

0295-0373 – Athanasius – Epistula festalis xxxix

The Festal Letters, and Their Index, Or Chronicon Athanasianum

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until Payni [x]iv, Coss. Valentinian and Valens. And in the following consulate of Valentinian and Victor, Payni xiv, i year, and in the following consulships of Valentinian [III] and Valens III Payni xiv, and in the following Consulships of Gratian and Probus, [and the next of Modestus and Arintheus], and another consulship of Valentinian [IV] and Valens IV, on Pachon viii he falls asleep (May 3, 373).

XIII. 18. Now in the aforesaid consulship of Lupicinus and Jovinus, Lucius being specially desirous to claim for himself the episcopate of the Arians a long time after he had left Alexandria, arrived in the aforesaid consulship, and entered the town secretly by night on the xxvi day of the month Thoth (Sept. 24, 367): and as it is said, abode in a certain small house keeping in hiding for that day. But next day he went to a house where his mother was staying; and his arrival being known at once all over the town, the whole people assembled and blamed his entry. And Duke Trajanus and the Prefect were extremely displeased at his irrational and bold arrival, and sent officials to cast him out of the town. So the officials came to Lucius, and considering all of them that the people were angry and very riotous against him they feared to bring him out of the house by themselves, lest he should be killed by the multitude. And they reported this to the judges. And presently the judges themselves, Duke Trajan, and the Prefect Tatianus [came] to the place with many soldiers, entered the house and brought out Lucius themselves at the vii hour of the day, on the xxvii day of Thoth. Now while Lucius was following the judges, and the whole people of the town after them, Christians and Pagans, and of divers religions, all alike with one breath, and with one mind, and of one accord, did not cease, from the house whence he was led, through the middle of the town, as far as the house of the Duke, from shouting, and hurling at him withal insults and criminal charges, and from crying, 'Let him be taken out of the town.' However, the Duke took him into his house, and he stayed with him for the remaining hours of the day, and the whole night, and on the following the xxviii of the same month, the Duke early in the morning, and taking him in charge as far as Nicopolis³⁸¹¹, handed him over to soldiers to be escorted from Egypt.

19. Now whereas Athanasius died on the viii of the month Pachon, the v day before he fell asleep, he ordained Peter, one of the ancient presbyters, Bishop, who carried on the Episcopate, following him in all things. After whom Timothy his B[rother] succeeded to the Episcopate for iv years. After him Theophilus from [being] deacon was ordained Bishop (385). The End.



B.—The Festal Letters, and Their Index,

Or Chronicon Athanasianum.

³⁸¹¹ A short distance east of Alexandria, see *Dict. Gr. and Rom. Geog.* s.v.

The latter document is from the hand, it would seem, of the original collector of the Easter Letters of Athanasius (yet see *infr.* note 6a). He gives, in a paragraph corresponding to each Easter in the episcopate of Athanasius, a summary of the calendar data for the year, a notice of the most important events, and especially particulars as to the Letter for the Easter in question, viz., Whether any peculiar circumstances attended its publication, and whether for some reason the ordinary Letter was omitted.

The variations of practice which had rendered the Paschal Feast a subject of controversy from very early times (see *Dict. Christ. Antiq.* Easter) had given rise to the custom of the announcement of Easter at a convenient interval beforehand by circular letters. In the third century the Bishops of Alexandria issued such letters (e.g. Dionysius in *Eus. H. E.* vii. 20), and at the Council of Nicæa, where the Easter question was dealt with (*ad Afros.* 2), the Alexandrian see was requested to undertake the duty of announcing the correct date to the principal foreign Churches as well as to its own suffragan sees. (This is doubted in the learned article Paschal Letters D.C.A. p. 1562, but the statement of Cyril. Alex. in his 'Prologus Paschalis' is express: cf. *Ideler* 2, 259. The only doubt is, whether the real reference is to *Sardica*, see *Index* xv. and *Ep.* 18.) This was probably due to the astronomical learning for which Alexandria was famous³⁸¹². At any rate we have fragments of the Easter letters of Dionysius and of Theophilus, and a collection of the Letters of Cyril³⁸¹³.

The Easter letters of Athanasius were, until 1842, only known to us by allusions in Jerome (*de V. illustr.* 87) and others, and by fragments in Cosmas Indicopleustes purporting to be taken from the 2nd, 5th, 6th, 22nd, 24th, 28th, 29th, 40th, and 45th. Cardinal Mai had also shortly before the discovery of the 'Corpus' unearthed a minute fragment of the 13th. But in 1842 Archdeacon Tattam brought home from the Monastery of the Theotokos in the desert of Skete a large number of Syriac mss., which for over a century European scholars had been vainly endeavouring to obtain. Among these, when deposited in the British Museum, Cureton discovered a large collection of the Festal Letters of Athanasius, with the 'Index,' thus realising the suspicion of Montfaucon (*Migne* xxvi.) that the lost treasure might be lurking in some Eastern monastery. Another consignment of mss. from the same source produced some further portions, which were likewise included in the translation revised for the present volume³⁸¹⁴.

(1) *Number of Festal Letters of Athanasius.*—This question, which is of first-rate importance for the chronology of the period, must be regarded as settled, at any rate until some discovery which

³⁸¹² So Leo Magnus (*Ep. ad Marcian. Imp.*) 'apud Ægyptios huius supputationis antiquitus tradita peritia.'

³⁸¹³ We trace differences of opinion in spite of the authority of the Alexandrian Pope in 'Index' xii, xv, xxi, and *Ep.* 18.

³⁸¹⁴ Further details in *Migne*, P.G. xxvi. 1339 *sqq.* and Preface (by Williams?) to Oxford Transl. of *Fest. Epp.* (Parker, 1854.)

shall revolutionise all existing data. The number 45, which was the maximum known to antiquity³⁸¹⁵, is confirmed by the Index, and by the fact that the citations from Cosmas (see above) tally with the order of the Letters in this Syriac version in every case where the letter is preserved entire, while Letter 39, preserved by a different writer, also tallies with the reference to it in the Index. It is therefore unassailably established on our existing evidence that the last Easter letter of Ath. was his '45th,' in other words that 45 is the *full or normal* number of his festal letters. This clinches the reckoning of the *Index* and *Hist. Aceph.* that he was bishop for 45 Easters (329–373 inclusive), i.e. for parts of 46 years (328–373 inclusive). Moreover it corroborates, and is rivetted firm by, the statement of Cyril. *Alex. Ep.* 1, that Athan. graced the see of Alexandria 'fully 46 years.' 'Il le dit en voulant faire son eloge: de sorte qu'il y a tout lieu de croire qu'il n'a point passé les 46 ans: car pour peu qu'il fust entré dans la 47^{me} année, S. Cyrille auroit dû naturellement luy donner 47 ans³⁸¹⁶.' So Tillemont (viii. 719), whose opinion is all the more valuable from the fact that he is unable to harmonise it with his date for the accession of Ath., and accordingly forgets, p. 720 (*sub. fin.*), what he has said on the previous page.

But we observe that many of the 45 Letters are represented in the 'corpus' by blanks. This is doubtless often the result of accidental loss. But the Index informs us that in several years, owing to his adversities, 'the Pope was unable to write.' This however may be fairly understood to refer to the usual public or circular letter. Often when unable to write this, he sent a few cordial lines to some friend (*Letter* 12) or to the clergy (17, 18) or people (29? see notes there) of Alexandria, in order that the true Easter might be kept (cf. the Arian blunder in 340, *Ind.* xii, with the note to Serapion *Letter* 12 from Rome). But occasionally the Index is either corrupt or mistaken, e.g. No. xiii, where the Pope is stated to have written no letter, while yet the 'Corpus' contains one, apparently entire and of the usual public kind. We may therefore still hope for letters or fragments for any of the 'missing' years.

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(2) The Festal Letters are fully worthy to rank with any extant writings of Athanasius. The same warmth, vigour, and simplicity pervades them as we find elsewhere in his writings, especially in such gems as the letter to Dracontius (*Ep.* 49). Their interest, however (apart from chronology), is mainly personal and practical. Naturally the use and abuse of Fast and Festival occupy a prominent place throughout. Repeatedly he insists on the joyfulness of Christian feasts, and on the fact that they are typical of, and intended to colour, the whole period of the Christian's life. We gather from *Ep.* 12 that Lent was kept less strictly in Egypt than in some other Christian countries. He insists not only upon fasting, but upon purity and charity, especially toward the poor (*Ep.* 1. 11, cf. *Ep.* 47. 4, &c.). We trace the same ready command of Scripture, the same grave humour in the unexpected turn given to some familiar text (*Ep.* 39) as we are used to in Athanasius. The Eucharist

³⁸¹⁵ The very late Arabic Life of Ath. alone gives 47 (Migne xxv. p. ccli.), a statement which we may safely ignore in view of the general character of the document which is 'crowded with incredible trivialities and follies' (Montf.), outbidding by far the 'unparalleled rubbish' (id.) of the worst of the Greek biographies (see Migne xxv. p. liv. sq.).

³⁸¹⁶ The italics are ours. Cf. Rufin. *H. E.* ii. 3, 'xlvi anno sacerdotii sui.'

is a feeding upon the Word (4. 3), and to be prepared for by amendment of life, repentance, and confession of sin (i.e. to God, *Ep.* 7. 10). Of special importance is the Canon of Holy Scripture in *Ep.* 39, on which see Prolegg. ch. iv § 4.

It should be observed that the interval before Easter at which notice was given varied greatly. Some letters (e.g. 1, 2, 20) by a natural figure of speech, refer to the Feast as actually come; but others (17, 18) were certainly written as early as the preceding Easter. Letter 4 was written not long before Lent, but was (§ 1) unusually late. The statement of Cassian referred to below (note to *Ep.* 17) is therefore incorrect at any rate for our period.

(3) *The Index to the Festal Letters*.—This chronicle, so constantly referred to throughout this volume, is of uncertain date, but probably (upon internal evidence) only ‘somewhat later’ (Hefele, *E. Tr.* vol. ii. p. 50) than Athanasius himself. Its special value is in the points where it agrees with the *Hist. Aceph.* (*supr.* Prolegg. ch. v.), where we recognise the accredited reckoning of the Alexandrian Church as represented by Cyril and Proterius (see Tillem. *ubi supr.*). The writer undoubtedly makes occasional slips (cf. *Index* iii. with Letter iv. and p. 512, note 1, *Index* xiii. with Letter³⁸¹⁷ xiii.!), and the text would be a miracle if it had come down to us uncorrupt (see notes *passim*): but on the main dates he is consistent with himself, with the *Chron. Aceph.* and (so far as they come in contact) with the notices of the Alexandrian bishops above mentioned.

The writer’s method, however, must be attended to if we are to avoid a wrong impression as to his accuracy. *Firstly*, his year is not the Julian but the Egyptian year (*infr.* Table C) from Aug. 29 to Aug. 28. Each year is designated by the *new* consuls who come into office in the fifth month. *Secondly*, in each year he takes a leading event or events, round which he groups antecedent or consequent facts, which often belong to other years. Two or three examples will make this clear. (α) Year Aug. 30, 335–Aug. 28, 336: leading event, exile of Athanasius (he reaches CP. Oct. 30, 335, leaves for Gaul [Feb. 7], both in the same Egyptian year). Antecedent: His departure for Tyre July 11, 335, at end of *previous Egyptian Year*. (β) The ‘eventful’ year Aug. 337–Aug. 338: leading event, triumphant return of Athanasius from Gaul, Oct. 21, 337. Antecedent: death of Constantine on previous 22nd of May (i.e. 337³⁸¹⁸). (γ) Year 342–3: leading event, Council of Sardica (summons issued, at any rate, before end of Aug. 343). Consequent events: temporary collapse of Arian party and recantation of Ursacius and Valens (344–347? Further examples in Gwatkin, *Studies*, p. 105). Bearing this in mind, the discriminating student will derive most important help from the study of the *Index*: when its data agree with those derived from other good sources, they must be allowed first-rate authority. This is the principle followed in the Prolegomena (ch. v.) and throughout this volume. On the main points in dispute, as strewn above, we have to reckon with a compact uniform chronological system, checked and counter-checked by careful calculations (*Hist. Aceph.*), and

³⁸¹⁷ Some phenomena might suggest (Hefele, ii. 88, note) that the *Index* was originally prefixed to another collection of the letters, and was copied by a collector or transcriber of our present corpus; cf. *Index* xiii., note 17^b, and p. 527, note 1.

³⁸¹⁸ Misunderstood by Hefele, vol. ii. p. 88 (*E. Tra.*).

transmitted by two independent channels; in agreement, moreover, as concerns the prior and posterior limits, with the reckoning adopted by the successors of Athanasius in the see.

N.B.—The *translation* of the Index and Festal Letters is revised by Miss Payne Smith from that contained in the Oxford ‘Library of the Fathers.’ A German translation by Larsow was published at Berlin 1852. The Latin Version (from an Italian translation) of Card. Mai is in Migne, xxvi. 1351 sqq.

