit, and power of his divinity, by which he soon raised himself again from death to an immortal life by his glorious resurrection. But others by the *spirit* rather understand Christ's soul, by which he never died, which always remained united to his divine person, and which the third day he again reunited to his body. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *In which (to wit, soul or spirit) also he came, and preached to those spirits who were in prison.* The true and common interpretation of this place seems to be, that the soul of Christ, after the separation from the body and before the resurrection, descended to a place in the interior parts of the earth, called *hell* in that which we call the apostles' creed, (sometimes called Abraham's bosom, sometimes Limbus Patrum [Limbo of the Fathers], a place where were detained all the souls of the patriarchs, prophets, and just men, as it were in prison) and preached to these spirits in this prison; i.e. brought them this happy news, that he who was their Redeemer, who opened as it were heaven's gates. Among these were many who had been formerly at first incredulous in the time of Noe [Noah], who would not take warning from his preparing and building the ark, but it may be reasonably supposed that many of them repented of their sins when they saw the danger approaching, and before they perished by the waters of the deluge, so that they died at least not guilty of eternal damnation; because, though they were sinners, yet

they worshipped the true God, for we do not find any proofs of idolatry before the deluge. These then, and all the souls of the just, Christ descended to free from their captivity, from their prison, and to lead them at his ascension triumphant with him into heaven. The Church of England cannot quarrel with this exposition, which seems altogether conformable to the third of their thirty-nine articles, which at present runs thus: "As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed that he went down into hell." It is thus expressed in the articles under queen Elizabeth, in the year 1562; and in the articles put out ten years before, in the year 1552, in the fourth year of king Edward the sixth, the words were: "that the body of Christ lay in the grave until his resurrection, but the spirit which he gave up was with the spirits which were detained in prison, or in hell, and preached to them, as the place in St. Peter testifieth. Dr. Pearson on the fifth article of the creed, writes thus: "There is nothing which the Fathers agree in more, than as to a local and real descent of the soul of Christ into the infernal parts, unto the habitation of the souls departed....This was the general opinion of the Church, as may appear by the testimonies of those ancient writers, who lived successively and wrote in several ages, and delivered this exposition in such express terms as are not capable of any other interpretation." Thus Dr. Pearson. He cites the Fathers. See the edition, in the year 1683, p. 237. (Witham) --- *Prison*. See here a proof of a third place, or middle state of souls: for these spirits in prison, to whom Christ went to preach after his death, were not in heaven, nor yet in the hell of the damned; because heaven is no prison, and Christ did not go to preach to the damned. (Challoner) --- St. Augustine, in his 99th epistle, confesses that his text is replete with difficulties. This he declares is clear, beyond all doubt, that Jesus Christ descended in soul after his death into the regions below, and concludes with these words: *Quis ergo nisi infidelis negaverit fuisse apud inferos Christum?* In this prison souls would not be detained unless they were indebted to divine justice, nor would salvation be preached to them unless they were in a state that was capable of receiving salvation.

**Ver. 21.** *Baptism, &c.* That is, the ark was a figure of baptism, which saveth you from the death of the soul; and as no one was saved from the waters of the deluge but those few eight persons who were in the ark, so no one can enter into heaven if he hath not been baptized, or hath had a desire of it when come to the use of reason. And such persons as are capable of knowing what they receive, must come with the dispositions of faith and a true repentance, which is here called *the examination* (literally, *the interrogation* [3]) *of a good conscience*, who therefore are examined whether they believe in one God and three Persons, &c. (Witham) --- Baptism is said to be the like form with the water by which Noe [Noah] was saved, because the one was a figure of the other. --- *Not the putting away, &c.* As much as to say, that baptism has not its efficacy, in order to salvation, from its washing away any bodily filth or dirt; but from its purging the conscience from sin: when accompanied with suitable dispositions in the party, to answer the interrogations made at that time, with relation to faith, the renouncing of Satan with all his works, and the obedience to God's commands. (Challoner)

**Ver. 22.** Jesus now as our Redeemer, and as man, *sitteth on the right hand of God*, (see Mark xvi. 19.; Colossians i.; Hebrews i. 3. &c.) having swallowed up[4] (devoured or destroyed) death; having conquered and triumphed over the devil, sin, and death, that by his grace and his merits we might become heirs of eternal life; and is gone into heaven, Angels, &c. being made subject to him. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 15. Ad satisfactionem, *Greek: pros apologian*, ad defensionem.

[2] Ver. 18. In quo (spiritu) *Greek: en o (pneumati)* veniens *Greek: poreutheis*, profectus. As to the different expositions of this place, see Estius, Cornelius a Lapide, &c. which also Dr. Pearson sets down at large. The late Protestant writers, as may be seen in Dr. Hammond and Dr. Wells, expound this place so as to signify no real descent of Christ's soul into hell, or to any infernal place, but only that his divine spirit sent Noe [Noah] to preach to the spirits in the prison of their body, (i.e. to those wicked men who lived in the days of Noe) to exhort them to repentance. But this exposition, as Dr. Pearson observed, is against the general opinion of the Church and the

ancient Fathers; and of which St. Augustine said, (Epis. 163. tom. 2. p. 574) *Quis nisi infidelis negaverit, fuisse apud inferos Christum?*

[3] Ver. 21. *Conscientiæ bonæ interrogatio*, *Greek: eperotema*. See Estius.

[4] Ver. 22. *Deglutiens mortem, ut vitæ æternæ hæredes efficeremur*. These words, found in all Latin copies, and cited by the Latin Fathers, are scarce found in any Greek manuscript and so are omitted in the Protestant translation.

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## 1 PETER 4

**Ver. 1.** *He that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sins*. Some expound these words of Christ; but he never had committed the least sin. The true sense is, that every one who suffers by Christ's example, leaves off an sinful life, so as not to fall into great sins. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *For the time past is sufficient, &c.* As if he said, you who were Gentiles, have already lived too long in vices before your conversion; so that they who are not yet converted, *admire* [1] at the change they see in you, make a jest of you, talk against you for your not running on with them in the same wicked and shameful disorders: but they shall render an exact account of all to the just Judge of the living and the dead. For as I told you before, in the last chap. (ver. 19.) for this cause (i.e. because Christ is judge of all) he descended to the place where the souls of the dead were, and preached to them, shewing himself, their Redeemer, who judgeth and condemneth those who had lived according to the flesh, but gave life to those who had lived well, or done penance according to the spirit of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Charity covereth a multitude of sins*. It is a great means to atone for them; or it may signify, that a charitable mind excuses many sins in others. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *As good stewards of the manifold grace of God*. An admonition to the ministers of the gospel, to employ well their talents and the graces received to the honour and glory of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Think not strange, &c.* Be not surprised, nor discouraged that a hot and sharp persecution is come upon you at this time, as if it were a *new* and an extraordinary thing. It is what you must expect and be ready to receive with patience, and even with joy, when you suffer as Christ did before you, and for his sake: this is the way to eternal happiness in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Which is of the honour, glory, &c.* He gives them the reason why they must rejoice and look upon themselves happy to suffer for the name of Christ, because to suffer for God's sake is glorious, is a mark that the glorious, the honourable, and the powerful spirit of God rests upon them: for as Paul said, (Hebrews xii. 6.) "For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth; and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Nothing then is more honourable, nothing more advantageous, than to suffer for being a *Christian*. This word is only found here, and Acts xi. 26. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Or a railer*. [2] The Greek here signifies one that does evil, or a malefactor. --- *Or as coveting the goods of others*. [3] The Greek rather signifies one curiously prying into the affairs of others, which Protestants translate a *busy body*. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The time is that judgment should begin at the house of God*. By *judgment* seems to be here understood afflictions, persecutions, and trials in this world; and the sense is, that the time of this life is a time of suffering. --- *And if first at us*. That is, if the justice of God deal in this manner

with his friends whom he loves, much greater will be hereafter the punishments of sinners, and of those who have refused to believe in Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Scarcely.* That is, not without much labour and difficulty. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 3. In quo admirantur, *Greek: xenizontai*, from *Greek: xenos*, hospes, peregrinus. The same word is used ver. 12, nolite peregrinari in fervore, *Greek: me xenizesthe te en umin purosei*: in ustione, meaning the heat of persecutions.

[2] Ver. 15. Maledicus, *Greek: kakopoios*, malefactor.

[3] Ver. 15. Alienorum appetitor, *Greek: allotrioepiskopos*, aliorum inspector.

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## 1 PETER 5

**Ver. 1.** *The ancients, therefore, that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also an ancient,* [1] &c. According to the letter, *the senior, I, a fellow senior*; or, *the elder, I, a fellow elder.* Mr. Nary, and also the French translators, commonly put, *the priest, I your fellow priest.* Or even it might be, *the bishops, I, your fellow bishop.* The Latin word, *senior*, and the Greek word *presbyteros*, which here are in the text, if we should follow their derivation only, signify *elderly men*, or men advanced in years; but since by a received use, they signify and represent to us offices and dignities, either ecclesiastical or civil, either belonging to the Church or state, which in other languages are now generally known by other words, we may however be permitted to use, even in translating the holy Scriptures, those words and names by which now are represented to us those offices and dignities. It cannot be doubted but the Greek and Latin words, which we find in this verse, were applied, after the establishment of the new law of Christ, to signify such ministers of God and the Church which are now called priests and bishops: and it is for this reason that I judged it better to put the word *priest*, and *fellow priest*, (meaning priests of the higher order, commonly known by the name of bishops) than to use the words *seniors*, *elders*, or *presbyters*. I should not blame the Protestant translators for translating always the Greek word, *presbyter*, by the English word *elder*, nor the Rhemes translators for putting it here *senior*, if these words were sufficiently authorised by an ecclesiastical use and custom to signify priests or bishops; which I think can scarce be said, to say nothing that the word *elders* hath been used by fanatical men, who admit no ordination of bishops or priests by divine institution, and who have affixed it to their *lay elders*, who are appointed and degraded as it seemeth good to their congregations. Though the Protestants of the Church of England always translate *elders* for *presbyters* in the New Testament, yet I do not find this word once used in their liturgy or common prayer book, when any directions are given to those that perform the church office, who are called priests, bishops, curates, or ministers. --- *And a witness of the sufferings of Christ.* St. Peter being called and made the first or chief of the apostles soon after Christ began to preach, he was witness of what Christ suffered, both during the time of his preaching and of his passion. --- *Glory.* Some think that St. Peter only means, that he was present at his transfiguration, where was shewn some resemblance of the glory which is to come in heaven. Others think, that he expresseth the firm hopes he had of enjoying the glory of heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Feed the flock.* This shews he speaks of bishops and priests, and not of elders in years only.

**Ver. 3.** *Neither as domineering over the clergy.*[2] This may not only signify over the inferior ministers, who were subject to the bishops or priests, but also over the particular flocks which fell to their share, or to their lot to take care of. See the Greek. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Ye young men*, not only younger in age, but employed in offices inferior to those of the bishops and priests, *be subject to the ancients*. But even all of you by your carriage insinuate, practise, and give examples of humility one to another: *for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*. St. James (Chap. iv. 6.) repeats the same doctrine and the same words. See also James ii. 12. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *I have written briefly*, considering the importance of such mysteries, and necessary instructions. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *The church, which is in Babylon*, (at Rome, say Eusebius, St. Jerome, &c.) so called not only on account of the extent of its empire, but also for its idolatry and vices. --- *Mark, my son*: generally thought to have been St. Mark, the evangelist. (Witham) --- See the unjust prepossession of certain seceders. In this text, where all the lights of antiquity understand Rome by Babylon, they deny it; and in the book of Revelation, where all evil spoken of Babylon, there they will have it signify nothing else but Rome: yes, and the Church of Rome, not (as the holy Fathers interpret it) the temporal state of the heathen empire.

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[1] Ver. 1. Seniores, *Greek: presbuteros*; consenior, *Greek: sumpresbuteros*. It is certain that in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and in other languages, such as have a superiority and command over others, in the Church or in the commonwealth, have been called by words that by their derivation express men advanced in age and years; because men chosen to such offices were commonly, though not always, advanced in age. Yet whether old or young, we give them the names which use and custom hath affixed to their dignities; for example, in English, the chief magistrate of a town we call the *mayor* or *major*, not the *greater* of such a town; those who rule with him, we call the *aldermen*, not the *elderly men* according to the derivation. The like might be said of *senate*, *senators*, and many other names of offices and dignities; and, as the authors of the annotations on the Rhem. Testament observed, it would be ridiculous to translate such words according to their *etymologies*. We must not translate *pontifex*, a *bridge-maker*; *lapis*, a *hurt foot*, &c. *Greek: Apostolos*, by its derivation, signifieth only *one sent*, or a *messenger*; *Greek: episkopos*, an *overseer*, or *inspector*; *Greek: diakonos*, a *servant*, or *waiter*; yet Protestants as well as Catholics translate, *apostles*, *bishops*, *deacons*; and where *Greek: presbuteroi*, or seniors, signify men now known by these words, priests or bishops, why may we not in translating give them these names? It is true a particular difficulty occurs, because (as St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, and others have taken notice) the Greek word, *Greek: o presbuteros*, is used in the New Testament sometimes for those who by their dignity were *priests* only, sometimes for *bishops*, and many times in the gospels for those who were governors among the Jews, or members of their great council or sanhedrim and sometimes only for those who by their age were elder or more advanced in years. This makes it impossible, in translating, to represent the signification of this Greek word always in Latin or in English by the same Latin or English word, which a translator should endeavour to do as much as possible. The Protestant translators have indeed always rendered the Greek *presbuteros* by the English word *elder*; they adhere to the derivation of the word without regard to the different offices signified by that one word, and for which we have different words in English. I take notice that the Latin interpreter of the old Vulgate, though generally very exact, has not followed this rule of translating *Greek: presbuteros* by the same Latin word: for example, Acts xv. 2. he puts *presbyteros*, and yet in the same chapter (ver. 4, 6, 22, and 23) he puts *seniores*. Acts xx. 17. for *Greek: presbuteros* he puts *maiores natu*; and these same persons, by the 28th verse, are called *episcopi*, *Greek: episkopoi*. In the epistle to Timothy and Titus, as also in those of Sts. James, Peter, and John, for the same Greek word we sometimes find *presbyteri*, and sometimes *seniores*. A late English translation from the Latin, (in the year 1719. by C. N.) for *seniores* and *presbyteri* sometimes puts *elders*, sometimes *priests*, whether it be *seniores* or *presbyteri* in the Latin; and when mention is made of the ministers of the gospel, (as Acts xv. 4.) for *seniores* he translates *elders*, and yet in the same chapter (ver. 6, 22, and 23) for the same word he puts *priests*, &c. The translators of the Rhem. Testament were more exact, for generally speaking of *seniores* they put *the ancients*, when mention was made of those who were *Greek: presbuteroi* among the Jews; when *seniores* were applied to the ministers

of the gospel, they put *seniors*; and for *presbyteri*, they translate *priests*. Yet they have gone from this in one or two places; for Acts xi. 30. where we read *mittentes ad seniores*, they put to the *ancients*; and also, Acts xvi. 4. for *senioribus* we again find *ancients*. For my part I judge it best, for distinction sake, to put *elders* in the gospels for *seniores*, or *Greek: presbuteroi* of the Jews. I had put in the Acts of the Apostles *seniors* where I found *seniores*, speaking of ministers of the new law; and where I have found the Latin, *presbyteri*, I have translated *priests*; and Acts xx. 17. I have translated the *seniors*. I have also been in a doubt here in this place of St. Peter, and also in the 2nd and 3rd of St. John, whether to put seniors or priests: I have put *ancient priests*, not doubting but that St. Peter and St. John speak of themselves as priests of the first order, or as they were bishops.

[2] Ver. 3. In cleris, *Greek: ton kleron*. Though I have followed the Rhem. Testament, and translated *over the clergy*, I believe *Greek: kleroi*, in the plural number, is scarce used for clerici, or men, but rather for *shares* and *parts* of Christ's flock, to signify that every bishop or priest should not domineer over those under him, whether inferior ministers or lay persons.

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## 2 PETER

### THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

This epistle, though not at first received [by some Churches] as canonical, was acknowledged as such [by all Churches] about the end of the fourth age [century]. See Eusebius, lib. iii. History of the Church, chap. iii.; St. Jerome, de Vir. Illust. Tillem. art. 33. The design, as it appears, Chap. i. 13. and Chap. iii. 1. was to give them admonitions and instructions against teachers of false doctrine, particularly against the *Simonites*. It seems to have been written a little before his martyrdom, about the year 66. (Witham) --- In this epistle St. Peter says, (Chap. iii.) "Behold this is the second epistle I write unto you:" and before, (Chap. i. 14.) "Being assured that the putting off of this my tabernacle is at hand." This shews that it was written a very short time before his martyrdom, which was about thirty-five years after our Lord's ascension. In this epistle he admonishes the faithful to be mindful of the great gifts they received from God, and to join all other virtues with their faith. He warns them against false teachers, by describing their practices and foretelling their punishments. He describes the dissolution of this world by fire, and the day of judgment. (Challoner) --- This epistle may be considered as the spiritual testament or last will of the apostle, as it contains his last admonitions to the faithful. He first calls their attention to the care they should have of their sanctification and perfection, next to the perils that concern the Church one the part of heretics, those that menaced her in her infant state, and those that will assail her in the latter days, which includes an invincible proof of her perpetuity; for is is the same infallible and indefectible Church that is to encounter the latter as the former trials, but always with promised success. Hence the great St. John Chrysostom says: the same day that shall see the Church of God ended, shall see the end of the world; and to these continued struggles shall succeed perfect peace, to be enjoyed through a blissful eternity. If some are still found to object, that the present epistle was not written by St. Peter, on account of the marked difference of the style, St. Jerome removes this objection thus: St. Peter employed different interpreters, sometimes Glaucias, and sometimes St. Mark; hence the difference of the style, from the diversity of his scribes. St. Mark was with him when he penned the first, but was not with him when he dictated the present. The present epistle contains, as we said above, an account of the last dreadful trials that are to assail the faithful before the end of time; but all that faith teaches us on that subject is: first, That the world will have an end; secondly, that it will end by fire; and thirdly, that the world will not be destroyed, but changed and perfected. Hence all that is said with

regard to the duration of the world; on the nature and quality of the fire that is to burn and purify the world; if it be to precede or follow the last judgment, all is problematical, all is doubtful. Hence the Christian knows a good deal, who knows how to entertain proper doubts.

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## 2 PETER 1

**Ver. 1.** *In the justice* (or by the justice) *of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.* As justice and sanctification are equally attributed to God and to Jesus Christ, it shews that the Son was equally and the same God with the Father. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Glory and virtue.*[1] By the Greek text, *virtue* is not here the same as power, as commonly in other places, but signifies God's goodness, mercy, and clemency. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Partakers of the divine nature.* Divine grace infused into our souls, is said to be a partaking in the divine nature by an union with the spirit of God, whereby men are made his adoptive children, heirs of heaven, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Join with your faith, virtue:* think not that faith alone will save you without the practice of virtues and good works. By *abstinence* or temperance, is understood that virtue which helps to moderate the inordinate love of sensual pleasures, and to govern all disorderly passions and affections. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Groping,*[2] like one that is blind. The Greek may signify one who hath his eyes shut, or that is like a blind mole. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *By good works you may make sure,* &c. without diving into the hidden mysteries of predestination, &c. --- *You shall not sin at any time.* These words evidently suppose, that the graces and assistances of God will not be wanting; for it would be in vain to command, unless a man had both free will and capacity to perform. But, as it follows, these helps shall be *abundantly ministered to you.* (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *I will begin.*[3] That is, by the Greek, I will take care. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *As long as I am in this tabernacle:* to wit, of the body, in this mortal life. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *The laying aside,*[4] or dissolution; i.e. my death is at hand. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *That you frequently have after my decease,*[5] &c. Some expounded these words to signify: I will have you frequently in my thoughts, and remember you, praying for you after my death. But this does not seem the true and literal sense, nor do we need such arguments to prove that the saints pray for us. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *We have not by following artificial fables.* Literally, learned *fables*,[6] invented to promote our doctrine. *We*, I with others, *were eye-witnesses* of his glory on Mount Tabor. [Matthew xvii. 2.] (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *And we have the surer word of prophecy,* or to make our testimonies and preaching of Christ more firm. The revelations of God made to the prophets, and contained in the holy Scriptures, give us of all others the greatest assurance. Though the mysteries in themselves remain obscure and incomprehensible, the motive of our belief is divine authority. (Witham) --- If our testimony be suspicious, we have what you will certainly allow, the testimony of the prophets: attend then to the prophets as to a lamp that illuminates a dark place, till the bright day of a more lively faith begins to illumine you, and the day-star arises in your heart: till this faith, which is like



the day-star, give you a perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is by the divine oracles you will acquire this knowledge, provided you peruse them with proper dispositions.

**Ver. 20.** *No prophecy of the scripture is made by private interpretation;* or, as the Protestants translate it from the Greek, *is of any private interpretation*, i.e. is not to be expounded by any one's private judgment or private spirit. (Witham) --- The Scriptures cannot be properly expounded by private spirit or fancy, but by the same spirit wherewith they were written, which is resident in the Church.

**Ver. 21.** *For prophecy came not by the will of man at any time.* This is to shew that they are not to be expounded by any one's private judgment, because every part of the holy Scriptures is delivered to us by the divine spirit of God, wherewith the men were inspired who wrote them; therefore they are not to be interpreted but by the spirit of God, which he left, and promised to his Church to guide her in all truth to the end of the world. Our adversaries may perhaps tell us, that we also interpret prophecies and Scriptures; we do so; but we do it always with a submission to the judgment of the Church, they without it. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. Et virtute, *Greek: kai aretes.*

[2] Ver. 9. Manu tentans, *Greek: muopazon.*

[3] Ver. 12. Incipiam, *Greek: ouk ameleso*, non omittam, non negligam, &c.

[4] Ver. 14. Depositio, *Greek: e apothesis.*

[5] Ver. 15. Dabo operam et frequenter habere vos, post obitum meum, ut horum memoriam faciatis. *Greek: umas....ten touton mnemen poieisthai.*

[6] Ver. 16. Non doctas fabulas, *Greek: ou sesopismenois muthois.* Some copies had *indoctas*, on which account the Rhem. Testament issued before the corrections of Pope Sixtus V. and Pope Clemens VIII. has *unlearned*.

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## 2 PETER 2

**Ver. 1.** *Lying teachers among you*, some of which were already come, and many more were to follow, *who shall bring in sects*, [1] (heresies) leading to *perdition*, and *deny the Lord who bought them*, denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer; such were the disciples of Simon, and many after them. (Witham) --- *Sects of perdition*; that is, heresies destructive of salvation. (Challoner)

**Ver. 2.** *Many shall follow their luxuries*, or lasciviousness, such as are related of the Nicolaites and Gnostics, *by reason of whom the way of truth shall be blasphemed*, or ill spoken of, by those who made no distinction betwixt true and false Christians. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *They shall make merchandise of you*, preaching such lying doctrine as might please the people, but through a motive of covetousness, and for their own gain. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *If God spared not the Angels*, &c. St. Peter here brings these examples of God's justice. 1. Towards the rebellious angels that fell from heaven; 2. that of the general flood, or deluge; 3. when he destroyed Sodom and those other cities. First, *angels that sinned*, *God by his justice delivered them*, *drawn down with infernal ropes into hell to be tormented*, and to be reserved even for greater torments after the day of judgment. This seems to be the liberal sense of this

fourth verse, which is obscure, and has divers reading in the Greek. In the examples of the deluge and of Sodom, St. Peter shews not only the severity of God's judgments upon the wicked, but also his merciful providence towards the small number of the just, as towards Noe [Noah], a preacher of justice, the eighth and chief of those that were preserved in the ark, when he spared not the world that was of old, (literally, the original world) or wicked of those ancient times. When he delivered that just man, Lot, at the time he reduced Sodom and those other cities to ashes: for Lot was just both in sight and hearing, without being corrupted by what he saw and heard; chaste as to his eyes and ears, or as to all that could be seen or heard of him, when the wicked among whom he lived vexed and grieved his just soul by their impious deeds. God, therefore, who knows and approves the ways of the godly, preserves them by his providence amidst temptations. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *To reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment, &c.* That is, God many times does not punish the wicked in this life, he suffers them to run on in the ways of iniquity, with prosperity as to the enjoyment of a short and vain happiness in this world, but his judgments are most of all to be dreaded, when the punishments are *reserved* till the next life, as it will appear at the day of general judgment: and from the time of their death they shall be tormented in hell. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *Especially those who walk after the flesh, &c.* Such were the Gnostics, and divers of the first heretics, as well as many of them in after ages, who *despise authority*, contemn the laws, both of church and state; *self-willed*, full of self-love, lovers of their own infamous pleasures; *blaspheming* against God, his ministers, and against those who serve God. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Whereas angels, &c.* By comparing this place with what we read in St. Jude, (ver. 9) he speaks of the good angels whom God employed to banish the rebellious angels out of heaven, and on other occasions, who, though they had greater strength and power given them by the Almighty, yet did not bear execrable judgment against themselves; i.e. one against another, or against those who at first had been happy spirits with them in heaven; did not exult over them with injuries and reviling reflections, but executed their commands in the name of God, saying, *let the Lord command you*. See Jude, ver. 9. (Witham) --- *Bring not an execrable judgment, &c.* That is, they use no railing, nor cursing sentence; not even in their conflicts with the evil angels. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12.** *But these men, &c.* These infamous heretics of whom he speaks, like brutes, void of reason, naturally following the disorderly inclinations of their nature corrupted by sin, tend, or run headlong into the snares of the devil, to their own destruction and perdition, blaspheming against the mysteries of religion, and against what they do not understand. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Counting the delights of the day to be pleasure; such is their impiety and their folly, that they have no regard to all the punishments they make themselves liable to, if they can but pass their days in this short life, or even one day, in shameful pleasures and delights.* They may be called the *stains and blemishes*, the shame and disgrace of mankind, on account of the abominations they practise in their rioting and banquetings.[3] See what St. Epiphanius relates of Gnostics. (Witham) --- *Delights*; that is, the short delights of this world, in which they place all their happiness. (Challoner)

**Ver. 14.** And what is still an aggravation to the weight of their sins, they entice and allure others, *unstable souls*, not sufficiently grounded in faith and virtue, by promising them liberty and happiness, though they themselves be miserable slaves to their passions. At the same time they make dupes of them out of covetousness, to get a share of their money and riches. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** In this they are like *Balaam, of Bosor*, (a town of the Madianites) who coveting the reward promised him, (Judges xi.) was willing, if God had permitted him, to have cursed the people of Israel: but God put a check to his madness, by making the ass which he rode upon speak with a human voice. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *These are fountains without water.* The like lively description is given of the manners of these heretics by St. Jude, so that the text of one of these apostles helps to expound the other. (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *For if flying,* and been happily freed from the pollutions, the abominations, and corruptions of a wicked world, be upon your guard, and take great care not to be entangled again in these dangerous snares and nets, lest your latter condition (as Christ said, Matthew xii. 45.) be worse than the former, lest you be like a dog that returns to his vomit, or like a sow that is washed and wallows again in the mire. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. *Sectas introducere*, Greek: *doxas*, as this Greek word sometimes signifies; witness Aristotle, 4. Eth. where he puts as apposite, Greek: *kata doxan, kai kat aletheian*.

[2] Ver. 4. *Rudentibus inferni detractos in tartarum tradidit cruciandos, in iudicium reservari*, Greek: *seirais zophou* (some few copies, Greek: *adou*) Greek: *tartaros, paredoken eis krisin teteremenous*; other manuscripts, Greek: *teroumenous*. Greek: *Tartaroo* must signify cast into a place, called Greek: *tartaros*, derived from Greek: *taratto, turbo*. The Rhem. Testament hath, with ropes of hell drawn down; but the sense rather seems to be, delivered into chains, or into prison. Some would have Greek: *tartaros* to signify, cast down into this region of the air. It is true divers of the ancient Fathers were of opinion, that devils are dispersed in the airy region, where they are punished and tormented; but these same Fathers do not deny, that there is in the inferior parts of the earth a place of torments for the devils and damned souls, into which (called also the abyss) the devils begged not to be sent and confined there. (Luke viii. 31.) This is the place called hell, tartarus, &c.

[3] Ver. 13. *In conviviis*, Greek *agapais*, which reading Dr. Wells prefers before Greek: *apatais*, the common reading: in the Protestant translation, *with their own deceivings*.

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## 2 PETER 3

**Ver. 3.** *Scoffers* [1] *with deceit*, (such as make a jest of all revealed religion) *walking according to their own lusts*, as if they might indulge themselves in every thing which their inclinations prompt them to, *saying: where is his promise, or his coming?* They have no belief nor regard for what has been revealed concerning the coming of Christ to judge every one, to reward the good, and punish the wicked. Such were the Sadducees, who believe not the immortality of the soul, nor the resurrection; such were at all times those atheistical men, who endeavoured to persuade themselves that all religion is no more than a human and politic invention; of this number are they who some in our days call free-thinkers. St. Peter here gives us the words of these unbelieving libertines, whom he calls scoffers: *where, they say, is his promise?* those pretended promises of God, those predictions and menaces in the Scriptures? what appearance of Christ's *coming* to judge the world? *for, since the Fathers slept*, ever since the death of the patriarchs and prophets, *all things continue*. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *For this they are wilfully ignorant of.* The ignorance of these unbelievers is wilful and inexcusable, when they question the existence of a Supreme Being, of a future state, wherein God will reward the good and punish the wicked; when they laugh at all the miracles, and all the extraordinary effects of God's power and justice, such as was the general flood or deluge, by which God destroyed the wicked by an inundation of waters. And as our blessed Saviour said of those, who would not believe in the days of Noe [Noah], "They were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage,...and they knew not till the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matthew xxiv. 38. 39.) (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *The heavens, &c.* He puts the faithful in mind not to regard these profane scoffers, but to be convinced of the truths revealed, and that the world shall be destroyed a second time by fire. Reflect that the time of this life, and all the time that this world shall last, is nothing to eternity, which has no parts, no beginning, nor end; so that in the sight of God, who is eternal, a thousand years are no more to be regarded than one day, or one moment. The long time that hath hitherto passed, must not make you think that God is slack as to his promises, or that they shall not infallibly come to pass at the time and moment appointed by his divine providence. God's infinite mercy, and his love for mankind, bears patiently with the provocations of blind and unthinking sinners, not willing that any of them should perish, but that they should return to him by a sincere repentance and true penance, and be saved. But watch always, according to the repeated admonition of our blessed Redeemer. (Mark xiii. 37. &c.) For both the day of your death, and the *day of the Lord* to judge the world, will *come like a thief*, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *Seeing then that all these things are to be dissolved*, that the world, and all things in the world, shall pass in a short time, set not your affections upon them: let your life and conversation be holy. According to the divine promises, *look for new heavens, and a new earth*, where justice is to dwell, whither sinners shall not enter, but the just only, in a new state of never-ending happiness. Make it then your endeavour to be found in the sight of God *spotless and blameless*; and look upon the long forbearance of God, who defers to punish sinners as they deserve, to be an effect of his mercy, and for your salvation. (Witham)

**Ver. 15-16.** *As also our most dear brother, Paul,...hath written to you.* He seems to mean in his epistle to the Hebrews or converted Jews, (Chap. x. 37.) where he says: *yet a little while,...and he that is to come, will come, and will not delay.* --- *In which are some things hard to understand*, especially by unlearned, ignorant people, *unstable*, inconstant, not well grounded in faith, and which they *wrest*, [2] as they do *also the other scriptures*, by their private interpretations, *to their own perdition*. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** Being forewarned, therefore, and *knowing these things before*, take heed not to be *led away by the errors* of such false and *unwise* teachers, whatever knowledge they boast of, as did the Gnostics. But make it your serious endeavour to increase in grace by God's assistance, in the true knowledge of our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to whom, as being one God with his eternal Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory now, and for all eternity. Amen. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 3. In deceptione illusores; the true reading in the Greek is, as Dr. Wells has restored it, *Greek: en empaigmone empaiktai*, illusiones illudentes.

[2] Ver. 16. Depravant, *Greek: streblousin*. detorquent. It is a speech, says Mr. Legh, on *Greek: strebloo*, borrowed from torturers, when they put an innocent man on the rack, and make him speak what he never thought. They deal, says he, with the Scriptures as chemists sometimes deal with natural bodies, torturing them to extract out of them what God and nature never put in them.

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## 1 JOHN

### THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

This epistle was always acknowledged for canonical, and written by St. John, the apostle and

evangelist. At what time and place, is uncertain. It is sometimes called the Epistle to the Parthians, or Persians. The chief design is to set forth the mystery of Christ's incarnation against Cerinthus, who denied Christ's divinity, and against Basilides, who denied that Christ had a true body; with zealous exhortations to love God and our neighbour. (Witham) --- The vein of divine love and charity towards our neighbour which runs throughout the gospel written by the beloved disciple and evangelist, St. John, is found also in his epistles. He confirms the two principal mysteries of our faith: the mystery of the Trinity, the mystery of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The sublimity and excellence of the evangelical doctrine he declares: "And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother;" (Chap. iv. 21.) and again, "For this is the charity of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not heavy." (Chap. v. 3.) He shews how to distinguish the children of God from those of the devil; marks out those who should be called antichrists; describes the turpitude and gravity of sin. Finally, he shews how the sinner may hope for pardon. It was written, according to Baronius's account, sixty-six years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- The effect of all is to prove the certainty of the Catholic faith, and to renounce all heretics and schismatics, who entice persons from the true saving faith.

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## 1 JOHN 1

**Ver. 1.** The first two verses and part of the third have a great conformity with the beginning of St. John's gospel. The construction is somewhat obscure, unless we observe that the second verse is to be taken by way of a parenthesis, and the sense is not complete till these words, *we declare to you*, &c. The whole may be expressed in this literal paraphrase: *We declare and preach to you the eternal and always living word, which was from the [1] beginning, (for this word which was with the Father from eternity, hath appeared,[2] and manifested himself to us, when he took upon him our human nature, and was made flesh). This word I say, incarnate, we have seen with our eyes, we have heard him preach his gospel, we have touched his true body with our hands, as we witness and declare to you, that you may have fellowship with us, and be made partakers of the graces which God came from heaven to bestow upon mankind, to make us his adoptive sons and heirs of heaven.* (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *God is light,[3] &c.* We cannot have this fellowship with God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, if we walk in the darkness of sin: we must walk as the children of light. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** Not that we say or pretend *we have no sin;*[4] thus truth would not be in us, and we should even make God a liar, who has declared all mankind guilty of sin. We were all born guilty of original sin; we have fallen, and still frequently fall into lesser sins and failings. We can only except from this number our Saviour Christ, who, even as man, never sinned, and his blessed Virgin Mother, by a special privilege, preserved from all kind of sin: and of whom St. Augustine[5] says, "that for the honour of our Lord, when we speak of the holy Virgin Mary, he will have no mention at all made of any sin." (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Quod fuit ab initio; in Greek, quod erat, *Greek: o en ap arches*. This answers to, in principio erat verbum [in the beginning was the Word. (John i. 1.)]

[2] Ver. 1. Et vita manifesta est. This corresponds to, in ipso vita erat, [in him was life, (John i. 4.)] and apparuit nobis Verbum Caro Factum est. [the Word was made flesh. (John i. 14)] And it was true to say that they had seen the eternal word, not as God, but under the veil of human nature.

[3] Ver. 5. Deus lux est; (John i.) erat lux vera. [that was the true light. (John i. 9.)]

[4] Ver. 8. Quoniam peccatum non habemus, &c. By which are confuted the errors of the Pelagian heretics, who denied original sin, and pretended that men by their natural strength could and did live free from all sins.

[5] Ver. 8. St. Augustine, lib. de Nat. et Gra. chap. xxxvii. Excepta S. V. Maria, de qua propter honorem Domini, nullam prorsus, cum de peccato agitur, haberi volo mentionem.

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## 1 JOHN 2

**Ver. 1.** *That you may not sin*, or lose the grace of God by any considerable sin. --- *But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ*, the eternal Son of the Father, who being made man to redeem us from sin, is our great Advocate, our chief Mediator, and only Redeemer, by whose merits and grace we have been reconciled, after we had lost and forfeited the grace and favour of God by our offences. He is the only *propitiation* for the sins of the whole world; for, as St. Paul says, (Hebrews x. 14.) Christ, for *one oblation* on the cross, *hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*. All remission of sins, all sanctification, is derived from the merits and satisfaction of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ; not but that the Angels and saints in heaven, and virtuous persons upon earth, when they pray to God for us, may be called advocates, mediators, and intercessors (though not redeemers) in a different sense, and in an inferior manner, without any injury, but on the contrary with an honour done to Christ; because what they pray and ask for us, is only begged and hoped for through Christ, and by his merits. St. Augustine[1] in his commentary on this epistle, on these very words, *we have an advocate*, &c. prevents and answers this very objection of the late pretended reformers: (tom. iii, part 2. p. 831 Nov. Edit.) "Some one will say: therefore the saints do not ask for us, therefore the bishops and governors of the Church do not ask for the people." He denies that this follows, the saints being advocates in a different sense. Though God be our protector and defender from dangers, this does not hinder us from owning the Angels to be our defenders in an inferior manner under God, as the Church of England acknowledges in the common prayer book on the feast of St. Michael, and all Angels, which runs thus: "mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen." (Witham) --- The calling and office of an advocate is many things proper to Christ, and in every condition more singularly and excellently applying to him than to any Angel, saint, or living creature, though these also may be truly so called without any derogation from Christ. To him solely it belongs to procure us mercy before God, by the general ransom of his blood for our delivery; hence he is our only advocate of redemption, though others may be and are advocates of intercession. Hence St. Irenæus (lib. iii. chap. 33. and lib. v. post med.) says: "the obedient Virgin Mary is made the advocate of the disobedient Eve." Our Saviour declares that Angels are deputed for the protection of infants; (Matthew xviii.) and frequently are the examples we find in the old Scripture, such as Genesis xlviii. 16.; Tobit v. 27. and xii. 12.; Daniel x. See also the common prayer book, in the collect of Michaelmas day.

**Ver. 3.** *We have known him, if we keep his commandments*. He speaks of that *practical knowledge* by love and affection, which can be only proved by our keeping his commandments; and without which we cannot be said to *know* God, as we should. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *He that says he knoweth him*, &c. To *know*, in this and many other places, is not taken for a speculative knowledge alone, but is joined with a love of God, and an earnest desire of serving him and keeping his commandments. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *The charity of God is truly perfect*. [2] Notwithstanding his lesser failings, he retains the habit of charity and grace, by which he remains united to God. --- *And by this we know that we are in him*; i.e. we are morally, though not absolutely, certain that we are in the state of grace. (Witham)

**Ver. 7-8.** *An old commandment....and again, a new commandment.* He means the commandment of charity, or of the love of God and the love of our neighbour. This he calls both an *old* and a *new* precept. It may be called old, not only as being a precept of the law of nature, and always obligatory, but because St. John and the other apostles had delivered it to them long ago, i.e. when these persons were first converted. It may also be called a new precept, St. John recommending it anew to them in this epistle, and declaring it to be enjoined in a particular manner by our Saviour Christ, after it had been misconstrued and neglected, especially as regards our neighbour, that is, every one without exception; so that if any one *hate* another, it is in vain that he pretends to walk in the light of the gospel. (Witham) --- *A new commandment*; viz. the commandment of love, which was given in the old law, but was *renewed* and extended by Christ. See John xiii. 33. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12.** *I write to you, little children, &c.* St. Augustine and divers others think that by these different words, he only means Christians more or less instructed and advanced in the knowledge and practice of the Christian faith. Others expound it with a regard also to their different ages and advancement in years. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *If any man love the world,* this wicked world, or any thing in it, as pleasures, riches, honours, so that his affections be more upon these than upon God, *the charity of the Father* (or of God) *is not in him.* (Witham)

**Ver. 16-17.** *All that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh,* under which is comprehended all that pleaseth the senses, *or the concupiscence of the eyes*; i.e. a longing after such things which enter by the eyes, as of riches in gold and silver, in apparel, in houses and palaces, train and equipage, &c. curiosity as to vain arts and sciences; or, *the pride of life*, as to honours, dignities, and preferments. But *the world passeth away*, and all these things that belong to it. --- *He that doth the will of God, abideth for ever*, with God in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *It is the last hour.* That is, according to the common interpretation, the last age of the world, from the coming of Christ to the day of judgment, and the end of the world, which St. Paul calls the end and consummation of ages. (Hebrews ix. 26.) --- *And as you have heard that antichrist* (the great antichrist) *cometh*, or is to come in this last age: *now there are* already many *antichrists*; i.e. as the word signifies, many adversaries to Christ, who are forerunners of the great and last antichrist. (Witham) --- *Many antichrists*; that is, many heretics, enemies of Christ and his Church, and forerunners of the great antichrist. (Challoner) --- St. Cyprian says all are called antichrists that have divided themselves from the charity and unity of the Catholic Church. (Ep. lxxvii. ad Magnum.) --- *Whereby we know that it is the last hour*, it being foretold that many false prophets should rise in the last days. (Matthew xxiv. 11. &c.) (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *They were not of us*, true and profitable members; though it can scarce be doubted but that some of them, at least for some time, truly believed: and by their going off, God was pleased to make it manifest that they were not of his faithful members. Such were Simon Magus, Cerinthus, Ebion, Nicolas of Antioch, &c. (Witham) --- *They*, &c. That is, they were not solid, steadfast, genuine Christians, otherwise they would have remained in the Church. (Challoner) --- The true note or mark of heresy, is the going out of or leaving the Catholic Church. God permitteth some to go out, that the true and tried faithful may be known.

**Ver. 20.** *You have an unction from the holy one.* You are sufficiently instructed by the grace and spirit of God against such false teachers. (Witham) --- *An unction*, &c. That is, grace and wisdom from the Holy Ghost. (Challoner) --- *And you know all things*, as to what you ought to believe and practise, and therefore I have not written to you as to ignorant persons. (Witham) --- The true children of God's Church, remaining in unity, under the guidance of their lawful pastors, partake of the grace of the Holy Ghost, promised to the Church and her pastors; and have in the Catholic Church all necessary knowledge and instruction, so as to have no need to seek it elsewhere, since it can be only found in that society of which they are members. (Challoner)

**Ver. 22-23.** *He who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist:* is in a special manner an adversary of Christ and the Christian religion, when he denies Jesus to be the Messias, or to have been from eternity the true Son of God. --- He who *denieth* him to be *the Son*, *neither hath he the Father*. He who denies either of these truths denieth both. He who denies the Son of God to be the eternal Son, denies the Father to be the eternal Father. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *Let that (faith) which you have heard from the beginning, abide in you:* when you received the Christian faith, and were baptized in the name of the three divine Persons. The promise which was then made to you, was life everlasting. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *You have no need, &c.* You want not to be taught by any of these men, who, under pretence of imparting more knowledge to you, seek to seduce you, (ver. 26) since you are sufficiently taught already, and have all knowledge and grace in the Church, with the unction of the Holy Ghost, which these new teachers have no share in. (Challoner) --- *His unction teacheth you concerning all things.* Unction here signifies the doctrine which they received together with the Holy Ghost or Spirit of God; in which he exhorts them to remain, as being sufficient for their instruction, and to make them avoid the new teachers of false doctrine. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Sed dicet aliquis, says St. Augustine on this place, ergo sancti non petunt pro nobis. Ergo episcopi et præpositi non petunt pro populo; sed attendite scripturas, &c.

[2] Ver. 5. Perfecta est, *Greek: teteleiotai*. That must only be understood of charity so perfected as to be true charity, but not a perfect degree of charity.

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## 1 JOHN 3

**Ver. 1.** *Behold what manner of charity (or of love) the Father hath bestowed upon us.* St. John had said in the last verse of the foregoing chapter that *every one who doth justice, is born of him;* i.e. is the son of God by adoption. But *the world knoweth us not*, nor esteems and values us as such: and no wonder, because they have not known, nor acknowledged, nor revered God as they ought. We indeed are the sons of God; we believe it, because God has assured us of it; *but it hath not yet appeared what we shall be*, (ver. 2) to what glory or happiness we shall thereby be exalted hereafter, for neither eye hath seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for those who love him. (1 Corinthians ix. 2.) We only know this, that his elect shall be like to him, because they shall see him as he is, when they shall enjoy him in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Committeth also iniquity.*[1] By the Greek text, iniquity is here taken for a transgression or prevarication of the law, which makes the sense clearer. (Witham) --- *Iniquity; (Greek: anomia )* transgression of the law. (Challoner)

**Ver. 6.** *Whosoever abideth in him*, complying with his law, *sinneth not; and whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, nor known him;* that is, with such a knowledge as is joined with love. (Witham) --- *Sinneth not; viz. mortally.* See Chap. i. 8. (Challoner)

**Ver. 8.** *The devil sinneth from the beginning:* not that he was created in sin, but sined soon after he was created. (Witham)

**Ver. 9.** *Doth not commit sin.* That is, as long as he keepeth in himself this seed of grace, and this divine generation, by which he is born of God. But then he may fall from this happy state by the abuse of his free-will, as appears from Romans xi. 20. 21. 22.; 1 Corinthians ix. 27. and x. 12.;



Philippians ii. 12.; Apocalypse iii. 11. (Challoner) --- *He cannot sin, because he is born of God.* The meaning of this can be no more, than that he cannot sin as long as the seed of grace remaineth in him, and as long as he is the adoptive son of God. But it is evident he may fall from this happy condition, and from the grace of God, otherwise St. John would not so often in this epistle have exhorted them not to sin. (Witham)

**Ver. 14-15.** *We know that we have passed from death to life;* i.e. from the death of sin to the life of grace: we know it by a moral certainty, when we experience in our heart a love of our neighbour. --- *He that loveth not God and his neighbour, abideth in death.* He that *hateth his brother* with a mortal hatred, or to a considerable degree, *is a murderer.* (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *The charity of God,*[2] *because he hath laid down his life for us.* Jesus Christ, therefore, who laid down his life for us, was God. It is true at present the words *of God* are wanting in most Greek manuscripts: yet the Protestant translation has them. (Witham)

**Ver. 19-20.** *And in his sight we shall persuade our hearts.* That is, if we love God and our neighbour *in deed*, as he said before, we may rest satisfied in conscience that we follow the ways of truth, and may have a well-grounded confidence in God. --- *But if our hearts reprehend us*, for not complying with this duty and precept of charity, *God is still greater than our heart;* i.e. he sees and knows the interior dispositions of our heart, even better than we know ourselves, and therefore we have more reason to fear him, especially when even our heart and conscience reprehend us. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* These words may be either referred to the body of the Church in general or to the apostles, or to every one in particular. It is certain that God gave his Spirit to his Church and to the apostles, by the coming of the Holy Ghost in a visible manner, and by the miraculous gifts bestowed upon the apostles; but every one in particular has only a moral certainty that he has the Spirit of God, and his sanctifying grace in his soul. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 4. Et peccatum est iniquitas, *Greek: kai e amartia estin e anomia*, transgressio.

[2] Ver. 16. Charitatem Dei, *Greek: tou Theou*: scarce in any manuscripts nor read by St. Augustine in his commentary on this verse.

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## 1 JOHN 4

**Ver. 1.** *Try the spirits;* i.e. every doctrine that you hear: for now are many false teachers, false doctors, and false prophets. (Witham) --- *Try, &c.* viz. by examining whether their teaching be agreeable to the rule of the Catholic faith and the doctrine of the Church. For, as he says, (ver. 6) "He that knoweth God, heareth us: (the pastors of the Church) ...by this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (Challoner) --- The Church only, not every private man, hath to prove and discern spirits.

**Ver. 2.** *By this is the Spirit of God known.* He gives the new converts first general mark, by which they might have good grounds to think that the teachers they met with in those days had a good spirit, were of God, if they confessed and acknowledged Jesus Christ to have come from heaven and to have been made flesh, or made man; i.e. to be truly God and truly man. But if (ver. 3) they met with teachers of such a spirit as *dissolveth Jesus*,[1] by denying him either to be the Messiah or to be truly God, or to be a true man, they might conclude for certain that such men had not a true spirit, but were heretics, antichrists, and forerunners of the great antichrist. Such, even in St. John's time, was Simon the magician, who, according to St. Epiphanius, (hæc. xxi. p. 55. Ed

Petav.) pretended among his countrymen, the Samaritans, that he himself was God the Father, and among the Jews that he was God the Son, and that Jesus suffered death in appearance only. His disciple also, Meander, said he was sent from heaven for the salvation of men. See St. Epiphanius, hæc xxii. p. 61. 3. Cerinthus, as also Carpocras, held that Jesus was a mere man, born of Joseph and Mary, and also different from Christ. See St. Epiphanius, hæc. xxxvii. and xxix. p. 102. and 110. 4. Ebion held much the same. See the same St. Epiphanius, hæc. xxx. p. 142. These heretics and divers of their followers divided Jesus, and destroyed the faith and mystery of the incarnation. (Witham) --- *Every spirit which confesseth, &c.* Not that the confession of this point of faith alone, is at all times and in all cases sufficient; but that with relation to that time, and for that part of the Christian doctrine, which was then particularly to be confessed, taught, and maintained against the heretics of those days, this was the most proper token by which the true teachers might be distinguished from the false. (Challoner)

**Ver. 3.** *That dissolveth Jesus*, viz. either by denying his humanity or his divinity. (Challoner) --- *This is antichrist;*[2] i.e. such is the spirit of antichrist, *of whom you have heard that he cometh*, or is to come in the latter times. --- *And he is now already in the world*, not the chief and great antichrist, but his precursors, in whom he may be said to come. (Witham) --- *And he is now already in the world.* Not in his person, but in his spirit and in his precursors. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *You....little children*, born anew in Christ by baptism, *have overcome him*, (i.e. every such antichrist) not by your own strength, but by the grace of Christ, *because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world*; i.e. the Spirit of God in you is above all your enemies. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *They are of the world.* Such antichrists and heretics are guided by a worldly spirit, teaching men to follow the corrupt customs and inclinations of the world and the flesh, therefore *the world heareth them*, and men are more easily seduced by them. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *We (Christians) are of God*, have received the Spirit; we, the apostles of Christ, were lawfully sent by him. --- *He that knoweth God, heareth us, &c.* That is, they who love and serve God, and comply with the doctrine of his Son, Jesus Christ, hear and follow the doctrine which we were commissioned by him to teach. --- *He that is not of God, heareth us not.* They are not of God, who refuse to hear and obey the voice of the Church and those whom Christ appointed to govern his Church, as hath been observed elsewhere. --- *By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.* Here St. John gives them the second general mark and rule, to preserve them and all Christians from errors and heresies to the end of the world. He that knoweth God, heareth us Apostles, whom he sent, and heareth our successors, invested with the same mission and authority, whom Christ sent, as his heavenly Father sent him, whom he appointed to govern his Church, and with whom he promised to remain to the end of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Let us love one another.* This is the repeated admonition of St. John, the evangelist, both in this epistle and to the end of his life, as St. Jerome relates in his Epist. ad Galat. (cap. vi. tom. 4, part 1, p. 414) that the apostle being very old, and when carried to Church meetings of the Christians, being desired to give them some exhortation, he scarce said any thing, but "love one another;" and it being tedious to his disciples to hear always the same thing, they desired some other instruction, to whom (says St. Jerome) he gave this answer, worthy of St. John: that this was the precept of our Lord, and that if complied with, it was sufficient. --- *Charity is of God*, is love, is the fountain and source of all goodness and mercy, infinitely good in himself, and in his love and mercy towards mankind. This love and charity of God hath appeared by his sending his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. See John i. 14. --- Thus God having *first loved us*, (ver. 10) when we were sinners, and his enemies, let us not be so ungrateful as not to love him, and to love one another after his example. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *No man hath seen God at any time.* No mortal man hath seen God and the perfections of his divine Majesty in such a manner as the blessed in heaven, but we have powerful motives to love and serve him, and to love our neighbour for his sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The charity of God* (which may either signify the love by which we love God, or by which God loves us) *perfected with us*, or in us, and so possesseth our souls, as to give us an humble *confidence* of our salvation, when we shall appear before his tribunal at *the day of judgment*: *because as he is, we also are in this world*. These words are differently expounded. They may signify, that as this world by his grace are always loving him and our neighbour, and increasing in this love, which gives us a confidence of our salvation. Or they may bear this sense, that as Jesus Christ was suffering in this world for us, so we are suffering for his sake. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Fear is not in charity, &c.* By the *fear*, which a perfect charity and love of God excludes, we may understand a fear of temporal losses in this world, of the loss of goods, of banishment, of torments, of death itself, which the love of God made so many glorious martyrs contemn; or an anxious servile fear of punishment in the next world, for the more perfect charity and the love of God is, so much the more doth it banish this imperfect and servile fear; but as perfect charity does not exclude a love, and constant desire of loving God as our last end, for whose enjoyment we were created, so it does not exclude a fear of displeasing, offending, and losing him by sin. (Witham) --- Perfect charity, or love, banisheth *human fear*, that is, the fear of men; as also all *perplexing fear*, which makes men mistrust or despair of God's mercy; and that kind of *servile fear*, which makes them fear the punishment of sin more than the offence offered to God. But it no way excludes the wholesome *fear of God's judgments*, so often recommended in holy writ, nor that *fear and trembling* with which we are told to work out our salvation. (Philippians ii. 12.) (Challoner)

**Ver. 20.** *He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?* By this is signified, that it is more easy and natural to love the things that we see, and that enter by the senses. Pretend not then to love the invisible God, whose perfections are hidden from you in this life, unless you love your brother whom you see. But he adds another reason to prove that no man can love God unless he love his brother; because saith he, (ver. 21.) this is God's express command, *that he who loveth God love also his brother*: so that a man cannot love God unless he also love his neighbour. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. *Qui solvit Jesum*. Greek: *Kataluei* is read in some manuscripts and must have been the reading which the Latin interpreter followed. We read the same in St. Irenæus, lib. 3. chap. xviii. p. 197. Ed. Feuardentii; in Tertullian, lib. 5. cont. Marcion. chap. xvi. p. 481. Ed. Rigaltii; in St. Augustine in his commentary on these words, trac. 6, p. 871.

[2] Ver. 3. *Et hic est antichristus*, Greek: *kai touto (pneuma) to tou antichristou*. By the Greek *hic* cannot agree with the man, and so the construction in Latin must be, *hic est ille spiritus antichristi*.

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## 1 JOHN 5

**Ver. 1.** *That Jesus is the Christ*, the promised Messiah, the Redeemer of the world, *is born of God*, is made his adoptive son by his grace in baptism. (Witham) --- *Is born of God*; that is, is justified, and become a child of God by baptism; which is also to be understood, provided the belief of this fundamental article of the Christian faith is accompanied with all the other conditions, which, by the word of God and his appointment, are also required for justification; such as a general belief of all that God has revealed and promised; hope, love, repentance, and a sincere disposition to keep God's holy law and commandments. (Challoner) --- *Loveth him* [1] *that begot*; i.e. the eternal Father. --- *Loveth him also who was born of him*; i.e. loveth him who is his only begotten and eternal Son. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *In this we know that we love the children of God*, (that is, all men, and especially the faithful, who are made his adoptive children) *when we love God, and keep his commandments*,

for these two branches of charity, the love of God and of our neighbour, are inseparable: the one is known and proved by the other. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *And his commandments are not heavy; not burdensome.* Not but that they comprehend what seems hard to human frailty, and especially to men carried away with the love of vanities in this world, who think it hard to comply with Christ's doctrine of self-denials, of renouncing their inclinations, of suffering death, sooner than to sin against God, or to renounce their faith: but the love of God, and the promises of an eternal happiness in the next life, with the assistances which God gives them, make the yoke of Christ sweet, and his burden light. See Matthew xi. 30. How different is this doctrine from that of those late heretics, who pretend that God's commandments are impossible, even to just men, when they employ all their endeavours. See the first proposition of Jansenius, and this heresy of Calvin condemned by the council of Trent, session 6, cap. xi. canon. 18. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith.* That is, a lively faith, working by charity, makes a man victorious over the greatest temptations, and over all the adversaries of his salvation. (Witham) --- *Our faith;* Not a bare speculative or dead faith, but a *faith working by charity.* (Galatians v. 6.) (Challoner)

**Ver. 6.** *Came by water and blood.* The sense seems to be, by *water*, with which he ordered every one to be baptized and made Christians; 2ndly, by his blood shed on the cross for our redemption. (Witham) --- *Blood:* not only to wash away our sins by the *water* of baptism, but by his own *blood*. (Challoner) --- *And it is the Spirit that testifieth that Christ [2] is the truth.* By the *Spirit*, which is not here called the *Holy Spirit*, or the Holy Ghost, as in the next verse, is either meant the Spirit or soul of Christ, which dying he recommended into the hands of his Father, and which shewed that he was truly man, against Cerinthus, and some heretics of those times; or else it may signify the spirit of grace, given in this world to the faithful, in the same sense as St. Paul says, (Romans viii. 16.) that *the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our Spirit, that we are the sons of God:* and of which may be understood what is said here, (ver. 10.) *He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself.* (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *There are three that give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one:* i.e. one in nature, in substance, and in all perfections, in the same sense as when Christ himself said, (John x. 30.) *I and the Father are one*, or one thing. The Socinians object that this verse is wanting in many Greek manuscripts; and even Erasmus in one edition, and Mr. Simon in his Critics, have questioned it, or rejected it, as a false reading, but without any sufficient proofs and grounds, as hath been shewn by many learned Catholics, and also by Protestant writers, who receive in their translations this verse as canonical. It is easy to account for the omission of this verse; for as both the seventh and eighth verse begin and end with the same words, this gave occasion to the oversight and omission of the transcribers, whereas it is not credible that such a whole verse could be added. And that it was only by the mistake and oversight of transcribers may further appear, because we find part of the seventh verse, to wit, *and these three are one*, cited by Tertullian, lib. cont. Praxeam. chap. xxiii. p. 515. Ed. Rig. and twice by St. Cyprian, Epist. 73. ad Jubaianum. p. 125. Ed. Rig. in the Oxford Edition, p. 310. and in his Treatise de Unit. Ecclesiæ, p. 181. Ed. Rigal. and in the Oxford Ed. p. 79, where also Dr. Fell defends this verse of St. John to be genuine. Tertullian and St. Cyprian wrote long before the dispute with the Arians. The Socinians also object that this passage is not brought by St. Athanasius and some other fathers against the Arians, which they could scarce have omitted had they read this verse, but this only proves that this omission had happened in some manuscripts in their time, or, as some conjecture, that the Arians had corrupted some copies. St. Fulgentius made use of it against the Arians, and also others about that time. See the Benedictines of St. Maur against Mr. Simon, in the first tome of St. Jerome, p. 1670. Both Catholics and Protestants, after diligent examination, have received this verse, which is found in the best manuscripts. See Greek Testament at Amsterdam, in the year 1711. The three divine Persons, who are present everywhere, though said to be in heaven, gave testimony concerning Christ. The Father by a voice from heaven, both at his baptism (Matthew iii. 17.) and at his transfiguration, (Matthew xvii.

5.) saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him:" and also by all the miracles wrought by the same power of all the three divine Persons. 2. The Son testified to the Jews on many occasions, that he was sent from God, that he was the only Son of God, that he and his Father were one, &c. as in the annotations on John iii. The Holy Ghost confirmed the same, particularly by coming down upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, and inspiring them to teach the same doctrine concerning Jesus Christ. (Witham) --- An express proof of the three distinct persons and unity of nature and essence in the blessed Trinity.

**Ver. 8.** *And there are three that give testimony on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three are one.*[3] This is a repetition of what was before said, ver. 6, to be expounded in the same manner. But when it is added, *these three are one*, the sense is, that they witness one and the same truth. (Witham) --- As the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, all bear witness to Christ's divinity; so the *spirit*, which he yielded up, crying out with a loud voice upon the cross, and the water and blood that issued from his side, bearing witness to his humanity, and *are one*; that is, all agree in one testimony. (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *He that believeth not the Son, maketh him (God) a liar*, by refusing to believe the testimonies given by the three divine Persons, that Jesus was the Messiah and the true Son of God, by whom eternal life is obtained and promised to all that comply with his doctrine. In him we have also this lively confidence, that we shall obtain whatever we ask, according to his will, when we ask what is for our good with perseverance and in the manner we ought. And this we know and have experience of, by having obtained the petitions that we have made. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *A sin which is not unto death....and life shall be given to him.* It is hard to determine what St. John here calls a *sin which is not unto death*, and a sin which is *unto death*. The difference cannot be the same as betwixt sins that are called *venial* and *mortal*; for he says, that if a man pray for his brother who commits a sin that *is not unto death*, *life shall be given to him*: therefore such a one had before lost the life of grace, and been guilty of what is commonly called a mortal sin. And when he speaks of a sin that is *unto death*, and adds these words, *I do not say that any one should ask for that sin*, it cannot be supposed that St. John would say this of every mortal sin, but only of some heinous sins which are very seldom remitted, because such sinners very seldom repent. By a sin therefore which is not unto death, interpreters commonly understand a wilful apostacy from the faith, and from the know truth, when a sinner hardened by his own ingratitude becomes deaf to all admonitions, will do nothing for himself, but runs on to final impenitence. Nor yet does St. John say that such a sin is never remitted, or cannot be remitted, but only has these words, *I do not say that any one should ask for the remission of that sin*; that is, though we must pray for all sinners whatsoever, yet man cannot pray for such sinners with such confidence of obtaining always their petitions, as St. John said before, ver. 14. Whatever exposition we follow on this verse, our faith teaches us from the holy Scriptures, that God desires not the death of any sinner, but that he be converted and live. See Ezechiel xxxiii. 11. Though men's "sins be as the scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow." (Isaias i. 18.) It is the will of God that every one come to the knowledge of truth and be save. See John vi. 40. There is no sin so great but which God is willing to forgive, and has left power in his Church to remit the most enormous sins; so that no sinner need despair of pardon, nor will any sinner perish buy by his own fault. (Witham) --- *A sin unto death*. Some understand this of *final impenitence*, or of dying in mortal sin, which is the only sin that never can be remitted; but, it is probable, he may also comprise under this name the sin of apostacy from the faith, and some other such heinous sins as are seldom and hardly remitted: and therefore he gives little encouragement to such as pray for these sinners, to expect what they ask. (Challoner)

**Ver. 17.** *All iniquity [4] is sin.* The sense here is, that sin is always an injury or an injustice done to God; but though every sin implies such an injury and an offence against God, yet there are different degrees in such injuries, which are not always such an injustice as St. John calls *the sin unto death*. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Sinneth not.* See the annotation on chap. iii. 6. &c. (Challoner) --- *The generation [5] of*

*God preserveth him*, (i.e. the grace of adoption, as long as it remains in the soul; see Chap. iii. 9.) *and the wicked one* (i.e. the devil) *toucheth him not*. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *And the whole world is seated in wickedness;*[6] i.e. a great part of the world. It may also signify, is *under the wicked one*; meaning the devil, who is elsewhere called the prince of this world, that is, of all the wicked. (John xii. 31.) (Witham)

**Ver. 20.** *And may be in his true Son.*[7] *This is the true God, and eternal life.* Which words are a clear proof of Christ's divinity, and as such made us of by the ancient Fathers.

**Ver. 21.** *Keep yourselves from idols.* An admonition to the new converted Christians, lest, conversing with heathens and idolaters, they might fall back into the sin of idolatry, which may be the sin unto death here mentioned by St. John. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Eum qui genuit, *Greek: ton gennesanta*, generantem; which, in English, may be translated, the Father.

[2] Ver. 6. Quoniam Christus est veritas; in most Greek copies is now read, *Greek: oti to pneuma esti e aletheia*, quoniam Spiritus est veritas.

[3] Ver. 8. Hi tres unum sunt. Divers Greek copies, *Greek: eis en eisin*, in unum sunt: and so the Protestant translation hath, and these three agree in one; though in the seventh verse they follow the manuscripts which there have, are one, *Greek: kai oi treis en eisi*.

[4] Ver. 17. Omnis iniquitas, *Greek: pasa adikia*, properly injustitia. It is not here *Greek: anomia*, as Chap. iii. 4.

[5] Ver. 18. Sed generatio Dei: Some manuscripts, *Greek: genesis*; others, *Greek: o gennetheis ek tou Theou*. qui genitus est ex Deo.

[6] Ver. 19. In maligno positus est, *Greek: en to ponero keitai*.

[7] Ver. 20. In vero Filio ejus, hic est verus Deus, *Greek: en to alethino uio autou, outos estin o alethinos Theos*, with the Greek article. St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, St. Augustine, St. Cyril by this sentence prove Christ truly God. See Petavius, lib. 2. de Trin. chap. ix. num. 8.

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## 2 JOHN

### THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Second and Third Epistles of St. John were not at first received as canonical by all Churches. See Eusebuis and St. Jerome, in Catalogo, and Tillemont, art. 9, on St. John, p. 349. The style sufficiently shew they were written by St. John the evangelist. The time and place whence they were written is uncertain. The design in both is to exhort those he writes to, to stand firm in the faith of Christ against all seducing heretics, to love one another, &c. (Witham) --- But though these last two Epistles of the beloved apostle were frequently contested till the fourth or fifth century, from that period they have been regularly received; and even during the first ages [centuries], they were frequently cited by many of the holy Fathers as Catholic Scripture. This

short Epistle may still be divided into two parts. The first, a congratulation to the lady he styles *Elect*, in which he felicitates her on account of the faith and virtue he had discovered in some of her children. He exhorts both them and their mother to be more and more confirmed in charity, as the essential and fundamental precept of Christianity, and of which the unequivocal mark is the observance of the other commandments. This part is from the beginning to ver. 6, inclusive. The second, which begins with ver. 7, and continues to the end, is to put them on their guard against the errors of Simon, of Cerinthus, of the Gnostics, and of Basilides, and prescribes the manner how they are to behave themselves towards these seducers. Though the time and place be uncertain, there is some appearance that it was written from Ephesus, when the apostle governed this Church and all the others of Asia [Asia Minor].

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## 2 JOHN 1

**Ver. 1.** *The ancient priest*, or bishop. See 1 Peter v. 1. --- *To the lady Elect*. Some conjecture that *elect* might be the name of a family, or of a particular church; but the common opinion is, that it was the proper name of a virtuous lady. --- *Whom I love in truth*, with a sincere Christian charity as well as *her children*. By reason of the truth, or the true faith, that abideth in us. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** This is the rule of a Christian and Catholic to walk in that faith and worship which he hath received from the beginning, and which we now call according to the Scriptures, the *tradition of the apostles*. Thus shall the faithful avoid seducers that start up in every age, teaching new doctrines. (Bristow)

**Ver. 7.** *Many seducers are gone out into the world*; antichrists, who confess not Christ to have *come in the flesh*. These were the disciples of Simon, the Cerinthians, Ebionites, &c. See 1 John ii. 18. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** We here see the reward for adhering to the Catholic faith, and the condemnation for revolting from the received truth. The apostles, and their lawful successors in the ministry, determine the true doctrine in points which innovators call into controversy, which being once done and declared to the faithful, they need no other mark to know a false teacher, but that he cometh with another doctrine than that which has been delivered.

**Ver. 10.** *No say to him, Hail*; or peace be to you, God speed you, all hail; or use any form of saluting him, as you would a friend, much less *receive* or entertain him in your house: this admonition is in general to forewarn persons of the dangers which may arise from a familiarity with heretics, and such as teach evil doctrine. But by this is not forbidden civility, kindness, and a sincere charity for all men, by which we ought to wish and pray for the eternal salvation of every one. I translate *Ave* by peace be to you, because this was the usual salutation among the Jews, and in those times, as we see Luke xxiv. and John xx.

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## 3 JOHN

### THE THIRD EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

St. John commends Gaius for his faith, charity, and hospitality towards strangers and the

ministers of the gospel, to whom he would have every one to give a kind reception, and such charitable assistance as they can afford, and which others want. (Witham) --- Gaius, to whom this epistle is addressed, is apparently one of the two disciples of St. Paul, who bore this name. The best known is that of Corinth, with whom St. Paul lodged, and who had been converted and baptized by St. Paul. Others, with greater probability, suppose it was Gaius, of Derbe, mentioned in Acts xx. 4. All that we know for certain of this Gaius is, that he was a great friend of St. John, that he exercised hospitality with great zeal and generosity, notwithstanding the harshness and severity of Diotrophes, who appears to have been his bishop, and who was not willing that hospitality should be shewn to the brethren converted from Judaism. St. John promises to visit Gaius, and to reprimand Diotrophes. There is great probability that this letter was carried by the converted Jews, who travelled to diffuse the gospel, and who made a religious point not to enter among the Gentiles, and not to receive any thing from them. It may then be considered as a recommendatory letter in favour of these apostolic men. It appears that great pains were taken to remove the antipathy that existed between these two parties, even after their conversion. The same seeds of division are discernible in St. Paul's epistles between the Jews and the converted Gentiles: and one of the earliest concerns of this apostle was, to suppress in the Jews all sentiments of vanity and self-sufficiency, which made them prefer themselves to the Gentiles; and in Gentiles a different kind of pride, which caused them to despise the Jews. In the first part of this letter St. John congratulates Gaius on his good works, and recommends to him certain evangelical preachers, who were to deliver him this letter as they called upon him. (ver. 1, 8.) In the second part he complains of Diotrophes, who affected independence, and proposes to Gaius the example of Demetrius, the faithful servant of Jesus Christ, ver. 9. ad finem [to the end].