The following Tables bear specially on the Festal Index.

Table C. *The Egyptian Year.*

After the final settlement of Egypt by Augustus as a province of the Roman Empire, the use of the Julian form of computation was established in Alexandria, the first day of the new Calendar being fixed to the 28th of August, the 1st of Thot of the year in which the innovation took place; from which period, six, instead of five, supplementary days were added at the end of every fourth year; so that the form of the Alexandrian year was as follows. *The months from Phamenoth 5 (Mar. 1) onwards are unaffected by leap-year.*

Thot	29 August	Pharmuthi	27 March
Paophi	28 September	Pachon	26 April
Athyr	28 October	Paoni (Payni)	26 May
Choiak	27 November	Epiphi	25 June
Tybi	27 December	Mesori	25 July
Mechir	26 January	Epagomena	24 August
Phamenoth	25 February		

N.B.—In leap-years, the *Diocletian* year (see p. 503, note 4) began on the previous Aug. 30, which was accordingly the First of Thot, owing to the additional ‘epagomenon’ which preceded it. Accordingly all the months *to Phamenoth inclusive* begin a day late. Then, the Julian intercalary day coming in as Feb. 29, Pharmuthi and the succeeding months begin as shewn above. (See Ideler, vol. I, pp. 161, 164, also 140, 142.)

Table D. *Of the Chronological Information Given in the Index to the Paschal Letters.*



N.B.—The Year of our Lord, the Golden Numbers, and Dominical Letter, and the date of Easter according to the Modern Reckoning, are added. The age of the Moon on Easter-day is apparently given from observations or reckoned by some lost system (see *Index* x. xxii.); in about one case out of three it varies from the modern reckoning, perhaps once or twice from corruption of text. The Epact is a day too little for 342, 344, 361, 362, 363 (see Galle in Larsow; . *F.B.* 48, *sqq.*).

Easter Day.

Numbr of Letter.	Year of Diocl.	Year of our Lord.	Ep̄in Calendar.	R̄m̄ Calendar.	M̄m̄ Reckon-ing.	Day of Lunar Month.	Epact (age of Moon on Mar. 22).	Sunday Letter and Concur- rentes.	Indict ^a .	Git̄n Num- bers.
...	44	328	19	XVII	14 April	18	25	1 F	1	6
			Pharm. Kal. Mai							
I	45	329	11	VIII	6 April	22	6	2 E	2	7
			Pharm. Id. April							
II	46	330	24	XIII	19 April	15	17	3 D	3	8
			Pharm. Kal. Mai							
III	47	331	16	III	11 April	18	28	4 C	4	9
			Pharm. Id. April							
IV	48	332	7	IV	2 April	20	9	6 A	5	10
			Pharm. Non. April							
V	49	333	20	XVI	³⁸¹⁹ 15 April	15	20	7 G	6	11
			Pharm. I Kal. Mai							
VI	50	334	12	VII	7 April	17	1	1 F	7	12
			Pharm. Id. April							
VII	51	335	4	III	30 March	20	12	2 E	8	13
			Pharm. Kal. April							
VIII	52	336	23	XIV	18 April	20	23	4 C	9	14
			Pharm. Kal. Mai							
IX	53	337	8	III	3 April	16	4	5 B	10	15
			Pharm. Non. April							
X	54	338	30	VII	26 March	18½	15	6 A	11	16
			Pham th . Kal. April							
XI	55	339	20	XVII	15 April	20	26	7 G	12	17
			Pharm. Kal. Mai							
XII	56	340	4	III	30 March	15	7	2 E	13	18
			Pharm. Kal. April							

³⁸¹⁹ According to the usual Antegregorian rule, Easter would fall on April 22.

XIII	57	341	24	XIII	19 April	16	18	3 D	14	19
					Pharm. Kal. Mai					
XIV	58	342	16	III	11 April	16	29	4 C	15	1
					Pharm. Id. April					
XV	59	343	1	VI	27 March	15	11	5 B	1	2
					Pharm. Kal. April					
XVI	60	344	20	XVII	15 April	19	21	7 G	2	3
					Pharm. Kal. Mai					
XVII	61	345	12	VII	7 April	19	3	1 F	3	4
					Pharm. Id. April					
XVIII	62	346	4	III	³⁸²⁰ 30 March	21	14	2 E	4	5
					Pharm. Kal. April					
XIX	63	347	17	Id.	12 April	15	25	3 D	5	6
					Pharm. Id. April					
XX	64	348	8	III	3 April	18	6	5 B	6	7
					Pharm. Non. April					
XXI	65	349	30	VII	³⁸²¹ 26 March	19	17	6 A	7	8
					Pham th . Kal. April					
XXII	66	350	13	VI	8 April	19	28	7 G	8	9
					Pharm. Id. April					
XXIII	67	351	5	Id.	31 March	18	9	1 F	9	10
					Pharm. Kal. April					
XXIV	68	352	24	XIII	19 April	18	20	3 D	10	11
					Pharm. Kal. Mai					
XXV	69	353	16	III	11 April	21	1	4 C	11	12
					Pharm. Id April					

³⁸²⁰ According to the usual rule, Easter would fall on March 23; see *Letter* 18, note 3.

³⁸²¹ According to rule, Easter would fall on April 23, which perhaps was the day really observed, as it agrees with the age of the moon; but see note on *Index* No. xxi.

XXI	70	354	1	VI	27 March	17	12	5 B	12	13
				Pharm. Kal.						
				April						
XXI	71	355	21	XVI	16 April	18	23	6 A	13	14
				Pharm. Kal. Mai						
XXI	72	356	12	VII	7 April	17	4	1 F	14	15
				Pharm. Id. April						
XXI	73	357	27	X	23 March	17	15	2 E	15	16
				Pham th . Kal.						
				April						
XXX	74	358	17	Pid	12 April	17	26	3 D	1	17
				Pharm. Id. April						
XXX	75	359	9	Pid.	4 April	20	7	4 C	2	18
				Pharm. Non.						
				April						
XXX	76	360	28	IX	23 April	21	18	6 A	3	19
				Pharm. Kal. Mai						
XXX	77	361	13	VI	8 April	17	29	7 G	4	1
				Pharm. Id. April						
XXX	78	362	5	Pid.	31 March	25	³⁸²² 10	1 F	5	2
				Pharm. Kal.						
				April						
XXX	79	363	25	XII	20 April	20	21	2 E	6	3
				Pharm. Kal. Mai						
XXXI	80	364	9	Pid.	4 April	16	3	4 C	7	4
				Pharm. Non.						
				April						
XXXI	81	365	1	VI	27 March	19	14	5 B	8	5
				Pharm. Kal.						
				April						
XXXI	82	366	21	XVI	16 April	20	25	6 A	9	6
				Pharm. Kal. Mai						
XXXI	83	367	6	Kal.	1 April	16	6	7 G	10	7
				Pharm. April						

³⁸²² Read Moon 20, Epect 11.

XL	84	368	25	XII	20 April	16	17	2 E	11	8
					Pharm. Kal. Mai					
XLI	85	369	17	Πιδ.	12 April	15	28	3 D	12	9
					Pharm. Id. April					
XLII	86	370	2	V	28 March	15	9	4 C	13	10
					Pharm. Kal.					
					April					
XLIII	87	371	22	XV	17 April	16	20	5 B	14	11
					Pharm. Kal. Mai					
XLIV	88	372	13	VI	8 April	19	1	7 G	15	12
					Pharm. Id. April					
XLV	89	373	5	Πιδ.	31 March	21	12	1 F	1	13
					Pharm. Kal.					
					April					



Index.

An Index of the months of each year, and of the days, and of the Indictions, and of the Consulates, and of the Governors in Alexandria, and of all the Epacts, and of those [days] which are named ‘of the Gods³⁸²³,’ and the reason [any Letter] was not sent, and the returns from exile³⁸²⁴—from the Festal Letters of Pope Athanasius.

The Festal Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, which he sent year by year, to the several cities and all the provinces subject to him; that is, from Pentapolis, and on to Libya, Ammoniaca, the greater and the lesser Oasis, Egypt, and Augustamnica, with the Heptanomis of³⁸²⁵ the upper and middle Thebais; [commencing] from the 44th³⁸²⁶ year of the Diocletian Era, in which the Paschal Festival was on xvi³⁸²⁷ Pharmuthi; xviii Kal. Mai; xviii Moon; when Alexander, his predecessor, having departed this life on xxii Pharmuthi³⁸²⁸, he [Athanasius] succeeded him after the

³⁸²³ The ‘Gods’ correspond to the Concurrentes,’ i.e. to the days of the week upon which Mar. 24 occurs in the year in question. (See Table, and Ideler, 2. 261), and so to the ‘Sunday letters,’ which follow the ‘gods’ in inverse order, ‘a’ corresponding to years when there were 6 ‘gods,’ b to 5, &c., f to 1, g to 7.

³⁸²⁴ The meaning of these words is doubtful. Larslow renders them ‘the answers from abroad.’

³⁸²⁵ Read ‘and.’

³⁸²⁶ i.e. the year beginning Aug. 30, 327 (328 being leap-year). The ‘Diocletian’ era, or era ‘of the martyrs,’ was that used by the Egyptian Christians. It is incorrectly described in D.C.A. s.v. Era; see Ideler, *ut supr.*

³⁸²⁷ Read xix (April 14). The corruption is easy in Syriac.

³⁸²⁸ April 17.

Paschal festival on xiv Pauni, Indict. i, Januarius and Justus being Consuls, the governor Zenius of Italy being the Præfect of Egypt, Epact xxv; Gods, i.

I. (Aug. 29, 328, to Aug. 28, a.d. 329.) In this year, Easter-day was on xi Pharmuthi; viii. Id. Ap.; xxii Moon; Coss. Constantinus Aug. viii, Constantinus Cæs. IV; the same governor Zenius being Præfect of Egypt; Indict. ii; Epact vi; Gods, ii. This was the first Letter he [Athanasius] sent; for he was ordained Bishop in the preceding year after the Paschal feast, Alexander, as is known, having despatched one for that year, before he was released from life. This was in the 45th of the Diocletian era.

II. (329–330.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxiv Pharmuthi; xiii Kal. Mai; xv Moon; Coss. Gallicianus, Symmachus; the governor Magninianus the Cappadocian being Præfect of Egypt; Indict. iii; Epact xvii; Gods, iii. In this year he went through the Thebais.

III. (330–331.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvi Pharmuthi; xviii Moon; iii Id. Ap.; Coss. Annius Bassus, Ablavius; the governor Hyginus³⁸²⁹ of Italy, Præfect of Egypt; Epact xxviii; Indict. iv. He sent this Letter while journeying on his return from the Imperial Court. For in this year he went to the Imperial Court to the Emperor Constantine the Great, having been summoned before him, on account of an accusation his enemies made, that he had been appointed when too young. He appeared, was thought worthy of favour and honour, and returned³⁸³⁰ when the fast was half finished.

IV. (331–332.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvii³⁸³¹ Pharmuthi; xx Moon; iv Non. Apr.; Epact ix; Gods, vi; Coss. Pacatianus, Hilarianus; the same governor Hyginus, Præfect of Egypt; Indict. v. In this year he went through Pentapolis, and was in Ammoniaca.

V. (332–333.) In this year, Easter-day was on xx Pharmuthi; xv Moon; xvii Kal. Mai; Epact xx; Gods, vii; Coss. Dalmatius, Zenophilus; the governor Paternus³⁸³², Præfect of Egypt; Indict. vi.

VI. (333–334.) In this year, Easter-day was on xii Pharmuthi; xvii Moon; vii Id. Apr.; Indict. vii; Epact i; Gods, i; Coss. Optatus, Paulinus; the same governor Paternus³⁸³³ Præfect of Egypt. In this year he went through the lower country. In it he was summoned to a Synod, his enemies having previously devised mischief against him in Cæsarea of Palestine; but becoming aware of the conspiracy, he excused himself from attending.

VII. (334–335.) In this year, Easter-day was on xiv³⁸³⁴ Pharmuthi; xx Moon; iii Kal. Ap.; Indict. viii; Epact xii; Gods, ii; Coss. Constantius³⁸³⁵, Albinus; the same governor Paternus, Præfect of Egypt.

³⁸²⁹ The heading to *Ep. 3* gives Florentius.

³⁸³⁰ This ought to have been placed under iv; but see p. 512, note 7.

³⁸³¹ Read vii.

³⁸³² Vid. *Ep. Fest. v. n. 2*.

³⁸³³ The headings of Letters 6, 7, give Philagrius.

³⁸³⁴ Read iv, as below, No. xii.

³⁸³⁵ i.e. Julius C.; the Syr. has Constantinus, by an error.

VIII. (335–336.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxiii Pharmuthi, xx Moon; xiv Kal. Mai; Indict. ix; Epact xxiii; Gods, iv; Coss. Nepotianus, Facundus; the governor Philagrius, the Cappadocian, Præfect of Egypt. In this year he went to that Synod of his enemies which was assembled at Tyre. Now he journeyed from this place on xvii Epiphi³⁸³⁶, but when a discovery was made of the plot against him, he removed thence and fled in an open boat to Constantinople. Arriving there on ii Athyr³⁸³⁷, after eight days he presented himself before the Emperor Constantine, and spoke plainly. But his enemies, by various secret devices, influenced the Emperor, who suddenly condemned him to exile, and he set out on the tenth of Athyr³⁸³⁸ to Gaul, to Constans Cæsar, the son of Augustus. On this account he wrote no Festal Letter.

IX. (336–7.) In this year, Easter-day was on viii Pharmuthi; xvi Moon; iv³⁸³⁹ Non. Ap.; Indict. x; Epact iv; Gods, v; Coss. Felicianus, Titianus; the governor Philagrius, the Cappadocian, Præfect of Egypt. He was in Treviri of Gaul, and on this account was unable to write a Festal Letter.

X. (337–8.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxx Phamenoth; vii Kal. Ap.; xix³⁸⁴⁰ Moon, Indict. xi; Epact xv; Gods, vi; Coss. Ursus, Polemius; the governor Theodorus³⁸⁴¹, of Heliopolis, Præfect of Egypt. In this year, Constantine having died on xxvii Pachon³⁸⁴², Athanasius, now liberated, returned from Gaul triumphantly on xxvii³⁸⁴³ Athyr. In this year, too, there were many events. Antony, the great leader, came to Alexandria, and though he remained there only two days, shewed himself wonderful in many things, and healed many. He went away on the third of Messori.³⁸⁴⁴

XI. (338–9.) In this year, Easter-day was on xx Pharmuthi; xx Moon; xvii Kal. Mai; Epact xxvi; Gods, vii; Indict. xii; Coss. Constantius II, Constans I³⁸⁴⁵; the governor Philagrius, the Cappadocian, Præfect of Egypt. In this year, again, there were many tumults. On the xxii Phamenoth³⁸⁴⁶ he was pursued in the night, and the next day he fled from the Church of Theonas, after he had baptized many. Then, four days after, Gregorius the Cappadocian entered the city as Bishop.

XII. (339–340.) In this year, Easter-day was on xiv³⁸⁴⁷ Pharmuthi; xv Moon; iii Kal. Ap.; Epact vii; Gods, ii; Indict. xiii; Coss. Acyndinus, Proclus; the same governor Philagrius, Præfect of Egypt.

³⁸³⁶ July 11, 335.

³⁸³⁷ Oct. 30, 335.

³⁸³⁸ Read 'Mechir,' Feb. 5, 336 (Gwatkin, p. 137, the correction is due to Sievers).

³⁸³⁹ Read iii.

³⁸⁴⁰ 'xviii½,' heading of *Letter* 10.

³⁸⁴¹ Superseded by Philagrius (see heading, and Prolegg. ch. ii. §6 (1) note).

³⁸⁴² May 22, 337.

³⁸⁴³ Nov. 23, 337.

³⁸⁴⁴ July 27, 338, *supr.* p. 214.

³⁸⁴⁵ The Syriac has erroneously Constantius I., Constans II.

³⁸⁴⁶ Mar. 18, 339.

³⁸⁴⁷ Read iv. as above, No. vii.

Gregorius continued his acts of violence, and therefore [Ath.] wrote no Festal Letter. The Arians proclaimed [Easter] on xxvii Phamenoth, and were much ridiculed on account of this error. Then altering it in the middle of the fast, they kept it with us on iv³⁸⁴⁸ Pharmuthi, as above. He [Athanasius] gave notice of it to the presbyters of Alexandria in a short note, not being able to send a letter as usual, on account of his flight and the treachery.

XIII. (340–341.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxiv Pharmuthi; xvi Moon; xiii. Kal. Mai; Epact xviii; Gods, iii; Indict. xiv; Coss. Marcellinus, Probinus; the governor Longinus, of Nicæa, Præfect of Egypt. Augustamnica was separated.³⁸⁴⁹ On account of Gregorius continuing in the city, and exercising violence, although this illness commenced, the Pope did not write a Festal Letter even this time³⁸⁵⁰.

XIV. (341–2.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvi Pharmuthi; xx³⁸⁵¹ Moon; iii Id. Ap.; Epact xxix; Gods, iv; Indict. xv; Coss. Constantius III, Constans II; the governor Longinus of Nicæa, Præfect of Egypt. Because Gregorius was in the city, [though] severely ill, the Pope was unable to send [any Letter].

XV. (342–3.) In this year, Easter-day was on i Pharmuthi; xv Moon; vi Kal. Ap.; Epact xi; Gods, v; Indict. i; Coss. Placidus, Romulus; the same governor Longinus, of Nicæa, Præfect of Egypt. In this year the Synod of Sardica was held³⁸⁵²; and when the Arians had arrived, they returned to Philippopolis, for Philagrius gave them this advice there. In truth, they were blamed everywhere, and were even anathematised by the Church of Rome, and having written a recantation to Pope Athanasius, Ursacius and Valens were put to shame. There was an agreement made at Sardica respecting Easter, and a decree was issued to be binding for fifty years, which the Romans and Alexandrians everywhere announced in the usual manner. Again he [Athanasius] wrote a Festal Letter.

XVI. (343–4.) In this year, Easter-day was on xx Pharmuthi; xix Moon; xvii Kal. Mai; Epact xxi; Gods, vi[i], Coss. Leontius, Sallustius; the governor Palladius, of Italy, Præfect of Egypt; Indict. ii. Being at Naissus on his return from the Synod, he there celebrated Easter³⁸⁵³. Of this Easter-day he gave notice in few words to the presbyters of Alexandria, but he was unable to do so to the country.

XVII. (344–5.) In this year, Easter-day was on xii Pharmuthi; xviii Moon; vii. Id. Ap.; Epact ii; Gods, i; Indict. iii; Coss. Amantius, Albinus; the governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt.

³⁸⁴⁸ Read iv. as above, No. vii.

³⁸⁴⁹ i.e. ‘made a separate province.’ This had been known (Gothofr. in *Cod. Th.* xii. i. 34) to fall between 325 and 342; and Augustamnica is not mentioned as a province in 338–9, *supr.* p. 101.

³⁸⁵⁰ This and the similar notice at the end of xiv are incorrect. The Index may have been written for a collection which lacked Letters 13, 14.

³⁸⁵¹ The Syriac has xvi, which is an error.

³⁸⁵² The summons for the Council was issued ‘in this year,’ i.e. before August, 343, but the proceedings fall in the autumn and winter, i.e. in the next Egyptian year, and the sequel (about Ursac. and Valens) refers to what took place about 347.

³⁸⁵³ Easter, i.e. Apr. 15, 344, at Nish, or Nissa, in Servia.

Having travelled to Aquileia, he kept Easter there. Of this Easter-day, he gave notice in few words to the presbyters of Alexandria, but not to the country.

XVIII. (345–6.) In this year, Easter-day was on iv Pharmuthi; xxi³⁸⁵⁴ Moon; iii Kal. Ap.; Epact xiv; Gods, ii; Indict. iv; Coss. Constantius³⁸⁵⁵ Aug. IV, Constans Aug. III; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. Gregorius having died on the second of Epiphi³⁸⁵⁶, he returned from Rome and Italy, and entered the city and the Church. Moreover he was thought worthy of a grand reception, for on the xxiv Paophi³⁸⁵⁷, the people and all those in authority met him a hundred miles distant, and he continued in honour. He had already sent the Festal Letter for this year, in few words, to the presbyters.

XIX. (346–7.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvii Pharmuthi xv. Moon; Prid. Id. Apr.; Epact xxv; Gods, iii; Indict. v; Coss. Rufinus, Eusebius; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. He wrote this Letter while residing here in Alexandria, giving notice of some things which he had not been able to do before.

XX. (347–8.) In this year, Easter-day was on vii Pharmuthi; xviii Moon; iii Non. Ap.; Epact vi; Gods, v³⁸⁵⁸ Indict. vi; Coss. Philippus, Salia; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. This Letter also he sent while residing in Alexandria.

XXI. (348–9.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxx Phamenoth;...xix Moon,...vii Kal. Ap.; Epact xvii; Gods, vi; Indict. vii. But because the Romans refused, for they said they held a tradition from the Apostle Peter not to pass the twenty-sixth day of Pharmuthi, nor..the thirtieth of Phamenoth, xxi Moon,.....³⁸⁵⁹, vii Kal. Ap.; Coss. Limenius, Catullinus; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. He sent this also while residing in Alexandria.

XXII. (349–50.) In this year, Easter-day was on xiii Pharmuthi; xix Moon, the second hour; vi Id. Ap.; Epact xxviii; Gods, vii; Indict. viii; Coss. Sergius, Nigrianus; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. In this year, Constans was slain by Magnentius, and Constantius held the empire alone; then he wrote to the Pope [Athanasius], telling him to fear nothing because of the death of Constans, but to confide in him as he had done in Constans while living.

XXIII. (350–1.) In this year, Easter day was on v Pharmuthi; Moon xviii; Prid. Kal. Ap.; Epact ix; Gods, i; Indict. ix; the Consulship after that of Sergius and Nigrianus; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, again Præfect of Egypt.

³⁸⁵⁴ The Syriac in this place has xxiv. But we find xxi in the heading to the Letter itself.

³⁸⁵⁵ The Syriac has Constantinus.

³⁸⁵⁶ June 26 of the previous year (345).

³⁸⁵⁷ Oct. 21, 346.

³⁸⁵⁸ Text 'iv.'

³⁸⁵⁹ The text is imperfect and apparently very corrupt; 'xix Moon' fits Pharm. 28 (Apr. 23), which was the true Easter, and probably observed at Alexandria, while the Romans, refusing to go beyond Apr. 21, kept Easter on Pham. 30 (Mar. 26), on which day the Moon was really xxi days old. See Table D, and *Letter* 18. *Letter* 21 is lost.

XXIV. (351–2.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxiv Pharmuthi; xviii Moon; xiii Kal. Mai, Epact xx; Gods, iii; Indict. x, Coss. Constantius Aug. V, Constantius Cæsar I; the same governor Nestorius of Gaza, Præfect of Egypt. Gallus was proclaimed Cæsar³⁸⁶⁰, and his name changed into Constantius.

XXV. (352–3.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvi Pharmuthi; xxi Moon; iii Id. Ap.; Epact i; Gods, iv; Indict. xi; Coss. Constantius Aug. VI, Constantius Cæsar II; the governor Sebastianus of Thrace, præfect of Egypt. In this year, Serapion³⁸⁶¹, Bishop of Thmuis, and Triadelphus of Nicion, and the presbyters Petrus and Astricius, with others, were sent to the emperor Constantius, through fear of mischief from the Arians. They returned, having effected nothing. In this year, Montanus, Silentarius of the Palace, [was sent]...against [the]³⁸⁶² Bishop, but, a tumult having been excited, he retired, having failed to effect anything.

XXVI. (353–4.) In this year, Easter-day was on i³⁸⁶³ Pharmuthi; xvii Moon; vi Kal. Ap.; Epact xii; Gods, v; Indict. xii; Coss. Constantius Aug. VII, Constantius Cæsar III.; the same governor Sebastianus of Thrace, Præfect of Egypt.

XXVII. (354–5.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxi Pharmuthi; xviii Moon; xvi Kal. Mai; Epact xxiii; Gods, vi; Indict. xiii; Coss. Arbetion, Lollianus; the governor Maximus the Elder of Nicæa, Prefect of Egypt. In this year, Diogenes, the Secretary of the Emperor, entered with the design of seizing the Bishop. But he, too, having raged in vain, went away quietly.

XXVIII. (355–6.) In this year, Easter-day was on xii Pharmuthi; xvii Moon; vii Id. Ap.; Epact iv; Gods, i; Indict. xiv, Coss. Constantius Aug. VIII, Julianus Cæsar I; the same governor Maximus the Elder of Nicæa, Præfect of Egypt, who was succeeded by Cataphronius of Byblus. In this year, Syrianus Dux, having excited a tumult in the Church on the thirteenth of Mechir, on the fourteenth³⁸⁶⁴ at night entered Theonas with his soldiers; but he was unable to capture [Athanasius], for he escaped in a miraculous manner.

XXIX (356–7.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxvii Phamenoth; xvii Moon; x Kal. Ap., Epact xv; Gods, ii; Indict. xv; Coss. Constantius Aug. IX, Julianus Cæsar II; the same governor Cataphronius, of Byblus, Præfect of Egypt, to whom succeeded Parnassius. Then Georgius entered on the thirtieth of Mechir, and acted with excessive violence. But Athanasius, the Bishop, had fled, and was sought for in the city with much oppression, many being in danger on this account. Therefore no Festal Letter was written³⁸⁶⁵.