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### 3 JOHN 1

**Ver. 4.** *No greater grace.* That is, nothing that gives me greater joy and satisfaction. (Challoner)

**Ver. 7.** *Taking nothing of the Gentiles.* These ministers and preachers of the gospel, whom St. John recommends, took care, as St. Paul did, not to take any thing of the Gentiles, to whom they preached, lest they should be thought to preach to get money by it. But he puts Gaius in mind, that by assisting such men, he would become a fellow labourer in the gospel, and have a share in their reward. (Witham)

**Ver. 9-10.** *Diotrophes....doth not receive us,* nor those we recommend, but prattles and talks against me. We know no more of this man, nor of Demetrius, of whom St. John gives so favourable a character. (Witham) --- It seemeth, saith Ven. Bede, that he was an arch heretic, or proud sect master --- *Greek: upomneso.* I will rebuke them, and make them know to be wicked. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 14.** This was a very usual salutation among the Jews, by which they wished every possible blessing might come upon their friends they thus saluted. (Menochius)

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### JUDE

#### THE CATHOLIC EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE, THE APOSTLE.

### INTRODUCTION.



This Epistle, as we find by Eusebius (lib. iii. History of the Church, chap. xxv.) and St. Jerome, (in Catal.) was not everywhere received as canonical till about the end of the fourth age [century]. It is cited by Origen, hom. vii. in Josue [Joshua]; by Tertullian, lib. de cultu fœminarum; by Clement of Alexandria, lib. iii. Pædag.; by St. Athanasius, in Synopsi; by St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Carm. xxxiv.; by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. 4ta.; by the councils of Laodicea and the third council of Carthage; by St. Augustine, lib. ii. de Doct. Christiana, chap. viii. See Tillemont, and Nat. Alex. in his preface to this epistle. The time when it was written is uncertain, only it is insinuated ver. 17 that few of the apostles were then living, perhaps only St. John. The design was to give all Christians a horror of the detestable doctrine and infamous practices of the Simonites, Nicolaites, and such heretics, who having the name of Christians, were become a scandal to religion and to all mankind, as may be seen in St. Irenæus and St. Epiphanius. He copies in a manner what St. Peter had written in his third Epistle, Chap. ii. (Witham) --- St. Jude in the first part of his Epistle, (ver. 1 to 16) writes against certain heretics of his day, known in history by the name of Gnostics, whose extravagant opinions and shameful and criminal disorders have been described by St. Epiphanius, St. Irenæus, and other Fathers. In the second part, he seems to have principally in view such as were to arise in the latter times; and he exhorts such of the faithful as should live to see those days, to remain firm in the faith which they had received, applying themselves to prayer, persevering in charity, and awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ and eternal life, which He has promised them. St. Jude in thus exerting himself, like St. Peter, against the first and last heresies, has invincibly established the perpetuity of the Catholic Church. With regard to the doubts of certain authors relative to the authenticity of this Epistle, we can oppose Origen, who says that St. Jude wrote a letter, which in the few lines it contains, includes discourses full of force and heavenly grace --- *Greek: loudas egrapsen epistolen oligostichon men, pepleromenen de ton tes ouraniou charitos erromenon logon.* --- And St. Epiphanius says, that he believed the Holy Ghost inspired St. Jude with the design of writing against the Gnostics in the letter he has left us....We find it inserted in the ancient catalogues of sacred Scripture, as in that of the council of Laodicea, canon. lx; of Carthage, canon xlvii: nor can there be any reasonable doubt at present for admitting it into the canon of Scripture. It is received by the Catholic Church, and has been received ever since the fourth age [century]. What gave doubts relative to the authenticity of this Epistle, was the author's quoting a prophecy of Enoch, which seemed to have been taken from a spurious work published under the name of this patriarch, and a fact concerning the death of Moses, not found in the canonical books of the Old Testament; but the apostle might have cited the prophecy of Enoch, and the fact concerning Moses, on the faith of some ancient tradition, without a reference to any book. Eusebius (History of the Church, lib. iii. chap. xxv.) bears testimony that this Epistle, though not frequently cited by the ancients, was publicly read in many Churches. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and the later Fathers, had admitted it as part of canonical Scripture. Hence Luther, the Centuriators of Magdeburg, and the Anabaptists, have no just reason to look upon this Epistle as doubtful. Le Clerc, in his Hist. Eccles. (an. 90.) acts more candidly in admitting it without any scruple. As for the exception Grotius take from St. Jude not assuming the quality of apostles, and from its not being universally received in the first ages [centuries], we can answer, that St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, did not take the title of apostles at the head of all their letters, and that some Churches have doubted at first of the authenticity of other writings, which have afterwards been universally acknowledged as authentic and canonical.

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## JUDE 1

**Ver. 1.** *And brother of James*, the apostle and bishop of Jerusalem; he might have added, the brother of Christ, as he and the same St. James are so styled; i.e. cousin Germans. --- *And called.* That is, to all converted to the faith of Christ, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** Being very solicitous to discharge my duty of an apostle, in writing and instructing you in the common concern of your salvation, I judge it necessary at present to write this letter, to exhort

you *to contend earnestly*,<sup>[1]</sup> and stand firm in the Christian faith. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *For there have crept in some men, impious men*, (who were of old<sup>[2]</sup> foretold that they should fall into condemnation, by their own obdurate malice) the disciples of Simon, and the Nicolaites, who endeavour to turn *the grace of our God*, and Christian liberty into all manner of infamous<sup>[3]</sup> *lasciviousness*; who, by their ridiculous fables, deny *the only sovereign Ruler, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. Some by *the only sovereign*, or master of all things, understand God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his divine Person, is the same God, Master, and Lord with him, and the Holy Ghost. But many interpreters think the true sense and construction is this, *denying Jesus Christ, our only sovereign master*,<sup>[4]</sup> *and Lord*. The reasons for this exposition are: 1. That this verse of St. Jude seems correspondent to that of St. Peter, (2 Peter ii. 1.) where he says of the same heretics, that they deny *the Lord who bought them*, or deny him that bought them, to be Lord. 2. Because the disciples of Simon denied Jesus Christ to be truly Lord God, but denied not this of the Father. 3. Because the Greek text seems to denote one and the same to be sovereign master and the Lord. See Cornelius a Lapide. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *But I will admonish you, that once* <sup>[5]</sup> (that is, some time ago, when you were converted and instructed) *knew all things* that were necessary as to the Christian faith, I will then put you in mind of the judgments and chastisements that such sinners may expect, *that Jesus*,<sup>[6]</sup> not as man, but as God, having saved the *people* of Israel from their slavery in *Egypt*, *did afterwards* on several occasions punish and *destroy those* among them, *who believed not*; who were rebellious and incredulous to his promises. (Witham) --- The Greek, and after it the Protestant version, have the *Lord saved*; the Vulgate has *Jesus*, which signifies Saviour, and may in this place be understood of the Word, who from his incarnation took the name of Jesus (Bible de Vence) --- Menochius says it means Josue [Joshua], who is thus styled by the seventy interpreters [in the Septuagint].

**Ver. 6-7.** *Principality*. That is, the state in which they were first created, their original dignity. (Challoner) --- *Having given themselves over to* <sup>[7]</sup> *fornication*, or to excessive uncleanness. --- *Going after other flesh*, and seeking unnatural lusts, with those of the same sex. (Witham) --- Impurity punished by fire and sulphur. Fire is a punishment proportioned to the criminal passion of the voluptuous. That of Sodom was most dreadful, but then it was of short duration. There is another fire that will never be extinguished.

**Ver. 8.** *In like manner these men* (heretics) *also defile the flesh* with their horrid abominations, *despise just dominion*, all lawful authority, as well as ecclesiastical as civil; *blaspheme majesty*, speak ill, and rail both against the majesty of God, and those whom he hath invested with power derived from him. (Witham) --- *Blaspheme*, &c. Speak evil of them that are in dignity; and even utter blasphemies against the divine majesty. (Challoner) --- The justice of God generally punishes the pride of heart, by abandoning the body to shameful and humiliating abominations, and this we observe in the chief heresiarchs. Their pride makes them rebel against authority; and when once they have got free of this yoke, every other restraint is laughed at.

**Ver. 9.** *When Michael*, &c. We do not find this in any other canonical Scripture, so that St. Jude must either have had it from some tradition among the Jews, or from some writing which he, by the Spirit of God, knew to be true. It is not expressed on what account this *dispute* or strife was, betwixt St. Michael and the devil, about *the body of Moses*. The common interpretation is, that St. Michael conveyed the body of Moses out of the way, and from the knowledge of the Israelites, lest they should pay to it some idolatrous worship; whereas the devil, for that end, would have it buried, so that the people might know the place and adore it. See Deuteronomy xxxiv. 6. where it is said, "and no man hath known of his sepulchre until this present day." (Witham) --- *Contended about the body*, &c. This contention, which is nowhere else mentioned in holy writ, was originally known by revelation, and transmitted by tradition. It is thought the occasion of it was, that the devil would have had the body buried in such a place and manner, as to be worshipped by the Jews with divine honours. --- *Command thee*, or, *rebuke thee*. (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *These men blaspheme whatsoever things they know not*, as it is the custom of false and ignorant teachers: and as to things which they know by their senses, in *these they are corrupted*, following, like brute beasts, their natural lusts and appetites. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *They have imitated, or gone in the way of Cain*, who murdered his brother; and they have a mortal hatred against the faithful. They have imitated *Balaam* [8] and his covetousness, (see 2 Peter ii. 15.) and *Core* [Korah], (Numbers xvi.) who with others opposed Moses; and as these sinners perished, so will they. (Witham) --- *Way, &c.* Heretics follow the way of Cain, by murdering the souls of their brethren; the way of Balaam by putting a scandal before the people of God, for their own private ends; and the way of Core or Korah, by their opposition to the church governors of divine appointment. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12-13.** *These are spots in their banquets*; (see 2 Peter ii. 13.) in which they commit unheard of abominations, *twice dead*, which signifies no more than quite dead, *clouds without water*, &c. All these metaphors are to represent the corrupt manners of these heretics. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *Enoch, &c.* Though the ancient writers mention an apocryphal book of Enoch's prophecies, yet St. Jude might know by tradition, or by the Spirit of God, what Enoch truly prophesied concerning God's coming with *thousands of his saints*, to judge, condemn, and punish the wicked for their impieties and blasphemies. (Witham) --- *Prophesied*. This prophecy was either known by tradition, or from some book that is since lost. (Challoner)

**Ver. 15.** Nothing more terrible than a God avenging in the majesty of his power his own cause. Then the impious libertine, in proportion as he has studied to extinguish in himself and to stifle in others the light of faith, the more shall be confounded and overwhelmed with the glory of God in the day of just retribution.

**Ver. 16.** *Speaketh proud things, admiring persons for gain's sake.* It is a part of the character of these heretics to seem to *admire* and flatter others when they can gain by it. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *Be mindful, &c.* He now exhorts the faithful to remain steadfast in the belief and practice of what they had heard from the apostles, who had also foretold that in after times (literally, in the *last time*), [9] there should be false teachers, scoffing and ridiculing all revealed truths, abandoning themselves to their passions and lusts, who *separate themselves* from the Catholic communion by heresies and schisms; *sensual men*, [10] carried away, and enslaved by the pleasures of the senses. (Witham)

**Ver. 20-21.** *Building yourselves.* That is, raising by your actions a spiritual building, founded 1. upon *faith*; 2. on the *love of God*; 3. upon hope, whilst you are *awaiting* for the *mercies* of God, and the reward of *eternal life*; 4. joined with the great duty of *prayer*. (Witham)

**Ver. 22.** *And some indeed reprove, being judged.* He gives them another instruction to practice charity in endeavouring to convert their neighbour, where they will meet with three sorts of persons. 1. With persons obstinate in their errors and sins, these may be said to be already judged and condemned, they are to be sharply reprehended, reprov'd, and, if possible, convinced of their errors. 2. As to others, you must endeavour to save them, by snatching them as it were out of the fire, from the ruin they stand in great danger of. 3. You must have compassion on others in great *fear*, when you see them, through ignorance or frailty, in danger of being drawn into the snares of these heretics; with these you must deal more gently and mildly, with a charitable compassion, hating always, and teaching others to hate the carnal coat, which is defiled, their sensual and corrupt manners, that defile both the soul and body. (Witham)

**Ver. 24-25.** *Now to him, &c.* St. Jude concludes his epistle with this doxology of praising God, and praying to *the only God, our Saviour*, which may either signify God the Father, or God as equally agreeing to all the Three Persons [of the blessed Trinity], who are equally the cause of Christ's incarnation and man's salvation *through Jesus Christ, our Lord*, who being God from

eternity, took upon him our human nature, that he might become our Redeemer. (Witham) --- To whom, O Lord, can we give the glory of our salvation, unless to thee, to whom all is due? To whom can we consecrate our hearts, but to him who has redeemed them with his blood, sanctified them by his Spirit, and who is to make them happy by his glory? Reign there, O Lord, as on thy throne, now by thy love; that you may reign there hereafter with glory, magnificence, and sovereignty in heaven.

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[1] Ver. 3. To contend earnestly, *supercertari*, which has an active sense, of which there are divers examples. See Estius and P. Alleman, *Greek: epagonizesthai*.

[2] Ver. 4. Who were foretold; *præscripti*, *Greek: progegrammenoi*, *prædicti*. It is not well translated *appointed*, by Mr. N., especially since Calvin and Beza pretended, from this expression, that God was the cause of their resisting the truth.

[3] Ver. 4. *Luxuriam*, *Greek: aselgeian*.

[4] Ver. 4. *Solum Dominatorem, & Dominum nostrum, Jesum Christum negantes*. The ordinary *Greek ton monon despoten Theon, kai Kurion emon Iesoun Christon arnoumenoi*.

[5] Ver. 5. *Scientes semel omnia*, *Greek: eidotas apax apanta*. *Semel*, pro jamdudum, says Estius.

[6] Ver. 5. *Quoniam Jesus*, some would have here meant *Josue* [Joshua]: they seem not to reflect, that it was not *Josue* [Joshua], but *Moses* that saved the people out of Egypt.

[7] Ver. 6-7. Given themselves over to fornication, *exfornicatæ*, *Greek: ekporneusasai*, excessive fornications, the signification being stronger, and increased by *Greek: ek*.

[8] Ver. 11. *Errore Balaam mercede effusi sunt*, *Greek: exechuthesan*, *decepti sunt simili avaritia & spe mercedis*.

[9] Ver. 17. *In novissimo tempore*, *Greek: en eschato chrono*, i.e. in this last age of the world.

[10] Ver. 17. *Animales*, *Greek: psuchikoi*, *ab anima*. Tertullian turned Montanist, called the Catholics, *Psychicos*.

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## APOCALYPSE

### THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Though some in the first ages [centuries] doubted whether this book was canonical, and who was the author of it, (see Eusebius, lib. 7, History of the Church, chap. xxv.) yet it is certain much the part of the ancient fathers acknowledged both that it was a part of the *canon*, and that it was written by St. John, the apostle and evangelist. See Tillemont, in his ninth note upon St. John, where he cites St. Justin Martyr, St. Irenæus, St. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Athanasius., Eusebius, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, &c. It was written in Greek to the churches in Asia [Asia Minor], under Domitian, about the year 96 or 97, long after the destruction of Jerusalem, when St. John was banished to the island of Patmos, in the Ægean

Sea. It is by some called the prophecy of the New Testament, and the accomplishment of the predictions of all other prophets, by the first coming of Christ at his incarnation, and by his second coming at the end of the world. As to the time when the chief predictions should come to pass, we have no certainty, as appears by the different opinions, both of the ancient fathers, and late interpreters. Many think that most things set down from the fourth chapter to the end, will not be fulfilled till a little time before the end of the world. Others are of an opinion, that a great part of them, and particularly the fall of the wicked Babylon, happened at the destruction of paganism, by the destruction of heathen Rome, and its persecuting heathen emperors. Of these interpretations, see Alcazar in his long commentary, the learned Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, in his treatise on this book, and P. Alleman, in his notes on the same Apocalypse, tom. xii, who, in his preface, says, that this is in a great measure may be now looked upon as the opinion followed by the learned men. In fine, others think St. John's design was in a mystical way, by metaphors and allegories, to represent the attempts and persecutions of the wicked against the servants of God, the punishments that should in a short time fall upon Babylon, that is, upon all the wicked in general; the eternal happiness and reward which God had reserved for the pious inhabitants of Jerusalem, that is, for his faithful servants, after their short trials and tribulations of this mortal life. In the mean time we meet with many profitable instructions and admonitions, which we may easily enough understand; but we have no certainty, when we apply these predictions to particular events; for as St. Jerome takes notice, the Apocalypse has as many mysteries as words, or rather mysteries in every word. *Apocalypsis Joannis tot habet sacramenta quot verba....parum dixi, in verbis singulus multiplices latent intelligentiæ.* (Ep. ad Paulin. t. iv., p. 574. Edit. Benedict.) (Witham) --- In the first, second, and third chapters of this book are contained instructions and admonitions which St. John was commanded to write to the seven bishops of the churches in Asia. And in the following chapters, to the end, are contained prophecies of things that are to come to pass in the Church of Christ, particularly towards the end of the world, in the time of antichrist. It was written in Greek, in the island of Patmos, where St. John was in banishment by order of the cruel emperor Domitian, about sixty-four years after our Lord's ascension. (Challoner) --- This is the last in order of the sacred writings, and contains, in twenty-two chapters, revelations, as the name imports, extremely obscure, it must be acknowledged, yet undoubtedly of utmost importance to the Christian Church, if we may judge from the dignity of the author, who is the beloved disciple, or the grandeur and majesty of the ideas, which pervade every chapter of the work. Being a *sealed book*, or a hidden mystery, in the beginning of the Church, when nothing of this important prophecy had yet been fulfilled, it is no wonder we are deprived of the usual lights which we have hitherto followed in expounding the Scripture, viz. the works of the fathers. So little was it indeed understood at that time, that by many it was long considered as a *reverie*, and an extravagant composition, though the most learned always looked upon it as an inspired work. One reason, which may have led the faithful to class this among the apocryphal works, was the number of fables and illusions published by the misguided piety of the ignorant. We know at least, that on account of the heresy of Cerinthus, which was filled up with illusion and fanaticism, this book was not circulated among the faithful: a few copies were kept with care in the archives of the Churches, to be perused only by the bishop, or such as he thought not likely to abuse it. With regard to the interpretation of it, it will not be expected that it should be attempted in a work of this kind. We shall therefore only give a short account of the principal commentators, and their plans, that the enlightened reader may consult their works, if he wish to enter deeper into the subject. But it should never be forgotten, that the connection of sublime and prophetic ideas which compose this work, has at all times been a labyrinth, in which the greatest geniuses have lost themselves, and a rock on which most commentators have split, the great Sir Isaac Newton not excepted. Hence Scaliger's praise of Calvin; Calvinus sapuit, quia non scripsit in Apocalypsim. 1. The fathers living before the accomplishment of the events, have of course given us no interpretation. Those, therefore, who have written on it at all, have explained it in a mere moral sense, and drawn from it useful parables and instructions. None of them have given a regular systematic explanation. It must, however, be observed, as a circumstance of some moment, that many of them, particularly Sts. Augustine and Jerome, thought the Apocalypse contained prophecies regarding the *whole time* of the existence of the Church of Christ, till its triumphant state in the new Jerusalem. 2. Among the moderns we have abundant interpreters of the Apocalypse in all the reformed Churches. It has indeed grown into a

mania among them, the only difference being their respective degrees of absurdity. This has been to all of them the common quarry, whence they have hewn the stones to cast at their mother Church. For to this day they have continued to disgrace themselves and Christianity, by depicting the Church of Rome as the scarlet whore of Babylon, popery the beast, and the pope antichrist. We must, however, except Grotius and Hammond, who have given historical interpretations, and some few others. 3. Among Catholic expositors stands eminently conspicuous the learned bishop of Meaux, Bossuet. This light of the Galican Church has improved upon and filled up the outlines which Grotius had only sketched. The first three chapters, according to him, regard only the Churches of Asia, to which they are addressed; the other chapters, to nineteen, have been fulfilled in the persecutions which the Church endured under the pagan emperors. The last three are merely allegorical of the triumphs which the Church finally gained over her persecutors. 4. *Du Pin* has taken a wider range. The last three chapters regard the final judgment, and the establishment of the Church in heaven. And all the chapters between the first three and last three, are mere general descriptions of persecutions, fall of tyrants, heresies, &c. which shall happen in the Church; represented under the various figures which the rich imagination of St. John supplied. This system certainly removes all difficulties at once, by saving the trouble of comparing each figure with corresponding historical facts; but substitutes a vague and indeterminate sense, which we do not expect in prophecy. 5. *Calmet* does not vary a great deal in the outlines with Bossuet; but their applications of the text to the history are in many points widely different. He conceives the intermediate chapters between the first three and last three to have been fulfilled in the general persecution begun by Diocletian, in 303, and the destruction of Rome, in 410, by Alaric. The last three chapters give the triumph of the martyrs at that period, as well as many things, which are to take place at the coming of antichrist, and the dissolution of the world. 6. Conceiving that all the above commentators had too much contracted the time for the accomplishment of the prophecy, by limiting it to the establishment of Christianity, *Monsieur de la Chetardie* established a new system upon the supposition that the Apocalypse includes the whole history of Christ's Church upon earth. In doing this, he had the authority of St. Augustine, and other fathers. Observing, therefore, upon an attentive perusal of this work, that there were seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, and that at the opening of such seals a new revelation was made, he ingeniously concluded, that the history of the whole Church was divided into seven periods or ages, and that to each period belonged one seal, one trumpet, and one vial. Six of these periods he conceives to be already accomplished, the seventh yet remains concealed in the womb of futurity. 7. Ingenious as is this system of Chetardie, it was not adopted, since Calmet, who wrote after him, preferred his own, which resembled that of Bossuet. It has, however, been renewed by this late bishop Walmsley, under the name of Signor Pastorini, who has taken up the idea and general outline from Chetardie, but illustrated the same with his own interpretation and application to historical facts. The erudition with which the latter author has clothed this system, and the striking aptness of his comparisons of the words of the prophecy to the events which have passed, have gained a very general approbation, and he is almost exclusively followed in the interpretation of this sealed book. How far he has succeeded in his explanation of the seventh age of the Church, cannot be determined by us, since it is shut up in the dark recess of futurity. Posterity will decide. To him we refer the English reader for any further information on the subject, convinced that his researches will be amply gratified, his education wonderfully improved. For, says the illustrious prelate Bossuet, "notwithstanding the obscurities of this book, we experience in its perusal an impression so sweet, and at the same time so magnificent, of the majesty of God; such sublime ideas present themselves of the mystery of Jesus Christ, such noble images of his victories and his reign, and such terrible effects of his judgment, that the soul is quite moved and penetrated. All the beauties of the Scriptures are collected in this book. Whatever there is melting, lively, and majestic in either the law or the prophets, acquires in this book an additional lustre." O truly adorable truths contained herein! of which God is the plenitude and eternal source; of which Jesus Christ is the prophet, the teacher and master; truths which have the angels for servants and ministers; the apostles and bishops for witnesses and depositaries; and all faithful souls, ver. 3. for children and disciples. Let us prepare our hearts to hear Jesus Christ arisen from the dead, discovering to us the mysteries of his kingdom, and the truths of the gospel of his glory. Let us hear his warning voice, and prepare for his speedy coming by a strict observance of every duty. Happy, thrice happy that Christian whom

the death of sin, and the sleep of tepidity shall not render deaf to this voice!

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## APOCALYPSE 1

**Ver. 1-3.** *The Apocalypse, or Revelation.* I rather prefer the word Apocalypse, which the Latin interpreter did not think fit to change. --- *Of Jesus Christ....by his Angel, sent to his servant, John.* So that these things were immediately revealed to St. John by an Angel, who represented and spoke in the person of Christ.--- *Which must shortly come;* and as it is again said, (ver. 3.) *the time is at hand.* This cannot be meant of all things in the Apocalypse, where mention is also made of the day of judgment, and of the glory of heaven at the end of the world. It can only mean, that some things were to happen shortly, i.e. what is said of the seven churches. (Chap. ii. and iii.) Or the persecutions foretold should begin shortly. Or else these expressions are only to signify, that all time is short, and that from the coming of the Messiah, we are not in the last age, or the *last hour.* See 1 John ii. 18. (Witham) --- St. John excites their attention by the most pressing motives, the approach of the events. Whatever explanation be given of this book, it is equally true in all, that the time is at hand, when it will begin to be accomplished. To find our consolation and happiness in this sacred book, according to the promise of the Holy Spirit, we must peruse it with faith and humility, receive the interpretation of the Church with submission and docility, and practise the truths contained with fidelity and promptitude. What is the life of man, since ages are but moments that escape us? Eternity is but a moment, but a moment that will never end.

**Ver. 4-6.** *John to the seven churches,*[1] afterwards named; and by them, to be understood of all churches, bishops, and people in the like dispositions. --- *From him, who is, who was, and who is to come.* As these words are only applied, and applicable to him, who is truly God and eternal, Alcazar (p. 176) applies them to God the Father. Others think them to be spoken of God, as the word God agrees to all the three divine Persons, who are one and the same God. See Ribera. --- *And from the seven spirits.* Alcazar understands them of seven of God's attributes, or perfections, but, by the common exposition, are meant seven of the chief created spirits, who in a special manner assist at the throne of God, employed to execute God's commands, as Raphael saith. (Tobit. xii. 15.) *I am one of the seven who stand before God.* (Witham) --- *Spirits, &c.* Some understand this of the Holy Ghost, on account of his seven gifts; but the most literal interpretation is of the principal Angels, who always surround the throne of God, and are his ministering spirits. (Calmet) --- *And from Jesus Christ,*[2] made man, and the Redeemer of mankind, whom St. John here names after the seven spirits, because he continues his discourse about Christ, *who is the faithful witness;* testified and approved of God by so many miracles, prophecies, &c. He is the chief of the martyrs or witnesses, as the Greek word signifies. --- *The first begotten of the dead,* both first in dignity, and first that rose to an immortal life. --- *The prince of the kings of the earth,* whose power is infinitely greater than all theirs; and this to put the suffering Christians in mind, that they needed not to fear the persecuting emperors, who have no power after this life. --- *And Christ hath made us a kingdom,* inasmuch as by his grace he has made us members of his true Church, called the kingdom of God, and promised us to reign with him in his glorious kingdom in heaven. --- *And hath made us priests to God, and his Father,* to offer up spiritual sacrifices. See 1 Peter ii. 9. --- *To him be, or is due, glory and empire, for ever and ever. Amen.* That is, to Jesus Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Behold, he cometh,* or is to come at the day of judgment. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *I am Alpha, and Omega.* These, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, signify the same as what follows, *the beginning, and the end,* the first cause and last end of all intelligent beings, *who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty:* These words agree only to him, who is the true God, and here are applied to our blessed Redeemer, who is to come and judge all. (Witham)

**Ver. 10.** *On the Lord's day.*[3] Not on the Jewish sabbath, which is our Saturday, but on the Christian sabbath, our Sunday, called the *Lord's day*. The Church, in the apostle's time, changed the day of rest, on which the Jews were commanded to rest and sanctify that day, from Saturday to Sunday, from the last day of the week to the first. They judged this only to be an indispensable precept, that some day or some time should be appointed, in a special manner, to God's service and worship, on which Christians should also abstain from servile works, that were not of necessity: as to the determination of such a day of the week, they judged that the Church had power to change the day. The late pretended reformers have all agreed with us in this change. And if they would have all that is expressed in this commandment, to be of an indispensable and unchangeable obligation, according to the letter of the law, they ought certainly to observe, to sanctify, and to abstain from all servile works of Saturday, or on the Jewish sabbath. --- *A great voice, as of a trumpet.* To signify the importance of things to be revealed. (Witham) --- *Voice, &c.* This was most likely St. John the Baptist, who calls himself the voice of one crying in the desert, and who in Malachias is called the Angel of the Lord, as he is also styled in the first verse of this chapter. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 12.** *I saw seven golden candlesticks,* which, by the last verse of this chapter, represented the seven Churches of Asia. We may suppose these candlesticks to have been shown to St. John, like what is described, Exodus xxv. 31. For in these visions of St. John are frequent allusions to the former tabernacle, and to things relating to the service and worship of God, which Moses was ordered to make. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,* i.e. *walking* among the candlesticks, like unto Christ, as he many times called himself the Son of man, and at other times told the Jews he was the Son, the only begotten Son of God. By this walking among the candlesticks is signified his providential care over all the particular Churches, which make up one Catholic Church. --- *With a long garment,*[4] and a *golden girdle*, with a resemblance to the habit of the priests. (Witham) --- Jesus Christ is in the midst of his Church to enlighten it, to defend and sanctify it, the true model of pastors, who should reside in the midst of their flock, be clothed with sanctity and justice, and girt with the golden girdle, i.e. with singular purity, always ready for combat and labour, by their charity and zeal.

**Ver. 15.** *His feet like unto fine brass,* to signify the purity and steadfastness of his steps and actions. --- *His voice as the sound of many waters,* the sound of his preaching by himself, and by his apostles, has been heard throughout all nations of the world. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *In his right hand seven stars,* which, as it is said, (ver. 20.) were the *Angels*, i.e. the bishops of the seven churches, by this comparison is expressed their dignity. --- *And from his mouth came out a sharp two-edged sword.* The word of God preached is compared to a two-edged sword. (Ephesians vi. 17. and Hebrews iv. 12.) It also signifies God's severity in punishing sinners. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *I am the first and the last.* These are the words of the Son of man, or of him that represented our Saviour, Christ, to St. John. To be the first and the last, is another expression agreeing only to him who is the true God, as it is divers times applied by the prophet Isaias. (Witham) --- From the 12th verse to this place we have a description of the Son of man, i.e. Christ. The different emblematical descriptions of his countenance, his dress, &c. are similar to what are used by other prophets, and easily explained of his attributes, his eternity, vengeance, &c. &c. (Omnes passim.)

**Ver. 18.** *And alive, and was dead;* always living as God, and as man was dead, died on the cross for the salvation of all men, rose again, triumphed over hell, death, and sin, and am living for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and of hell, power over all, all things being made subject to me, even as man, or as God and man. (Witham)



**Ver. 20.** *Angels.* These are the seven bishops of the churches. Christ's having them in his right hand, shews the care he takes of his Church. (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 4. Ab eo qui erat, & qui est, & qui venturus est, *Greek: apo tou o on, kai o en, kai o erchomenos*, as if it was said, *Greek: apo tou os legetai o on*, &c.

[2] Ver. 5. Qui est testis fidelis, *Greek: o martus o pistos*. Martyr ille fidelis.

[3] Ver. 10. In Dominica die, *Greek: en te kuriake emera*.

[4] Ver. 13. -- Vestitum podere, *Greek: endedumenon podere*. See Exodus xxviii. 51.; Daniel x. 5.

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## APOCALYPSE 2

**Ver. 1-7.** *To the Angel of the church of Ephesus.* The great St. Timothy, who was bishop of Ephesus, died a glorious martyr about this time. But as for the admonitions and reprehensions given in these letters, we must take notice, that they are given to the faithful of each church, and not only to the bishops, as it appears by the words so often repeated. (Witham) --- *Angel.* This could have been no other than St. Timothy, who was then bishop of Ephesus. We must not suppose the faults, which are reproved by St. John, to belong individually to St. Timothy, but to some members of the Church. (Bossuet, and others) --- *These things, with he who holdeth, &c.* That is, Christ, or the Angel, who represented Christ, as appeareth by his titles repeated out of the last chapter. --- *And hast not failed*, or fainted, in opposing the teachers of false doctrine. --- *Thou has left thy first charity*, or first fervour, a common, yet a very dangerous disposition, and especially in a bishop, charged with the care of those under him. --- *Do penance....practise the first works*, return to thy first fervour, or *I will remove thy candlestick out of its place*. The church of Ephesus is threatened, as in danger to lose its faith, which faith should be transplanted and received in other places. It is said what God has divers times permitted, that churches flourishing in the profession of the true Christian faith should be perverted by infidelity and heresy, while the faith hath been planted in other kingdoms of the world. I need not bring instances, where candlesticks have been removed out of their places. (Witham) --- The Nicolaites were an infamous sect, who disturbed the rising Church by the superstitions and all the impurities of paganism. See St. Augustine, de hæresib. --- *To him*, to every one *that overcometh, I will give to eat of the tree of life*, (that is, eternal happiness, differently expressed in these letters) *which is in the paradise of my God*. It is spoke in the person of Christ, as man. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-11.** *To the Angel of the church of Smyrna.* To St. Polycarp, or some bishop there before him. No reprehension is given to this bishop, or to his church, but a commendation for suffering in poverty and tribulation, when they were rich in grace. (Witham) --- *Poverty.* He was poor in temporal things, but rich in grace and merits. --- *Thou art blasphemed* by those false teachers, who call themselves Jews and Israelites, and the chosen people of God, waiting for the coming of the Messiah, but are not to be looked upon as such; having refused to own their true Messiah, Jesus Christ, they are *the Synagogue of Satan*, the greatest enemies of the true faith. --- *You shall have tribulation ten days*, which several here understand for a long time, others for a short time, *ten times* being used in both senses. (Witham) --- The first death is that of the body, the second of the soul. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 12-17.** *To the Angel of the Church of Pergamus.* -- This Church is exhorted to *do penance*, and reprehended, as the seat or throne of Satan. It is only said, that the bishop lives where this satanical seat is, that *he had not denied the faith*, even under the persecution, when St. Antipas suffered martyrdom, of whom see Tillemont in the persecution under Domitian, tom. ii, p. 119, and

note 523; and Bollandus, April 11th; though the acts themselves be not of great authority. --- Thou hast *them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaites*, which is compared to that of *Balaam* who taught *Balac* to cast a scandal before the children of Israel, by which they were seduced by the women of the Moabites, and fell into the sin of fornication and idolatry. (Numbers xxiv. and xxxi. 16.) --- *To him that overcometh, I will give the hidden manna*; a happiness in heaven, which the eye hath not seen, &c. --- And a *white* [1] *stone*, with a *new name written*, as a mark of the happiness promised to all those who shall conquer. An allusion to the custom of giving a white stone to those that were tried and acquitted, and also to persons promoted to a dignity; and a black stone to such as were found guilty. See Acts xxvi. 10. (Witham) --- This new name is the eternal recompense, unknown and despised by worldlings, but esteemed by the faithful, who know the excellence of the rewards promised by God. (Calmet)

**Ver. 18-29.** *To the Angel of the church of Thyatira.* Here is first a commendation of their constancy in the *faith*, in good *works*, *charity*, *patience*, and *ministry*, which chiefly regards their bishop, whoever he was at that time. The heretics, called Alogians, who rejected the Apocalypse, (chiefly because of the clear proofs of the divinity of the Word, or Son of God) pretended that there was not church at Thyatira, when St. John is supposed to have written his Apocalypse. They have not proof of this. This same church was afterwards perverted by the Montanists. See St. Epiphanius, hæc. li. p. 455. Here follows a reprehension that they permitted *the woman*, (here called by the name of *Jezabel*, [2] as was called the wife of Achaz, who persecuted the true prophets, and protected the false ones, 3 Kings xviii.) *to seduce the servants of God, to commit fornication*, and eat of things offered to idols. There is no probability that this Jezabel was wife to the bishop of that church. Had this been true, the bishop would have deserved a reprehension much more severe than is here given him. Alcazar thinks that by this woman was meant some heretical sect, or the corrupt synagogue of the Jews; but interpreters commonly understand some powerful woman thereabout among the infamous Nicolaites, who by her authority and artifices, brought many to embrace that sect. --- *I give her time to do penance; and she will not, or would not repent.* It is Christ who speaks as God, for who but God gives sinners time to repent? --- *Behold, I will cast her into a bed*, &c. Some understand a bed of sickness, others of corporal death, others eternal torments in hell, where she, and *they* that sin *with her*, shall be *in very great tribulation, unless first they do penance.* --- *All the churches shall know that I am he, who searcheth the reins and hearts*, which God alone can do. See Psalm vii. 10.; Jeremias xvii. 10.; &c. It is God also *who will give to every one...according to his works.* See Psalm lxi. 13.; Proverbs xxiv. 12.; Romans ii. 6. and in divers other places. --- *I will not put upon you any other weight*, &c. That is, not the insupportable burden of the Jewish ceremonies, to which teachers of false doctrines would have you subject. (Witham) --- Whoever does not give in to this new doctrine of the Nicolaites and Gnostics, and does not approve the deep and abstruse doctrines of Satan, which they teach, shall have no new weight or punishment. Let them keep the doctrine once delivered. (Calmet) --- Yet in the faith which you have already learnt, remain steadfast, *till I come.* --- To them who shall *overcome*, &c. *I will give power over* or *above all nations.* This shews that the saints, who are with Christ our Lord in heaven, receive power from him to preside over nations, and provinces, as patrons; and shall come with him at the end of the world to execute his will against those who have not kept his commandments. (Challoner) --- *End.* This alludes to the day of judgment, when the faithful shall sit on thrones with Christ. And he shall inherit the morning star of perpetual bliss, that shall never set. --- They shall triumph over all the wicked world, and under me *shall rule them*, as it were, *with a rod of iron*, being so much exalted above them. --- *As the vessel of a potter*, shall all their present greatness *be broken.* To every such faithful servant, I will give *the morning star*, another expression to signify eternal light, or eternal happiness. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 17. *Calculus candidus*, Greek: *psephos leuken*. See Acts xxvi. 10.