XXX. (357–8.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvii Pharmuthi; Prid. Id. Ap.; xvii Moon; Epact xxvi; Gods, iii; Indict. i; Coss. Tatianus, Cerealis; the governor Parius of Corinth, Præfect of Egypt.

³⁸⁶⁰ In the previous year, Mar. 15, 351.

³⁸⁶¹ Cf. *Letters* 49, 54.

³⁸⁶² Text corrupt.

³⁸⁶³ Text 'iv.'

³⁸⁶⁴ Feb. 8–9, 356.

³⁸⁶⁵ But see *Letter 29*, note 1.

Athanasius, the Bishop, lay concealed in the city of Alexandria. But Georgius left on the fifth of Paophi³⁸⁶⁶ being driven away by the multitude. On this account, neither this year was the Pope able to send a Festal Letter.

XXXI. (358–9.) In this year, Easter-day was on ix³⁸⁶⁷ Pharmuthi; Prid. Non. Ap.; xx Moon; Epact vii; Gods, iv; Indict. ii; Coss. Eusebius, Hypatius; the same governor Parius, who was succeeded by Italicianus of Italy for three months; after him Faustinus, of Chalcedon. Neither this year did the Pope write [any Letter].

XXXII. (359–60.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxviii Pharmuthi; ix Kal. Mai; xxi Moon; Epact xviii; Gods, vi; Indict. iii; Coss. Constantius Aug. X, Julianus Cæsar III; the governor Faustinus, of Chalcedon, Præfect of Egypt. This Præfect and Artemius Dux, having entered a private house and a small cell, in search of Athanasius the Bishop, bitterly tortured Eudæmonis, a perpetual virgin. On this account no [Letter] was written this year.

XXXIII. (360–1.) In this year, Easter-day was on xiii Pharmuthi, vi Id. Ap.; xvii Moon; Epact xxix; Gods, vii; Indict. iv; Coss. Taurus, Florentius; the same governor Faustinus³⁸⁶⁸, Præfect of Egypt, who was succeeded by Gerontius the Armenian. He was unable to send [a Letter]. In this year, Constantius died³⁸⁶⁹, and Julianus holding the empire alone, there was a cessation of the persecution against the Orthodox. For commands were issued everywhere from the emperor Julianus, that the Orthodox ecclesiastics who had been persecuted in the time of Constantius should be let alone.

XXXIV. (361–2.) In this year, Easter-day was on v³⁸⁷⁰ Pharmuthi; Prid. Kal. Ap.; xxv Moon; Epact x; Gods, i; Indict. v; Coss. Mamertinus, Nevitta; the same governor Gerontius, who was succeeded by Olympus of Tarsus. In this year, in Mechir, Athanasius the Bishop returned to the Church, after his flight, by the command of Julianus Augustus, who pardoned all the Bishops and Clergy in exile, as was before said. This year, then, he wrote [a Letter].

XXXV. (362–3.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxv Pharmuthi; xii Kal. Mai; xx Moon; Epact xxi; Gods, ii; Indict. vi; Coss. Julianus Augustus IV, Sallustius; the same governor Olympus, Præfect of Egypt. Pythiodorus Trico of Thebes, a Philosopher, brought a decree of Julianus on the twenty-seventh of Paophi, and set it in action against the Bishop first, and uttered many threats. So he [Athanasius] left the city at once, and went up to the Thebais. And when after eight months Julianus died, and his death was announced, Athanasius returned secretly by night to Alexandria. Then on the eighth of Thoth, he embarked³⁸⁷¹ at the Eastern Hierapolis, and met the emperor Jovian, by

³⁸⁶⁶ Oct. 2, 358.

³⁸⁶⁷ Text 'xix.'

³⁸⁶⁸ Or Pausanias. This name is written vaguely in the Syriac, varying in all the three places in which it occurs.

³⁸⁶⁹ Nov. 23, 361.

³⁸⁷⁰ Text 'xv.'

³⁸⁷¹ Prolegg. ch. v. §3, h.

whom he was dismissed with honour. He sent this festal Letter to all the country, while being driven by persecution from Memphis to the Thebais, and it was delivered as usual.

XXXVI. (363–4.) In this year, Easter-day was on ix Pharmuthi; Prid. Non. Ap.; xvi Moon; Epact iii; Gods, iv; Indict. vii; Coss. Jovianus Aug., Varronianus; the governor Aerius, of Damascus, Præfect; who was succeeded by Maximus of Rapheotis, and he again by Flavianus the Illyrian. In this year, the Pope returned to Alexandria and the Church on the twenty-fifth of Mechir. He sent the Festal Letter, according to custom, from Antioch to all the Bishops in all the province.

XXXVII. (364–5.) In this year, Easter-day was on i Pharmuthi; v[i] Kal. Ap.; xix Moon; Epact xiv; Gods, v; Indict. viii; Coss. Valentinianus Aug. I, Valens Aug.; the same Flavianus, the Illyrian, being governor. We received the Cæsareum; but again, the Pope being persecuted³⁸⁷² with accusations, withdrew³⁸⁷³ to the garden of the new river. But a few days³⁸⁷⁴ after, Barasides, the notary, came to him with the Præfect and obtained an entrance for him into the Church. Then, an earthquake happening on the twenty-seventh of Epiphi³⁸⁷⁵, the sea returned from the East, and destroyed many persons, and much damage was caused.

XXXVIII. (365–6.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxi Pharmuthi; xvi Kal. Mai; xx Moon; Epact xxv; Gods, vi; Indict. ix; in the first year of the Consulship of Gratianus, the son of Augustus, and Daglaiphus; the same governor Flavianus, Præfect. On the twenty-seventh of Epiphi, the heathen made an attack, and the Cæsareum was burnt and consequently many of the citizens suffered great distress, while the authors of the calamity were condemned and exiled. After this, Proclianus the Macedonian, became chief.

XXXIX. (366–7.) In this year, Easter-day was on vi³⁸⁷⁶ Pharmuthi; Kal. Ap.; xvi Moon; Epact vi; Gods, vii; Indict. x; Coss. Lupicinus, Jovinus; the same Proclianus being governor, who was succeeded by Tatianus of Lycia. In this year, when Lucius had attempted an entrance on the twenty-sixth of Thoth³⁸⁷⁷, and lay concealed by night in a house on the side of the enclosure of the Church; and when Tatianus the Præfect and Trajanus Dux brought him out, he left the city, and was rescued in a wonderful manner, while the multitude sought to kill him. In this year he [Ath.] wrote, forming a Canon of the Holy Scriptures.

XL. (367–8.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxv Pharmuthi; xii Kal. Mai; xvi Moon; Epact xvii; Gods, ii; Indict. xi; Coss. Valentinianus Aug. II, Valens Aug. II; the same governor Tatianus, Præfect. He [Ath.] began to build anew the Cæsareum, on the 6th of Pachon, having been honoured with an imperial command by Trajanus Dux. He also discovered the incendiaries, and immediately cleared away the rubbish of the burnt ruins, and restored the edifice in the month Pachon.

³⁸⁷² May 5, 365.

³⁸⁷³ Oct. 5, 365.

³⁸⁷⁴ Feb. i. 366.

³⁸⁷⁵ July 21, 365; so also *Chron. Pasch.* and *Amm. Marc.* xxvi. 10, specially mentioning Alexandria.

³⁸⁷⁶ Text 'xvi.'

³⁸⁷⁷ Sep. 24, 367; cf. *Hist. Aceph.*



XLII. (368–9.) In this year, Easter-day was on xvii³⁸⁷⁸ Pharmuthi; Prid. Id. Ap.; xv Moon; Epact xxviii; Gods, iii; Indict. xii; Coss. Valentinianus (son of Augustus) I, Victor; the same Tatianus being governor. The Pope began to build that Church in Mendidium which bears his name, on the twenty-fifth³⁸⁷⁹ of the month Thoth, at the beginning of the eighty-fifth year of the Diocletian Era.

XLIII. (369–70.) In this year, Easter-day was on ii Pharmuthi; v³⁸⁸⁰ Kal. Ap.; xv Moon; Epact ix; Gods, iv; Indict. xiii; Coss. Valentinianus Aug. III, Valens Aug. III; the same Tatianus being governor, who was succeeded by Olympius Palladius, of Samosata. The Pope finished the Church, called after his name, at the close of the eighty-sixth year of the Diocletian Era; in which also he celebrated the dedication, on the fourteenth³⁸⁸¹ of Messori.

XLIV. (370–1.) In this year, Easter-day was on xxii Pharmuthi; xv Kal. Mai; xvi Moon; Epact xx; Gods, v; Indict. xiv; Coss. Gratianus Aug. II, Probus; the same Palladius being governor; who was succeeded as Præfect of Egypt by Ælius Palladius, of Palestine, who was called Cyrus.

XLV. (371–2.) In this year, Easter-day was on xiii Pharmuthi; vi Id. Ap.; xix Moon; Epact i; Gods, vii³⁸⁸², Indict. xv; Coss. Modestus, Arintheus; the same Ælius Palladius the governor, called Cyrus, Præfect of Egypt.

XLVI. (372–3.) In this year, Easter-day was on v Pharmuthi; Prid. Kal. Ap.; xxi Moon; Epact xii; Gods, i; Indict. i; Coss. Valentinianus IV, Valens IV; the same governor Ælius Palladius, Præfect of Egypt. At the close of this year, on the seventh of Pachon³⁸⁸³, he [Athanasius] departed this life in a wonderful manner.

The end of the heads of the Festal Letters of holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria.

I. Festal Letters.

Letter I.—*For 329. Easter-day xi Pharmuthi; viii Id. April; Ær. Dioclet. 45; Coss. Constantinus Aug. VIII. Constantinus Cæs. IV; Præfect. Septimius Zenius; Indict. II.*

Of Fasting, and Trumpets, and Feasts.

³⁸⁷⁸ Text 'xxvii.'

³⁸⁷⁹ Sept. 22, 368.

³⁸⁸⁰ Text 'iv.'

³⁸⁸¹ Aug. 7, 370.

³⁸⁸² The Syr. has 'and not one,' which must be incorrect.

³⁸⁸³ [May 2, 373.]

Come, my beloved, the season calls us to keep the feast. Again, ‘the Sun of Righteousness³⁸⁸⁴, causing His divine beams to rise upon us, proclaims beforehand the time of the feast, in which, obeying Him, we ought to celebrate it, lest when the time has passed by, gladness likewise may pass us by. For discerning the time is one of the duties most urgent on us, for the practice of virtue; so that the blessed Paul, when instructing his disciple, teaches him to observe the time, saying, ‘Stand (ready) in season, and out of season³⁸⁸⁵’ — that knowing both the one and the other, he might do things befitting the season, and avoid the blame of unseasonableness. For thus the God of all, after the manner of wise Solomon³⁸⁸⁶, distributes everything in time and season, to the end that, in due time, the salvation of men should be everywhere spread abroad. Thus the ‘Wisdom of God³⁸⁸⁷,’ our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, not out of season, but in season, ‘passed upon holy souls, fashioning the friends of God and the prophets³⁸⁸⁸;’ so that although very many were praying for Him, and saying, ‘O that the salvation of God were come out of Sion³⁸⁸⁹!’ — the Spouse also, as it is written in the Song of Songs, was praying and saying, ‘O that Thou wert my sister’s son, that sucked the breasts of my mother³⁸⁹⁰!’ that Thou wert like the children of men, and wouldest take upon Thee human passions for our sake! — nevertheless, the God of all, the Maker of times and seasons, Who knows our affairs better than we do, while, as a good physician, He exhorts to obedience in season — the only one in which we may be healed — so also does He send Him not unseasonably, but seasonably, saying, ‘In an acceptable time have I heard Thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped Thee³⁸⁹¹.’

2. And, on this account, the blessed Paul, urging us to note this season, wrote, saying, ‘Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation³⁸⁹².’ At set seasons also He called the children of Israel to the Levitical feasts by Moses, saying, ‘Three times in a year ye shall keep a feast to Me³⁸⁹³’ (one of which, my beloved, is that now at hand), the trumpets of the priests sounding and urging its observance; as the holy Psalmist commanded, saying, ‘Blow with the trumpet in the new moon, on the [solemn] day of your feast³⁸⁹⁴.’ Since this sentence enjoins upon us to blow both

³⁸⁸⁴ Mal. iv. 2.

³⁸⁸⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 2. The due celebration of the feast is spoken of as producing a permanent beneficial effect on the Christian.

Cf. *Letter 4*.

³⁸⁸⁶ Eccl. iii. 7. Cf. S. Cyril. *Homil. Pasch. V*.

³⁸⁸⁷ 1 Cor. i. 24.

³⁸⁸⁸ Wisd. vii. 27.

³⁸⁸⁹ Ps. xiv. 7.

³⁸⁹⁰ Cant. viii. 1.

³⁸⁹¹ Isa. xlix. 8.

³⁸⁹² 2 Cor. vi. 2.

³⁸⁹³ Exod. xxiii. 14.

³⁸⁹⁴ Ps. lxxxi. 3, cf. Num. x. 8.



on the new moons, and on the solemn³⁸⁹⁵ days, He hath made a solemn day of that in which the light of the moon is perfected in the full; which was then a type, as is this of the trumpets. At one time, as has been said, they called to the feasts; at another time to fasting and to war. And this was not done without solemnity, nor by chance, but this sound of the trumpets was appointed, so that every man should come to that which was proclaimed. And this ought to be learned not merely from me, but from the divine Scriptures, when God was revealed to Moses, and said, as it is written in the book of Numbers; ‘And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make to thee two trumpets; of silver shalt thou make them, and they shall be for thee to call the congregation³⁸⁹⁶;’ — very properly for those who here love Him. So that we may know that these things had reference to the time of Moses — yea, were to be observed so long as the shadow lasted, the whole being appointed for use, ‘till the time of reformation³⁸⁹⁷.’ ‘For’ (said He) ‘if ye shall go out to battle in your land against your enemies that rise up against you³⁸⁹⁸’ (for such things as these refer to the land, and no further), ‘then ye shall proclaim with the trumpets, and shall be remembered before the Lord, and be delivered from your enemies.’ Not only in wars did they blow the trumpet, but under the law, there was a festal trumpet also. Hear him again, going on to say, ‘And in the day of your gladness, and in your feasts, and your new moons, ye shall blow with the trumpets³⁸⁹⁹.’ And let no man think it a light and contemptible matter, if he hear the law command respecting trumpets; it is a wonderful and fearful thing. For beyond any other voice or instrument, the trumpet is awakening and terrible; so Israel received instruction by these means, because he was then but a child. But in order that the proclamation should not be thought merely human, being superhuman, its sounds resembled those which were uttered when they trembled before the mount³⁹⁰⁰; and they were reminded of the law that was then given them, and kept it.

3. For the law was admirable, and the shadow was excellent, otherwise, it would not have wrought fear, and induced reverence in those who heard; especially in those who at that time not only heard but saw these things. Now these things were typical, and done as in a shadow. But let us pass on to the meaning, and henceforth leaving the figure at a distance, come to the truth, and look upon the priestly trumpets of our Saviour, which cry out, and call us, at one time to war, as the blessed Paul saith; ‘We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this dark world, with wicked spirits in heaven³⁹⁰¹.’ At another time the call is made to virginity, and self-denial, and conjugal harmony, saying, To virgins, the things of virgins;

³⁸⁹⁵ Or *appointed*, and so *passim*.

³⁸⁹⁶ Num. x. 1, 2.

³⁸⁹⁷ Heb. ix. 10.

³⁸⁹⁸ Numb. x. 9.

³⁸⁹⁹ Ib. x. 10.

³⁹⁰⁰ Exod. xix. 16.

³⁹⁰¹ Eph. vi. 12.

and to those who love the way of abstinence, the things of abstinence; and to those who are married³⁹⁰², the things of an honourable marriage; thus assigning to each its own virtues and an honourable recompense. Sometimes the call is made to fasting, and sometimes to a feast. Hear again the same [Apostle] blowing the trumpet, and proclaiming, ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness³⁹⁰³.’ If thou wouldest listen to a trumpet much greater than all these, hear our Saviour saying; ‘In that last and great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink³⁹⁰⁴.’ For it became the Saviour not simply to call us to a feast, but to ‘the great feast;’ if only we will be prepared to hear, and to conform to the proclamation of every trumpet.

4. For since, as I before said, there are divers proclamations, listen, as in a figure, to the prophet blowing the trumpet; and further, having turned to the truth, be ready for the announcement of the trumpet, for he saith, ‘Blow ye the trumpet in Sion: sanctify a fast³⁹⁰⁵.’ This is a warning trumpet, and commands with great earnestness, that when we fast, we should hallow the fast. For not all those who call upon God, hallow God, since there are some who defile Him; yet not Him—that is impossible—but their own mind concerning Him; for He is holy, and has pleasure in the saints³⁹⁰⁶. And therefore the blessed Paul accuses those who dishonour God; ‘Transgressors of the law dishonour God³⁹⁰⁷.’ So then, to make a separation from those who pollute the fast, he saith here, ‘sanctify a fast.’ For many, crowding to the fast, pollute themselves in the thoughts of their hearts, sometimes by doing evil against their brethren, sometimes by daring to defraud. And, to mention nothing else, there are many who exalt themselves above their neighbours, thereby causing great mischief. For the boast of fasting did no good to the Pharisee, although he fasted twice in the week³⁹⁰⁸, only because he exalted himself against the publican. In the same manner the Word blamed the children of Israel on account of such a fast as this, exhorting them by Isaiah the Prophet, and saying, ‘This is not the fast and the day that I have chosen, that a man should humble his soul; not even if thou shouldest bow down thy neck like a hook, and shouldest strew sackcloth and ashes under thee; neither thus shall ye call the fast acceptable³⁹⁰⁹.’ That we may be able to shew what kind of persons we should be when we fast, and of what character the fast should be, listen again


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³⁹⁰² Cf. 1 Cor. vii. 2, 5.

³⁹⁰³ Ib. v. 7, 8.

³⁹⁰⁴ John vii. 37.

³⁹⁰⁵ Joel ii. 15.

³⁹⁰⁶ Ps. xvi. 3.

³⁹⁰⁷ Rom. ii. 23.

³⁹⁰⁸ Luke xviii. 12.

³⁹⁰⁹ Is. lviii. 5.

to God commanding Moses, and saying, as it is written in Leviticus³⁹¹⁰, ‘And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, In the tenth day of this seventh month, there shall be a day of atonement; a convocation, and a holy day shall it be to you; and ye shall humble your souls, and offer whole burnt-offerings unto the Lord.’ And afterwards, that the law might be defined on this point, He proceeds to say; ‘Every soul that shall not humble itself, shall be cut off from the people³⁹¹¹.’

5. Behold, my brethren, how much a fast can do, and in what manner the law commands us to fast. It is required that not only with the body should we fast, but with the soul. Now the soul is humbled when it does not follow wicked opinions, but feeds on becoming virtues. For virtues and vices are the food of the soul, and it can eat either of these two meats, and incline to either of the two, according to its own will. If it is bent toward virtue, it will be nourished by virtues, by righteousness, by temperance, by meekness, by fortitude, as Paul saith; ‘Being nourished by the word of truth³⁹¹².’ Such was the case with our Lord, who said, ‘My meat is to do the will of My Father which is in heaven³⁹¹³.’ But if it is not thus with the soul, and it inclines downwards, it is then nourished by nothing but sin. For thus the Holy Ghost, describing sinners and their food, referred to the devil when He said, ‘I have given him to be meat to the people of Æthiopia³⁹¹⁴.’ For this is the food of sinners. And as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being heavenly bread, is the food of the saints, according to this; ‘Except ye eat My flesh, and drink My blood³⁹¹⁵,’ so is the devil the food of the impure, and of those who do nothing which is of the light, but work the deeds of darkness. Therefore, in order to withdraw and turn them from vices, He commands them to be nourished with the food of virtue; namely, humbleness of mind, lowliness to endure humiliations, the acknowledgment of God. For not only does such a fast as this obtain pardon for souls, but being kept holy, it prepares the saints, and raises them above the earth.

6. And indeed that which I am about to say is wonderful, yea it is of those things which are very miraculous; yet not far from the truth, as ye may be able to learn from the sacred³⁹¹⁶ writings. That great man Moses, when fasting, conversed with God, and received the law. The great and holy Elijah, when fasting, was thought worthy of divine visions, and at last was taken up like Him who ascended into heaven. And Daniel, when fasting, although a very young man, was entrusted with the mystery, and he alone understood the secret things of the king, and was thought worthy of divine visions. But because the length of the fast of these men was wonderful, and the days prolonged, let

³⁹¹⁰ Levit. xxiii. 26, *sq.*

³⁹¹¹ Ib. xxiii. 29.

³⁹¹² 1 Tim. iv. 6.

³⁹¹³ John iv. 34.

³⁹¹⁴ Ps. lxxiv. 14, LXX.

³⁹¹⁵ John vi. 53.

³⁹¹⁶ The word in the Syriac is ‘priestly.’ But in this and in other places, it appears to be for the Greek ἱερός. Cf. τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα. 2 Tim. iii. 15.

no man lightly fall into unbelief; but rather let him believe and know, that the contemplation of God, and the word which is from Him, suffice to nourish those who hear, and stand to them in place of all food. For the angels are no otherwise sustained than by beholding at all times the face of the Father, and of the Saviour who is in heaven. And thus Moses, as long as he talked with God, fasted indeed bodily, but was nourished by divine words. When he descended among men, and God was gone up from him, he suffered hunger like other men. For it is not said that he fasted longer than forty days—those in which he was conversing with God. And, generally, each one of the saints has been thought worthy of similar transcendent nourishment.

7. Wherefore, my beloved, having our souls nourished with divine food, with the Word, and according to the will of God, and fasting bodily in things external, let us keep this great and saving feast as becomes us. Even the ignorant Jews received this divine food, through the type, when they ate a lamb in the passover. But not understanding the type, even to this day they eat the lamb, erring in that they are without the city and the truth. As long as Judæa and the city existed, there were a type, and a lamb, and a shadow, since the law thus commanded³⁹¹⁷: These things shall not be done in another city; but in the land of Judæa, and in no place without [the land of Judæa]. And besides this, the law commanded them to offer whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices, there being no other altar than that in Jerusalem. For on this account, in that city alone was there an altar and temple built, and in no other city were they permitted to perform these rites, so that when that city should come to an end, then those things that were figurative might also be done away.

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8. Now observe; that city, since the coming of our Savior, has had an end, and all the land of the Jews has been laid waste; so that from the testimony of these things (and we need no further proof, being assured by our own eyes of the fact) there must, of necessity, be an end of the shadow. And not from me should these things be learned, but the sacred voice of the prophet foretold, crying; ‘Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, and publisheth peace³⁹¹⁸;’ and what is the message he published, but that which he goes on to say to them, ‘Keep thy feasts, O Judah; pay to the Lord thy vows. For they shall no more go to that which is old; it is finished; it is taken away: He is gone up who breathed upon the face, and delivered thee from affliction³⁹¹⁹.’ Now who is he that went up? a man may say to the Jews, in order that even the boast of the shadow may be done away; neither is it an idle thing to listen to the expression, ‘It is finished; he is gone up who breathed.’ For nothing was finished before he went up who breathed. But as soon as he went up, it was finished. Who was he then, O Jews, as I said before? If Moses, the assertion would be false; for the people were not yet come to the land in which alone they were commanded to perform these rites. But if Samuel, or any other of the prophets, even in that case there would be a perversion of the truth; for hitherto these things were done in Judæa, and the city was standing. For it was necessary that while that stood, these things should be performed. So that it was none of

³⁹¹⁷ Deut. xii. 11, 13, 14.

³⁹¹⁸ Nah. i. 15.

³⁹¹⁹ Nah. i. 15; ii. 1, LXX.

these, my beloved, who went up. But if thou wouldest hear the true matter, and be kept from Jewish fables, behold our Saviour who went up, and ‘breathed upon the face, and said to His disciples, Receive ye the Holy Ghost³⁹²⁰.’ For as soon as these things were done, everything was finished, for the altar was broken, and the veil of the temple was rent; and although the city was not yet laid waste, the abomination was ready to sit in the midst of the temple, and the city and those ancient ordinances to receive their final consummation.

9. Since then we have passed beyond that time of shadows, and no longer perform rites under it, but have turned, as it were, unto the Lord; ‘for the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty³⁹²¹’;—as we hear the sacred trumpet, no longer slaying a material lamb, but that true Lamb that was slain, even our Lord Jesus Christ; ‘Who was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and was dumb as a lamb before her shearers³⁹²²’; being purified by His precious blood, which speaketh better things than that of Abel, having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel, holding in our hands the rod and staff of the Lord, by which that saint was comforted, who said³⁹²³, ‘Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me;’ and to sum up, being in all respects prepared, and careful for nothing, because, as the blessed Paul saith, ‘The Lord is at hand³⁹²⁴’; and as our Saviour saith, ‘In an hour when we think not, the Lord cometh;—Let us keep the Feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Putting off the old man and his deeds, let us put on the new man³⁹²⁵, which is created in God,’ in humbleness of mind, and a pure conscience; in meditation of the law by night and by day. And casting away all hypocrisy and fraud, putting far from us all pride and deceit, let us take upon us love towards God and towards our neighbour, that being new [creatures], and receiving the new wine, even the Holy Spirit, we may properly keep the feast, even the month of these new [fruits]³⁹²⁶.