[2] Ver. 20. *Mulierem Jezabel*, Greek: *ten gunaika lezabel*. Dr. Wells, in his amendments to the Protestant translation, has put *thy wife*, and in the Greek *Greek: gunaika sou* which he says is found in the Alexandrian and several other manuscripts. But neither the Oxford edition of 1675,

nor that at Amsterdam of 1711, take notice of this reading in any one manuscript. As for that one manuscript of Alexandria, I guess by Walton's Polyglot, that it cannot well be read in that place. And though it is likely that the author of the Syriac version may have found that reading, yet there is nothing for it in the Arabic or Ethiopic, nor in the vulgar Latin, which, as Dr. Wells himself take notice on 1 John v. 7. is more ancient than any other version or Greek manuscript. And though we find uxorem tuam in St. Cyprian ad Antonianum, edit. Rig. p. 72, and in the edition of Dr. Fell, published in Amsterdam, in the year 1701, p. 248, where he says in the note mark a, cui interpretationi favent illa Græca exemplaria, quæ lugent, *Greek: gunaika sou*, but he did not think fit to tell us where any such manuscripts were to be found, nor have I heard that they have been seen by any one. It is certain St. Epiphanius did not find *Greek: sou*, nor think this the true reading, when in the heresy of the Alogians, by Jezabel, he understands Maximilla, Priscilla, or Quintilla, in Marcion's time.

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### APOCALYPSE 3

**Ver. 1-6.** *To the Angel of the church of Sardis.* He begins with a severe reprehension, *thou hast the name of being alive, and thou art dead*, which we may understand of the greatest part of them, and of being dead by the worst of deaths, which is that of sin. (Witham) --- In the style of the sacred writers, to live, is to be in the state of grace, and to bring forth good works; as, to be dead, is to live in sin, and the neglect of Christian duties. (Calmet) --- Here we see that the opinion of men is no advantage to us, when our internal dispositions are not correspondent to our external appearance. For what we are in thy sight, O Lord, so much we are, and no more, says St. Augustine. --- The bishop is charged with this fault, that he did not watch and take care of his flock. He is admonished to repent, and to *strengthen* those that were not dead, but *ready to die*. [1] (Witham) --- God does not seek to surprise us and lay snares for us. But when he tells us that he will come like a thief, it is only to admonish us not to slumber. Had he wished to take us unawares, he never would have admonished us beforehand. (Calmet) --- *But thou hast a few names*, &c. That is, a few persons not yet defiled, neither as to their consciences, souls, nor bodies. --- *They shall walk with me in white apparel*, &c. It is a new way of expressing the happiness of heaven. (Witham) --- White is the color of joy, festivity, and triumph. The Angels always appear clothed in white. (Calmet)

**Ver. 7-13.** *To the Angel of the church of Philadelphia.* There were several towns of this name; here is understood that which was near Sardis, in Lydia. Here is no more than an admonition to persevere, to hold that which thou hast. Christ takes the title of the *Holy One*, and *True One*, who *hath the key of David*; i.e. being the son of David, and the promised Messiah, hath the supreme power in the Church: who opens the gate of salvation, and no one shuts it against his elect. (Witham) --- By the key in this place may be understood either the key of the Church, or of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ has both, he opens and shuts the heavens by his infinite power. But in the Church on earth he has entrusted this key (his power) to his apostles and ministers; whatever is bound or loosened by them is ratified by him in the kingdom of his glory. (Calmet) --- *I have set before thee a door open*, by giving thee graces to save thee, which no one shall be able to hinder, *because thou hast of thyself little power or strength*, [2] *and hast kept my word*, and not denied the faith. (Witham) --- I have sent you to preach, and have given my blessing to your labours. You shall, notwithstanding all your adversaries, eventually succeed. St. Paul makes use of the same manner of expression (1 Corinthians xvi.) I see a great door is open to me, and at the same time many adversaries; and again, 2 Corinthians ii. and Colossians iv. On account of your little strength, your want of talents, eloquence, supernatural gifts, &c. I have not exposed you to great trial. Thus does the Almighty always proportion the trials he sends, and the temptations he permits in his servants, to the graces and strength he has given them. --- Those who were neither Jews nor Christians, shall come and abjure at your feet their former errors, and shall evidently perceive that you are strengthened by me. (Calmet) --- Christ also promises that he will make the false abandoned Jews subject to the bishop and his Church, and to won them to be the

beloved and chosen people. God promises to preserve them in *the hour* or time of *temptation* and persecutions, which should happen to all the inhabitants of the *earth*. (Witham) --- He here advertises him of the persecution which was about to take place, and by which he would try the fidelity of his servants. In ver. 12. he relates the triumph and everlasting beatitude of the martyrs. --- *He that overcomes, I will make him a pillar, &c.* so as to stand firm against his enemies, and to be secure of his endless happiness. --- *I will write upon him the name of my God*, a subscribed citizen of the celestial Jerusalem, with *the new* name of Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind. He alludes to the custom of writing names upon pillars, palaces, &c. --- From the words *my God*, the Socinians pretend that Christ is not the true God, as we may find in the disputes which Servetus had with Calvin. Calvin answered the Socinians, as all Catholics do, that Christ was both God and man: this and divers things were spoken of Christ as he was a man, but that many things in the Scriptures could not apply to him, unless he was also truly God. And by such places is clearly confuted the blasphemy and error of the Arians and Socinians. The argument concludes in the principles of the Catholics, who allow the authority of the Church in expounding the sense of the Scriptures; but the Calvinists, and all other pretended reformers, having shaken off that authority, and having allowed that the holy Scriptures are to be interpreted according to every man's private judgment or spirit, this set Calvin and Servetus, every Calvinist and Socinians, upon the same level. (Witham)

**Ver. 14-22.** The seventh and last letter is *to the Angel of the Church of Laodicia*. Christ here takes the title of *the Amen*,<sup>[3]</sup> as if he said, I am the Truth. --- *The beginning of the creation*, or of the creatures of God, to which is added, in the first chapter, *the beginning and the end*. --- *Thou art neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm*. A dreadful reprehension, whatever exposition we follow. According to the common interpretation, by the *cold* are meant those who are guilty of great sins; by the *hot*, such as are zealous and fervent in piety and the service of God; by the *lukewarm* or tepid, they who are slothful, negligent, indolent, as to what regards Christian perfection, the practice of virtue, and an exact observance of what regards the service of God. On this account they are many times guilty in the sight of God of great sins, they forfeit the favour and grace of God, fancying themselves good enough and safe, because they live as others commonly do, and are not guilty of many scandalous and shameful crimes, to which they see others addicted. --- *I would thou wert either cold or hot*. This is not an absolute wish, because the condition of the cold is certainly worse in itself; but it is to be taken with the regard to the different consequences, which oftentimes attend these two states, and to signify to us that the lukewarm may be farther from a true conversion, inasmuch as they are less sensible of the dangers to which they remain exposed, than such as commit greater sins. Their careless indevotion becomes habitual to them, they live and die with a heart divided betwixt God and the world; whereas greater and more shameful sinners are not without an abhorrence of such vices which they commit; a fear of punishment, of hell and damnation, strikes them by the mercies of God offered even to sinners, and makes them enter into themselves like the prodigal son; they detest their past lives, and by the assistance of God's graces become both fervent and constant in the duties of a Christian life. (Witham) --- Tepidity in a Christian life, and in the service of God, is oftentimes more dangerous than absolute wickedness. The open sinner is easily made sensible of his danger; he experiences the stings and reproaches of conscience, whilst the tepid Christian lives without remorse, fear, or apprehension, and listens not to those who wish to shew him the danger of his situation. I dare venture to affirm, says St. Augustine, that to fall into some public and manifest sin would be of advantage to the proud, that so those who by their self-complacency had so often fallen before, may now become displeased with themselves and humble. (Calmet) --- To the lukewarm it is said, *I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth*; i.e. if thou continue in that state, I will permit thee to run on and be lost in thy sins. Thou blindly sayest within thyself, *I am rich, &c.* A false conscience generally attends a lukewarm soul and those who serve God by halves; they flatter themselves that all goes well even with them, when they see they are not so vicious, as many others: but here the spirit of God, who penetrates the secret folds and windings of slothful souls, admonisheth them of their dangerous mistakes, that they are *wretched, poor, blind, and naked*, when God, by his grace, does not inhabit their souls, though they may have millions of gold and silver in this world. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire*, the love of God purified by trials and troubles in this life, to recover thy lost innocence, to be *clothed* with the habit

of grace, to *anoint thy eyes with eye-salve*, by a serious reflection on what regards thy eternal salvation. --- I chastise *those whom I love*. He concludes all the former admonitions by telling them: first, that to be under trials and troubles, is a mark of God's favour and his paternal care; secondly, to hearken to the voice of God, when he knocks at the door of their heart; and thirdly, he promises them the reward of eternal happiness --- he that overcomes, shall *sit with me on my throne*: though this does not imply an equality of happiness, not even to all the saints, much less with God himself, but only that the elect shall be in the throne as it were of heaven, and partakers of heavenly happiness according to their past good works. --- I should not here mention the wild and ridiculous fancies of one Mr. Brightman, when he pretends to expound to all men these letters to the seven bishops of Asia [Asia Minor], were it not to shew how the obscure predictions of St. John's revelation have been turned and abused by the loose interpretations of some of the late reformers, as may be seen more at large, when we mention their arbitrary fancies about the whore of Babylon and the popish antichrist. I shall here with Dr. Hammond, give the reader a taste of such licentious expositions of the divine oracles. The Calvinists, Mr. Brightman, pretended he had his expositions by divine inspirations, and so gave his commentary the title of *Revelation of the Revelation*. I shall his words out of Dr. Hammond. "Mr. Brightman assures his readers, that by the churches of *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, and *Laodicia*, were meant Germany, France, and Britain. He says a most heavy trial was now suddenly to invade the Christian world....that the three said churches were most favourably admonished of this tempest by the epistles written to them *by name, nomination*....that he found and understood this to be so by divine inspiration, from the inscriptions of these letters, and so should be guilty of a sin against the Divine Majesty, if he concealed them." Not to tire the reader with his fancies about *Ephesus* and *Pergamus*, which may be seen in Dr. Hammond. Rev. ii. 13. "on those words, *in those days was Antipas*, &c. Mr. Brightman has this wanton fancy on the name Antipas, that it doth denote that the martyrs of his time (which was after Luther) should be antipapæ, or antipopes;" i.e. adversaries to the popes and popery. Dr. Hammond (p. 928) gives us Mr. Brightman's conceit on the name *Thyatria*, which must be taken for the same as *Thygatheira*, signifying a young daughter, and so denotes the growth of piety in the Church from the year 1300, from Wycliffe's time to 1520, that is, till it came to perfection in *Luther's* days. Page 932. note a, "*Sardis*, according to Mr. Brightman," says Dr. Hammond, "is the first reformed church in the antitype, to wit, that of Germany, which began at Wittenburg, by Luther, in the year 1517. And the proof is, that Sardis is more to the south than Thyatria, and so must have more of the truth in it; or, because there is no mention made of Balaam and Jezabel, which he resolved must signify the doctrines of Christian Rome, the absence of which must signify a breaking off from the Romish communion; or, that she (the German Church) had *a name to be living, but was dead*, by the doctrine of *consubstantiation* among the Lutherans, even after the reformation. This," says Dr. Hammond, "were a strange way of interpreting dreams, which no oneirocritic would allow, but a much stranger of explaining prophecies." Page 933, "*Philadelphia*, says Mr. Brightman, must needs be the Helvetian, Swedish, Genevan, French, Dutch, and Scotch reformed Churches. No reason again for it, but that the city of *Philadelphia* was yet farther south than *Sardis*, and so must needs signify more increase of reformation; 2. that the name of *Jezabel* was not to any but this pattern of all piety (to which Mr. Brightman had so much kindness) the Church of Helvetia and Geneva. And the reformed Church of England must be that of *Laodicia*,....because episcopacy was here retained, and so a mixture of cold with that of *heat*, and consequently is the *lukewarm* Church that is found fault with." O the profound interpretations and bright inventions of Mr. Brightman! (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2. Et ceteræ quæ moitura erant, *Greek: ta loipa a mellei apothanein*, meaning persons, not things.

[2] Ver. 8. Virtutem, *Greek: dunamin*, strength.

[3] Ver. 14. Hæc dicet Amen; *Greek: tade legei o Amen*. Ille qui est Amen.

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## APOCALYPSE 4

**Ver. 1.** No sooner had St. John received in the preceding vision the documents he was to transmit to the seven Churches of Asia [Asia Minor], when, behold, a new scene displays itself. Heaven opens, and St. John is invited up thither by the voice which had spoken to him before, and is told he shall see what is to happen in future ages. On a sudden appears a throne, and the Almighty himself seated upon it. The rainbow which surrounds the throne, denotes the covenant of reconciliation and peace between God and man. (Walmesley) --- *Behold a door open.* Here begins what may be looked upon as a second part of the Apocalypse, and from hence to the two last chapters are contained wars and victories of the Church over all its enemies, the devil, Jews, heathens, and heretics. --- These visions are so differently expounded, when applied to different events, that this alone may convince us how uncertain are those various interpretations. The servants of God are taught that they must expect to meet with many trials, afflictions, and persecutions; but this ought to be a great subject of consolation to the faithful, that they are assured of victory if they fight manfully, and of a recompense of endless happiness for their short labours. Such visions and majestic descriptions shew that St. John was inspired by the same spirit of God, as the ancient patriarchs and prophets. --- *I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter;* i.e. after the things already revealed concerning the seven Churches, and therefore after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was about twenty years before St. John wrote this Apocalypse. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *I was in the spirit,* rapt as it were in an ecstasy into heaven, and saw a throne, and one sitting, representing God the Father. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *And he....was to the sight like the jasper,*[1] or had the appearance of jaspers, as to the colours with which he appeared, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *About the throne were four and twenty seats,* or lesser thrones, twenty-four seniors or senators upon them, representing the illustrious saints both of the Old and New Testament, *clothed in white garments,* in token of their innocence, and crowns of gold, signifying the glory of the heavenly inhabitants. (Witham) --- These four and twenty elders sitting around the throne of God, represent the judgment which the Almighty was about to pass upon the enemies of his Church. Thus in Daniel, when he was about to pronounce sentence against Antiochus Epiphanes, "thrones were placed, and the ancient of days sat,...the judgment sat, and the books were opened." (Daniel vii. 9, 10.) They represent kings and priests who attend on the Sovereign Judge. It appears as if God intended to designate by the number the ancient patriarchs and the twelve apostles, who judge with the Lord, and condemn the injustice of their persecutors. (Calmet)

**Ver. 5.** *Lightnings,* a symbol of God's majesty and power. --- *Seven lamps burning,* which signified the seven spirits of God, the chief spirits that attend his throne. See chap. i. 4. (Witham) --- The lightnings, loud voices, and thunders, which come from the throne of God, announce alarms and severe hardships, such as persecutions, heresies, calamities, &c. by which he tries the fidelity of his servants on earth. And the seven spirits of God, who appear under the form of burning lamps, are seven Angels, as before mention, (Chap. i. 4.) standing ready to execute the Divine commands. (Walmesley)

**Ver. 6.** *A sea of glass, like crystal,* calm and transparent, and may signify that the saints had passed a boisterous sea of troubles in this world, which is now changed into everlasting tranquility. --- *Four living creatures,* or animals. Alcazar (p. 364) takes notice of thirty different expositions of these animals. He understands the apostles, bishops, and preachers of the Christian faith: others, four of the chief Angels or celestial spirits. Several others expound them of the four evangelists: yet this was before St. John himself had written his gospel. (Witham) --- The extensive sea of glass, here described transparent as crystal, represents what may be called the

floor of heaven. Before the throne and round it stand four living creatures, of an extraordinary shape, which denote the four great prophets, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and Daniel. Their bodies are described full of eyes, both before and behind, an emblem of their prophetic sight, that penetrates into all ages past, present, and to come. And their being also full of eyes within, indicates that their extensive knowledge arises from an interior divine inspiration. They have each six wings, in the same manner as the seraphim appeared to the prophet Isaias. (Chap. vi. 2.) Some have imagined these four symbolical animals to represent the four evangelists; but we think improperly, as St. John was still living and there present in person. The first animal is here said to resemble a lion, the king of beasts, because the prophet Isaias, represented by it, was descended of the royal race of David. The second animal resembles a calf, and represents the prophet Jeremias in his character of priest; the calf, which was the principal victim in Jewish sacrifices, being on that account the emblem of the priesthood. The third animal, exhibiting Ezechiel, has the countenance of a man; because God, in speaking to that prophet, always addresses him by the name of son of man. The fourth animal, denoting Daniel, resembles a flying eagle, on account of the sublime oracles of this prophet, who soars to the highest objects, and views the succession of all the great empires that were to rise up in the world to the end of time. Probably these four principal prophets are to be understood to represent all the prophets of the old law. (Walmesley)

**Ver. 7.** *Like a lion, &c.* The qualities in these animals are observed to be courage and strength in the lion; profit to human life, by the calf; reason and wisdom, by the face of man: soaring high, and rapidity or swiftness, by the eagle: whether we understand those spiritual perfections to belong to blessed spirits, or to the apostles in general, or to the four evangelists. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Each of them six wings.* See the like visions, Ezechiel i. 4; Isaias vi. 2. These signify their swiftness in executing God's just commands. --- *Full of eyes:* a symbol of knowledge and watchfulness. --- *They rested not day and night.* There is no night in heaven; but hereby is signified, that they praised God without intermission for all eternity, saying: Thou art worthy, O Lord, our[2] God, &c. (Witham) --- They repeat the word *holy* three times, probably in honour of the blessed Trinity. And the four and twenty elders prostrate before the throne, in token of their acknowledging all their happiness and pre-eminence to be his gift. (Walmesley)

**Ver. 10.** Nothing is so well adapted to give us an idea of the infinite majesty of God, and of the sovereign respect which is due to him, as this description. How ought Christians to appear in the presence of the God of armies, if what is most august and most elevated in heaven acknowledges its lowness and nothing before this tremendous Majesty? (Calmet)

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[1] Ver. 3. *Similis erat aspectui jaspidis, Greek: omoios orasei iaspidi.*

[2] Ver. 8. *Dignus est, Domine Deus.* God is wanting in many copies, but Dr. Wells restored it as the true reading.

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## APOCALYPSE 5

**Ver. 1.** *A book written within and without.*[1] Books were their skin, membranes, or parchments, and when written on both sides part of the writing appeared, though they were rolled up. --- *Sealed with seven seals,* as containing mysteries and secrets of high importance. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *No man was able,*[2] &c. As to the contents, some understand the prophecies and mysteries both of the Old and New Testament; others, the events that should afterwards happen to the Church of Christ, as various persecutions against Christians. Alcazar would have the sense of these words to be, that only Christ and his Spirit could open the book to others, and

make them believe and know the punishments prepared for the wicked, and the reward reserved for God's faithful servants. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *Behold the lion, of the tribe of Juda, &c.* viz. Jesus Christ, who was descended from that tribe, denominated a *lion* on account of his great power, by which title we find him designated also in the prophecy of Jacob. (Genesis xlix. 9.) (Calmet) -- It is he who has merited by his triple victory over death, sin, and hell, the great honour of opening the book, and revealing the secrets therein contained.

**Ver. 6.** *I saw...a Lamb standing as it were slain, with the prints and marks of its wounds.* It was of this lamb (i.e. of our Saviour Jesus Christ) that St. John the Baptist said: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." (John i. 29.) (Witham) --- Here again Jesus Christ is plainly marked out, the Lamb of God, the victim of expiation, who by his death has reconciled us with his Father; and who, even in heaven, bears the marks of his passion, and by the wounds therein received continually inclines his Father to shew us mercy. He has seven horns, as so many crowns and marks of his omnipotence; and seven eyes, to represent his infinite knowledge and wisdom. (Calmet) --- *Having seven horns and seven eyes,* (to signify his power and his knowledge,) *which are the seven spirits* subject to Christ. See Chap. i. 4. It is observed that in the Revelation of St. John, the number seven is divers times applied to signify a multitude, and a number implying perfection, and three and a half for a small number. Thus are represented the seven candlesticks, seven churches, seven spirits, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 7-8.** *He....took the book,[3]...and when he had opened it, or was about to open it, (in the Greek is only, he took it: which was a sign that he would open it)...the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, to adore him, as appears by what follows, ver. 13. --- Having every one of them harps to celebrate his praise, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints:* which shews that the saints in heaven offer up before the throne of the Divine Majesty the prayers of the faithful. (Witham) --- *Harps, &c.* These harps are symbols of the praise which good men render to God; and the vials full of odours represent the prayers of the saints. In conformity with this idea, St. John wishes to represent these four and twenty ancients as so many senators, who present to the Almighty the prayers and homages of good men on earth. (Estius; Clement of Alexandria) --- This also is an imitation of what was practised in the temple, in which were always around the altar, in times of sacrifice, Levites with musical instruments, priests with vials to contain the wine and blood, and censers to hold the incense (Calmet) --- *The prayers of the saints.* Here we see that the saints in heaven offer up to Christ the prayers of the faithful upon earth. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9.** *They sung a new canticle, &c. called new, as belonging to the New Testament, or alliance of the new law of Christ.* (Witham) --- *Canticle;* that is, *excellent.* The Scripture generally attaches the epithet *new* to canticles. New canticles are always more agreeable, says Pindar. (Grotius) --- *And hast redeemed, &c.* The twenty-four ancients here may well represent all, who are in possession of beatitude. They all acknowledge it is to Jesus Christ they are indebted for the felicity they enjoy; it is he that has assembled at the foot of God's throne all the nations of the world, faithful souls from every tribe and tongue, and people and nation, by his blood. (Calmet)

**Ver. 10.** *And hast made us to our God, &c.* See 1 Peter ii. 5, 9. (Witham) --- All Christians may justly be styled kings and priests of God, by the spiritual empire they possess over their passions and the world; and by the continual offering they make on the altar of their hearts, by means of the prayers they daily offer up to God. (Origen) --- Thus they say, we shall reign on the earth by the empire we shall exercise over our passions; and by the union we shall have with Jesus Christ and his Church, triumph over all who have persecuted us. (Estius; Andræas.)

**Ver. 11.** *The number of them was thousands of thousands.[4]* In the Greek also, ten thousand times ten thousand. (Witham)



**Ver. 12.** *The Lamb is worthy....to receive power and divinity*,[5] &c. The Socinians and new Arians from hence pretend that the Lamb, Jesus Christ, is not the same true God with the Father, but only deserved divinity, or to be made God, in an inferior and an improper sense. The argument is of no force at all in the ordinary Greek, where for divinity is read *riches*. The sense is, thou art worthy to have thy *power and divinity* acknowledged and praised by all creatures both in heaven and earth: and the following words are a confutation of the Socinians, "I heard all saying: To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, forever and ever," where the same divine power is attributed to the Father and to the Son of God, Jesus, true God and true man. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 1. Intus et foris, *Greek: esother kai opisthen*; on the back side.

[2] Ver. 3. Aperire librum, neque videre illum, *Greek: blepein kai anagnonai*, legere.

[3] Ver. 7-8. Cum aperuisset: in the present Greek only, *Greek: ote elabe*; and in one or two manuscripts of the Marquis de Velez, *Greek: enoixe*.

[4] Ver. 11. Millia millium, *Greek: muriades muriadon, kai chiliades chiliadon*.

[5] Ver. 12. Accipere virtutem et divinitatem: in the Greek, instead of divinitatem, *Greek: plouton*. In one or two manuscripts of the Marquis de Velez, *Greek: theoteta*.

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## APOCALYPSE 6

**Ver. 1.** *I saw that the Lamb had opened one of the seven seals*, or the first seal. The interpreters are much divided in expounding what is to be understood by the sealed up contents, and in applying them to such and such persecutions, persons, and events, by all which it appears that there is no certainty as to such applications and expositions, even of particular ancient fathers; though at the same time it is both certain and evident that many pretended interpretations, (that is, arbitrary inventions, from the private spirit of heretics) are both false and groundless, *contrary to the unexceptionable authority* (to use Dr. W.'s words) *of the primitive fathers, and inconsistent with the doctrine and belief of the Catholic Church*, as I may have occasion to shew that the ridiculous fable is of this number, of so many popes being antichrist, and the beast of the Apocalypse. I shall, for the satisfaction of the Christian reader, as I hinted in the preface of this book, give a short account of those expositions that are not improbable. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *A white horse*, such as conquerors used to ride upon at a solemn triumph. This is commonly understood of our Saviour, Christ, who, by himself and his apostles, preachers, martyrs, and other saints, triumphed over all the adversaries of his Church. He had a *bow* in his hand, the doctrine of his gospel, piercing like an arrow the hearts of the hearers; and the *crown* given him, was a token of the victory of him who went forth *conquering, that he might conquer*. (Witham) --- He that sitteth on the white horse is Christ, going forth to subdue the world by his gospel. The other horses that follow represent the judgments and punishment, that were to fall on the enemies of Christ and his Church: the red horse signifies war; the black horse famine; and the pale horse (which has death for its rider) plagues or pestilence. (Challoner) --- *White horse*; viz. Jesus Christ, who came to subdue all nations to the faith. The *bow* signifies the gospel, and the word of God, those powerful arms, of which St. Paul so often speaks, as being so necessary for all who are engaged in bringing souls to the faith of Christ. The *crown* marks the sovereign power of Jesus Christ, and the assurance of conquest. (Cornelius; Bossuet; Du Pin)

**Ver. 3-4.** *Opened the second seal*, &c. portending wars and shedding of blood, and so he is said to have power *to take away peace from the earth*. (Witham) --- *Another red horse*. This red horse

signifies the cruel persecutions, which the Roman emperors carried on against the Christian religion. For this end, it is said immediately after, one sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and kill one another; for this purpose was a great sword given to him. (Andræas; Menochius; Grotius)

**Ver. 5.** *The third seal....a black horse.* This is also commonly expounded of wars and persecutions, and particularly of famine, by the *scales* in the rider's hand, and by two pounds of wheat being sold for a penny: a great price, considering the value of money at that time. (Witham) --- The black horse represents the public miseries, famines, &c. which, particularly the latter, the Roman empire frequently experienced during the reign of the persecuting emperors. The *balance*, which the rider is said to hold in his hand, represents the strict manner in which people would measure out whatever they sold during the time of famine. (Andræas; Hamm; Bossuet)

**Ver. 7-8.** *The fourth seal....a pale horse,* the rider's name *death*. It is also expounded of trials, afflictions, persecutions, and especially of plagues, over *four parts of the earth*, by which may be denoted the great power and extent of the Roman empire. In the Greek we read, *over the fourth part of the earth*; which some reconcile, by observing that the Roman empire had dominions under it in all the four parts of the world, east, west, north, and south; and that its dominions might be said to comprehend the fourth part of the world. (Witham) --- By the pale horse, and the rider, death, who sat upon it, followed by hell, are meant that dreadful mortality which ever attends famines, &c. He had power to kill with sword, with famine, &c. All these evils came upon the Roman people, and history has preserved the memory of them, to shew the truth of the prophecy here delivered by St. John. (Grotius; Calmet)

**Ver. 9, &c.** After the opening of the fifth seal, the souls of the martyrs under the altar cried aloud for justice, saying, *how long*, &c. Out of zeal for God's honour, and the good of the Church, they pray that the enemies of Christ, and of the Christian faith, may be humbled, and that all may acknowledge and fear the justice of God, by the punishment of his enemies, and the reward of his faithful servants. St. Jerome, by *under the altar*, understands Christ himself, under whom, as under their head, are all the martyrs. Some who doubted or held that the blessed were not admitted to see God, in heaven before the day of general judgment, have turned this expression, *under the altar*, or at least the expressions of some of the fathers upon these words, as if they were favourable to their error, which is sufficiently disproved, even by the words that follow, that *white robes were given to each of them one*, in which they are said to walk with him wherever he goeth. (Chap. iii. 4. and Chap. xiv. 4.) (Witham) --- *Under the altar.* Christ, as man, is this altar, under which the souls of the martyrs live in heaven: as their bodies are here deposited under our altars. --- *Revenge our blood.* They ask not this out of hatred to their enemies, but out of zeal for the glory of God, and a desire that the Lord would accelerate the general judgment, and the complete beatitude of all his elect. (Challoner) --- These holy souls, who had been slain for the word of God, do not beg the Almighty to revenge their blood, through any hatred of their enemies, but through the great zeal with which they were animated, to see the justice of God manifested: that by this severity they might be moved to fear him, and be converted to him. Thus in the Scripture we often read of the prophets beseeching the Almighty to fill their enemies with confusion, to humble them, &c. (Perer; Bossuet; Du Pin, &c.) --- *And white robes.* To console them, they each had given them a white robe, as a mark of their innocence, and as an assurance that on account of it they would in due time receive full measure of beatitude. They should rest yet a little while, most probably to the day of final retribution, when the number of those destined to be their brethren in bliss should be completed. Then they should all together receive full recompense, and their persecutors be covered with confusion. (St. Augustine, serm. xi. de sanctis; Gregory the great, lib. ii. Moral. cap. iv.

**Ver. 12.** At the opening of the *sixth seal....a great earthquake*, &c. Many think that these dreadful signs, of the sun turning black, &c. are not to happen till the time of antichrist, a little before the end of the world. See Matthew xiv.; Luke xxi.; Isaias xiii. and xxxiv.; Ezechiel xxxiii.; Daniel xii.; &c. Others apply these prodigies to God's visible chastisements, on the heathen emperors and persecutors of the Christians, before the first Christian emperor Constantine. (Witham) --- *And I*

saw. The sixth seal being opened, St. John sees painted before him the severe and terrible manner in which the Almighty would revenge himself on his enemies. It may refer either to the time of Constantine, when we behold the Christian religion triumphing on the ruins of paganism, and after his death, and that of his sons, the empire of Rome given up a prey to barbarians, Rome itself taken and pillaged, and all the provinces thrown into dreadful disorder and consternation; or it may likewise refer to the day of general judgment, when the Almighty will make sinners drink the wine of his indignation, in presence of all the just; of which dreadful time of vengeance all other particular judgments are only imperfect figures. (Victorin; Ven. Bede; Tichon) --- St. John, in imitation of the ancient prophets, makes use of the earthquake, &c. hyperbolically, to mark more strongly the dreadful and horrible evils with which the Roman empire, and its persecuting emperors, we to be overwhelmed. Rome itself was filled with wars and seditions, both at home and abroad. The emperors were all destroyed by the Almighty in a most singular manner; witness Maxentius, who was thrown headlong into the Tiber; Maximin Jovius, who, under a horrible and incurable disease, owned the hand of the Almighty afflicting him; Maximin Daia, who, being overcome in battle, fled away in disguise, and at last, seized with a strange disease, his bowels were all consumed, he lost his eyes, and died reduced to a mere skeleton. Witness likewise Licinius, who, being engaged with Constantine, was always beaten, and at length strangled. Maximian also, the rival of Constantine, who strangled himself in Marseilles, where he had been confined. (Calmet)

**Ver. 14. And every mountain.** In the dreadful confusion of the Roman empire, in the time of Constantine, so great was the revolution, that mountains appeared, as it were, moved out of their places; islands shifted from their accustomed situations. We behold at one time seven persons, Maximin Galerius, Maxentius, Severus Cæsar, Maximin, Alexander, Maximin Hercules, and Licinius, all aiming at the empire. The first six perished in nine years, from 305 to 314: Licinius was strangled in 324. All these were enemies of the Christian religion. Constantine, who supported it, remained sole master of the empire. (Calmet)

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## APOCALYPSE 7

**Ver. 1. I saw four Angels, &c.** Though some understand here evil spirits, whom God may make use of as instruments to punish the wicked, yet we may rather, with other interpreters, understand good angels sent from God to guard and protect his faithful servants both from evil spirits and wicked men. (Witham)

**Ver. 2. Having the seal.** This sign is generally supposed to be the sign of the cross. In the East, it was the custom to impress some indelible mark upon the soldiers. This sign [the sign of the cross] amongst the ancient Christians was used on every occasion. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3. Hurt not the earth, &c.** Some understand Christ himself, who gives his commands in this manner to the Angels; others, an Angel of a higher rank or order. --- *Till we seal the servants of our God in their foreheads*, which may be expounded, let not persecutions and trials come upon them till they are strengthened by the spirit and grace of God, with which St. Paul sometimes says the servants of God are *signed* and *sealed*. See 2 Corinthians i. 22.; Ephesians i. 13. He alludes to the passages of Ezechiel (Chap. ix. 4.) where God bids an angel mark with the letter Tau the foreheads of those who should not be hurt by the judgments that were to fall upon Jerusalem; so God would protect the faithful Christians, who believe and put their trust in Christ crucified, and who from the first ages [centuries], in testimony of this faith, used to sign themselves by making the sign of the cross on their foreheads, of which the letter Tau was a figure or resemblance. See Tertullian, de lib. Corona militis. I beg the readers patience, if I here set down what I find in the great Synopsis Papismi, in folio, put out by Mr. Andrew Willet, and dedicated first to queen Elizabeth, and afterwards to king James the first. Among his demonstrations, as he calls them, that the pope is the antichrist, (Controv. iv. q. 10. p. 232 and

233) he tells us in plain terms, "that the sign of the cross is one of the visible signs of antichrist. And who," saith he, "hath taught the papists that the sign of the cross is to be borne or made on men's foreheads? And that with crossing the forehead we are preserved from dangers? The superstitious marks of the cross *had their beginning from the beast's name*, since the number of the beast's name in the Revelation of St. John is by these Greek letters, *Greek: chxs*. The first letter, *Greek: ch*, is a cross; the middle letter, *Greek: x*, (in Latin, X) is also a side long cross; and the last letter, *Greek: s*, contains both *Greek: s* and *Greek: t* of which the latter is called a headless cross;" and then Mr. Willet concludes in these words, "And thus it *plainly appears*, that the marks whereby the papists say they honour Christ, are rather a dishonour to him, and are *in very deed the cognizance of antichrist*." Such an ingenious, and at the same time learned fancy, may perhaps outvie even those we have cited out of Mr. Brightman [in the annotations on Chap. iii. 14-22.], and may be equally serviceable to any country parson on the fifth of November, or on any day when he shall think fit to hold forth against the pope or popery. I suppose that Mr. Willet did not know that the Christians in the first ages [centuries] (as all Catholics to this day) made so frequent use of the sign of the cross, as it is witnessed by Tertullian above two hundred years before even any Protestant pretended that the popes began to be antichrists, or the great antichrist. And this, says he, they do by a *tradition* from father to son. *At every setting forward or going about any thing, at coming home or going out, at putting on our clothes, at going to bathe, to table, to light a candle, to bed, to sit down, to any thing, we make the sign of the cross on our foreheads. And this is a tradition*. The like is witnessed by St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and many of the Fathers. At the same time that with our hand we make the sign of the cross, we say these words, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" the words used when any one is made a Christian, according to the command of Christ. So that the action itself puts us in mind that Jesus Christ died for us on the cross; and by the words, we make a profession of our Christian faith, that we believe in one God and three Persons. Can we do this too often? Dare we be ashamed of doing it? Was ever any thing more ridiculous than to call this *in very deed the cognizance of antichrist*? What must Mr. Willet have thought of the Protestants, or what can they think of him, and such like folio scribblers, to prove the popes the beast of St. John's Revelation? What must, I say, Mr. Willet think of the public liturgy, or the book of common prayer, approved and used by the Church of England in his time, and which ordains that the *sign of the cross shall be made by the priest on the forehead of every one that is baptized*? This, according to Mr. Willet, is (when any one is made a Christian) to give him the badge, and *visible sign of antichrist*, to the dishonour of Christ, and what *in very deed is the cognizance of antichrist*. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *I heard the number of them that were sealed*. By these determinate numbers need only be understood a great number of Jews converted and saved, though much greater was the number of the saved taken from among the Gentiles of all nations, of which it is said, *I saw a great multitude, which no man could number*, &c. (Witham) --- The number of one hundred and forty-four thousand is not to be taken in a literal and strict sense, but to express in general terms the great number of the elect; for it appears that the tribe of Dan, which certainly must have produced some elect, is not mentioned, and the tribe of Joseph is put in lieu of that of Ephraim: so that if it be supposed that these numbers must be taken literally, the tribe of Joseph would have produced a double number to that of any other tribe, since Manasses was his son, and the tribe of Dan would have produced none. (Ven. Bede)

**Ver. 10.** *Salvation to our God*; i.e. our salvation is from God, to whom be praise for ever, *Amen*, *benediction*, or *blessings*, *thanksgiving*. &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *White in the blood of the Lamb*. That is, they have been cleansed and purified from sin, by the death, merits, and grace of Christ crucified. (Witham) --- The whole of this verse must be understood in a mystical sense, for we are said to make our garments white in the blood of the Lamb, when we enter into his Church by baptism, or wash away our sins by penance or martyrdom. (Calmet)

**Ver. 15.** *Therefore they are before the throne of God....in his temple*; i.e. therefore are they now

happy in heaven, where the temple was represented to be, as observed before. --- *He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell, or dwelleth over them.* (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, God and man, shall rule [1] them as a shepherd does his flock. By the Greek, And shall lead them unto fountains of living waters; [2] literally, to the fountains of life of waters; shall bless them with everlasting happiness.* (Witham) --- He represents the happiness of the saints, under the idea of being exempt from all the wants and evils of this life. For we are not able, according to truth itself, to conceive the happiness that is prepared for us; wherefore we must content ourselves with considering what it is not, rather than what it is. He, nevertheless, seems to compare heaven to a temple or palace, in which we observe ministers and servants all in their proper order, his counselors (if we may be allowed the expression) and friends seated in presence of their prince, and the souls of the just singing the praises of the Most High. (Car.)