10. We³⁹²⁷ begin the holy fast on the fifth day of Pharmuthi (March 31), and adding to it according to the number of those six holy and great days, which are the symbol of the creation of this world, let us rest and cease (from fasting) on the tenth day of the same Pharmuthi (April 5), on the holy

³⁹²⁰ John xx. 22.

³⁹²¹ 2 Cor. iii. 17.

³⁹²² Is. liiii. 7.

³⁹²³ Ps. xxiii. 4.

³⁹²⁴ Phil. iv. 5.

³⁹²⁵ Luke xii. 40; 1 Cor. v. 8; Ephes. iv. 22–24.

³⁹²⁶ Alluding to Deut. xvi. 1, LXX.

³⁹²⁷ We should not have much difficulty in fixing upon many of the phrases and expressions used by S. Athan. towards the close of his Epistles, by referring to the concluding sentences in the Paschal Letters of S. Cyril, who seems herein to have closely imitated his illustrious predecessor in the Patriarchate. The Syriac translator must frequently have had before him the following expressions: ἀρχόμενοι τῆς ἁγίας τεσσαρακοστῆς—ἐπισυνάπτοντες—συνάπτοντες ἕξις—περιλύοντες τὰς νηστείας—καταπαύοντες τὰς νηστείας—ἐσπέρα βαθεί& 139 σαβάτου—τῇ ἐπιφωσκούση κυριακῇ.

sabbath of the week. And when the first day of the holy week dawns and rises upon us, on the eleventh day of the same month (April 6), from which again we count all the seven weeks one by one, let us keep feast on the holy day of Pentecost—on that which was at one time to the Jews, typically, the feast of weeks, in which they granted forgiveness and settlement of debts; and indeed that day was one of deliverance in every respect. Let us keep the feast on the first day of the great week, as a symbol of the world to come, in which we here receive a pledge that we shall have everlasting life hereafter. Then having passed hence, we shall keep a perfect feast with Christ, while we cry out and say, like the saints, ‘I will pass to the place of the wondrous tabernacle, to the house of God; with the voice of gladness and thanksgiving, the shouting of those who rejoice³⁹²⁸,’ whence pain and sorrow and sighing have fled, and upon our heads gladness and joy shall have come to us! May we be judged worthy to be partakers in these things.

11. Let us remember the poor, and not forget kindness to strangers; above all, let us love God with all our soul, and might, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. So may we receive those things which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for those that love Him³⁹²⁹, through His only Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; through Whom, to the Father alone, by the Holy Ghost, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Salute one another with a kiss. All the brethren who are with me salute you.

Here endeth the first Festal Letter of holy Athanasius.

Letter II.—*For 330. Easter-day xxiv Pharmuthi; xiii Kal. Mai; Æra Dioclet. 46; Coss. Gallicianus, Valerius Symmachus; Præfect, Magninianus; Indict. iii.*

Again, my brethren, is Easter come and gladness; again the Lord hath brought us to this season; so that when, according to custom, we have been nourished with His words, we may duly keep the feast. Let us celebrate it then, even heavenly joy, with those saints who formerly proclaimed a like feast, and were ensamples to us of conversation in Christ. For not only were they entrusted with the charge of preaching the Gospel, but, if we enquire, we shall see, as it is written, that its power was displayed in them. ‘Be ye therefore followers of me³⁹³⁰,’ he wrote to the Corinthians. Now the apostolic precept exhorts us all, for those commands which he sent to individuals, he at the same time enjoined upon every man in every place, for he was ‘a teacher of all nations in faith and truth³⁹³¹.’ And, generally, the commands of all the saints urge us on similarly, as Solomon makes

³⁹²⁸ Ps. xlii. 4.

³⁹²⁹ 1 Cor. ii. 9; Is. lxiv. 4.

³⁹³⁰ 1 Cor. iv. 16.

³⁹³¹ 1 Tim. ii. 7. Cf. Letter iii.

use of proverbs, saying, ‘Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding; for I give you a good gift, forsake ye not my word: for I was an obedient son to my father, and beloved in the sight of my mother³⁹³².’ For a just father brings up [his children] well, when he is diligent in teaching others in accordance with his own upright conduct, so that when he meets with opposition, he may not be ashamed on hearing it said, ‘Thou therefore that teachest others, teachest thou not thyself³⁹³³?’ but rather, like the good servant, may both save himself and gain others; and thus, when the grace committed to him has been doubled, he may hear, ‘Thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a little, I will set thee over much: enter into the joy of thy Lord³⁹³⁴.’

2. Let us³⁹³⁵ then, as is becoming, as at all times, yet especially in the days of the feast, be not hearers only, but doers of the commandments of our Saviour; that having imitated the behaviour of the saints, we may enter together into the joy of our Lord which is in heaven, which is not transitory, but truly abides; of which evil doers having deprived themselves, there remains to them as the fruit of their ways, sorrow and affliction, and groaning with torments. Let a man see what these become like, that they bear not the likeness³⁹³⁶ of the conversation of the saints, nor of that right understanding, by which man at the beginning was rational, and in the image of God. But they are compared to their disgrace to beasts without understanding, and becoming like them in unlawful pleasures, they are spoken of as wanton horses³⁹³⁷; also, for their craftiness, and errors, and sin laden with death, they are called a ‘generation of vipers,’ as John saith³⁹³⁸. Now having thus fallen, and grovelling in the dust like the serpent³⁹³⁹, having their minds set on nothing beyond visible things, they esteem these things good, and rejoicing in them, serve their own lusts and not God.

3. Yet even in this state, the man-loving Word, who came for this very reason, that He might seek and find that which was lost, sought to restrain them from such folly, crying and saying, ‘Be ye not as the horse and the mule which have no understanding, whose cheeks ye hold in with bit and bridle³⁹⁴⁰.’ Because they were careless and imitated the wicked, the prophet prays in spirit and says, ‘Ye are to me like merchant-men of Phœnicia³⁹⁴¹.’ And the avenging Spirit protests against

³⁹³² Prov. iv. 1.

³⁹³³ Rom. ii. 21.

³⁹³⁴ Mat. xxv. 21.

³⁹³⁵ We have here the first fragment extant of the original Greek text. It is to be found in Cosmas Indicopleustes. p. 316.

³⁹³⁶ Syr. εἰκῶν.

³⁹³⁷ Jer. v. 8.

³⁹³⁸ i.e. the Baptist, Matt. iii. 7; Luke iii. 7.

³⁹³⁹ Cf. *Vit. Anton. supr.* p. 202.

³⁹⁴⁰ Ps. xxxii. 9. Cf. *Orat.* iii. 18.

³⁹⁴¹ Is. xxiii. 2, LXX.



them in these words, ‘Lord, in Thy city Thou wilt despise their image³⁹⁴².’ Thus, being changed into the likeness of fools, they fell so low in their understanding, that by their excessive reasoning, they even likened the Divine Wisdom to themselves, thinking it to be like their own arts. Therefore, ‘professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the corruptible image of man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient³⁹⁴³.’ For they did not listen to the prophetic voice that reproved them (saying), ‘To what have ye likened the Lord, and with what have ye compared Him³⁹⁴⁴?’ neither to David, who prayed concerning such as these, and sang, ‘All those that make them are like unto them, and all those who put their trust in them³⁹⁴⁵.’ Being blind to the truth, they looked upon a stone as God, and hence, like senseless creatures, they walked in darkness, and, as the prophet cried, ‘They hear indeed, but they do not understand; they see indeed, but they do not perceive; for their heart is waxen fat, and with their ears they hear heavily³⁹⁴⁶.’

4. Now those who do not observe the feast, continue such as these even to the present day, feigning indeed and devising names of feasts³⁹⁴⁷, but rather introducing days of mourning than of gladness; ‘For there is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord³⁹⁴⁸.’ And as Wisdom saith, ‘Gladness and joy are taken from their mouth³⁹⁴⁹.’ Such are the feasts of the wicked. But the wise servants of the Lord, who have truly put on the man which is created in God³⁹⁵⁰, have received gospel words, and reckon as a general commandment that given to Timothy, which saith, ‘Be thou an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in love, in faith, in purity³⁹⁵¹.’ So well do they keep the Feast, that even the unbelievers, seeing their order³⁹⁵², may say, ‘God is with them of a truth³⁹⁵³.’ For as he who receives an apostle receives Him who sent him³⁹⁵⁴, so he who is a follower of the saints, makes the Lord in every respect his end and aim, even as Paul, being a follower of Him,

³⁹⁴² Ps. lxxiii. 20.

³⁹⁴³ Rom. i. 22, 28, and cf. *c. Gent.* 19. 2.

³⁹⁴⁴ Is. xl. 18.

³⁹⁴⁵ Ps. cxv. 8.

³⁹⁴⁶ Is. vi. 9.

³⁹⁴⁷ Syr. σχηματισάμενος. The allusion in this sentence is evidently to the conduct of Jeroboam, as recorded 1 Kings xii. 32,

33. The phraseology of the Syriac resembles that of the Syr. version in v. 33.

³⁹⁴⁸ Is. xlvi. 22.

³⁹⁴⁹ Vid. *Letter* iii. note.

³⁹⁵⁰ Eph. iv. 24.

³⁹⁵¹ 1 Tim. iv. 12.

³⁹⁵² τάξις, Syr. Cf. Col. ii. 5, βλέπων ὁμῶν τὴν τάξιν.

³⁹⁵³ 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

³⁹⁵⁴ Matt. x. 40.

goes on to say, ‘As I also of Christ³⁹⁵⁵.’ For there were first our Saviour’s own words, who from the height of His divinity, when conversing with His disciples, said, ‘Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls³⁹⁵⁶.’ Then too when He poured water into a basin, and girded Himself with a towel, and washed His disciples’ feet, He said to them, ‘Know what I have done. Ye call Me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If therefore I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet: for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, ye also should do³⁹⁵⁷.’

5. Oh! my brethren, how shall we admire the loving-kindness of the Saviour? With what power, and with what a trumpet should a man cry out, exalting these His benefits! That not only should we bear His image, but should receive from Him an example and pattern of heavenly conversation; that as He hath begun, we should go on, that suffering, we should not threaten, being reviled, we should not revile again, but should bless them that curse, and in everything commit ourselves to God who judgeth righteously³⁹⁵⁸. For those who are thus disposed, and fashion themselves according to the Gospel, will be partakers of Christ, and imitators of apostolic conversation, on account of which they shall be deemed worthy of that praise from him, with which he praised the Corinthians, when he said, ‘I praise you that in everything ye are mindful of me³⁹⁵⁹.’ Afterwards, because there were men who used his words, but chose to hear them as suited their lusts, and dared to pervert them, as the followers of Hymenæus and Alexander, and before them the Sadducees, who as he said, ‘having made shipwreck of faith,’ scoffed at the mystery of the resurrection, he immediately proceeded to say, ‘And as I have delivered to you traditions, hold them fast³⁹⁶⁰.’ That means, indeed, that we should think not otherwise than as the teacher has delivered.

6. For not only in outward form did those wicked men dissemble, putting on as the Lord says sheep’s clothing, and appearing like unto whited sepulchres; but they took those divine words in their mouth, while they inwardly cherished evil intentions. And the first to put on this appearance was the serpent, the inventor of wickedness from the beginning—the devil,—who, in disguise, conversed with Eve, and forthwith deceived her. But after him and with him are all inventors of unlawful heresies, who indeed refer to the Scriptures, but do not hold such opinions as the saints have handed down, and receiving them as the traditions of men, err, because they do not rightly know them nor their³⁹⁶¹ power. Therefore Paul justly praises the Corinthians³⁹⁶², because their

³⁹⁵⁵ 1 Cor. xi. 1.

³⁹⁵⁶ Matt. xi. 29.

³⁹⁵⁷ John xiii. 12.

³⁹⁵⁸ 1 Pet. ii. 21–23

³⁹⁵⁹ 1 Cor. xi. 2.

³⁹⁶⁰ 1 Tim. i. 19; 2 Tim. ii. 18; 1 Cor. xi. 2

³⁹⁶¹ Matt. xxii. 29.

³⁹⁶² 1 Cor. xi. 2.



opinions were in accordance with his traditions. And the Lord most righteously reproveth the Jews, saying, ‘Wherefore do ye also transgress the commandments of God on account of your traditions³⁹⁶³.’ For they changed the commandments they received from God after their own understanding, preferring to observe the traditions of men. And about these, a little after, the blessed Paul again gave directions to the Galatians who were in danger thereof, writing to them, ‘If any man preach to you ought else than that ye have received, let him be accursed³⁹⁶⁴.’