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[1] Ver. 17. Reget eos, *Greek: poimanei, &c.*

[2] Ver. 17. Ad vitæ fontes aquarum, *Greek: epi zoes pegas udaton; not Greek: zosas, as in some manuscripts.*

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## APOCALYPSE 8

**Ver. 1.** *There was silence in heaven:* which is to represent as it were a general consternation, and an expectation of dreadful events at the opening of the seventh seal, and when seven Angels stood prepared to sound seven trumpets. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Stood before the altar, having a golden censer.* In the visions is an allusion to the tabernacle and its parts. The altar of perfumes was in the sanctum, hard by the entrance into the sanctum sanctorum [the holy of holies], and here the golden altar is said to be before the throne of God. The incense from the censer is said to be the prayers of all the Saints, which the Angel offered up. The altar seems to signify our Saviour Christ, as the prayers of all the faithful are always made through the merits of Christ, our only chief Mediator or Redeemer. By the fire cast upon the earth, (ver. 5.) is signified the fire of divine charity, now to be exercised by the ways of justice, to draw persons to their conversion by punishments. (Witham) --- We may observe both in this and other places of the Apocalypse, that St. John makes continual allusions to what was done in the temple of Jerusalem, for which he gives us symbolical reasons. Thus on the present occasion, the incense which was offered morning and evening in the temple, on the golden altar, is represented as done here in heaven. (Calmet)

**Ver. 7.** *The first Angel sounded, &c.* From this place to the eleventh verse of chapter xx. the visions are differently expounded. Some interpret them, without applying them to any particular events, as general comminations, in a mystical and allegorical sense, of the many persecutions which God permits to happen to his Church. Others think that they are all predictions, which shall not happen till a little time before the end of the world, in antichrist's time, after which will follow the day of the general judgment, the punishment of the wicked, and the reward of the just. But there are others, both ancient and later writers, as in particular Alcazar, the bishop of Meaux (Bossuet,) Pere Alleman, to whom we may add among the Protestants, Dr. Hammond, whom the bishop of Meaux calls the most learned of all the English Protestants. According to the interpretations which these writers have followed, these predictions of St. John (except the last persecution, when the devil shall be let loose, Chap. xx. 7, in the time of the great antichrist) have already happened in the three first ages [centuries], during the persecutions of the heathen emperors, as I shall briefly take notice. *Hail therefore, and fire, blood, falling of stars, &c.* some look upon as mystical representations, to signify that a great many trials and persecutions shall

happen to the good, and a great many punishments and chastisements shall fall upon the wicked; with this grand difference that the sufferings of the good shall be short and momentary, and their reward a crown of endless glory; but the wicked, if any of them escape punishments in this world, can never escape eternal torments with the devils in the next. 2. It is also a very common opinion, that all these disasters shall happen in a great measure, literally about antichrist's time, a very short time before the end of the world. 3. Others apply all these events to the judgments which God's justice exercised either upon the Jews, in the time of Trajan and Adrian, or upon the heathen Roman emperors, and upon the pagan city of Rome, for persecuting the servants of God. (Witham) --- As these Angels with their trumpets, according to Pastorini, denote the sufferings of the Church during the seven ages that it lasts, it may not be improper to point out the time, according to his opinion, when each Angel sounded the trumpet. Thus the first trumpet denotes the persecutions of the first three centuries, in which the Christians suffered death by the sword, (denoted by blood) by being stoned, (denoted by the hail) and by fire, when the third part of the trees were burnt, that is, the third part of the clergy were destroyed. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 8.** The great mountain denotes the heresy of Arius, which caused the greatest troubles in the Church, and destroyed many churches, which are here denoted by the ships. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 10.** *A great star fell.* The bishop of Meaux thinks this agrees very well to Cochebas, or Barcochebas, who in Adrian's time pretended to be the true Messiah of the Jews; his name also signifying a star. He was the chief cause of those wars, and of the other destruction of the Jews. (Witham) --- The third trumpet points out to us the punishment that falls upon the Roman empire, in its destruction by the northern nations. These people spread themselves over the third part of the rivers and provinces of ancient Rome. The star is called wormwood, from the bitter calamities and miseries which they inflicted upon the Roman empire. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 12.** *The third part of the sun was smitten.* This may signify a third part of men killed in those wars, or (according to the opinion that refers all to antichrist's time) that in those days the sun and moon shall not give above a third part of their light. (Witham) --- Here we behold a noble figure of the Church, which whilst in its most flourishing state, like the sun, is suddenly obscured, and a third part extinguished by the heresy and schism of the Greeks, under Photius, which began in 866, and infected all orders of Christians, clergy and laity, princes and individuals, signified by the sun, moon, and stars. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 13.** *The voice of one eagle:* in divers Greek copies, of an Angel, saying, *Woe, woe, woe!* It is to fortell, in general, greater punishments and miseries. The Protestant translation has followed those Greek copies that read an *Angel*; but Dr. Wells, in his amendments, has restored that reading of an *eagle* which the ancient Latin interpreter had met with. (Witham) --- An eagle, on account of its swiftness, is here represented as chosen to announce by its cry of *woe* on the three succeeding ages of the Church, greater disasters to be sustained than in the preceding ages. (Pastorini)

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## APOCALYPSE 9

**Ver. 1.** *The fifth Angel....and I saw a star, &c.* This again may be to represent the confusion of all things in antichrist's time, or it may signify the fall and apostacy of great and learned men from the Christian faith. Bossuet applies it to the fall of Theodotus, of Byzantium, towards the end of the second age; but certainly no great stress can be laid on such arbitrary applications, which it is no hard matter to invent, as may be seen by the different fancies we may meet with about the *locusts*, &c. (Witham) --- Here is a description of the rise and progress of the reformation. This trumpet begins with announcing to us the fall of a star from heaven; a very just emblem of the apostacy of Luther, who in quality of a priest and religious man is styled a star, but renouncing the faith and vows, may truly be said to have fallen from heaven upon the earth. (Pastorini, hic.[here])

--- *To him* (i.e. to the Angel, not to the fallen star) *was given the key of the bottomless pit*, which properly signifies hell. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *And the smoke, &c.* Luther and his followers propagated and defended their new doctrines with such heat and violence, as to occasion every where seditions and insurrections, which they seemed to glory in. Luther openly boasted of it. "You complain," said he, "that by our gospel the world is become more tumultuous; I answer, God be thanked for it; these things I would have so to be, and woe to me if such things were not." --- *The sun was darkened, &c.* The light of faith, which is the word of God, may well be represented by the sun, according to that of the Psalm cxviii. 105. "Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths." And as the air is the spring of man's respiration and life, it may be a just type of morality, which gives spiritual life and worth to all human actions. By the sun, therefore, and air being darkened, we are to understand faith and morality obscured and perverted by the novel doctrines of the reformers. (Pastorini, hic.[here])

**Ver. 3.** *There came out locusts;* devils, in antichrist's time, when the chief devil, *Abaddon, the destroyer*, shall be as it were let loose. Others by locusts, understand the Goths and those barbarous people that made an irruption into the Roman empire, in the time of Decius, about the year 250. Others again, by locusts, understand heretics, and especially those heretics that spring from the Jews, and with them denied the divinity of our Saviour Christ, as Theodotus, Praxeas, Noetus, Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Arius, &c. These were the great enemies of Christian religion, and instruments of the devil: they tormented and infected the souls of men, stinging them like scorpions with the poison of their heresies. They had power for five months, by which is signified for a short term, but had no power to hurt those who were sealed with the seal of God in their foreheads. God protected, at least from sin, his faithful servants. It is to no purpose to give the reader divers fancies and inventions about their shape, their heads, tails, hair, teeth, &c. nor is it worth my while to confute such writers as Mr. Willet, who, Brightman-like, makes Abaddon the pope, and the locusts to be friars mendicant. With this fifth trumpet ended the first of the three woes, as we are told [in] ver. 12. (Witham) --- The locusts are commonly understood of heretics. They are not able to hurt the green tree; that is, such as have a lively faith, working by charity; but only the reprobate. The latter are represented as *prepared to battle*, as being ever ready to contend; they wear counterfeit gold on their heads, for all is but pretence and fiction; in shape they are as *men*, in smoothness of speech as *women*; in fury and rage against all that opposes them, as *lions*; their breasts and hearts are as hard as iron; they are full of noise and shuffling; the sting of their pestiferous doctrine is worse than that of a scorpion; but their reign is generally but for a short time. (Challoner) --- Heretics are compared to locusts, says St. Jerome, because they are a species of insects extremely hurtful to mankind, as they occasion famine, eat up the harvest, and even strip the trees and the vines. With very great propriety then may the locusts here mentioned be understood of the first reformers, not only on account of their rapacity, but also for their number. Luther was their leader, by allowing every one to be his own interpreter of Scripture, the effects of which we have described by Dudithius, a learned Protestant divine, in his epistle to Beza. "What sort of people are our Protestants, straggling to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, sometimes to this side, and sometimes to that? You may, perhaps, know what their sentiments in matters of religion are to-day; but you can never certainly tell what they will be to-morrow. In what article of religion do these churches agree, which have cast off the bishop of Rome? Examine all of them from top to bottom, and you will scarce find one thing affirmed by one, which is not immediately condemned by another for wicked doctrine." The same confusion of opinions is thus described by an English Protestant, the learned Dr. Walton: "Aristarchus heretofore could scarcely find seven wise men in Greece, but with us scarce are to be found so many idiots; for all are doctors, all are divinely learned; there is not so much as the meanest fanatic, or jack-pudding, who does not give you his own dreams for the word of God." (Pastorini, hic.[here])

**Ver. 4.** *Nor any green thing.* The Greek and Latin texts express it every green thing; meaning, that though the locusts, or the sects of Protestants, are allowed by the Almighty to seduce some of all sorts from the Church, yet that the generality of the faithful will be preserved unhurt.

(Pastorini)

**Ver. 7.** *And the shapes of the locusts.* We now come to the description of these locusts, which expresses the spirit of sedition and rebellion that animated the reformers and their proselytes. Luther proclaimed himself the leader in this as well as in other articles of the new discipline: see his works, particularly *Contra statum ecclesiæ et falso nominatum ordinem Episcoporum*, lib. contra Sylvest. Prieras, *De Seculari potestate et Contra Rusticos*, &c. Erasmus thus describes the effects of the inflammatory doctrine of these ministers of evangelical liberty: "I saw them (the people) come forth from their sermons with fierce looks and threatening countenances," like men "that just come from hearing bloody invectives and seditious speeches." Accordingly, we found "these evangelical people always ready to rise up in arms, and equally as good at fighting as at disputing." The learned Protestant historian, Dr. Heylin, in his *Cosmography*, (B. i.) says of the Calvinists: "Rather than their discipline should not be admitted, and the episcopal government destroyed in all the Churches of Christ, they were resolved to depose kings, ruin kingdoms, and to subvert the fundamental constitutions of all civil states." --- *And on their heads*, &c. These crowns shew clearly their general spirit of independence; and their faces being as the faces of men, indicate the presumption with which they announced themselves as teachers of orthodox and holy doctrine. (Pastorini, hic.[here])

**Ver. 8.** *And they had hair as the hair of women.* This latter allusion, unhappily for the sectaries, betrays too plainly their sensual disposition towards that sex, their shameful doctrine on that score, and the scandalous example of their practice. Luther, in despite of a vow he had solemnly made to God of observing continence, married; and married a nun, equally bound as himself to that sacred religious promise! But, as St. Jerome says, "it is rare to find a heretic that loves chastity." Luther's example had indeed been anticipated by Carlostadius, a priest and ringleader of the Sacramentarians, who had married a little before; and it was followed by most of the heads of the reformation. Zuinglius, a priest and chief of that sect which bore his name, took a wife. Bucer, a religious man of the order of St. Dominic, became a Lutheran, left his cloister, and married a nun. Œcolampadius, a Brigittin monk, became a Zuinglian, and also married. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, had also his wife. Peter Martyr, a canon regular, embraced the doctrine of Calvin; but followed the example of Luther, and married a nun. Ochin, general of the Capuchins, became a Lutheran, and also married. Beza, the most celebrated minister in the Calvinistic party, being asked in his old age, by an intimate acquaintance of his, (Deshayes, governor of Montargis) what was the leading reason which connected him so closely with the Calvinists? Beza called in his mistress, a beautiful young girl who lived with him, and said: "That is the principle reason which convinces me of the excellence of my religion." (Marsollier's *Life of St. Francis de Sales*, book iii.) --- Thus the principal leaders in the reformation went forth preaching the new gospel, with two marks upon them---apostacy from the faith, and open violation of the most sacred vows. The passion of lust, it is well known, hurried Henry VIII. of England, into a separation from the Catholic Church, and ranked him amongst the reformers. (Pastorini, hic.[here]) --- *Teeth of lions.* What is more known than the truth of this representation? Did not the reformers, wherever they got footing, pillage the churches, seize the church possessions, destroy the monasteries, and appropriate to themselves the revenues? Such was the case in Germany, in Holland, in France, in Switzerland, in Scotland, and in England; what a scene of rapine! Let it suffice to say, that in the reign of Henry VIII. were suppressed not less than 645 monasteries, 90 collages, 110 hospitals, and 2374 chantries and free chapels; (Baker's *Chron.*) the lands, &c. of all which were confiscated to the king. Is not this to devour with lions' teeth? The whole explication here given of the allegory of the locusts, we presume, appears so consonant with the history of the reformation, that the propriety will not be denied. The application is even so obvious, that the learned Protestant divine, Dr. Walton, used it for describing the multitudes of new sectaries that swarmed out of the English Church. Thus he speaks in the preface of his *Polyglot*: "The bottomless pit seems to have been set open, from whence a smoke has risen, which has darkened the heavens and the stars; and locusts are come out with stings, a numerous race of sectaries and heretics, who have renewed all the ancient heresies, and invented many monstrous opinions of their own. These have filled our cities, villages, camps, houses, nay our pulpits too, and lead the poor delude people with them to the pit



of perdition." (Pastorini, Apocalypse ix.)

**Ver. 10.** *And their power was to hurt men for five months.* The duration of their power is here limited, but we dare not venture to explain what is meant by the dark expression, five months; time to come must clear up the difficulty. (Haydock)

**Ver. 13.** At the sounding of the sixth trumpet, are said to be loosed the four angels bound in the river Euphrates. By these four angels, and the two hundred millions of horsemen, many understand the devils and their instruments, men incited by them in antichrist's time, to make war and persecute the Church of Christ, who shall destroy a *third part*, that is, a great part of men then in the world. Divers others apply this to the Persians, the successors of the Parthians, who about the middle of the third age [century], in the time of Valerian, a great persecutor of the Christians, passed the Euphrates, which used to be the bounds of the Roman empire to the east, defeated, took, and kept Valerian prisoner, which by its consequences gave a great stroke to the Roman empire. See the bishop of Meaux, Pere Alleman, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *And the four angels were loosed.* This seems to indicate the moment in which Satan himself is loosed from the abyss or hell, where, as we shall see [in] Apocalypse xx. 2. he was chained up for a thousand years. This is the time of antichrist, whose coming, as St. Paul says, is according to the working of Satan. (2 Thessalonians ii. 9.) The antichristian period is described by the ancient Fathers as the most dreadful of all; and the Apocalypse plainly shews it to be so, as we shall see. But we have this comfort, that his time will be short. He must be loosed a little time. (Apocalypse xx. 3.)

**Ver. 16.** *Twenty thousand times ten thousand,* or two hundred millions. Such an immense multitude cannot be accounted for, but by supposing a great part of it consist of the infernal beings in human form, as it is doubtful whether there be that number of men capable of bearing arms upon the whole globe of the earth.

**Ver. 17.** *And thus I saw the horses in the vision.* The horsemen appeared to St. John with breastplates of fire, and of hyacinth, and of brimstone. By this expression is indicated the firing of carabines, or such firearms as cavalry use, which are applied to the breast when shot off. St. John took the fire that issued out of the muskets to come from the horsemen's breast, on which the muskets rested, and so thought the horsemen had breastplates of fire. The prophet here even describes to us the composition of gunpowder, with its three ingredients, viz. brimstone or sulphur, fire or charcoal, and hyacinth or saltpetre; because saltpetre, when set on fire, emits a flame of fine purple colour, similar to the colour of the hyacinth stone. Here then we see revealed to St. John both the composition and use of gunpowder, to which he and all mankind at that time were strangers. Then it is said: *And the heads of the horses,* &c. Here is pointed out the artillery of the army, or cannon. He saw in this vision the whole army drawn up at a distance, and the artillery placed upon a line with the cavalry. He seemed to confound the cannon with the horses, and the cannons' mouths with the mouths of the horses, as the height of both from the ground is nearly the same. He describes the appearances as he saw in the vision, not the reality. When therefore he says, *the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*, it is the same as if, the mouths of the cannon were as to the noise they made, like the mouths of roaring lions. Hence it appears that St. John, in this vision, both saw the fire of the cannon, and heard the explosion.

**Ver. 19.** *For the power of the horses.* The power of the imagined horses or real cannon, lying in their mouths and in their tails, signifies that the mischievous *power* of the cannon is directed to the object by their *mouths*, but takes its birth in the *tail* or breech of the cannon, where the charge is lodged: whence the cannon's breech is here compared to the serpent's head, which contains its venom. (Pastorini, hic.[here])

**Ver. 20.** *The rest of men, who were not slain by these plagues,* which before are metaphorically called *fire, smoke, and brimstone*, did not for all that do penance, nor repent of their idolatrous

worship of devils, and of idols of gold, silver, &c. nor for their sorceries of magic, nor for their fornication, nor for their thefts. This again may be either understood of what shall happen hereafter, a little before the end of the world (see Cornelius a Lapide); or perhaps of the Roman heathen idolaters, who still persisted in their iniquitous practices. Dr. Hammond expounds it of the Gnostic heretics. But to apply it to popish Christians, is a groundless invention of the late pretended reformers, neither supported by any authority or reason; (though Dr. W. is pleased to join with them) whereas all Catholics (and as he calls them, papists) have constantly declared in their controversies, in all their catechisms, that they adore none but God alone. Of this more hereafter. (Witham)

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## APOCALYPSE 10

**Ver. 1.** *I saw another mighty Angel.* Some expound it of Christ himself: others of an Angel, representing the power of God over the sea and land. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *Seven thunders uttered their voice,* to signify the following approaching evils, which St. John is ordered not to write down, though they were shewn to him; and if he was not to write them, even in such a mystical and prophetic manner as he wrote other things, who can pretend to know any thing of them? (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *And when the seven thunders had, &c.* St. John is not permitted to write, but ordered to seal up the things which the seven thunders had spoken; which circumstance seems to insinuate, that the things spoken by the seven thunders were seven particulars of antichrist's persecution, as the word thunder is generally used in the Apocalypse to denote some disaster; and these seven particulars being most dreadful and severe, the Almighty chose to have them sealed up, or kept concealed, lest the foreknowledge of them should too much terrify and damp the human mind.

**Ver. 5-6.** *The angel....swore....that time shall be no longer.* This seems to favour very much the exposition of those interpreters who think that all these things are not to be fulfilled till some short time before the end of the world. Others (of which see Alcazar, &c.) take this to be a prediction of the ruin and destruction of the Jews, particularly under the emperor Adrian. Others (see the bishop of Meaux) understands by this, that the time was approaching when God, by his judgments, would put an end to the idolatry and heathen worship of pagan Rome, and that his providence would make the Christian faith triumph over all its adversaries, and his Church flourish, as foretold by the ancient prophets; that is, this should come to pass when the seventh Angel should sound his trumpet. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Declared.* Literally, *evangelized*, to signify the *good tidings*, agreeable to the gospel, of the final victory of Christ, and of that eternal life which should be the reward of the temporal sufferings of the servants of God. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9-10.** *Take the book, and devour it.* See Ezechiel ii. and iii. It was sweet in my mouth; I was delighted to read and hear the victories and glory of God's faithful servants; but it became bitter in my belly, when I considered the judgments of God upon so many sinners, who by their own wilful blindness were lost for eternity. (Witham) --- This mysterious book, presented to St. John precisely between the sound of the sixth and seventh trumpet, or rather between the irruption announced at the sound of the sixth trumpet, and the persecution which is then to follow and to precede the sound of the seventh trumpet, appears to represent the book of the gospel, which shall be given to the Jews at the end of the sixth age of the Church. This book will be then to them full of sweetness, because they will see in it the tender love of Jesus Christ; but at the same time it will cause bitterness, because they will see in it with grief their infidelity and that of their fathers. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 11.** *Thou must prophesy again:* we may understand what still follows in this Apocalypse, or his gospel written afterwards, or his preaching and instructing the Asiatic Churches. (Witham)

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## APOCALYPSE 11

**Ver. 1.** The apostle is ordered to measure the temple. Two prophets are promised, to teach mankind. They are put to death, and in three days and a half after, they are raised to life, and ascend to heaven. A great earthquake follows. The seventh Angel sounds the trumpet. The elders give thanks to God. --- *Measure the temple*, &c. This is to signify that the divine Providence would always protect his faithful servants, who are called the temple of God; (1 Corinthians iii. 17. and 2 Corinthians vi. 16.) but by the *outward court* not to be measured, *because it is given to the Gentiles*, &c. (ver. 2) is commonly understood idolaters, infidels, heretics, who are not in the temple of God, nor in his Church. It is an allusion to the Jewish temple, and the different divisions of it, the Gentiles not being permitted to enter into the temple itself, but only into that outward part called the court of the Gentiles. (Witham) --- The churches consecrated to the true God, are so much diminished in number, that they are represented by St. John as one church; its ministers officiate at *one altar*; and all the true faithful are so few, with respect to the bulk of mankind, that the evangelist sees them assembled in one temple, to pay their adorations to the Most High. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 2.** *The holy city they shall tread under foot forty-two months.*[1] That is, Gentiles and Jews shall be permitted to persecute the Church and the faithful servants of God; but only for a short time, expressed by *forty-two months*, as elsewhere by *twelve hundred and sixty days*, and also by *a time*, and *times*, and *half a time*, which, as St. Jerome observes, is for a year, and two years, and half a year, which three different ways of speaking by years, by months, and by days, are only to signify that God never permits his faithful to be under any violent persecution for any long time. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *My two witnesses....shall prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days.* It is a very common interpretation, that by these two witnesses must be understood Henoah [Enoch] and Elias [Elijah], who are to come before the end of the world. It is true this is what we read in several of the ancient Fathers, insomuch, that Dr. Wells, in his paraphrase, calls it the "consent of the primitive fathers," and in his notes says, it is of "unexceptionable authority." This opinion (at least as to Elias) is grounded on those words of the prophet Malachy [Malachias/Malachi], (Chap. iv. 5.) *behold, I will send you Elias, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*; and also on the words of our Saviour, Christ, (Matthew xvii. 11.) where he tells his disciples: *Elias indeed shall come, and restore all things*. But I cannot say that the consent of the fathers is so unanimous as to Henoah: for we find by St. Hilary, that some thought Jeremy [Jeremias/Jeremiah] was to come with Elias, and he himself thought that with Elias would come Moses. See his commentary on Matt. p. 710, Nov. edit. Secondly, allowing it a received opinion that Henoah and Elias are again to come before the day of judgment, yet it is not the constant doctrine of the ancient fathers, that by these *two witnesses* in this place of the Apocalypse, must be understood Henoah and Elias. St. Cyprian expounds it of two sorts of martyrs for the Catholic faith; to wit, they who suffer death, and others who only suffered imprisonment, loss of goods, and the like. Others expound it of the testimonies concerning Christ and his Church, of which some are in the Old Testament, some in the New. To these we must join all those interpreters who expound all the visions and predictions in the Apocalypse, till the 20th chapter, of the persecutions raised by the Jews: or by the heathens against the Church, which have already happened. Of these, both as to ancient fathers and later interpreters, see Alcazar in his Prologomena, note 6, p. 33, and note 12, p. 48. (Witham) --- *Two witnesses*. It is commonly understood of Henoah and Elias. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *These are the two olive-trees, flourishing with works of piety and mercy, and the two candlesticks shining with faith and good works.* (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *And if any man would hurt them, &c.* These two verses seem to signify both the miracles which God many times wrought by the prayers of his martyrs, as he had done frequently in the time of Elias [Elijah] and the exemplary punishments with which from time to time he chastised those by whom they were persecuted, and that he will do the like by Henoah [Enoch] and Elias, when they shall come. (Witham) --- In this and the following verse are expressed the miraculous powers with which the two witnesses will be invested. These powers will be necessary to enable them to prove the truth of their doctrine. Every messenger who appears with a commission from God, is always furnished with means to prove it. Thus our Saviour and his apostles worked miracles in testimony of the Christian religion. And in the Old Testament, Elias convicted the false prophets by a miracle. See 3 Kings xviii. Every new teacher consequently, who comes destitute of this sanction, can claim no credit, but is only to be considered as an imposter. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 7.** *The beast, &c.* God, for the greater good and glory of his servants, permits the devil by antichrist, and such like instruments, to torment them, and put them to death; and yet by dying they conquer, to the eternal confusion of their persecutors, who shall behold them going up to heaven, to be there happy with God in his kingdom for ever. (Witham) --- Antichrist, impelled by Satan, shall kill them. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 8.** *Their bodies shall lie in the streets.* It is what has often happened to the bodies of the martyrs, and may happen to Henoah [Enoch] and Elias [Elijah], *for three days and a half*, for a short time. --- *The great city.* Some understand any city where Christians are persecuted. Others by the following words, *where also their Lord was crucified*, will needs have to be understood Jerusalem, which they hold shall be rebuilt in the time of antichrist, and where by him shall be put to death Henoah and Elias. But others think it may be expounded of heathen Rome, which in a mystical sense might be called *Sodom* for its infamous crimes, and *Egypt* for its idolatries and superstitions, where Christ might be said to be *crucified*, not as to himself, but in his members, according to what he himself said, Matthew xxv. 40. "inasmuch as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me." (Witham) -- *City*; Jerusalem, which is supposed will be the residence of antichrist, and filled with a great concourse of people. (Menochius)

**Ver. 10.** *The inhabitants of the earth shall rejoice, &c.* The persecutors rejoice and make merry for a while, when they seem to get the better of the Christians. Dioclesian caused pillars to be erected to him, as if he had destroyed the Christian religion; and when, by his cruelties he saw the faith of Christ, still increase more and more, he fell into a kind of madness, and laid down his empire. See Baron. ad an. Dni. 304, p. 771. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *The spirit of life from God entered into them, &c.* It is an allusion to a vision in the prophet Ezechiel, chap. xxxvii. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *A great earthquake.* By which may be signified the consternation that fell upon the persecutors of Christians, when by God's visible chastisements, *seven thousand* (i.e. many of them) perished miserably; others were struck with fear, others converted. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** These visions belong to the second woe, and the third woe is at hand. (Witham) --- *Second woe*; the persecution of antichrist. --- *Third woe*, or the day of judgment, is near at hand. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 15.** *The seventh Angel, &c.* The saints and blessed spirits and heaven are represented praising God with loud voices, at the approaching of the kingdom of God; some understand at the end and consummation of the wicked world, after the destruction of antichrist, when the blessed shall reign in heaven: but others expound this of the triumph of the Christian faith and Church, when the providence of God putting an end to the persecutions against the Christian religion, by the miserable end of Dioclesian, Maximian, Maxentius, &c., made *the kingdom of this world* (the

powerful Roman empire) become the kingdom of our Lord, by his raising Constantine the great to the empire, and under him making the faith of Christ triumph over all its persecutors and adversaries. (Witham)

**Ver. 19.** *The temple of God was opened....the ark of his testament was seen;* which P. Alleman applies to the cross that appeared in the air to Constantine. Such applications may be probable, but cannot be called certain. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 2, &c. Atrium autem quod est foris, *Greek: ten aulen exothen*, not *Greek: esothern* as in some manuscripts. --- Dr. Wells, when he tells us, on the third verse of this chapter, that the *consent of the primitive Church and their unexceptionable authority*, require that by the *two witnesses* we understand Henoah [Enoch] and Elias [Elijah], seems to be convinced of it by the authority (as he imagines) of Dr. Grabe. This we find by his own words, (p. 79) "I shall hear," saith he, "adjoin a note of the late most learned and pious divine, Dr. Grabe, in reference to this matter, in a passage of St. Irenæus, lib. v., chap. v. It is note 4, in p. 405, Oxon. Edit. and runs thus in the doctor's own words: Disputationem de loco in quam Deus transtulerit et huc usque viventes conservavit Enochum et Eliam Augustinus indicavit ad fidem non pertinere, at cum hic Irenæus doceat Apostolorum discipulos et (N. B.) auditores dixisse, &c. And the note in Dr. Wells ends with these words: Plures alios legendo notes licet. After this Dr. W. adds: I have taken the pains to transcribe all these citations, that the reader may see how generally the Fathers do agree in this matter. And the same Dr. Wells a little after: Whereupon, saith he, the good doctor (Grabe) adds in reference to himself: mihi parum tutum videtur aliter nunc sentire. And had all others the like due esteem for the *Fathers*, and the like modest *opinion of themselves*, there would quickly be taken away that great and unhappy difference of opinions, which is now in the Church, as to points of religion." I wish, no less than Dr. Wells, that all others had the like due esteem of the Fathers, and the like modest opinion of themselves as the author of this note, and he who writ, mihi parum tutum videtur aliter nunc sentire. By such dispositions of submission to the doctrine delivered or witnessed by the consent of the primitive Fathers, might be quickly taken away the unhappy differences in points of religion betwixt us, and all pretended reformers, who, by setting up their private judgment against the authority of the Catholic Church, have brought in these differences. Luther led the way: I care not, said he, if a thousand Cyprians, a thousand Augustines, are against me, &c. But I am fully persuaded that Dr. W. did not know that all this Latin note, with the citations of the Fathers, and with those words upon them, (mihi parum tutum videtur aliter nunc sentire) are not the words of the learned and pious divine, Dr. Grabe, but are found word for word in the third note of Franciscus Feuardentius, in his Paris edition of St. Irenæus, in the year 1576, p. 322, from whence they were taken above a hundred years after by Dr. Grabe. Had Dr. W. taken notice that they were the words of so warm an adversary of the pretended reformation as Feuardentius, I doubt whether he would have given such high commendations of the true author, with an N. B. on those words of Feuardentius, mihi parum tutum videtur, &c. But I am glad that Dr. Grabe and Dr. Wells are of the same judgment with the author of the note.

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## APOCALYPSE 12

**Ver. 1.** *A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet.* By this woman, interpreters commonly understand the Church of Christ, shining with the light of faith, under the protection of the sun of justice, Jesus Christ. The *moon*, the Church, hath all changeable things of this world *under her feet*, the affections of the faithful being raised above them all. --- *A woman*: the Church of God. It may also, by allusion, be applied to our blessed Lady [the Virgin Mary]. The Church is clothed with the sun, that is, with Christ: she hath the moon, that is, the changeable things of the world, under her feet; and the twelve stars with which she is crowned, are the twelve apostles: she is in labour and pain, whilst she brings forth her children, and Christ in them, in the midst of

afflictions and persecutions. (Challoner) --- *On her head....twelve stars*, her doctrine being delivered by the twelve apostles and their successors. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *With child*, &c., to signify that the Church, even in the time of persecutions, brought forth children to Christ. (Witham) --- It likewise signifies the difficulties which obstructed the first propagation of Christianity. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 3.** *Another wonder in heaven*; that is, in the Church of Christ, though revealed to St. John, in the visions, as if they were seen in heaven. --- *A great red dragon*; a fiery dragon, with *seven heads and ten horns*; i.e. many heads and many horns. By the dragon is generally understood the devil, (see ver. 7 and 9) and by the heads and horns, kings and princes, who act under him, persecuting the servants of God. (Witham) --- *Dragon*, &c. the devil; and by the seven heads and ten horns, are meant those princes and governors who persecute the Church of Christ. (Calmet)

**Ver. 4.** *His tail drew the third part of the stars*: a great part of mankind. This is spoken with an allusion to the fall of Lucifer from heaven, with the rebellious angels, driven from thence by St. Michael. (Witham) --- According to Pastorini, the passage refers to the angels whom Lucifer drew after him by sin to the earth. Menochius interprets it of those bishops and eminent persons who fell under the weight of persecution, and apostatized. --- *And the dragon stood before the woman*, &c. The devil is always ready, as far as God permits him, to make war against the Church and the faithful servants of God. The woman, the Church, brought a *man child*, or rather many men children, stout and valiant in the profession of the true faith, able to resist and triumph over the attempts of the persecutors in all nations, not of themselves, but by the grace and power of Jesus Christ, their protector, who is able to rule all nations as it were with a rod of iron, to frustrate all their attempts, and turn their hearts as he pleaseth. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *A man child*; that is, a masculine race of Christians, willing to confess the name of the Lord, and *to fight his battles*; who, through the merits of Jesus Christ, should triumph over all the attempts of the world. (Calmet) --- *Her son* (or children) *was taken up to heaven*, guarded by the special favour of God. They always overcome the devil, and all their adversaries, by reason of *the blood of the Lamb*, by the merits of Christ. And they loved not the life of the body, so as to preserve it, by incurring the death of the soul. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *The woman fled into the wilderness*. The Church, in the times of persecutions, must be content to serve God in a private manner; but by the divine Providence, such persecutions never lasted with violence only for a short time, signified by 1260 days, or as the same is expressed here, (ver. 14) *for a time, and times, and half a time*, i.e. for a year, and two years, and half a year. (Witham) --- The Christians were accustomed to fly during the times of persecution into the deserts, to avoid the fury of the pagans. This was done by the greatest saints; and St. Jerome remarks, that it was this which gave rise to the eremitical state of life.