7. For there is no fellowship whatever between the words of the saints and the fancies of human invention; for the saints are the ministers of the truth, preaching the kingdom of heaven, but those who are borne in the opposite direction have nothing better than to eat, and think their end is that they shall cease to be, and they say, ‘Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die³⁹⁶⁵.’ Therefore blessed Luke reproves the inventions of men, and hands down the narrations of the saints, saying in the beginning of the Gospel, ‘Since many have presumed to write narrations of those events of which we are assured, as those who from the beginning were witnesses and ministers of the Word have delivered to us; it hath seemed good to me also, who have adhered to them all from the first, to write correctly in order to thee, O excellent Theophilus, that thou mayest know the truth concerning the things in which thou hast been instructed³⁹⁶⁶.’ For as each of the saints has received, that they impart without alteration, for the confirmation of the doctrine of the mysteries. Of these the (divine) word would have us disciples, and these should of right be our teachers, and to them only is it necessary to give heed, for of them only is ‘the word faithful and worthy of all acceptance³⁹⁶⁷.’ these not being disciples because they heard from others, but being eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, that which they had heard from Him have they handed down.

Now some have related the wonderful signs performed by our Saviour, and preached His eternal Godhead. And others have written of His being born in the flesh of the Virgin, and have proclaimed the festival of the holy passover, saying, ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed³⁹⁶⁸.’ so that we, individually and collectively, and all the churches in the world may remember, as it is written, ‘That Christ rose from the dead, of the seed of David, according to the Gospel³⁹⁶⁹.’ And let us not forget that which Paul delivered, declaring it to the Corinthians; I mean His resurrection, whereby ‘He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil³⁹⁷⁰.’ and raised us up together with Him, having loosed the bands of death, and vouchsafed a blessing instead of a curse, joy instead of grief, a feast instead

³⁹⁶³ Matt. xv. 3.

³⁹⁶⁴ Gal. i. 9.

³⁹⁶⁵ Is. xxii. 13.

³⁹⁶⁶ Luke i. 1.

³⁹⁶⁷ 1 Tim. i. 15.

³⁹⁶⁸ 1 Cor. v. 7.

³⁹⁶⁹ 2 Tim. ii. 8.

³⁹⁷⁰ Heb. ii. 14.

of mourning, in this holy joy of Easter, which being continually in our hearts, we always rejoice, as Paul commanded; ‘We pray without ceasing; in everything we give thanks³⁹⁷¹.’ So we are not remiss in giving notice of its seasons, as we have received from the Fathers. Again we write, again keeping to the apostolic traditions, we remind each other when we come together for prayer; and keeping the feast in common, with one mouth we truly give thanks to the Lord. Thus giving thanks unto Him, and being followers of the saints, ‘we shall make our praise in the Lord all the day³⁹⁷²,’ as the Psalmist says. So, when we rightly keep the feast, we shall be counted worthy of that joy which is in heaven.

8. We begin the fast of forty days on the 13th of the month Phamenoth (Mar. 9). After we have given ourselves to fasting in continued succession, let us begin the holy Paschal³⁹⁷³ week on the 18th of the month Pharmuthi (April 13). Then resting on the 23rd of the same month Pharmuthi (April 18), and keeping the feast afterwards on the first of the week, on the 24th (April 19), let us add to these the seven weeks of the great Pentecost, wholly rejoicing and exulting in Christ Jesus our Lord, through Whom to the Father be glory and dominion in the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

The brethren which are with me salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss³⁹⁷⁴.

Here endeth the second Festal Letter of the holy lord Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria.

Letter III.—*For 331. Easter-day xvi Pharmuthi; iii Id. April; Æra Dioclet. 47; Coss. Annius Bassus, Ablabius; Præfect, Florentius; Indict. iv.*

Again, my beloved brethren, the day of the feast draws near to us, which, above all others, should be devoted to prayer, which the law commands to be observed, and which it would be an unholy thing for us to pass over in silence. For although we have been held under restraint by those who afflict us, that, because of them, we should not announce to you this season; yet thanks be to

³⁹⁷¹ 1 Thess. v. 17.

³⁹⁷² Ps. xxxv. 28.

³⁹⁷³ In Syriac there is but one word ‘pescha’ to express the Passover and Easter feasts, it is therefore sometimes rendered Easter, and sometimes Passover, in the following pages.

³⁹⁷⁴ The twenty-fifth Paschal Letter of S. Cyril ends with the same words. This is the usual form in which our author concludes his Paschal Letters. S. Cyril employs it but once, as above.



‘God, who comforteth the afflicted³⁹⁷⁵,’ that we have not been overcome by the wickedness of our accusers and silenced; but obeying the voice of truth, we together with you cry aloud in the day of the feast. For the God of all hath commanded, saying, ‘Speak³⁹⁷⁶, and the children of Israel shall keep the Passover.’ And the Spirit exhorts in the Psalm; ‘Blow the trumpet in the new moons³⁹⁷⁷, in the solemn day of your feast.’ And the prophet cries; ‘Keep thy feasts, O Judah³⁹⁷⁸.’ I do not send word to you as though you were ignorant; but I publish it to those who know it, that ye may perceive that although men have separated us, yet God having made us companions, we approach the same feast, and worship the same Lord continually. And we do not keep the festival as observers of days, knowing that the Apostle reproves those who do so, in those words which he spake; ‘Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years³⁹⁷⁹.’ But rather do we consider the day solemn because of the feast; so that all of us, who serve God in every place, may together in our prayers be well-pleasing to God. For the blessed Paul, announcing the nearness of gladness like this, did not announce days, but the Lord, for whose sake we keep the feast, saying, ‘Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed³⁹⁸⁰;’ so that we all, contemplating the eternity of the Word, may draw near to do Him service.

2. For what else is the feast, but the service of the soul? And what is that service, but prolonged prayer to God, and unceasing thanksgiving³⁹⁸¹? The unthankful departing far from these are rightly deprived of the joy springing therefrom: for ‘joy and gladness are taken from their mouth³⁹⁸².’ Therefore, the [divine] word doth not allow them to have peace; ‘For there is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord³⁹⁸³,’ they labour in pain and grief. So, not even to him who owed ten thousand talents did the Gospel grant forgiveness in the sight of the Lord³⁹⁸⁴. For even he, having received forgiveness of great things, was forgetful of kindness in little ones, so that he paid the penalty also of those former things. And justly indeed, for having himself experienced kindness, he was required to be merciful to his fellow servant. He too that received the one talent, and bound it up in a napkin, and hid it in the earth, was in consequence cast out for unthankfulness, hearing the words, ‘Thou wicked

³⁹⁷⁵ 2 Cor. vii. 6. The historical reference is not quite certain, but the *Index* iii. is clearly right in its statement that Ath. was absent at this time, as well as in 332.

³⁹⁷⁶ ‘Ἐἶπον, καὶ,’ as LXX. not Peshito.

³⁹⁷⁷ Cf. S. Cyril. *Hom. Pasch.* xxx. near the beginning.

³⁹⁷⁸ Numb. ix. 2; Ps. lxxxi. 3; Nah. i. 15

³⁹⁷⁹ Gal. iv. 10.

³⁹⁸⁰ 1 Cor. v. 7.

³⁹⁸¹ Cf. Clemens Alex. *Strom.* 7. 1. ἀδιάλειπτος ἀγάπη. Also 1 Thess. v. 16, 17, both in the Greek and in the Syriac vers. and *Letter* 11.

³⁹⁸² Apparently a quotation from Scripture, perhaps from Jer. vii. the phraseology of v. 28. being transferred to the sentiment of v. 34. The expression has already occurred, *Letter* 2. 4.

³⁹⁸³ Is. xlvi. 22.

³⁹⁸⁴ Matt. xviii. 24.

and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and on my return, I should have received mine own. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents³⁹⁸⁵.' For, of course, when he was required to deliver up to his lord that which belonged to him, he should have acknowledged the kindness of him who gave it, and the value of that which was given. For he who gave was not a hard man, had he been so, he would not have given even in the first instance; neither was that which was given unprofitable and vain, for then he had not found fault. But both he who gave was good, and that which was given was capable of bearing fruit. As therefore 'he who withholdeth corn in seed-time is cursed³⁹⁸⁶,' according to the divine proverb, so he who neglects grace, and hides it without culture, is properly cast out as a wicked and unthankful person. On this account, he praises those who increased [their talents], saying, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful in a little, I will place thee over much; enter into the joy of thy Lord³⁹⁸⁷.'

3. This was right and reasonable; for, as the Scripture declares, they had gained as much as they had received. Now, my beloved, our will ought to keep pace with the grace of God, and not fall short; lest while our will remains idle, the grace given us should begin to depart, and the enemy finding us empty and naked, should enter [into us], as was the case with him spoken of in the Gospel, from whom the devil went out; 'for having gone through dry places, he took seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and returning and finding the house empty, he dwelt there, and the last state of that man was worse than the first³⁹⁸⁸.' For the departure from virtue gives place for the entrance of the unclean spirit. There is, moreover, the apostolic injunction, that the grace given us should not be unprofitable; for those things which he wrote particularly to his disciple, he enforces on us through him³⁹⁸⁹, saying, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee. For he who tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread; but the paths of the slothful are strewn with thorns;' so that the Spirit forewarns a man not to fall into them, saying, 'Break up your fallow ground, sow not among thorns³⁹⁹⁰.' For when a man despises the grace given him; and forthwith falls into the cares of the world, he delivers himself over to his lusts; and thus in the time of persecution he is offended³⁹⁹¹, and becomes altogether unfruitful. Now the prophet points out the end of such negligence, saying, 'Cursed is he who doeth the work of the Lord carelessly³⁹⁹².' For a servant of the Lord should be


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³⁹⁸⁵ Matt. xxv. 26.

³⁹⁸⁶ Prov. xi. 26.

³⁹⁸⁷ Matt. xxv. 23.

³⁹⁸⁸ Ib. xii. 43–45.

³⁹⁸⁹ Cf. *Letter* 2, near beginning.

³⁹⁹⁰ 1 Tim. iv. 14; Prov. xii. 11; Ib. xv. 19; Jer. iv. 3.

³⁹⁹¹ σκανδαλίζεται, Matt. xiii. 21.

³⁹⁹² Jer. xlviii. 10.

diligent and careful, yea, moreover, burning like a flame, so that when, by an ardent spirit, he has destroyed all carnal sin, he may be able to draw near to God who, according to the expression of the saints, is called ‘a consuming fire³⁹⁹³.’

4. Therefore, the God of all, ‘Who maketh His angels [spirits],’ is a spirit, ‘and His ministers a flame of fire³⁹⁹⁴.’ Wherefore, in the departure from Egypt, He forbade the multitude to touch the mountain, where God was appointing them the law, because they were not of this character. But He called blessed Moses to it, as being fervent in spirit, and possessing unquenchable grace, saying, ‘Let Moses alone draw near³⁹⁹⁵.’ He entered into the cloud also, and when the mountain was smoking, he was not injured; but rather, through ‘the words of the Lord, which are choice silver purified in the earth³⁹⁹⁶,’ he descended purified. Therefore the blessed Paul, when desirous that the grace of the Spirit given to us should not grow cold, exhorts, saying, ‘Quench not the Spirit³⁹⁹⁷.’ For so shall we remain partakers of Christ³⁹⁹⁸, if we hold fast to the end the Spirit given at the beginning. For he said, ‘Quench not;’ not because the Spirit is placed in the power of men, and is able to suffer anything from them; but because bad and unthankful men are such as manifestly wish to quench it, since they, like the impure, persecute the Spirit with unholy deeds. ‘For the holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, nor dwell in a body that is subject unto sin; but will remove from thoughts that are without understanding³⁹⁹⁹.’ Now they being without understanding, and deceitful, and lovers of sin, walk still as in darkness, not having that ‘Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world⁴⁰⁰⁰.’ Now a fire such as this laid hold of Jeremiah the prophet, when the word was in him as a fire, and he said, ‘I pass away from every place, and am not able to endure it⁴⁰⁰¹.’ And our Lord Jesus Christ, being good and a lover of men, came that He might cast this upon earth, and said, ‘And what? would that it were already kindled⁴⁰⁰²!’ For He desired, as He testified in Ezekiel⁴⁰⁰³, the repentance of a man rather than his death; so that evil should be entirely consumed in all men, that the soul, being purified, might be able to bring forth fruit; for the word which is sown by Him will be productive, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred⁴⁰⁰⁴. Thus, for instance, those who

³⁹⁹³ Deut. iv. 24; ix. 3; and Heb. xii. 29.

³⁹⁹⁴ Ps. civ. 4.

³⁹⁹⁵ Exod. xxiv. 2.

³⁹⁹⁶ Ps. xii. 6.

³⁹⁹⁷ 1 Thess. v. 19.

³⁹⁹⁸ Conf. S. Athan. *Expos. in Psalmos*, t. i. p. 863. πῦρ ὡσπερ νοητόν, τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος μέθεξιν ἐμβαλὼν.