**Ver. 10-12.** *Now is come salvation....rejoice, O ye heavens*. The blessed in heaven rejoice for the victories of the faithful on earth, and also for the reward and glory which would shortly be given them in heaven. (Witham) --- *Woe to the earth*, &c. Both Pastorini and Calmet refer this woe to the persecution of Dioclesian. The dragon, the devil, is more irritated than ever against the Christians; he therefore stimulates the pagans to exercise their utmost cruelty against them, knowing that a Christian emperor (Constantine) would in a short time extend the reign of Jesus Christ over the whole world.

**Ver. 14.** *There were given to the woman two wings of a great eagle*. By these two wings, some understand the love of God, and the fear of offending him; others, piety, prudence, &c. (Witham) --- The Church, on account of the severe pressure of the persecution, obtained from the Almighty a special protection and assistance. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 15.** *The serpent* (the dragon, the devil) *came out of his mouth*, &c. He endeavoured to destroy Christian religion; but the *earth*, that is, the princes of the earth, as God was pleased to

turn their hearts, helped to turn away the persecutions. (Witham) --- As a last effort, the devil raises a more bloody persecution than was ever known before. See Eusebius, History of the Church.

**Ver. 16.** *And the earth helped the woman.* A prince of the earth, Constantine, came to the succour of the Church, and caused the persecution to cease.

**Ver. 18.** *And he stood upon the sand of the sea;*<sup>[1]</sup> i.e. the dragon seemed to be at a stand, to rest a while, not being able to raise any more persecutions. Now as to the time that these things should come to pass, many by seven heads and ten horns understand many powerful wicked kings, who should persecute the good, especially about antichrist's time, when the faithful at different times should be oppressed, and forced to fly as it were into the wilderness to worship God in private. And when the end of the world seems to draw near, the devil with greater malice will persecute God's servants, his time being short. Others apply these predictions to the particular persecutions in the Church by the Jews, and by the heathen emperors in the first three Christian ages [centuries] before Constantine's time, when idolatry was destroyed, when the face of the Church was changed, and when she became victorious, and publicly triumphed over her former enemies, the heathens; and by the man child, whom God took under his special protection, they will have to be understood Constantine himself. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 18. Et stetit super arenam maris. The ordinary Greek copies, *Greek: estathen*, steti, which the Protestant translators followed, beginning chapter xiii. with these words, *and I stood upon the sand of the sea*, as if St. John spoke of himself. But Dr. Wells, in his amendments, has corrected the Protestant translation, and restored the reading *Greek: estathe*, stetit, as we find it in the Latin Vulgate. I have reckoned near upon a hundred places in the Apocalypse only, wherein Dr. Wells has preferred those readings in the Greek manuscripts which are conformable to our Latin Vulgate.

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## APOCALYPSE 13

**Ver. 1.** *I saw a beast coming out of the sea.* By this first beast several understand antichrist, as St. Irenæus, lib. v. chap. xxviii. and St. Gregory, lib. xxxi. Moral. chap. xli. But this is not certain. By the *other beast*<sup>[1]</sup> *coming up out of the earth*, (ver. 11) many understand antichrist's false prophet, some famous impostor and magician in antichrist's time, who will do great wonders and signs. The *seven heads and ten horns*, may again signify a great number of kings and princes, who shall be overcome by antichrist, and submit themselves to him. The *dragon*, or devil, gives that great power to antichrist, signified by the different parts of the beast, some like to a *leopard*, others to a *bear*, and others to a *lion*. The head *wounded to death* and cured, is either antichrist himself or some one of those heads or kings, cured by the devil and diabolical arts after a mortal wound. (Witham) --- This first beast, with seven heads and ten horns, is probably the whole company of infidels, enemies and persecutors of the people of God, from the beginning to the end of the world. The seven heads are seven kings, that is, seven principal kingdoms or empires; which have exercised, or shall exercise, tyrannical power over the people of God: of these, five were then fallen, viz. the Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, and Grecian monarchies: one was present, viz. the empire of Rome: and the seventh and the chiefest was to come, viz. the great antichrist and his empire. The ten horns may be understood of ten lesser persecutors. (Challoner)

**Ver. 2.** M. Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, observes in the emperors Maximian Herculeus, Galerius Maximin, and Dioclesian, the distinguishing characters of these three animals. The leopard represents Maximian, a changeable, restless and cruel prince. The bear figures Galerius Maximin, a man from the north of cruel and brutal disposition, terrible mein, and gigantic stature.

Lactantius moreover informs us, that he took a pleasure in feeding bears, which bore so great a resemblance to him in size and brutality. The lion, in fine, is the symbol of Dioclesian, who was cruel and vehement against Christians. (Calmet) --- The whole of this is by Pastorini applied to the empire of Rome, which was composed of the territories of the three preceding empires, which are represented by Daniel under the figure of these animals. And as the body of the beast was like to a leopard, the centre and capital of the Roman empire, under antichrist will be the Grecian empire, denoted by the leopard, of which Constantinople became the capital. Various interpreters explain the whole of this vision by different ways. (Haydock)

**Ver. 3.** *One of his heads, &c.* Some understand this of the mortal wound which the idolatry of the Roman empire (signified by the sixth head) received from Constantine; which was as it were healed again by Julian the apostate. (Challoner)

**Ver. 4.** *They adored the dragon;* i.e. in antichrist's time, they will adore both antichrist and the devil, who will make war against the saints for forty-two months, i.e. a short time, signified also by 1260 days, and by three years and a half. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *His tabernacle, &c.* That is, his Church, and his saints. (Challoner)

**Ver. 8.** *Slain from the beginning.* In the foreknowledge of God; and in as much as all mercy and grace, from the beginning, were given in view of his death and passion. (Challoner)

**Ver. 10.** *Here is the patience, &c.* Here is the motive of the patience and the faith of the saints, or the servants of God in this world. By *faith* they rely on the promises of God for the reward of their *patience*, and leave him to vindicate as he may judge fit their cause with respect to their persecutors. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 11.** *I saw another[2] beast, &c.* He had two horns like those of the Lamb, pretending to imitate Christ by an outward sanctity, and by working strange things. (Witham) --- This second beast with two horns may be understood of the heathenish priests and magicians, the principal promoters both of idolatry and persecution. (Challoner)

**Ver. 12.** *He executed all the power of the former beast in his sight, or before him, doing great wonders, as Christ foretold should be done by false prophets (Matthew xxiv. 24) making even fire by lightning come from heaven, as the devil was permitted to do in the time of Job. (Chap. i.) --- He caused men to adore the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed, and the image of the first beast, of antichrist, to be adored, and that no one should buy or sell any thing, unless he had on his forehead or on his arm, some particular mark, called the *character* of this false Christ, or antichrist; or his name, or the number of his name, that is, his name which was made up of numerical letters, 666; but, St. Irenæus thinks, in Greek letters or characters, as St. John wrote his Revelation in Greek. According to the application made by the bishop of Meaux, &c. by the first beast with seven horns were signified the cruel persecutors of the Church, Dioclesian and other six persecuting emperors, to wit, Maximian Herculeus, Galerius Maximian, Constantius Chlorus (father to Constantine), Maxentius, Maximinus, and Licinius. These they look upon to have been the seven heads of the first beast, and by this beast they understand the idolatry of the heathen Roman empire; and by the *ten horns*, a great many barbarous nations, who in their time made irruptions and pillaged the empire, and afterwards brought destruction upon the whole Roman empire, to wit, the Goths, Vandals, and the rest. The resemblances of a leopard, bear, and lion, are introduced with an allusion to what is written by the prophet Daniel, (Chap. vii.) meaning the four great empires: by the leopard, that of the Chaldeans; by the bear, that of the Persians; by the lion, that of the Grecians and of Alexander the great; lastly, that of the Romans, which is not represented by any one beast, but as a compound of others. When it is said that the beast had received a mortal wound, and was *cured again*, these interpreters understand the idolatry of the empire, which was in a great measure destroyed by Constantine, but which was again revived and renewed by Julian the apostate. He might well be said to have a *mouth speaking great things and blasphemies*; but his power lasted only for a short time, signified by*



forty-two months, though literally he did not reign so long. By the *other beast*, (ver. 11) these interpreters, as also Dr. Hammond, understand the philosophers and magicians, with their auguries and pretended oracles of the heathen gods. For these men, under Dioclesian, and particularly under Julian, were constantly exciting the emperors and the people against the Christians, telling them that the gods required that the religion of the Christians should be utterly destroyed. We find in the histories of those times, that an *image* or statue was erected to Julian, together with Jupiter, Mars, and Mercury, and orders given to put to death all those who refused to adore that image. See St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. 3. cont. Julianum, and Sozomen, lib. v. Hist. chap. xvii. Under Dioclesian, and also under Julian, meats offered to idols, were thrown into fountains; and waters consecrated to idols, were sprinkled upon all things to be sold in the market, to the end that the Christians might be defiled by every thing that they bought or eat. As to the number of the name of the beast, 666, in these Greek letters, *Greek: chxs*, nothing can be produced but mere conjecture. St. Irenæus[3] (lib. v. chap. xxx. p. 371. Ed. Feuardentii) says, that according to the testimony of those who had seen St. John, the number of the beast was to be computed by Greek letters. He takes notice that this number of 666 may be found in several names. He produces some examples, and amongst others the word *Lateinos*; of which he says, it may seem very likely that this is the name, because the last of the four empires, which were spoken of by the prophet Daniel, was then extant, and had this name of the empire of the Latins. Take notice, that he has not a word that hints at the Latin Church, as some of the late pretended reformation would insinuate. But, says he, the word *Teitan* carries with it a greater probability. Yet he concludes, that such expositions are uncertain, and he will not venture to say that this will be the name. The bishop of Meaux proposes, *DloCLesAVgVstVs*: but this is to look for it in Latin letters. Others have produced other names. Such fancies are conjectures seen full as well omitted. (Witham)

**Ver. 18.** *Six hundred sixty-six.* The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 1. Though St. Irenæus, and also St. Gregory, (lib. xxxi. mor. chap. xli.) by the first of these two beasts understand antichrist, and others would have antichrist to be meant by one of the two, yet this is not to be looked upon as absolutely certain, not being witnessed by the consent of primitive Fathers. The ancient Fathers, especially in the exposition of obscure prophecies, many times give us no more than their private opinions, or suspicions and conjectures, as St. Augustine expressly takes notice in the 20th book de Civ. Dei, (chap. xix. tom. 7. p. 597, Nov. Ed.) where he speaks of antichrist: so that though St. Irenæus had seen St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John the evangelist, yet he delivers us divers things concerning antichrist, which are no more than his private opinions and conjectures, in which others do not agree with him; as that antichrist shall be of the tribe of Dan; that he shall sit in the temple of Jerusalem. He was also in an error as to Christ's reign of a thousand years upon the earth with his elect. Arethas, bishop of Cesarea, in Cappadocia, in the sixth age [century], in his commentary on the Apocalypse, (tom. vi. Bib. Patrum, Edit. Colon) speaking of this opinion, that some would have the first beast (Apocalypse xiii. 1.) to be antichrist, and others the second beast, only says: *quidam sic accipiunt, &c.*

[2] Ver. 11. *Vidi aliam bestiam, Greek: eidon allo therion.* Another wild beast. St. Irenæus calls this second beast *armigerum primæ*, and takes notice that he is also called in other places of the Apocalypse (Chap. xvi. 13. and xix. 20. and xx. 10.) the false prophet, *pseudopropheta* of the first beast. By what is said in this chapter, this second beast must live and act at the same time with the first; for it is said, ver. 12, that he exercised all the power of the former beast *in his sight*, *Greek: enopion autou*; and again, ver. 14, that he did *wonders in the sight of the first beast*, *Greek: enopion tou theriou*. 2. It is said that this second beast made all that *dwelt on the earth* *adore the first beast*. 3. That he made all persons make an *image to the first beast*, that was wounded and cured, and that they should be *slain who adored not that image*. 4. He caused that all persons should have the character of the first beast, and the *number of his name*, i.e. of the name of the first beast. All those who hold that the first beast in this chapter is antichrist, who is

to come a little before the end of the world, hold in like manner that the second beast is not come, but will also come at the same time; and that he is to be a famous imposter and false prophet in antichrist's time. But they who hold the first beast not to be antichrist, but to be the idolatry of heathen Rome, by the second beast understand the philosophers and magicians, who were accustomed to raise the indignation of the pagan emperors against Christians. This exposition of the bishop of Meaux, and of divers Catholic interpreters, I shall here give in Dr. Hammond's words: "By the second beast is meant magic, auguries, and oracles of heathens, made use of to advance idol worship. This beast had two horns, two powers, with some resemblance of Christ, the Lamb; the power of doing some kind of miracles, even of making fire seem to come down from heaven, as Philostratus relates of Apollonius of Thanea, (lib. v. chap. v.) and the pretended power of prophecy by dubious and obscure oracles; by which also they engaged the emperors to promote idolatry, and to make bloody edicts against Christianity, to force every one to join in their heathen worship, and to shew that they did so by exterior marks and signs, by tickets, to shew that they had sacrificed to idols, otherwise they should be incapable of buying and selling, i.e. of enjoying any particular advantages, or the common benefits of life." Dr. Hammond did not think it worth taking notice of, that so many writers of the pretended reformation would have the second beast to be a great many popes, whom they affirm to be the most famous antichrist. Never was there a more groundless or a more malicious invention, without shadow of authority or reason, and evidently contradictory to both, which I may shew as occasion offers, and as far as these short notes will permit. Here I shall only touch upon what relates to that which is set in this chapter. 1. The late reformers, some of them, make the first beast the popish antichrist, (as we may see in the bishop of Meaux, and also in Dr. Wells) and some affirm this of the second beast. The two beasts are quite different: are they both the popish antichrist? 2. Some of them prove the popes to be the second beast, because the popes mitre has a resemblance of his two horns: does this deserve an answer? See the bishop of Meaux. 3. Is it not as ridiculous to pretend that *by fire coming from heaven*, is meant the pope's excommunications? Is not the power of excommunication grounded in St. Paul? Do not the Protestants themselves own, and make use of this power? 4. Those Protestants who tell us the second beast is the popish antichrist, say that the first beast was the state of paganism in the Roman empire. This, as they own, was destroyed before the popes began to be antichrist: how does this agree with what is here said of the second beast, antichrist's armiger, that he exercised all his power in *the sight* and in the presence of the first *beast*? 5. How can they pretend that the popes ever ordered all to be slain who would not adore the first beast? (that is, heathen idols, or the images of heathen gods, of Jupiter, Mars, &c.) or who did not bear on his forehead or hand the *character*, the mark, or the *number* of some of the heathen gods or heathen emperors? 6. If the second beast be the popish antichrist, all those Protestants have been guilty of a grievous oversight, who have endeavoured to prove the popes antichrist, by finding the number 666 in their names, or in the word *Lateinos*; for it is evident by this chapter, (ver. 17) that the number of the name belongs to the first beast, and not to the second. 7. This contradicts what the Protestants teach with St. Paul (2 Thessalonians. ii.) that antichrist is to be *the man of sin*, who will make himself *adored above all that is called or worshipped as God*; whereas, in this place of the Apocalypse, the second beast does not make himself, but the first beast, to be adored. Therefore this second beast is not the popish antichrist. Of this more in the following chapters.

[3] Ver. 12. Est enim numerus hominis, et numerus ejus sexcenti sexaginta sex; *Greek: arithmos gar anthropou esti, kai o arithmos autou chxs.* St. Irenæus, (lib. v. chap. xxx. p. 370) numerus nominis bestię secundum Græcorum computationem per litteras quę in eo sunt, sexcentos habebit et sexaginta et sex. Eusebius (lib. v. History of the Church, chap. viii. Ed. Valesii) citing the words of St. Irenæus, in Greek, p. 172: *Greek: oti o arithmos tou onomatos tou theriou, kata ten ton ellenon psephon dia ton en auto grammaton emphainetai.* But he declares it rash and dangerous to affirm any thing: *Greek: emeis oun ouk apokinduneuomen, &c.* As for the name itself, he proposes first *Greek: evanthas* and then of *Lateinos* says, that valde verisimile est quoniam novissimum, regnum (to wit, of the four kingdoms, in Daniel) hoc habet vocabulum. It is evident he speaks of the empire, not of the Christian church of Rome. Latini enim sunt qui nunc regnant, sed non in hoc nos gloriabimur. Sed et Teitan....omnium nominum, quę apud nos inveniuntur magis fide dignum est....but adds, nos tamen non periclitabimur in eo, nec

asseberantes pronuntiabimus, &c. Dr. Wells in a note observes, that Mr. Mede and Mr. Whiston, without sufficient grounds, take notice of this conjecture of St. Irenæus, as favouring their notion of the pope to be antichrist.

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## APOCALYPSE 14

**Ver. 1.** *Behold a Lamb*, by which is divers times represented our Saviour Christ. (Witham)

**Ver. 3.** *They sung as it were a new canticle.* In these visions, after persecutions, are sometimes introduced rejoicings to encourage the servants of God in their sufferings from the wicked world. --- *No man could say (or sing) the canticle, but those hundred forty-four thousand:* by which are signified the elect, *who were not defiled with women.* Some expound this literally of those who always lived virgins; others understand all those who lived or died with a pure and clean heart, exempt from the corruption of vices, and of whom it is said, (ver. 5) that *in their mouth was found no lie*, and that they were without spot for the throne of God. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *These are they,* &c. In the style of the prophets, by fornication is meant idolatry, and virginity signifies cleanness from all sacrilegious worship. These, therefore, are virgins in this sense, who have not fallen into the impurities of creature worship. But others, as St. Augustine, understand it of persons who have lived in continency. The first, however, is the more literal sense. (Calmet)

**Ver. 6- 7.** *Another angel,...saying: Fear the Lord.*[1] By this Angel are represented the preachers of the gospel, exhorting all men to a true faith and a good life. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *Another Angel,...saying:...She is fallen, she is fallen, that great Babylon.* By Babylon, as observed before, may very probably be signified all the wicked world in general, whom God will punish and destroy after the short time of this mortal life: or may be signified every great city, and perhaps Rome returned to idolatry in the time of antichrist, a little before the end of the world: or may be signified the idolatry of heathen Rome, in the fourth age [century], when the Christian religion, under Constantine and his successors, began to triumph over paganism, i.e. according to those interpreters followed by Alcazar, Bossuet, P. Alleman, &c. which exposition Dr. Hammond thus expresseth: "the whole impure city of heathen Rome, under the title of Babylon, that old idolatrous city that had lain so heavy upon the people of God....should speedily be destroyed, for advancing the heathen worship." (Witham) --- It is probable that here by the great Babylon is meant the city of the devil; that is, the universal society of the wicked: as Jerusalem is taken for the city and the Church of God. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9-10.** *The third Angel followed....if any man shall adore the beast,...he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine,* &c. That is, he shall drink of the bitter cup of God's indignation, not mixed with water, or any thing to diminish its force, but with wine and wine; i.e. with punishments upon punishments for ever and ever. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *Here is the patience of the saints.* Here patience is necessary, so as not to be carried away with such pleasures and vanities as are offered in the wicked Babylon, and remain firm under persecutions with the pious inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Witham)

**Ver. 13.** *Blessed are the dead (all the dead) who die in the Lord,* and not the martyrs only, for their works follow every one. (Witham) --- It is understood of the martyrs, who die for the Lord. (Challoner) --- *For their works follow them.* It is just that they rest at length from their labours, and enjoy for eternity the recompense of their fidelity. They land on the shores of their native country, enriched with the treasures of the good works they have done in this lower world. This is said in express contradiction to those who denied the necessity of good works, and maintained the

indifference of actions. This seems to have been the doctrine of the Nicolaites and other heretics of those times. (Calmet) --- The Holy Ghost confirms the sentence of their happiness, not only because at the moment of their departure their hard labours and penitential works cease, but their souls are admitted to a glorious immortality, the recompense of their good works. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 14-20.** *Like to the Son of man.* That is, to our Saviour Christ, sitting on a white cloud, with a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another Angel, desiring of him to do justice, by putting in his sickle, because the harvest of the earth was ripe, dry, and withered; i.e. the wicked, ripe for punishment. The like is again represented by the sickle, which is said to be put to the clusters of the vineyard: and they were cast into the great wine-press, or lake of the wrath of God, into hell, where the blood is said to come out *even up to the horses' bridles, for a thousand and six hundred furlongs*: a metaphorical way of expressing the exceeding great torments of the wicked in hell. But to pretend from hence to give the just dimensions of hell, is a groundless conjecture; of which see Cornelius a Lapide. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 6-7. I cannot but admire how Dr. W., after his *learned modern divines*, Mr. Mede and Mr. Whiston, could hook in the popish antichrist in so many places on this chapter, as ver. 7, where it is said *fear God*, the Christians, says he, are *forewarned not to fall into any corruptions the visible Church afterwards fell into, particularly popery*. According to a great many of our Protestant adversaries, the popes have been the great antichrist ever since the destruction of the heathen Roman emperors in the fourth age [century], and yet no man ever dreamt of it or suspected it. The Protestants tell the people, they need but open their Bibles and Testaments to see and find the monstrous popish antichrist, the frightful beast with seven heads and ten horns; and what is more strange than all the rest, not any one of the Latin or Greek Church for so many ages [centuries] could ever see the leas appearance of what to them is visible at the first sight. The Greek Church, by an unfortunate schism, was divided from the Latin in the ninth age [century]: they wanted not learned men among them, well read in the Scriptures, who omitted nothing that could be alleged to justify their schism and separation from the pope of Rome. It is possible that neither Photius nor any one among them should see this truth, so palpable that every Protestant presently discovers it at the opening of his New Testament? This at once would have justified their separation. This invention, which doubtless was suggested by the most subtle adversary of popery, first came, says the bishop of Meaux on the Apocalypse, from the late Manicheans, a sect among the Albigenses, as infamous for their errors as for their manners, (see Nat. Alex. tom. 6, Sæc. 11. and 12. p. 490. and tom. 7. Sæc. 13. p. 66) who, among other detestable blasphemies against God, against Jesus Christ and his blessed Mother, taught the people that pope Silvester in Constantine's time was antichrist, and the Church from that time was become *a den of thieves, and the harlot in the Apocalypse*. I scarce think the reasons they brought will be approved by the writers of the late reformation, inasmuch, said they, as the Church and ministers of the Church were then permitted to receive ecclesiastical benefices and revenues. These heretics were followed in some points by Wycliffe and his disciples; but perhaps upon a strict examination, they only meant that the pope and bishops taught antichristian doctrine, and so were to be esteemed adversaries to Christ and precursors of antichrist. We may look upon Luther (though he denied the Apocalypse of St. John to be canonical Scripture) and the Lutherans and Calvinists, to be the true inventors of this empty and incoherent fable of the popish antichrist, twelve hundred years after the popes had successively one after another been the one, great, and famous antichrist. These lovers of novelty, liberty, and Church lands found the obscure revelations in the Apocalypse very convenient for their arbitrary fancies, where they could make the wicked Babylon not signify the heathen Roman empire, with St. Irenæus and the primitive fathers, but to be the Christian popish Rome; and the *scarlet whore* must be the popes and cardinals who wear scarlet and purple. An argument not inferior to that Mr. Andrew Willet, who found out the pope to be the angel that opened with a key the bottomless pit, because, he said he, *who give the cross keys for this arms but the pope?* The last reformers of the faith found their ingenious expositions of the Apocalypse a fit means to stir up kings and princes, as well as the ignorant populace and unthinking mob against the tyranny of this Babylon: it is not my remark, nor that of the bishop of Meaux only, but of their learned Dr. Hammond, who, after he hath given

us the extravagant and trifling ravings of Mr. Brightman, says, "that what such writers aim at, is to put the people in mind that they are to pull down antichrist. Nothing (says Dr. Hammond) can be more effectual towards the raising and fomenting of commotions." It is evident the country parson can never be at a loss, or want matter, to excite his parishioners (as occasion offers itself) to a detestation of popery and all papists, if he has but Mr. Brightman's revelations on the seven epistles in the second and third chapters of St. John's Apocalypse, written to the Protestant churches *by name*. See what we have cited on those chapters. If he keep by him Mr. Willet's expositions of the number of the name of antichrist, whereby he may prove that the three letters are each of them crosses, and that the sign of the cross, still retained by papists, is in very deed the cognizance of antichrist. He may confirm the same by Mr. Willet's evident *demonstration*, as he himself calls it. Take it in his own words, in his Synop. Papismi. Controv. 4. q. 16. "Antichrist, says he, is the great whore of Babylon, i.e. of Rome: and here Willet devoutly, we are to note the singular providence of God, who suffereth not a *jot* of his word to fall to the ground: for even so verily, in the year 853, next after Leo. IV. there was a right whore elected pope, called John, or if you will, Joan VIII. who fell in labour in the midst of a solemn procession: thus then by evident demonstration it appeareth that the pope is the whore of Babylon, and consequently antichrist." Is not this witty? No matter if by the same logic every whore that ever lived in Rome may be proved antichrist. But as for the story of pope Joan, David Blondel, a French hugonot, has shewn it to be a fable; for it neither was pope John, nor Joan, that succeeded Leo IV. in the year 853. Leo IV. died in July 853, to whom succeeded, in August or September of the same year, Benedict III. so that no place is found for pope John or Joan, to reign after Leo two years and five months, as the authors of that story pretend. The parson, if need be, may add the expositions on the seven vials of the learned and pious divine, Mr. Mede, as Dr. W. calls him: (though the bishop of Meaux looks upon him as a mere enthusiast) the effusion of the first vial, says Mede, was when the Waldenses and Albigenses, and the followers of Wycliffe, and Hus began to renounce popery. The second vial was completed by what is more eminently styled the reformation, begun by Luther, and carried on afterwards by many others. The third vial was completed partly by the laws made here in England in the reign of queen Elizabeth against popish priests, partly by the great overthrow given to the Spanish armada, in the year 1588, and also to the Spanish forces in the Netherlands. See the rest in Dr. W. p. 127. But Dr. W. with Mr. Whiston, looks upon the vials to be *all still future*. I cannot think that the learned men among the Protestants believe the popes to be antichrist, especially since time, that discovers what is true as to matters of fact, that are pretended to be foretold, has confuted the conjectures of de Moulin, Jurieu, Mede, Whiston, &c. I must here do justice to divers learned men of the Protestant communion. Grotius, in a letter (epist. 557.) to the Protestant John Gerard Vossius, tells him, "that they who did not believe the popes to be antichrist, nevertheless judged it necessary to give such interpretations, for the public good of the Protestant religion." See Mons. de Meaux in his advertisement, num. 1. The same Vossius answers, (ep. 571.) "that he himself having told a certain minister of Dort, whom he calls thickskull, (lourde tete) that he should not impose on the people, even against popery, that minister presently asked him if he was for taking the papists' part, whom, said he, we cannot run down too much, that the people may the more detest their Church. This, adds Vossius, is much the same as some others said to me at Amsterdam: why should not we say the pope is antichrist? must we leave off saying so? and make the people leave our communion more and more, as if too many did not leave it already?" This was a secret that was not to be divulged. Of our English Protestants, I have read Dr. Hammond's paraphrase and notes, on the second chapter of Thessalonians; and on the Revelation or Apocalypse, he never pretends that the popes are antichrist. The predictions in St. John, of the *beasts*, of the *fall of Babylon*, of the *great harlot*, he expounds, as fulfilled already, by the destruction of pagan Rome, and of its idolatry, superstitions, auguries, under the heathen emperors, much after the same manner as Alcazar, and as the bishop of Meaux and other Catholic writers. Mr. Richard Montague, in his Gag. p. 74, writes thus: "Whether the pope be that antichrist, or not, the Church (of England) resolveth not, tendereth it not to be believed any way. Some, I grant, are very peremptory indeed that he is. He, for instance, who wrote and printed it, I am as sure the pope is antichrist, that antichrist spoken of in the Scripture, as that Jesus Christ is God: but they that are so resolute, peremptory, and certain, let them answer for themselves. The Church is not tied, nor any one that I know of, to make good their private imaginations. For myself, I profess ingenuously I am not of opinion that the bishops

of Rome personally are the antichrist....nor yet that the bishops of Rome successively are that antichrist," &c. He only holds the pope and papists to be antichrists improperly in the sense that St. John says, *there are many antichrists*. He cites for the same opinion Melancthon and others. Mr. Thorndike, in his just weights and measures, (chap. ii.) speaking to those two points, that the *pope is antichrist*, and *papists idolaters*. "The truth, says he, is, they of the Church of Rome have overcharged us, in calling us heretics....but they that would have *the pope antichrist*, and the *papists idolaters*, have revived it upon them, and taken their revenge beyond the bounds of blameless defence....*Let them not lead the people by the nose*, to believe that they can prove the supposition, *which they cannot*," &c. The same Mr. Thorndike, in chap. 19, p. 125, &c. shews more at large that their *reverencing images in churches is no idolatry*. And again, (p. 149) "*having shewed, says he, why the Church of Rome cannot be charged with idolatry, I may from hence infer that the pope cannot be antichrist*." Yet Dr. W. on the Apocalypse, has another argument to prove the pope is antichrist, that is, by a new invention, *the mystical antichrist*, foretold by St. John, and his reign to be twelve hundred and sixty years, only because he supposeth that the pope and papists give divine honour, the honour that is due to God alone, to images, saints, and Angels. This he continually repeats, and takes it for a thing granted. It seems very strange, that so learned a doctor, after such mistakes have been canvassed and cleared, as appears by what hath been written by Mr. Thorndike on this subject, should still run on in this groundless supposition, contrary to all the protestations which the Catholics have constantly made. Every little papist boy or girl can assure the doctor, that they have been always taught to give divine worship to God alone: they will recite to him the words of their catechism, *that they pray indeed before images, to put them in mind of things thereby represented, but they do not pray to them, because they know they can neither see, nor hear, nor help them*: they will tell him that the Angels and saints, even the blessed Virgin Mother of Christ, and the true mother of God made man, is no more than a creature below God, at an infinite distance; and so that the inferior honour that we pay to them, is nothing like to that supreme and divine honour, which we pay to God alone. In a word we know, and have always professed that images, Angels, and saints are but creatures; and as we are not such fools as to think them Gods, so neither are we so senseless as to pay them divine honour.

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## APOCALYPSE 15

**Ver. 1.** *I saw...seven Angels, having the seven last plagues.* Many by these understand chastisements that will fall upon the wicked a little before the end of the world, and so take these plagues and vials that are poured out, in the next chapter, mostly in a literal sense. Others apply them to different calamities that happened to heathen Rome; but the applications are so different, that they serve to convince us how uncertain they are. In the mean time St. John seems to repeat the same things in a different manner, and some times by way of anticipation, as here the saints are introduced rejoicing, in view of that happiness in heaven which is prepared for them. (Witham) --- Here is a new vision, great and wonderful, seven Angels holding the figurative symbols of seven plagues. They are called the last, because in them is completed the wrath of God, being inflicted on mankind in the last period of the world, the period of Christianity. The first of these scourges takes place shortly after the commencement of the Christian era, and the seventh puts an end to the world. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 2.** *I saw...a sea of glass, mingled with fire:* by which are signified the storms and dangers which they had happily passed: now they are said to be singing the canticle of Moses after he had passed the Red Sea, *Cantemus Domino*, "Let us sing to the Lord," &c. As Moses was a figure of Christ, and the Israelites of the Christians, so it is now called the canticle of the Lamb. (Witham) --- By the sea of glass is meant the firmament that makes the floor of heaven, which is here said to be mingled with fire, in allusion to the troubles and persecutions which the faithful, who are standing on this sea, have sustained. The beast that is here mentioned is an allusion to idolatry or heresy (Pastorini)

**Ver. 3.** *And singing.* This sea of glass and fire may also represent the sea which Moses passed in leaving Egypt; and the memory of this famous event, in every respect so similar to the deliverance of the saints from the persecutions to which they had been exposed during their lives, affords them the opportunity of singing the canticle of Moses, at the conclusion of which, they join in the praises of the Almighty for their own particular deliverance. (Calmet) --- *O King of ages.* In the common Greek is now read, O king of saints. (Witham)

**Ver. 5.** *And after these things.* Here the scene changes, and is carried back to the period of time that immediately precedes the seven plagues. This removal of the scene St. John insinuates by the unusual circumlocution, "after these things I beheld," and looked on the commencement of this scene. The temple opens, and the seven Angels with the seven plagues proceed from the sanctuary to execute the work they are charged with. (Pastorini) --- One ought not to be surprised to see the good Angels employed in these kinds of offices, as justice is no less an attribute of the Deity than mercy, and therefore equally the object of the ministry of the Angels. (Calmet) --- *Behold, the temple of the tabernacle....in heaven, was opened.* We have before observed, that these visions were shewn to St. John as it were in a temple in heaven, and with an allusion to the sanctuary and its parts under Moses. The Angels are seen coming out with clean and white linen, and with golden girdles, being an allusion to the habits of the priests in the ancient law. (Witham)

**Ver. 8.** *The temple was filled with smoke, &c.,* as in the time of Solomon. (2 Paralipomenon vii.) (Witham) --- The vials are given to the Angels by one of the four living creatures, that is, by a prophet, because at that time the effects had not happened, but were to happen in time to come, and are therefore announced by way of prophecy; and the temple was filled with smoke, manifesting first the majesty of God, and secondly his power. (Pastorini)

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## APOCALYPSE 16

**Ver. 1.** *I heard a great voice.* Bossuet explains the pouring out of the seven vials in this manner. The five first he supposes to have taken place under the reign of Valerian and Gallien; the sixth he supposes to have been poured out during the reigns of Valerian, Dioclesian, and Julian; and the seventh under Honorius and the Alani. (Bossuet) --- All commentators, however, seem to agree that the great city mentioned in the 19th verse, is to be understood of Rome, and that the plagues which are here foretold, are denounced against her. (Calmet, Pastorini, &c.) --- *Go and pour out the seven vials, &c.* According to the exposition followed by the bishop of Meaux, all these seven vials are already past, being punishments and judgments exercised against the heathen emperors, from the time of Valerian even to the time of Julian, at whose death it might be said, (ver. 17) *it is done.* Idolatry is destroyed, as to its public worship. Here in particular, by the drying up of the Euphrates, and by the armies of the East, these interpreters understand those of the Persians, who first gave the great shock to the empire in Valerian's time, and by whom afterwards Julian the apostate was defeated, and killed. By the great Babylon they also understand idolatrous Rome; and by the islands and mountains sunk by earthquakes, they understand the destruction of divers kingdoms. According to another interpretation, (which is very common) all these judgments are to come before the end of the world; and will be in a manner literally executed about antichrist's time. At the first vial, men shall be struck with ulcers and wounds, not unlike to the sixth plague of Egypt. At the second and third vial, the sea and fountains shall be turned into blood, as in Egypt. At the fourth vial shall be excessive scorching heats, tormenting men, and burning every thing for their use. At the fifth vial darkness, like that of Egypt. At the sixth vial, (ver. 12.) the Euphrates dried up, to open a passage for the armies from the East, to come and join the forces of antichrist. And the three unclean spirits like frogs, may signify devils sent by the dragon, or chief of the devils, to excite the wicked to all manner of unclean abominations. They are here said to be gathered together in a place called Armagedon,

perhaps with an allusion to Mageddon, in the tribe of Manasses, where the two kings of Israel, Ochozias and Josias, perished. (4 Kings ix. 21.) And they are brought in only to signify a place of great destruction. See also Zacharias xii. 11. At the seventh vial, a voice, *it is done*, i.e. the reign of the wicked in general, and of antichrist, is at an end. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *And the first.* From hence it appears that the first vial was poured out indiscriminately upon the good equally with the wicked. But behold the different consequences that follow: those that have the mark of the beast are afflicted with a sore and grievous wound, which is said in allusion to the madness, fury, and despair with which the wicked were afflicted, whilst St. John's omitting to say any thing of the just, shews that they bore it with resignation and joy. (Calmet)

**Ver. 3.** *And the second.* On pouring out the vial follows the divine judgment. There appears blood, like that of a dead man. This passage, Pastorini is of opinion alludes to the Arian heresy, which, like blood, flowed in vigorous circulation whilst in health and strength, gradually retarded its motion, as in a dying man, and was at last totally lost and stopped, like the circulation in a dead man. Hence every living soul died in the sea. (Pastorini) --- Calmet interprets it as a prediction of the calamities which befell the Roman empire, during the invasion of the Persians on the east, and the Goths and other barbarous nations on the west.

**Ver. 4.** *Upon the rivers.* That is, on the Roman provinces in Italy, and Rome itself. This is the last stroke employed by the Almighty for the total destruction of Rome. The divine judgment being executed, the Angel of the waters, that is, the Angel that presided over the Roman states, cries out, (ver. 5. 6.) *thou art just, &c.* (Pastorini)

**Ver. 8.** *And the fourth Angel.* Here is the punishment of the Greeks during the siege of Constantinople by the Turks, where the fire engines, that were then made use of for the first time, so reduced the Grecian army, that the walls of the city were reduced to ashes, and the whole town to flames. Hence it appears how the Greeks were scorched with great heat; and how they blaspheme the name of God, appears too evident from the history of Notaros, admiral of the Constantinopolitan fleet. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 10.** Calmet explains this passage of Rome the seat of idolatry, which was given up to the pillage of the barbarians under Alaric. (Calmet)

**Ver. 12.** *River Euphrates.* That is, a passage is laid open for the potentates of the East to lay their destructive hands upon the countries on this side the Euphrates. For they are the spirits of devils working signs, which are sent forth by the eastern princes, to oblige all to unite in arms against the great day of the Almighty God. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 16.** *Armagedon.* That is, the hill of robbers. (Challoner)

**Ver. 18.** The seventh vial is poured out upon the air which lies between the earth and the heavens, to indicate that the judgments of God are going to fall upon the whole creation. After which follow these words, *it is done*. All is over, time is no more; upon which immediately follow lightnings, &c.

**Ver. 19.** *Great Babylon came in remembrance before God.* The time of God's punishing the wicked world is approaching: for by a third interpretation, Babylon may signify metaphorically all the wicked in general. (Witham)

**Ver. 21.** *And great hail like a talent came down, &c.*<sup>[1]</sup> Which need not be taken literally, but only metaphorically, to signify the heavy weight of God's judgments upon sinners. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 21. Et grando magna sicut talentum, *Greek: os talantiaia*, quasi talentaris. The Protestant and Mr. N. translate hail about the weight of a talent, as if every hailstone were of that



weight.

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## APOCALYPSE 17

**Ver. 1.** I must repeat what I have already taken notice of, both in the preface to the Apocalypse, and sometimes in the annotations, that there are three ways of expounding all the visions of this revelation, from the end of chap. iii. to the end of ver. 10. chap. xx. all of which seem grounded on the opinions of the ancient Fathers. According to the first, all these visions are only to be fulfilled in antichrist's time, a little before the end of the world. According to the second, the visions may be applied to particular events, which happened in the first three or four ages [centuries], under the persecuting heathens, till by Constantine, and the succeeding Christian emperors, idolatry by degrees was extirpated, and the faith of Christ triumphed over all its enemies, whether Jews or pagans. According to the third, by the great city of Babylon, is mystically and metaphorically signified all wicked great cities in the world, all the multitude of the wicked dispersed in all nations, their short and vain happiness, their persecutions and oppressions of the good and faithful servants of God, who live piously in this world, and who are called to be citizens of the celestial Jerusalem in the kingdom of God, where he reigneth for ever with his Angels and saints, and where they all reign with him, happy in his sight and enjoyment. I am more and more inclined to this third exposition, by reading this 17th chapter, with the contents of the 18th, 19th, and 20th chapters, till the 11th verse, and by reading what St. Jerome says in general terms, in his epistle to Marcella, tom. 4, part 1, p. 166, Nov. edit. *"that all this book (of the Apocalypse) is either to be expounded spiritually, or if we follow a carnal interpretation, we must content ourselves with Jewish fables.* And especially by reading what St. Augustine has delivered us upon the chief difficulties of the Apocalypse, in his 20th book de Civ. Dei [The City of God], from chap. vi. to chap. xvi. and from p. 578. to p. 594. tom. 7. Nov. edit. To expound then these chapters together according to this third interpretation. (Witham) --- *Of the great harlot.* Nothing can be better applied than this epithet to ancient Rome, which had conquered almost all the kingdoms of the known world, as it is said in ver. 18. *she is the great city, a kingdom, which hath dominion over the kings of the earth;* ver. 9. *it was built upon seven mountains;* ver. 6. *was watered with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus Christ;* and in fine, ver. 5. *it was the great Babylon,* as St. Peter, in his first epistle, pleases to call it. (Calmet) --- *Come, I will show thee the condemnation of the great harlot,...Babylon....the mother of the fornications.* By this *harlot*, and this *Babylon*, is signified the multitude of all the wicked of all times and places, who have abandoned themselves to sensual pleasures, and sought for their happiness in riches and worldly grandeur; for this reason she is said to carry on her forehead this inscription, *a mystery;* that is, to be understood in a mystical sense of all the wicked, who make up as it were one city, as St. Augustine observes, which may be called *Babylon*, the city of confusion, the city of idolatry, and of all manner of vices. --- *The beast*, that is, the devil, carries her, whose suggestions the wicked follow. He comes out from *the bottomless pit.* *He was*, i.e. had a much greater and more extensive power over the wicked world before Christ's coming and incarnation; *and he is not*, i.e. according to St. Augustine, his power hath been much extenuated and lessened since that time. He is *bound* or *chained up for a thousand years*, as it is said, chap. xx. 2. By which may be understood all the time from Christ's coming, and the establishing of his Christian Church, till the last and severest persecution under antichrist. See St. Augustine, lib. xx. de Civ. Dei. chap. vii. And when he shall come again, and be let loose, as it were, in antichrist's time, he must continue a short while: for all the ancient fathers agree, by the interpretations they give to the Scripture, that antichrist, and consequently the devil with antichrist, must reign but a short time. The *scarlet coloured beast*, the devil, called the prince of this world, on whom the *harlot gilded with gold* sat; that is, all the wicked, and particularly all wicked kings and princes, with their worldly greatness, who were *drunk with the wine of her prostitution;* that is, who abandoned themselves and indulged their passions with all sensual pleasures, and contented themselves with the vain and deceitful happiness of this life; to be convinced of which, the Angel is said to have taken St. John *in spirit into a wilderness* from the company of the wicked world, the better to see and contemplate the

vanity of their short and false happiness. This *woman*, the *harlot*, this *Babylon*, this multitude of the wicked, especially the heathen persecuting emperors at Rome, and in all other places, (and they who acted against the Christians under them) are said to be *drunk with the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs*, by putting the Christians, the Catholics and the servants of God to death, from the foundation of the world to its consummation, by the instigation of the *beast*, the devil. The *beast*, the devil, is represented with *seven heads* and *ten horns*; that is, with many heads and many horns, signified by the numbers *seven* and *ten*. See St. Augustine, chap. xxiii. p. 606. --- *The seven heads*, as it is said, ver. 9, are seven mountains and seven kings, i.e. a great many. And also the *ten horns*, (ver. 12.) are ten kings. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *Cup....full of the abomination, &c.* These are common scriptural expressions for the abominations of idolatry, with which ancient Rome had notoriously polluted herself. For not content with worshipping her own heathenish gods, she adopted those of all the countries and nations she had subdued. In Rome itself there were no less than 420 heathenish temples, so that one of their most famous poets, Ovid, (lib. i. Trist.) says:

Sed quæ de septem totum circumspicit orbem,  
mortibus Imperii, Roma, Deumque locus.

**Ver. 5.** *A mystery.* That is, a secret, because what follows of the name and title of the great harlot is to be taken in a mystical sense. --- *Babylon.* Either the city of the devil in general; or, if this place be to be understood of any particular city, *pagan Rome*, which then and for 300 years persecuted the Church, and was the principal seat both of empire and idolatry. (Challoner)

**Ver. 6.** *Drunk with the blood of the saints.* Such was pagan Rome, for innumerable were the *martyrs* she put to death, both throughout the extent of her vast dominions, and even in her own bosom, the city itself. These were the victims of the ten persecutions raised by Rome against the Christians. Such was *the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.* (Pastorini)

**Ver. 8.** *The beast which thou sawest.* This beast, which supports Babylon, may signify the power of the devil; *which was, and is not*, being much limited by the coming of Christ, but shall again exert itself under antichrist. The seven heads of this beast are seven mountains or empires, instruments of his tyranny; of which five were then fallen, as above, chap. xiii. ver. 1. The beast itself is said to be *the eighth, and is of the seventh*; because they all act under the devil, and by his instigation, so that his power is in them all, yet so as to make up, as it were, an eighth empire distinct from them all. (Challoner)

**Ver. 9.** *Seven mountains.* We have already observed that ancient Rome stood upon seven mountains. The same cannot be said of modern Rome, as some of the hills are not inhabited. --- *The seven heads....are seven kings*, or seven Roman emperors, who were particularly distinguished as the chief supporters of idolatry, and the most virulent persecutors of the Christian religion. Their names were Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, Valerian, Dioclesian and Antichrist. --- *Five of them are fallen or gone*, viz. Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, Valerian, who supported the idolatrous empire for a time; *one is*, viz. Dioclesian, with whom the reign of idolatry falls; and *the other is not yet come*, that is, antichrist.

**Ver. 10.** *Five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet.* The meaning of this is obscure. And perhaps it were better to own with St. Augustine that we do not know the meaning, than to advance suspicions and conjectures. But it is not improbable that by these seven kings may be understood the collection of kings, in what are called the seven ages of the world, from its creations to its consummation. The first age, is reckoned from Adam to Noe [Noah], and the deluge: the second age, from Noe to Abraham; the third, from Abraham to Moses; the fourth, from Moses to David; the fifth, from David to Christ. These five were past, and *fallen*, when St. John wrote. The sixth is, and is to last from Christ to antichrist. And another, the seventh, *is not*, being the time of antichrist, and only a short time. See Cornelius a Lapide on this verse. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *The beast that was, and is not: is the eighth: and is of seven.* The devil reigns with the kings in all these ages: he is *of the seven*, because he is the prince under whom reign the wicked in all ages: he is also *the eighth*, inasmuch as he is their prince, and they are only his instruments. (Witham)

**Ver. 12.** *The ten horns*, or ten kings, *which thou sawest*, as yet have received no kingdom, *but shall receive power as kings one hour after the beast*; or, as it is in the Greek, with the beast. According to the common interpretation, this must be referred to ten, or many kings, who are different from all the wicked kings that had been, and who should follow and live at the same time with *the beast*, by which here seems to be signified antichrist. Or, if by these ten kings we understand all the wicked kings, who were to come after St. John wrote, to the end of the world, they had not yet kingdoms, but the kingdoms which they should have, and all their vain happiness, would be very short, and at the same time they would be under the beast, and subject to him. (Witham) --- *Ten horns*. These denote ten kings or ten powers; namely, Goths, Huns, Alans, Vandals, Saxons, Burgundians, Franks, Heruli, Suevi, &c. the chief of the barbarians that invaded the Roman empire in the fifth century. --- *They shall receive power as kings one hour after the beast*; that is, they will serve under their own leaders, to assist pagan Rome a little against its enemies; and their *one design* is afterwards to take the fruitful provinces of Rome to themselves, which we know they did. (Pastorini) --- *Ten kings*. Ten lesser kingdoms, enemies also of the Church of Christ; which nevertheless shall be made instruments of the justice of God, for the punishment of Babylon. Some understand this of the Goths, Vandals, Huns, and other barbarous nations that destroyed the empire of Rome. (Challoner)

**Ver. 13.** *These have one design*, to make themselves as happy as they can in this world: and their *power they shall give to the beast*, being always slaves of the devil. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *These shall fight with the Lamb.* Their actions and affections being always led away with the love of this world, which is an enemy to Christ and his doctrine: but *the Lamb*, Christ, *shall overcome them*, and punish them, when he pleases: for he, Christ, God and man, *is Lord of lords, and King of kings*; and as St. John says again, (chap. xix. 16,) has written on his thigh, *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, to signify to us his divinity, or divine nature. (Witham) --- All these different people were either heathens or heretics, and of course were bitter enemies to the Catholic religion; *but the Lamb overcame them*, by turning their hearts, and converting them to Christianity.

**Ver. 15, &c.** *The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth*, signify the different nations, in all which is a multitude of wicked, especially among the great ones of this world. (Witham) --- *And the ten horns....shall hate the harlot.* That is, ancient Rome; they *will make her desolate*, by laying waste all her provinces; they *will make her....naked*, by stripping her of her shining ornaments, her gaudy palaces, Egyptian obelisks, magnificent temples, theatres, triumphal arches, &c. --- They *will eat her flesh*, by plundering her of her wealth and riches, with which she has fed herself by plundering the rest of the world; and lastly, they *will burn her with fire*; all which we know has been accomplished, even to a tittle. (Pastorini) --- Alaric, the Goth, in 410, took the city, pillaged it, and delivered it over to fire and the plunder of his soldiers for three days. The only privileged places that escaped were the churches. (Calmet) --- Genseric plundered it for fourteen days, in 455, and set fire to it. Odoacer took it, and deposed the emperor, in 476; and Totila, in 546, burnt it, and reduced it to a solitude. Procopius says he left not one human creature in the city. (Pastorini) --- *These shall hate the harlot.* There is no true love or friendship among them: the wicked hate, envy, make war against the wicked, though they make alliances sometimes one with another. --- *For God hath put it into their hearts*, permits them, and makes use of them as instruments of his justice, against one another: and they *give their kingdom to the beast*: the wicked reign under the prince of this world, the devil, as long as God pleases, and till his words and judgments are fulfilled. All the contents of the following chapters agree with this exposition. When the Angels cries, (chap. xviii.) *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*, the false happiness of the wicked is come to its last period; though St. John speaks sometimes by anticipation, especially when the rejoicings of the saints are represented, and the miseries and consternation

of the wicked, to encourage the servants of God to patience and perseverance under their trials and persecutions in this mortal life. Babylon will in a short time be the habitation of devils: and therefore the good are admonished by these words, *go out of her, my people*, avoid and detest her wicked ways. Almighty God hath remembered her iniquities, the provocations of the wicked, nor can they escape the hand of his justice. They lived as if they were never to be called to an account. Babylon, blinded with sensual delights, pride, and vanity, said in her heart, I sit as a queen above others, and sorrow I shall not see; like the wicked in the psalmist, *who is Lord over us?* (Psalm xi.) But all her *plagues* (chap. xviii. 8.) *come in one day*, at the day of death, or the day of judgment. Then are represented the weeping and mourning of all the accomplices of the wicked, like the disappointment of merchants by the burning and destruction of a great city, where they found so great profit in disposing and selling their merchandise. After this, in the 19th chapter, the blessed in heaven sing *Alleluia*, &c. the *God Almighty hath reigned*, or is about to reign. At the latter end of the 19th chapter, ver. 17, it is said, *I saw an Angel standing in the sun*; saying to all *the birds*, &c. Here are represented God's judgments on the wicked, as it were after a great battle, in which kings and many noblemen are slain, so that the birds are invited to drink of their blood. --- *The beast was taken*, and *with him the false prophet*. We may take this as spoken by anticipation of antichrist, and his great impostor, or false prophet. For still after this, (chap. xx. 7,) is foretold, according to St. Augustine, the last persecution by the devil, and by antichrist, with Gog and Magog; for it is then that fire came down from heaven, and was to devour them; and there it is expressed that the devil, who seduced them, and all the wicked, was cast into the lake of fire, into hell, where also the beast, antichrist, and the false prophet shall be tormented for ever and ever. Now to give a short account of the two other expositions. The first of them, followed by a great many, (as may be seen in Alcazar and Cornelius a Lapide) holds that all these visions will come to pass in the short reign of antichrist, a little while before the end of the world. These interpreters are divided about the signification of *Babylon*: some understand Babylon the metropolis of Chaldea, where they think that antichrist will begin to reign; others understand Constantinople, the seat of the Turkish empire, which is also built upon seven hills: but many understand Rome, not Christian Rome, but Rome that was a heathen city in the first ages [centuries], and which they think will be heathen Rome again in antichrist's time. See a great number of the Fathers and interpreters for this opinion cited by Cornelius a Lapide. By the *beast* that carries her with her idolatry and vices, they understand the devil; and by the seven heads and ten horns, kings, who shall be in the time of antichrist, and submit themselves to him. All these kings and persecutors will receive their power one hour after, or with the beast, by which they rather understand antichrist, whose reign shall be short, as shall be that of the devil, who shall be let loose, and have greater power for a little while. By the eighth, who is of the seven, they understand the devil, because all the seven will be as it were his instruments. The same kings who committed fornication with the harlot, are also said to hate her, and burn her, says Gagneius, by being the cause of her damnation and destruction: for none are greater enemies than sinners' accomplices. As to the other exposition, (for which see Alcazar, the bishop of Meaux, &c.) they look upon all these visions till the last persecution under antichrist, (chap. xx. 7. 10.) to be already fulfilled by the destruction of the heathen Roman empire, as they are also expounded by Dr. Hammond. Babylon is the ancient heathen Rome, mother of fornication, i.e. of idolatry and of all kind of vices, sitting upon a scarlet beast, supported by the pagan emperors in all their grandeur, pomp, and vanity. When it is said of her, *that she was, and is not*, this is not to be taken with regard to the visions one after another represented to St. John, nor with a regard to the time when he wrote under Domitian. She is said to come again *out of the bottomless pit*, when the same heathen worship was again renewed by Julian the apostate, who had a design and endeavoured to destroy the Christian religion. The seven heads are ingeniously applied to Dioclesian, Maximian Herculeus, Constantius Chlorus, Maximus, and Maxentius, which in a vision of St. John, are said to be the five that are fallen. One, to wit, Maximinus, is the sixth, represented as then in being; and another, the seventh, it is said is not yet come; to wit, Licinius, whose persecution but a short time. The eighth, who is called also one of the seven, they take to be Maximian Herculeus, who had laid down the empire with Dioclesian, but took it up again, and so was the eighth, but of the seven mentioned before. The ten horns represented as not yet having a kingdom, but who are to receive power as kings, one hour after the beast, or at the fall of the empire, are those kings and princes by whom the Roman empire was destroyed; as the

Goths, Vandals, Lombards, Burgundians, Franks, Huns, Alans, Suevi, also Persians and Saracens, who invaded and dismembered different parts of the empire: but no great stress need be laid on the exact number *ten*; which, as St. Augustine says, may be taken for a great many. They all come with the same design, (ver. 13.) to enrich and settle themselves in the dominions of the empire; yet afterwards they gave their power to the beast, by entering into alliances with the emperors, as Alaric, the Goth, and others did. They at first fought with the Lamb, being then heathens, and afterwards many of them Arians, till the Lamb overcame them, and brought them to the true Christian faith. They are said to have hated the harlot, making her destitute by pillaging Rome and divers other cities: they devoured her flesh, her treasures, God putting it into their hearts, making use of them as instruments to punish these wicked persecuting idolaters; yet they afterwards sometimes agreed to give her their strength by agreements and alliances, till the time that God decreed the empire should be in a manner destroyed. These interpreters conclude that by Babylon must necessarily be understood Rome, because it is said that seven heads, upon which the woman sitteth, are seven mountains; and it is well known that Rome is built upon seven hills; and secondly, because the woman is said to be the city, which hath dominion over the kings of the earth. But first, those seven mountains are also called seven kings; secondly, Constantinople is also built upon seven hills; thirdly, seven may be taken for many. And I cannot but take notice, that some expressions in this and in the next chapter, seem to agree better with that exposition, which takes Babylon for the multitude of all the wicked: as when we read, (chap. xviii. 3.) that *all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*; (ver. 23.) that *all nations were deceived by her sorceries*; (ver. 24.) that *in her was formed the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth*. For though the Roman empire was of so large an extent, yet a greater part of the world was never subject to the Romans: many apostles and martyrs were not put to death at Rome, nor by the Romans, but by the Persians, and in India, &c. so these general expressions are more easily expounded, if by the great city of Babylon we understand the multitude of the wicked in all parts of the world: not but that these visions may also regard heathen Rome as the chief place where such persecutions were acted, and where all kind of vices were practices. --- N. B. Some have taken notice, that the English Protestants print the 5th verse of this chapter in capital letters: *Mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth*. I will suppose that these words are only printed in this manner, because they contain an inscription; as when it is said, that he who was called the word of God, had written upon him, the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, which words are also printed in great letters: but if our adversaries do this, to make the Church of Rome to be looked upon as the whore of Babylon, and the pope as antichrist, nothing can be more unfair, nothing more ridiculous, as I may shew on the following chapters. (Witham)

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## APOCALYPSE 18

In this chapter is a repetition of the fall of Babylon and the mourning of other nations, and their consternation for its sudden destruction, to which may be applied the three mentioned expositions. Among the sorts of merchandise, (ver. 13.) are *mentioned slaves, and the souls of men*. Some of our Protestant adversaries (see Mr. Theophilus Higgons) tell us, that it is only Popish Rome that deals with this sort of merchandise. But I must needs say, our adversaries have the misfortune to betray a shameful ignorance, whensoever they undertake to bring proofs to shew the popes to be antichrist. Here it is so evident that by the *souls of men* are meant only bond slaves, which merchants used to bring and sell at Rome, that Dr. Wells instead of *slaves and souls of men*, in the amendments made to the Protestant translation, has translated *hired servants and bond servants*, as Dr. Hammond had before put in his paraphrase, and proved it in his notes. It is from the mysterious visions of these revelations, especially in the 17th and 18th chapters, that divers Protestant writers would make the people believe that all the popes for above twelve hundred and sixty years have been the detestable antichrist, the great whore of Babylon, the monstrous beast with seven heads and ten horns. This new invention, and their wild fancies upon it, are full as monstrous as the beast. The obscurity of the visions furnishes them

with a more convenient handle for their main design, which is to make the pope and the popery odious to the people, where they can with less hazard advance their groundless and licentious expositions: and where the expressions are mystical and allegorical, it is no hard matter, said Dr. Hammond, *to transform any thing into any thing*, and thus to *lead the people by the nose*, said Mr. Thorndike on this very subject. Never was there a fable invented by men, that pretend to be interpreters of the holy Scriptures, so empty, so incoherent in its parts, so contradictory to the Scripture, and to the *unexceptionable authority of the primitive fathers*, to use the words of Dr. Wells, who therefore is pleased to own that his is not so *sanguine* as divers others of his communion, to think that the popes are the *great, literal, and famous antichrist, emphatically so called*, but by another new invention, as groundless and as frivolous as the former, he would have above two hundred popes for the same term of twelve hundred and sixty years, to have been the *mystical antichrist*: he does not only mean antichrist *improperly* and *metaphorically* so called, as are all heretics who teach false doctrine, and so are adversaries to Christ, of which St. John said, (1 John ii. 18.) *they are become many antichrists*. The doctor's mystical antichrist or antichrists, he pretends were foretold in this revelation of St. John, who were to reign for twelve hundred and sixty days, that is by a new exposition of his learned divines of the reformation, twelve hundred and sixty years, which no one dreamt of before them. I had designed and prepared an appendix to these annotations on the Apocalypse, with a confutation of their arbitrary expositions and groundless arguments; but by the advice of a learned friend, for whose judgment I have the greatest esteem, I shall only give the reader in short what I hope may be sufficient to shew that the popes can neither be that mystical antichrist, nor antichrist emphatically so called: and that both from the authority of Scriptures and of all the primitive Fathers, both of the Greek and Latin Church, in which we find any thing concerning antichrist. It may be observed that the Fathers, or ancient interpreters, sometimes give us their private conjectures and opinions, as St. Augustine takes notice, in which others do not join with them, as that antichrist is to be of the tribe of Dan, a Jew, and chiefly to be acknowledged by the Jews, who will pretend to be their Messias, who is to sit in the temple rebuilt at Jerusalem, to overcome three kings, and seven others to submit to him, &c. These are the suspicions and opinions of some; though none of them favour their system of the popish antichrist. But whosoever consults the primitive Fathers, as I make bold to say I have done with all possible exactness, will find that the Scripture and Fathers unanimously agree in these three following points, (utterly destructive of their systems of the popish antichrist) to wit: 1. That antichrist must be one single man; 2. that he shall not come till about the end of the world; 3. that he shall but reign a very short time. In the holy Scriptures we only find the word itself, antichrist, five times, that is, in the 1st and 2nd Epistle of St. John. In four of these places, he only speaks of antichrists improperly so called, as being seducers and adversaries of Christ; and of the one proper antichrist he only says, (1 John ii. 18.) *as you have heard that antichrist cometh*, or is to come. But it is generally agreed, even by Protestants, that St. Paul (2 Thessalonians ii.) speaks of the great antichrist; and there he is called *the man of sin, the son of perdition, he who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped*, &c. St. Paul also there adds, *then that wicked one shall be revealed*, (i.e. about the time of the day of judgment,) *whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*: from which it follows, both that antichrist is to be one man, and that his coming and the glorious coming of our Saviour shall concur together. If our adversaries will understand the predictions of the prophet Daniel (Chap. vii, &c.) of antichrist, and not only of Antiochus, he must also be one particular king, who shall overcome other kings, that *little horn* that sprang up amidst other ten horns. In the Revelation or Apocalypse of St. John, we nowhere find the name of antichrist. Secondly, I take notice that divers of the ancient Fathers, as St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Theodoret, &c. never bring any passages out of the Apocalypse when they speak of antichrist. Thirdly, nor is this to be wondered at, since divers of them by the *beast*, *Babylon*, and the *scarlet whore*, understood the devil, or heathen Rome with its heathen Roman emperors, and taught that all those visions till the 20th chapter are fulfilled already, before the coming of antichrist. Dr. Hammond gives their interpretations in these words, in his first note on the Revelation, chapter xviii: "What is said of the fall of Babylon cannot belong to Christian Rome, neither to the emperor Honorius, who was then a Christian, and at Ravenna, nor to Innocentius, the pope or bishop of Rome, by the ordering of God's providence....rescued like Lot out of Sodom also at Ravenna, nor generally to the Christians, who survived to restore

and re-edify the city, a more Christian city than before, *but to the heathen part of the city*: so that the sum of the fall of Babylon is the destruction of the wicked and heathen, and the preserving of the pure and Christian Rome, and so in effect the bringing of that city and empire to Christianity." Thus Dr. Hammond. Nothing that the Protestants bring, as I think, has even the face or appearance of an objection, unless it be when they tell us, that by *Babylon* in St. John's Revelation is meant Rome; therefore, say they, the Church of Rome must be Babylon, and the scarlet whore that sitteth there must be the Pope with his cardinals, clothed in scarlet and purple. I answer: All Catholics, and all men of sense, have reason to wonder and ask by what kind of logic they have hooked or drawn into the consequence the Church of Rome. There is not, as the bishop of Meaux desires the Protestants to take notice, in all these vision and predictions the least hint or insinuation of a fallen corrupted church, but of a heathen city and pagan empire. Many by Babylon understand the multitude of the wicked in general: but we will willingly allow that by Babylon was meant Rome, yet not Christian Rome or the Church of Rome, but heathen Rome and its pagan emperors, with their dresses of purple and scarlet. Let me again cite to these our adversaries, the paraphrase of their learned Dr. Hammond, p. 985: "I will shew thee the vengeance that is ready to befall the imperial dignity of Rome, fitly styled the great whore....for their worship of many heathen gods. I saw a woman, that great whore, *the imperial power of pagan Rome, seated on an emperor in a scarlet robe, a great blasphemer against God,*" &c. --- Now as to the ancient Fathers, and what they have witnessed and delivered to us concerning the three above mentioned points. **St. Irenæus**, on whose testimony the Protestants seem to lay the greatest stress, tells us, (lib. v. c. xxx, p. 361. Ed. Rig.) *that antichrist shall be a wicked king....who shall overcome ten other kings*. He also makes his conjecture on the number of the name of a single man. As to the time of his coming, he says, (p. 363) that it *shall be at the end of the world, and when the end of all things shall come. That he shall reign upon the earth three years and six months*: or, as he says again, for *forty-two months*. Rex impius et injustus....novissimo tempore....quoniam finis fiet....regnans annis tribus et sex mensibus, &c. **St. John Chrysostom**: (tom. 6. Nov. Ed. Ben. p. 238) *What is the little horn? I say it is antichrist appearing among some kings, and that he is a man, Greek: anthropos esti*. See also his 3rd homil. on 2 Thess. *Who is antichrist? a certain man, &c. Greek: anthropos tis*. And hom. iv. *Antichrist*, says he, *will be destroyed by Christ's coming, &c.* **Theodoret**, on Daniel (Chap. vii. t. 2, p. 631. Ed. Par. 1642) *The little horn is antichrist, &c.* And Chap. xi. *He will glorify the god Maozim in this place*: which the Protestants may take notice of, that he expounds thus: *Instead of the gods which his forefathers adored, he will set himself up for the strong and powerful god*, signified by the word *Maozim*. See on 2 Thess. tom. 3, p. 386. *Antichrist is called the man of sin, because by nature a man, who will call himself the Christ, &c. God hath decreed he shall appear at the end of the world: Greek: para ton tes sunteleias kairon*. **St. Cyril of Jerusalem**: (Cat. xv, p. 162. Ed. Par. 1640): *The devil will bring a certain man, a magician, falsely calling himself the Christ*. And this will come after the time of the Roman empire, and when the end of the world shall approach: *Greek: tes tou kosmou sunteleias*. He shall be destroyed by the glorious coming of Christ. He will act only for *three years and six months: Greek: epi tria ete mona, kai menas ex*. He brings proofs, p. 165 and 166, to shew that antichrist's reign will last but three years and a half, being also expressed by months. And these things, says he, we draw from the divine Scriptures, *Greek: ek theion graphon*, yet does not bring any place out of the Apocalypse. I do not cite Hippolytus on the Apocalypse, because that book we now have with his name is thought not to be his. Theophylactus, Æcumenius, and Euthymius follow St. John Chrysostom. In the BB. Patrum, (tom. 4. Ed. Colon. p. 517) we have a commentary on the Apocalypse of Andreas, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, and another (tom. 6. p. 59) of Arethas, bishop of the same city, which is in a manner an abridgment of the former. They both agree that the reign of antichrist will last but three years and a half, for which also they cite Hippolytus. **St. John Damascene**, in the eighth age [century], (lib. 4. Orthod. fid. chap. xxviii. Ed. Basil. p. 389) says that antichrist is to come *at the end of the world*. None of these writers dreamt that the bishops of Rome were antichrist. The Latin Fathers, upon antichrist, deliver us the very same truths. **Tertullian**, to omit other places, lib. de Resur. carnis. chap. xxvii. *Those*, saith he, *in antichrist's time at the end of the world, &c.* **St. Cyprian**, in the middle of the third age [century], (Ep. 56. Ed. Rig. and in other epistles) was apprehensive that the time of antichrist was then approaching, as divers of the Fathers feared the same in their time, but he always joins with antichrist *the end of*

*the world.* Scire debetis et occasum sæculi, et antichristi tempus appropinquasse....prænuntiata sunt hæc futura in fine sæculi, deficiente jam mundo et antichristo propinquante. See Ep. 68. ad Clerum in Hispania, p. 115. See **Lactantius**, lib. 7. div. Institut. chap. xxvii: *Antichrist*, says he, will come; *imminente jam tempore conclusionem*, &c. **St. Hilary** (on Matt. xxiv. can. or cap. 26) tells us, that antichrist is to come when the *day of judgment is at hand*. See also can. 33. See **St. Ambrose**, (t. I. de ben. Prophet. chap. vii. p. 523) where he also thinks that antichrist will be of the tribe of Dan. See t. 2. in Psalm xlv. p. 1028. **St. Jerome** (on Daniel vii. tom. 3, p. 1101. Nov. Ed.) says, that by the *little horn* is meant antichrist. "Let us say what all ecclesiastical writers have delivered to us, that *at the end of the world*, when the kingdom of the Romans is to be destroyed, there will be ten kings, who will divide among them the Roman world, and the eleventh will rise up, a little king, who will overcome three of those ten....and the other seven will submit to the conqueror." Take notice, that these words, "what all ecclesiastical writers have delivered to us," *quod omnes ecclesiastici scriptores tradiderunt, in consummatione mundi, quando regnum est Romanorum*, &c. are not to be extended to every particular in this sentence, but only to what he and other ecclesiastical writers agreed in, to wit, that antichrist was not to come till about *the end of the world*, and that the heathen Roman empire was first to be destroyed. But it does not follow, that presently after the destruction of the Roman empire, both antichrist and the end of the world (which others also join together) should happen. This was indeed, for some time at least, the particular opinion of St. Jerome and of some other Fathers; but divers others hold that the Roman empire is now long ago destroyed, though antichrist be still to come. St. Jerome also tells us that ten kings shall divide the Roman world; but St. Augustine puts un in mind, that by *ten* may signify *many*. And besides, there are other expositions on these kings and on Babylon, which are very probable, as shewn already. St. Jerome also (on Daniel, p. 1103) says, the reign of antichrist will last but *three years and a half*. On the 12th chapter, (p. 1133) he takes notice that the same short time is signified by 1260 days. P. 1127, he tells us Antiochus was a *figure* of antichrist, but that many things in that prophecy agree better to antichrist himself at the end of the world: *rectius in fine mundi hæc facturus est antichristus*. See also his Ep. to Algasia, tom. 4, part 1, q. 11, p. 200. **St. Augustine** began his learned work, *de Civ. Dei*, soon after the destruction of Rome by Alaric, about the year 410, as he tells us, lib. 2. retract. chap. xliii, though he did not finish these books about the year 427. He is far from finding any certainty of the approaching antichrist, as I shall have an occasion to shew on chap. xx. of this Apocalypse; and shall only here take notice, that he delivers it as a certain truth, that the reign of Antichrist will last but *three years and a half*, (lib. 20, chap. xxiii) which he tells us we are the more certain of, the same short time being expressed in the Scriptures by years, by months, and by days: *tres annos et semissem, etiam numero dierum aliquando, et mensium numero declaratur*. **St. Gregory**, in his moral books on Job, (tom. 1.) makes frequent mention of antichrist, little dreaming that his predecessors for almost two hundred years, that he himself and his successors for so many ages, were antichrist, foretold in the Apocalypse. Lib. 12, chap. xv, p. 410, he says antichrist will be permitted to be exalted for a *little time*; parvo tempore. Lib. 13, p. 32, he calls him that *damnable man whom* the apostate angel will make use of *at the end of the world*; in fine mundi: and again, (lib. 29, chap. vii, p. 925,) in mundi termino, &c. --- Now to conclude from what hath been said. The Scripture, and all both Greek and Latin Fathers, acknowledge no particular antichrist, properly so called, but him who shall be *one single man*, who is not to come till about *the end of the world*, who is *to reign but a short time*. Let our adversaries reconcile this doctrine with their systems of the popish antichrist, whether *emphatical* or *mystical*. They tell us that 1260 days, being prophetic days, must be taken for years; and that just so long must reign the popish antichrist. It is true we have two examples in Scripture, and only two, as the bishop of Meaux observes, in which days are put for years, to wit, Numbers xiii. 34. and Ezekiel iv. 5. and in both places we are admonished that days unusually stand for years. And certainly, unless we have particular proofs to the contrary, days even in the writings of the prophets are to be taken for days, months for months, years for years. Now in this place, since the same term of antichrist's reign both in Daniel (to whom St. John alludes) and in the Apocalypse, is also expressed by as many years and months as come to no more than 1260 days, it is manifest that St. John by days means days, and not years. See divers other convincing proofs of this matter in the advertisement of the bishop of Meaux, num. 24. This the ancient Fathers saw very well, and so not one of them understood this of a number of so many years. Yet unless we allow this arbitrary and groundless exposition, that by 1260 days are



meant years, the whole system of so many popes being antichrist is utterly destroyed. But let us see what pleasant work they can make of it, if we suppose days to be years; with a second supposition, that above two hundred men are one man; and with a third, that the end of the world, at which antichrist is to come, has now been ending for 1260 years. The popish antichrist, say they, is to last 1260 years and no longer: and they are certain that he began some time in the fifth age [century], as soon as the Roman empire was destroyed by ten kings; for the popish antichrist was to begin with those kings that began to reign *with the beast*, and the pope renewed heathenism and idolatry at that very time. From hence they have made different computations: 1. From the year 410, when Alaric, the Goth, pillaged and almost destroyed Rome; add to this number 1260 years, and the antichristian reign of the popes should have come to a period in 1670, or thereabouts. This by the event being found a mistake, others, as Jurieu and Mr. Whiston, found out a new epoch, and dated the beginning of the popish antichrist from the year 455 or 456, under the great, learned, and virtuous St. Leo, when Genseric, the Vandal, again plundered Rome; adding the aforesaid number, and the reign of the popish antichrist was to end in 1715 or 1716. The author of a late book, entitled *Charity and Truth*, laughs at Mr. Whiston, that he has outlived his nine whimsical *demonstrations*, by which in his Essay on the Revelation he had shown that the papacy was to expire in the year 1716. This term being also expired, and this popish antichrist going prosperously on at this present year, (1730) under Benedict XIII. whom even the Protestants themselves, commonly allow to be a very holy and virtuous pope or antichrist, some have computed that the beginning of this popish antichrist may be dated from the year 475, when both the dignity and name of the Roman empire ceased under Augustulus: and thus they may hope for the destruction of antichrist, and (as I think they hold) of the end of the world, just five years hence, 1735. Luther, at the beginning of the reformation, made some pretence to prophecies, as the particulars are related by the bishop of Meaux in his excellent History of the Variations, and among the rest, that the antichristian reign of the popes should come to an end in two years time. Luther's preaching was to be looked on as the breath of Christ, by which the *man of sin*, the popish antichrist, should be destroyed, and that whilst *he drank his beer quietly at his fireside with his two friends, Amsdorf and Melancthon*. See the Hist. of Variations, lib. i. and num. ix. if you can --- *Spectatum admissi risum teneatis*. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.* Idolatrous Rome is fallen. That mighty seat of power and dominion is fallen. The long fixed abode of voluptuousness and luxury, for *the merchants of the earth have become rich by the strength of her delicacies*, and now the hand of God hath struck her. It is utterly destroyed; not a human being in it. Thus it is become an accursed place, given up for an *habitation of devils* and a *hold of every unclean spirit*, or of frightful spectres and ghosts, and a *hold of every unclean and hateful bird*, of owls, ravens, vultures, &c. &c. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 4.** *Go out from her, my people.* The people of God, the Christians, are all here told to leave the falling city, *lest they be partakers of her sins, and receive of her plagues*. At the time of Alaric's sacking Rome, many fled away to St. Jerome, who was then in Judea; others fled into other parts, as many holy fathers testify. St. Jerome says, (Ep. vii) that St. Paula and several illustrious Christian families had left Rome as if by particular inspiration, and retired into Judea. The holy pope Innocent was drawn by a particular providence out of the city, as Lot out of Sodom, that he might not see the ruin of a guilty people, says Orosius, lib. 7. chap. xxxix. We read likewise that Melania, as if she foresaw the approaching catastrophe, had prevailed upon many Christians to retire with her from a city doomed to destruction. (Hist. Laus. chap. cxviii.) In fine, we all know that when the storm broke out, the Christians took refuge and were saved in the Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, which Alaric had allowed to be places of safety. (Haydock)

**Ver. 10.** *Alas! Alas!* St. Augustine informs us, that the people of the eastern provinces, and the remotest cities, mourned in a public manner on this occasion. (De Civ. Dei. lib. 1, chap. xxxiii.)

**Ver. 13.** We see here enumerated the articles of the luxury of the pagan Romans in dress, in ornaments, in furniture, in equipage, in the sumptuousness of their tables, &c. &c. Nothing is more remarkable than the extravagant luxury and profusion of some of the Roman emperors at their tables. Caligula once spent (according to Seneca) for a supper, 150,000 crowns. Suetonius

tells us, that the emperor Vitellius would feast himself thrice, and often four times in a day, spending 10,000 crowns at each meal. But now they are all gone; they are now the fuel of fire, and *in one hour brought to naught*. (Haydock)

**Ver. 20.** *Rejoice....heaven, the holy apostles and prophets*, and all the holy ministers of the gospel: and holy men are invited here to rejoice, because the divine justice is accomplished in the ruin of that guilty city. (Pastorini) --- By the words *prophets*, &c. are not meant those of the old law, as pagan Rome had not been the cause of their deaths, but here only includes all the prophets, saints, and martyrs, who had been put to death for Christ throughout the whole Roman empire. (Haydock)

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## APOCALYPSE 19

**Ver. 1.** Here we enter upon a new scene. Babylon the great is fallen. The saints are here represented rejoicing over *the woman which was drunk with the blood of the saints*. (Chap. xvii. 6.) (Calmet) --- *The voice of many multitudes....saying: Alleluia*. In these visions, when the martyrs have triumphed and overcome persecutors, are sometimes represented their praises of God in heaven. Here in the Protestant translation, are retained *Alleluia* and *Amen*, which as St. Augustine takes notice, used not to be changed or translated in any language. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *The voice of a great multitude*. Menochius applies this voice to the multitude of Angels and saints, which from its strength may be compared to the voice of rushing waters, and because of the terror with which it strikes the wicked. Pastorini understands by this *voice of many waters*, the voices of many Angels that preside over the nations, denoted by *waters*, which had all before groaned under the tyranny of antichrist; and the *voice of great thunders*, that of the Angel who presides over fire, which, as employed in military engines, by its explosion resembles thunder. It must be observed that the latter author refers it to the last stage of the world.

**Ver. 7.** *For the marriage*, &c. In the New Testament, the word marriage points out the establishment of the Church, the vocation of different people to the faith, or the reign of the Messias. (Calmet)

**Ver. 8.** *Fine linen*. The symbol of justification, or the good works and merit of her holy members; the most pleasing attire in which she can present herself to the Lamb. Her robe is *glittering and white*, because she has been purified as silver in a furnace, and washed *white* in the waters of tribulation and persecution. (Pastorini) --- The fine linen, or *byssus*, here mentioned, is, according to Calmet, a kind of silk produced by a shell-fish, called *pinna*; though the same learned commentator allows that the Greek authors use this word for *fine linen*.

**Ver. 10.** *And I fell before his feet, to adore him*. They of the pretended reformation think they have here a clear proof that no veneration is due to Angels and saints, and that papists in doing so are idolaters. In answer to this: First, they make St. John the apostle guilty of that idolatry which they lay to our charge. For they must suppose and grant that St. John, as to the dispositions of his mind and will, was just ready, or rather falling down, did pay an idolatrous worship to the Angel; and what Christian can believe this of so great an apostle, that after he had been favoured with all those extraordinary visions, he should either be so very ignorant as not to know what was idolatry, or so impious as to become guilty of it, and give divine honour to any creature? And what makes St. John altogether inexcusable, (had it been idolatry) we find him doing the very same a second time, in the last chapter of the Apocalypse; (ver. 7 and 8) that is, falling down at the Angel's feet to *adore*. Secondly, as it would be extravagantly unreasonable to suspect this apostle, this evangelist, this prophet of the new law, to be guilty of it, and give divine honour due to God alone to any creature whatsoever; so in reason we cannot but conclude that he was not for giving divine honour to any Angel, knowing them all to be God's creatures. If

therefore he was about to pay divine honour, we must either say that he took him who then appeared to him to be our Saviour Christ, God and man, as some expound it; or, which seems more probable, he was only for offering an inferior honour and veneration to the Angel, such as he knew was lawful: and therefore he was for doing it afterwards a second time; though the Angel would not receive it from St. John, to make us the more convinced of the great dignity of this apostle and prophet, who should be raised in heaven to a degree of glory, not inferior to that of the Angels: and thus the Angel tells him, that he is his fellow creature, who with him must adore Almighty God, that by these prophecies they both bear testimony concerning Jesus Christ and his Church, the Angel by revealing them, and St. John by publishing them, which seems to be the sense of the following words, *for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*: or they may be expounded thus, for the testimony that we give concerning Christ and his Church, we both of us receive from the divine spirit of God, who reveals such truths to his prophets. Thirdly, Protestants are for proving us idolaters from what St. John was about to do, or rather from what he did, expressed in these words, *and I fell before his feet to adore him*; or, as in the Protestant translation, *and I fell at his feet to worship him*. Now it is certain and evident that these words neither in the Latin nor in the Greek, express that divine worship and honour which is due, and which is given to God alone, whether we consult the Hebrew or the Septuagint of the Old Testament, the very same words are many times used to signify no more than an inferior honour given to creatures. This is a thing well known, and agreed upon by every Protestant as well as Catholic, who has read the Scriptures, or who knows any thing of Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. Fourthly, it seems very strange, very unaccountable, that our adversaries will not understand the difference betwixt divine honour due to God alone, and an inferior honour, respect, or veneration given to Angels or saints, to their relics or images, which inferior honour may, in some sense, be called a religious honour, inasmuch as it is paid to persons or things that may be called sacred or holy. Is not honour or veneration certainly different, as the *objects* or things we pay honour to, and the intention of him that pays this honour, are different, though perhaps the exterior marks of bowing, of kneeling, of prostrating, or kissing, may be the same? We honour the king, and we also honour his courtiers, his officers, and such as are invested with dignities and authority from him: but shall any one think that we pay the same honour to all these persons or things belonging to them? though the eastern people kneel or prostrate themselves before kings or persons in dignities, they neither give nor design to give them divine honour and supreme worship to God alone? that we honour, worship, serve and adore him only as the author of all things? that we never design to pay any thing but an inferior honour to the highest Angels or saints, or their relics and images. We know, believe, and profess that there is an infinite distance betwixt God the creator, and the highest and most perfect of all created beings; so that the honour we give them is infinitely inferior, as they themselves are, to the honour that with our hearts and minds we pay to God: and must it be said that we give divine honour to creatures, and so become idolaters, when we must never design it, when we design quite the contrary? This made Mr. Thorndike, in his book of just weights and measures, tell his Protestant brethren, that the Church of Rome cannot be charged with idolatry for their reverencing images, nor on any other account; and so exhorts them not to pretend to lead the people by the nose, to make them believe suppositions which they cannot prove. See Chap. ii. and xix. (Witham) --- *Fell before*, &c. St. Athanasius and St. Augustine think St. John toll the Angel to be Jesus Christ, and as such was desirous of paying him the supreme homage, or *Greek: latreia*. (Calmet) --- St. John, in token of gratitude, offers to pay to the Angel such homage as is due to a being of his rank, which the Angel however refuses to accept, giving for reason, that his is a *fellow-servant* of the apostle, and of the apostle's brethren, who bear *testimony* to Jesus Christ. (Pastorini) --- This speech evidently agrees with the character of [John] the Baptist, but not with that of a real Angel. --- *Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*. The testimony which you give to Christ, by suffering for his holy name and the profession of his doctrine, is of equal value with the *spirit of prophecy* which I possess (Pastorini; Calmet)

**Ver. 11.** *Behold a white horse*. The titles and character given to him that sat on this white horse, shew that hereby was represented Jesus Christ, called also here the *word of God*, ver. 13; and ver. 16, *and he hath on his garment and on his thigh written: King of kings and Lord of lords*, &c. (Witham) --- *And he that sat*, &c. The heavens open and St. John sees Jesus Christ, the Son of

God, descending, seated on a *white horse*. He is known by the peculiar appellations of *faithful and true*. Faithful, in protecting his servants; and true, by always keeping strictly true whatever he promises. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 12.** *Flame*, &c. Which shews his indignation. --- *Diadems*; the mark of power. So Ptolemy, the king of Egypt, after he had entered Antiochia, took two crowns, to signify that he was king of two countries, Syria and Egypt. (Pastorini) --- *Which* (name) *no man knoweth but himself*. Some interpreters think St. John alludes to an ancient custom which still obtains among the Orientals, of having a secret name, which they discover to no one. (Calmet) --- Pastorini understands this to be the name of the *word of God*, as mentioned in the subsequent verse; which is so comprehensive in its meaning, that human reason cannot fathom it, *and no man knoweth but himself*.

**Ver. 13.** *Sprinkled with blood*, &c. Which betokens the carnage made among his enemies.

**Ver. 14.** *The armies*, &c. The celestial armies of saints follow the Son of God, as their captain and commander; they are all like him, mounted on *white horses*, and clothed in *fine linen, white and clean*, a symbol of their merit and glory. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 15.** *Sharp two-edged sword*. The power which Christ exercises over the impious. (Menochius) --- *Wine press*, &c. This painting corresponds to the triumph of Jesus Christ. (Calmet) --- Some of the attributes here mentioned are also ascribed to Christ, by the prophet Isaias. Chap. lxiii. 2, 3. "Why then is thy apparel red, and thy garments like theirs that tread in the wine press? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a man with me: I have trampled on them in my indignation, and have trodden them down in my wrath, and their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my apparel." (Pastorini)

**Ver. 17.** *An Angel....in the sun,...with a loud voice* invites all the birds of the air to a most plentiful entertainment which is preparing for them, where they may fill themselves with human flesh of all kinds; from that of *kings* to that of *bondmen*; (ver. 18) and with the *flesh of horses* and that of *them that sin on them*: and expressive picture of the immense slaughter that is going to be made. It would seem that this bloody scene will terminate in the evening of the day, as the invitation is given to a supper. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 19.** We have just now seen the heavenly captain on horseback, at the head of his holy troop, marching to battle; and now we see who are the enemies he comes to encounter. Here is the beast, or antichrist, with prodigious armies gathered from all parts of the earth, and headed by their kings and princes. (Pastorini)

**Ver. 20.** *The beast*, &c. Antichrist is taken alive. (Menochius)

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[1] Ver. 10. Cecidi ante pedes ejus ut adorarem illum: *Greek: epeson emprosthen ton podon autou proskunesai auto, proskunein*, as Mr. Legh shews out of other authors: promiscue de Dei et hominum cultu apud LXX. (the Septuagint) usurpatur, cui respondet apud Latinos, adorare, quod est quasi ad aliquem orare, says Erasmus, capite vel corpore inclinato. We have very many examples in the holy Scripture, where both *Greek: proskunein* and *Greek: latreuein* signify not only divine honour, but also the honour paid to men. When God gave the ten commandments, (Exodus xx.) he forbid his people to adore strange gods; non adorabis ea, neque coles; *Greek: ou proskuneseis autois, oude me latreuseis autois*. Yet the same words are used in a great many places, where it is evident no divine adoration or worship is designed, as we read of Abraham, (Genesis xxvii. 7.) adoravit populum terræ, *Greek: prosekunese to lao tes ges*; Genesis xlii. 6. of Joseph's brethren, cum adorassent eum fratres sui, *Greek: prosekunesan auto epi prosopon*. See also 1 Kings xx. 41. where David is said to have adored Jonathan, cadens pronus in terram adoravit, *Greek: epesen epi prosopon kai prosekunesen auto tris*. See likewise 3 Kings i. 16. where Bethsabee [Bathsheba] is said to have adored old king David, adoravit regem, *Greek:*

*prosekunese to basilei.* Though in these and many other places is meant the supreme worship due to God alone: did Bathsheba take her old, decayed, dying husband, David, to be God, or design to pay him divine honour? Nothing then is more frivolous than such arguments drawn from the like words, which have different significations.

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## APOCALYPSE 20

**Ver. 2.** *And bound him for a thousand years.* I shall give the reader an abridgment of what St. Augustine has left us on this chapter, in this 20th book de Civ. Dei [The City of God]. From the 5th to the 16th chap. (t. vii. p. 578, et seq.) he treats upon these difficulties: What is meant by the first and second resurrection; by the binding and chaining up of the devil; by the thousand years that the saints reign with Christ; by the first and second death; by Gog and Magog, &c. As to the *first resurrection*, chap. vi. he takes notice on the 5th verse, that *resurrection* [1] in the Gospels, and in St. Paul, is applied not only to the body but also to the soul; and the *second resurrection*, which is to come, is that of the bodies: that there is also a *death of the soul*, which is by sin; and that the *second death* is that of soul and body by eternal damnation: that both bad and good shall rise again in their bodies. On those words, (ver. 6) *Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection; in these the second death hath no power.* Such, saith he, (chap. ix.) as have risen from sin, and have remained in that resurrection of the soul, shall never be liable to the second death, which is damnation. Cap. vii. p. 580, he says that *some Catholics not understanding rightly the first resurrection*, have been led into *ridiculous fables*, [2] and this by the interpretation which they put on the *thousand years*; as if the first resurrection implied a *resurrection of the bodies* of the martyrs and saints, who should live *on the earth with Christ* for a thousand years before the general resurrection, in all *manner of delights*. This was the opinion of those called Millenarians: this, saith he, might seem *tolerable in some measure*, [3] if taken for spiritual delights, (for we ourselves were once in these sentiments) but if for carnal pleasures, it can only be *believed by carnal men*. He then expounds what may be understood by the *binding* and chaining of the devil for a thousand years (Cap. vii. & viii, p. 581) that the thousand years, meaning a long time, may signify all the time from Christ's first coming [4] to his second at the end of the world, and to the last short persecution under antichrist. The devil is said to be *bound*, that is, his power much *lessened* and restrained, in comparison of the great and extensive power he had over all nations before Christ's incarnation; not but that he still tempts many, [5] and raiseth persecutions, which always turn to their greater good; and that towards the end of the world he shall be let loose, as it were, for a short time, and permitted with his infernal spirits to exercise his malice against mankind, to try the patience of the elect, and to shew the power of God's grace, by which his faithful servants shall triumph over the devil. (N. B.) What St. Augustine adds divers times in these chapters: "Let no one," says he, "imagine [6] that even during that short time, there shall be no Church of Christ on the earth: God forbid: even when the devil shall be let loose, he shall not be able to seduce the Church." Cap. ix, p. 586, he expounds those words, (ver. 4-5) *I saw the souls of them that were beheaded....and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years....this is the first resurrection:* i.e. the first resurrection is while the devil is chained up for the space of a thousand years. He takes notice that the *present state of the Church* is many times called *the kingdom of God*, and that the *Church of Christ reigns now with Christ*, both in the living saints, and those who are dead, in the souls of the martyrs, and of others, who have lived and died piously, now reign with Christ, not yet *in their bodies*, [7] *but their souls reign with him*. On those words of the 4th verse: *who had not adored the beast, nor his image, nor received his mark*, he only gives this exposition, as agreeable to the Christian faith, that by the *beast* may be understood the multitude of wicked sinners in general, and the *image of the beast* [8] those who are of the Church in outward appearance and profession only, and not by their works. When it is said (ver. 5) that the *rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished*: they lived not, says he, as to their souls, when they should have lived; and therefore not being happy in heaven, when their *bodies shall rise*, *it shall not be to life, but to judgment and damnation, which is the second death*. Cap. xi, he expounds the 7th and 8th verses, where it is said that *Satan shall be*

loosed....and seduce the nations which are over the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, [9] and shall gather them together to battle. This, says St. Augustine, will be *the last persecution* at the approach of the day of judgment, which the whole city, or the whole Church of Christ dispersed through the universe, will suffer from the whole city of the devil. Neither need Gog and Magog be taken for a particular[10] barbarous people, but such as are dispersed in a manner in every nation, and who shall then break out by the instigation of Satan into an open hatred and persecution against the faithful servants of God; as it is said, (ver. 8.) *they ascended upon the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints*, where we cannot literally understand one camp, one city, or one place, but the Church every where dispersed. Cap. xii, he expounds the 9th verse, where he takes *fire* to signify, metaphorically, *the firm resistance* and constancy of the good, and the *fire* [11] of their zeal, which devoured as it were the wicked; or we may understand with others, the temporal *fire* of God's judgments in this world against the wicked, but not the last eternal fire; because the eternal fire comes *not down from heaven* but the wicked are cast into it below. Cap. xiii, he teacheth that the last persecution[12] of antichrist, here mentioned, shall but last three years and six months; i.e. a little while. Cap. xiv and xv, he expounds the 10th and following verse, of the devil being cast into the lake of fire, after the last persecution of antichrist. By *the beast* he understands, as before, the city or multitude of all the wicked; and by the *false prophet*, either antichrist or the outward appearance of faith in them that have none. Then follows the last judgment, where it is said that *the books are opened*, and also that *another book was opened*. By the first book, may be understood men and their consciences; and by the *other book*, *the book of life*, that[13] *of eternal predestination*. Thus far S. Augustine, where we see that he delivers the common Catholic doctrine, that by the thousand years, so often mentioned in this chapter, he understands all that time in which the souls of the martyrs, and of all other saints, reign happy with Christ in heaven, till after the general resurrection they receive a full and complete happiness, both as to soul and body. A false exposition of these *thousand years* gave occasion to the mistake, the error, and heresy of those called the Millenarians, which Mede and Dr. W. have followed. Papias, who lived soon after, or perhaps with St. John, was the chief promoter of this mistake; a man, says Eusebius, of "little judgment and capacity,"[14] who misconstrued the discourses which he heard. He was followed by divers writers in the second, third, and fourth century, who did not hold with Cerinthus and his followers, that the saints should rise before the general resurrection, and reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years in all manner of *sensual pleasures*; but in *spiritual delights*, in the city of Jerusalem, built anew after that glorious manner described in the next chapter. Now though this opinion had several considerable abettors, of which I find these seven: Papias, St. Justin Martyr, St. Irenæus, Tertullian, Nepos, (a bishop, in Egypt; in Eusebius, lib. xii. chap. xxiv.) Victorinus Petabionensis, Lactantius, and Severus Sulpitius: yet were there always other learned Catholic writers who rejected it as a fable. Of this number was Caius, a priest, at Rome, about the end of the second age [century]; Origen, in his prologue on the Canticles; St. Denys, of Alexandria, who in the third age [century] wrote to confute Nepos; (see Eusebius, lib. vii. History of the Church, chap. xxiv., who treats it as a *fable* ) St. Basil,[15] who calls it an *old wife's tale*, and a Jewish fiction, Epist. 293; St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. 52; St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome, Philastrius, Theodoret, who place this opinion among the heresies and heretical fables: so that this could never be looked upon as the constant doctrine and tradition of the Church. The bishop of Meaux takes notice, that Mede either mistook or falsified the text of St. Justin,[16] who, in his Dialogue with Tryphon, holds that opinion of a *thousand years reign*; but adds, "I also told you, that many who are Christians of pious and sound sentiments, do not own this to be true." Thus we read in the Greek, as well as in the Latin translation: but Mr. Mede quite changes the sense, by adding a negative in this manner; *but many who are not of this pure and holy doctrine*, &c. We may observe that St. Justin says in the next page, that they who own not the resurrection of the body, and say that souls go to heaven without any future resurrection, are not to be accounted Christians, but are to be looked upon as Sadducees and unbelievers. Which is very true. And he adds, that he, and others who *think right* with him, know that there will be a resurrection of the flesh, and a rebuilding of Jerusalem for a thousand years, which St. Justin himself judge grounded on the prophets, Isaias, Ezechiel, &c. So that not to make St. Justin contradict himself, he mentions three opinions: the first is the heresy of those who absolutely denied the future resurrection of the dead: these were not Christians, but unbelievers, Sadducees, &c. The second was of those who held that the

martyrs and saints should rise and reign for a thousand years in their bodies on the earth; this, which was his own opinion, he calls *the right and true doctrine*. But thirdly, he does not condemn those pious Christians who, as he had said before, disowned this thousand years reign, for this would be to contradict himself. (Witham) --- In the above chapter, what man can reflect without trembling, that the devil has the rage of a dragon, the cunning of an old serpent, the malice of a calumniator, and that he is a most implacable enemy? On the other hand, what man is there that does not feel consolation in the reflection, that Jesus Christ has vanquished this savage fiend, and bound him in fetters, by limiting the exercise of his rage and malice? Some understand this chaining of the dragon of the reign of Constantine, and particularly after the defeat of Licinius; (see above, [Apocalypse] chap. xii. 18.) and the thousand years of the intermediate period between Constantine and antichrist, when the devil will again be let loose, but for a short time, only three years and a half. (Bible de Vence) --- *Bound him*, &c. The power of Satan has been very much abridged by the passion of Christ; for a thousand years; that is, for the whole time of the new testament, but especially from the time of the destruction of Babylon or pagan Rome, till the new efforts of Gog and Magog against the Church, towards the end of the world. During which time the souls of the martyrs and saints live and reign with Christ in heaven, in the first resurrection, which is that of the soul to the life of glory, as the second resurrection will be that of the body, at the day of the general judgment. (Challoner)

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[1] Ver. 2. St. Augustine, chap. vi. Prima animarum est.

[2] Ver. 2. Chap. vii, p. 580. In quasdam ridiculas fabulas.

[3] Ver. 2. P. 581. Utunque tolerabilis.

[4] Ver. 2. Mille annos pro annis omnibus hujus sæculi posuit, &c. Chap. viii, p. 583. A primo adventu Christi usque ad finem sæculi.

[5] Ver. 2. Chap. viii, p. 583. Alligatio diaboli est non permitti exercere totam tentationem, &c.

[6] Ver. 2. Ne quis existimet eo ipso parvo tempore, quo solvetur diabolus, in hac terra ecclesiam non futuram, &c. Tales erunt, cum quibus ei belligerandum est, ut vinci tanto ejus impetu, insidiisque non possint, &c.

[7] Ver. 2. Chap. ix, p. 586. Quamvis ergo cum suis corporibus nondum, jam tamen eorum animæ regnant cum eo.

[8] Ver. 2. P. 587. Quæ sit ista bestia....non abhorret a fide recta, ut ipsa impia civitas intelligatur, et populus infidelium contrarius populo fidei, et civitati Dei. Imago vero simulatio ejus mihi videtur....fallaci imagine Christiani.

[9] Ver. 2. Chap xi, p. 589. De Gog et Magog: hæc erit novissima persecutio, novissimo imminente judicio, quam sancta ecclesia toto terrarum orbe patietur, universa scilicet civitas Christi ab universa diaboli civitate.

[10] Gentes istæ, quas appellat Gog et Magog: non sic sunt accipiendæ tanquam sint aliqui in aliqua parte terrarum barbari constituti....non utique ad unum locum venisse, vel venturi esse significati sunt, &c.

[11] Ver. 2. Chap xii, p. 589. Bene intelligitur ignis de cælo de ipsa firmitate sanctorum, qua non cessuri sunt sævientibus, quoniam non poterunt attrahere in partes antichristi sanctos Christi.

[12] Ver. 2. Chap xiii. Hæc persecutio novissima, quæ futura est ab antichristo (p. 590) tribus annis et sex mensibus erit....tempus exiguum, &c.

[13] Ver. 2. Chap. xv, p. 593. Prædestinationem significat eorum, quibus æterna dabitur vita, &c.

[14] Ver. 2. Eusebius (lib. 3, chap. xxxix) says of Papias, *Greek: omikr[] on ton noun*; and that he followed *Greek: muthikotera*.

[15] Ver. 2. St. Basil (tom. 3, p. 284) says, *Greek: graiodeis muthous*.

[16] Ver. 2. St. Justin, (Ed. Joachimi Perionii, p. 62.) multis autum eorum, etiam qui integræ piæque sententiæ Christianæ sunt, hæc incognita (seu non agnita) esse tibi exposui. In the Greek of Rob. Stephen, out of a manuscript in the king's library, in the year 1551, p. 88, *Greek: pollous d au, kai ton tes katharas, kai eusebous onton christianon gnomes, touto me gnorizein, esemena soi*.

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## APOCALYPSE 21

From the seventh verse of the foregoing chapter, begins as it were the third part of the Apocalypse containing the coming of antichrist, the great day of judgment, the punishment of the wicked, and the eternal happiness of God's elect in heaven, or in the celestial Jerusalem, which St. John describes in this chapter as if it were like a large city, beautified and enriched with gold and all manner of precious stones, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 1.** *New*, by their form and qualities, but not by their substance. --- *The first heaven and first earth was passed away*: being changed, not as to their substance, but in their qualities. (Challoner)

**Ver. 2.** *Coming down from God out of heaven*. By the city we must understand its citizens, the Angels and saints. (Witham) --- Justice, innocence, the good works of the saints, are the ornaments of the inhabitants of this new Jerusalem, the Church triumphant. If the world of the old Adam has appeared so beautiful, so magnificent, good God, what will be the riches of that which is made for Jesus Christ, the second Adam, and for his members! O Jesus! Father of the world to come, render us worthy of this new and everlasting world, and give us a disgust, a mortal hatred, for that which perishes, and which is the cause of our perdition.

**Ver. 3.** *Behold the tabernacle of God with men*, inasmuch as God's elect shall there dwell with him for ever and ever. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *It is done*. The state of Christ's Church on earth, and in this world, is now finished; and the time is come to reward the good, and to punish the wicked in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, in hell, with the devils for all eternity. (Witham) --- This living water is God himself, of which the saints shall be inebriated at the source; i.e. in God himself. Enviably moment, when all the designs of God upon Jesus Christ and upon his Church will be accomplished: but how little thought of now! And how can we hope to be inebriated at this source of God above, if we do not aspire after it whilst we are in this dreary desert here below? He who begins and finishes gratuitously here below the work of our faith, crowns it still more liberally in heaven.

**Ver. 9.** *I will shew thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb*: all the Church triumphant in heaven. (Witham)

**Ver. 16.** *The city is situate four-square*;<sup>[1]</sup> and by what follows, so as to be a perfect square, though everything that is quadrangular is not always a square, or perfect square. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *The measure of a man, which is of an Angel*.<sup>[2]</sup> This seems, without doubt, the sense of it. (Witham)



**Ver. 22.** *No temple in it.* No need of a temple for divine worship, where God is in such a perfect manner present to all the blessed, where nothing can distract or divert their souls from endless adorations, praises, &c. (Witham)

**Ver. 23.** *Needeth not sun nor moon,* where there is no vicissitude or succession of day and night, the divine brightness always shining to them. (Witham)

**Ver. 24.** *The kings of the earth shall bring their glory;* the elect, of all states and conditions, shall now be exalted like kings, or rather infinitely above the glory that we can imagine of any kings in this world. (Witham)

**Ver. 27.** *There shall not enter it any thing defiled.* This is what we ought always to remember and have in our minds. (Witham)

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[1] Ver. 16. In quadro, *Greek: tetragonos*, quadrangularis.

[2] Ver. 17. Mensura hominis, quæ est Angeli; *Greek: metron anthropou, o estin aggelou.*

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## APOCALYPSE 22

**Ver. 1.** *A river of water of life,* or of living water. It is spoken with allusion to the rivers of paradise and to the tree of life. (Witham)

**Ver. 2.** *For the healing of the nations,* or Gentiles, to signify the call of all Gentiles or nations to this heavenly happiness. (Witham)

**Ver. 4.** *They shall see his face.* Thus in a few words is expressed the happiness of the blessed in heaven; they shall see God, from which vision proceed love, joy, and everlasting praises of the divine Majesty. (Witham)

**Ver. 6.** *These words are most faithful.* Here begins the conclusion and close of all these revelations. --- *The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his Angel to shew,* &c. and in the 16th verse it is said: *I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify:* from whence we may understand that Jesus, as to his person, is the same Lord God with the Father, though as man he is the *root* of the offspring of David, of the race of David, as the Messiah was to be. (Witham)

**Ver. 7.** *Behold I come quickly.* Man's life is short, and at his death he must give an account to God. All time is short, if compared with eternity. St. John (ver. 8) was again for casting himself at the feet of the Angel, though here it is not expressed whether it were to adore God, or whether it were by an inferior veneration to the Angel, often expressed by adoration. (Witham)

**Ver. 8-9.** This is the second time the saint wishes to adore the Angel, but not with the supreme worship of *latría*, as he knew the object of his worship was only an Angel, and of course a mere creature; but the Angel, through respect for St. John, still refuses the proffered honour, (see Chap. xix. 10.) and to shew the holy society that was hereafter to exist between Angels and men, who were to compose but one and the same family. (Bible de Vence)

**Ver. 10.** *Seal not the words;* as not designed to be kept sealed or secret, but to be delivered to the faithful for their instruction, that they may be prepared to suffer persecutions; that their faith, hope, and charity may be enlivened and increased by a firm expectation of their happiness in the next world, after short sufferings in this. (Witham)

**Ver. 11.** *He that hurteth*, (by living in sins against God, himself, and his neighbours) *let him hurt still*; i.e. he shall be permitted; *and he that is just, let him be justified still*, and increase in virtues by God's assistance. (Witham) --- It is not an exhortation or license to go on in sin, but an intimation that how far soever the wicked may proceed, their progress shall quickly end, and then they must expect to meet with proportionable punishments. (Challoner)

**Ver. 13.** *I am alpha and omega.* See Chap. i. 8. (Witham)

**Ver. 14.** *That they may have a right* or power to eat of the *tree of life*. A right grounded on the promises of God and his graces. (Witham)

**Ver. 15.** *Without* are *dogs*; meaning unbelievers, and whosever *loveth and maketh a lie*, i.e. all the wicked, who have not walked in the ways of truth. (Witham)

**Ver. 17.** *And the Spirit and the bride say: Come.* This is, the *Spirit* of God, who moves us to love and praise him; and the *bride*, i.e. the Church, the spouse of Christ, which earnestly desires to be happy in the enjoyment of God: and every one that heareth these divine promises, let him with all the affections of his soul, with his whole heart, say: *Come*. He that thirsteth after justice, the Author and Fountain of all justice, *let him come* and be filled *gratis* by the bounty and liberality of our merciful God. (Witham)

**Ver. 18-19.** *I, John, testify* and bear witness of all the truths contained in this revelation: *If any man shall add to these things*, he becomes guilty of sin, and makes himself liable to the punishments and *plagues* that are *written in this book*. (Witham)

**Ver. 20-21.** *He that giveth testimony of these things*, i.e. God, and Jesus Christ by an Angel, saith, *surely*, (or even so, or truly, these are certain truths) *I come quickly*, to reward the good and punish the evil. To which words St. John himself replieth with a zealous prayer and earnest desire, saying, *Amen*, let it be so. --- *Come, Lord Jesus*: come, and remain always in my soul by thy grace, and make me partaker of thy glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Witham) --- **Conclusion.** The Church in sighs and groans, and by the mouth of her children, solicits the coming of Jesus Christ, her divine Spouse. The fruit to be drawn from the perusal of this sacred book, is ardently to desire the kingdom of God, to sigh after the day of eternity, to feel the weight of the yoke of the present life, and the disgrace of our exile, and to live here below as strangers. Enkindle in me, O Lord, this desire; enable my poor soul to join with the beloved disciple in this prayer: *Come Lord Jesus*; that she may go and lose herself in Thee, who art her Centre, her God, her All.

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