³⁹⁹⁹ Wisd. i. 5.

⁴⁰⁰⁰ John i. 9.

⁴⁰⁰¹ Jer. xx. 9, cf. *Letter* 49. 5.

⁴⁰⁰² Luke xii. 49.

⁴⁰⁰³ Ezek. xviii. 23, 32.

⁴⁰⁰⁴ Mark iv. 20.

were with Cleopas⁴⁰⁰⁵, although infirm at first from lack of knowledge, yet afterwards were inflamed with the words of the Saviour, and brought forth the fruits of the knowledge of Him. The blessed Paul also, when seized by this fire, revealed it not to flesh and blood, but having experienced the grace, he became a preacher of the Word. But not such were those nine lepers who were cleansed from their leprosy, and yet were unthankful to the Lord who healed them; nor Judas, who obtained the lot of an apostle, and was named a disciple of the Lord, but at last, ‘while eating bread with the Saviour, lifted up his heel against Him, and became a traitor⁴⁰⁰⁶.’ But such men have the due reward of their folly, since their expectation will be vain through their ingratitude; for there is no hope for the ungrateful, the last fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, awaits those who have neglected divine light. Such then is the end of the unthankful.

5. But the faithful and true servants of the Lord, knowing that the Lord loves the thankful, never cease to praise Him, ever giving thanks unto the Lord. And whether the time is one of ease or of affliction, they offer up praise to God with thanksgiving, not reckoning these things of time, but worshipping the Lord, the God of times⁴⁰⁰⁷. Thus of old time, Job, who possessed fortitude above all men, thought of these things when in prosperity; and when in adversity, he patiently endured, and when he suffered, gave thanks. As also the humble David, in the very time of affliction sang praises and said, ‘I will bless the Lord at all times⁴⁰⁰⁸.’ And the blessed Paul, in all his Epistles, so to say, ceased not to thank God. In times of ease, he failed not, and in afflictions he gloried, knowing that ‘tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and that hope maketh not ashamed⁴⁰⁰⁹.’ Let us, being followers of such men, pass no season without thanksgiving, but especially now, when the time is one of tribulation, which the heretics excite against us, will we praise the Lord, uttering the words of the saints; ‘All these things have come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee⁴⁰¹⁰.’ For as the Jews at that time, although suffering an assault from the tabernacles⁴⁰¹¹ of the Edomites, and oppressed by the enemies of Jerusalem, did not give themselves up, but all the more sang praises to God; so we, my beloved brethren, though hindered from speaking the word of the Lord, will the more proclaim it, and being afflicted, we will sing Psalms⁴⁰¹², in that we are accounted worthy to be despised, and to labour anxiously for the truth. Yea, moreover, being grievously vexed, we will give thanks. For the blessed Apostle, who gave thanks at all times, urges us in the same manner to draw near to God saying, ‘Let your requests, with thanksgiving, be made

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405 Luke xxiv.
 406 Ps. xli. 9; John xiii. 18.
 407 Cf. *Letter* 1. 1, note 12.
 408 Ps. xxxiv. 1.
 409 Rom. v. 3.
 410 Ps. xliv. 17.
 411 Compare Ps. lxxxiii. 6.
 412 Cf. James v. 13

known unto God⁴⁰¹³.’ And being desirous that we should always continue in this resolution, he says, ‘At all times give thanks; pray without ceasing⁴⁰¹⁴.’ For he knew that believers are strong while employed in thanksgiving, and that rejoicing they pass over the walls of the enemy, like those saints who said, ‘Through Thee will we pierce through our enemies, and by my God I will leap over a wall⁴⁰¹⁵.’ At all times let us stand firm, but especially now, although many afflictions overtake us, and many heretics are furious against us. Let us then, my beloved brethren, celebrate with thanksgiving the holy feast which now draws near to us, ‘girding up the loins of our minds⁴⁰¹⁶,’ like our Saviour Jesus Christ, of Whom it is written, ‘Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins⁴⁰¹⁷.’ Each one of us having in his hand the staff which came out of the root of Jesse, and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel⁴⁰¹⁸, let us keep the feast as Paul saith, ‘Not with the old leaven, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth⁴⁰¹⁹;’ reverently trusting that we are reconciled through Christ, and not departing from faith in Him, nor do we defile ourselves together with heretics, and strangers to the truth, whose conversation and whose will degrade them. But rejoicing in afflictions, we break through the furnace of iron and darkness, and pass, unharmed, over that terrible Red Sea. Thus also, when we look upon the confusion of heretics, we shall, with Moses, sing that great song of praise, and say, ‘We will sing unto the Lord, for He is to be gloriously praised⁴⁰²⁰.’ Thus, singing praises, and seeing that the sin which is in us has been cast into the sea, we pass over to the wilderness. And being first purified by the fast of forty days, by prayers, and fastings, and discipline, and good works, we shall be able to eat the holy Passover in Jerusalem.

6. The beginning of the fast of forty days is on the fifth of Phamenoth (Mar. 1); and when, as I have said, we have first been purified and prepared by those days, we begin the holy week of the great Easter on the tenth of Pharmuthi (Apr. 5), in which, my beloved brethren, we should use more prolonged prayers, and fastings, and watchings, that we may be enabled to anoint our lintels with precious blood, and to escape the destroyer⁴⁰²¹. Let us rest then, on the fifteenth of the month Pharmuthi (Apr. 10), for on the evening of that Saturday we hear the angels’ message, ‘Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is risen⁴⁰²².’ Immediately afterwards that great Sunday receives

4013 Phil. iv. 6.

4014 1 Thess. v. 17.

4015 Ps. xviii. 29.

4016 1 Pet. i. 13.

4017 Is. xi. 5.

4018 Ib. xi. 1; Eph. vi. 15.

4019 1 Cor. v. 8.

4020 Exod. xv. 1.

4021 Exod. xii. 7, 23.

4022 Luke xxiv. 5.

us, I mean on the sixteenth of the same month Pharmuthi (April 11), on which our Lord having risen, gave us peace towards our neighbours. When then we have kept the feast according to His will, let us add from that first day in the holy week, the seven weeks of Pentecost, and as we then receive the grace of the Spirit, let us at all times give thanks to the Lord; through Whom to the Father be glory and dominion, in the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Salute one another with a holy kiss. The brethren who are with me salute you. I pray, brethren beloved and longed for, that ye may have health, and that ye may be mindful of us in the Lord.

Here endeth the third Festal Letter of holy Athanasius.

Letter IV.—*For 332. Easter-day vii Pharmuthi*⁴⁰²³, *iv Non. Apr.*; *Æra Dioclet. 48*; *Coss. Fabius Pacatianus, Mæcilius Hilarianus; Præfect, Hyginus*⁴⁰²⁴; *Indict. v.*

He sent this Letter from the Emperor's Court by a soldier⁴⁰²⁵.

I send unto you, my beloved, late and beyond the accustomed time⁴⁰²⁶; yet I trust you will forgive the delay, on account of my protracted journey, and because I have been tried with illness. Being hindered by these two causes, and unusually severe storms having occurred, I have deferred writing to you. But notwithstanding my long journeys, and my grievous sickness, I have not forgotten to give you the festal notification, and, in discharge of my duty, I now announce to you the feast. For although the date of this letter is later⁴⁰²⁷ than that usual for this announcement, it should still be considered well-timed, since our enemies having been put to shame and reprov'd by the Church, because they persecuted us without a cause⁴⁰²⁸, we may now sing a festal song of praise, uttering the triumphant hymn against Pharaoh; 'We will sing unto the Lord, for He is to be gloriously praised; the horse and his rider He hath cast into the sea⁴⁰²⁹.'

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⁴⁰²³ The Syriac text has 17th instead of 7th. There is the same error in the index. The correct day is given towards the end of the Letter.

⁴⁰²⁴ There is sometimes a difficulty, in the absence of independent testimony, in ascertaining the exact orthography of the proper names, from the loose manner in which they are written in the Syriac. Here, however, it is clearly Hyginus, as in Sozomen, lib. ii. c. 25, Larsow writes it Eugenius. He has also the 46th instead of the 48th of the Diocletian Æra. The word 'Fabius' is not clear. In Baronii *Annal. Eccles*, however, we find it Ovinus.

⁴⁰²⁵ See note 6 at the end of the Letter.

⁴⁰²⁶ In the index it is stated that the *third*, but not that the *fourth*, Letter was sent late, but see *Letter 3*, note 1.

⁴⁰²⁷ i.e. too late to give notice of the beginning of Lent, *infr.* §5, and *Letter 5*, §6.

⁴⁰²⁸ Constantine, in his letter, *supr.* p. 133, speaks of the envy of the accusers of Athan. and of their unsuccessful efforts to criminate him.

⁴⁰²⁹ Exod. xv. 1.

2. It is well, my beloved, to proceed from feast to feast; again festal meetings, again holy vigils arouse our minds, and compel our intellect to keep vigil unto contemplation of good things. Let us not fulfil these days like those that mourn, but, by enjoying spiritual food, let us seek to silence our fleshly lusts⁴⁰³⁰. For by these means we shall have strength to overcome our adversaries, like blessed Judith⁴⁰³¹, when having first exercised herself in fastings and prayers, she overcame the enemies, and killed Olophernes. And blessed Esther, when destruction was about to come on all her race, and the nation of Israel was ready to perish, defeated the fury of the tyrant by no other means than by fasting and prayer to God, and changed the ruin of her people into safety⁴⁰³². Now as those days are considered feasts for Israel, so also in old time feasts were appointed when an enemy was slain, or a conspiracy against the people broken up, and Israel delivered. Therefore blessed Moses of old time ordained the great feast of the Passover, and our celebration of it, because, namely, Pharaoh was killed, and the people were delivered from bondage. For in those times it was especially, when those who tyrannized over the people had been slain, that temporal feasts and holidays were observed in Judæa⁴⁰³³.

3. Now, however, that the devil, that tyrant against the whole world, is slain, we do not approach a temporal feast, my beloved, but an eternal and heavenly. Not in shadows do we shew it forth, but we come to it in truth. For they being filled with the flesh of a dumb lamb, accomplished the feast, and having anointed their door-posts with the blood, implored aid against the destroyer⁴⁰³⁴. But now we, eating of the Word of the Father, and having the lintels of our hearts sealed with the blood of the New Testament⁴⁰³⁵, acknowledge the grace given us from the Saviour, who said, 'Behold, I have given unto you to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy⁴⁰³⁶.' For no more does death reign; but instead of death henceforth is life, since our Lord said, 'I am the life⁴⁰³⁷;' so that everything is filled with joy and gladness; as it is written, 'The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.' For when death reigned, 'sitting down by the rivers of Babylon, we wept⁴⁰³⁸,' and mourned, because we felt the bitterness of captivity; but now that death and the kingdom of the devil is abolished, everything is entirely filled with joy and gladness. And God is no longer known only in Judæa, but in all the earth, 'their voice hath gone forth, and the knowledge of Him

4030 τοῖς τῆς σαρκὸς ἐπιτιμῶντες πάθεισιν. S. Cyril. *Hom. Pasch.* xx.

4031 Judith xiii. 8.

4032 Esther iv. 16.

4033 Cf. Esther ix. 20–28; Judith ix. xv.

4034 Conf. S. Cyril. *Hom. Pasch.* xxiv. p. 293. Ed. Paris, 1638.

4035 Matt. xxvi. 28.

4036 Luke x. 19, *Vit. Ant.* 30.

4037 John xiv. 6.

4038 Ps. xcvi. 1; cxxxvii. 1.

hath filled all the earth⁴⁰³⁹.’ What follows, my beloved, is obvious; that we should approach such a feast, not with filthy raiment, but having clothed our minds with pure garments. For we need in this to put on our Lord Jesus⁴⁰⁴⁰, that we may be able to celebrate the feast with Him. Now we are clothed with Him when we love virtue, and are enemies to wickedness, when we exercise ourselves in temperance and mortify lasciviousness, when we love righteousness before iniquity, when we honour sufficiency, and have strength of mind, when we do not forget the poor, but open our doors to all men, when we assist humble-mindedness, but hate pride.

4. By these things Israel of old, having first, as in a figure, striven for the victory, came to the feast, for these things were then foreshadowed and typified. But we, my beloved, the shadow having received its fulfilment, and the types being accomplished, should no longer consider the feast typical, neither should we go up to Jerusalem which is here below, to sacrifice the Passover, according to the unseasonable observance of the Jews, lest, while the season passes away, we should be regarded as acting unseasonably⁴⁰⁴¹; but, in accordance with the injunction of the Apostles, let us go beyond the types, and sing the new song of praise. For perceiving this, and being assembled together with the Truth⁴⁰⁴², they drew near, and said unto our Saviour, ‘Where wilt Thou that we should make ready for Thee the Passover⁴⁰⁴³?’ For no longer were these things to be done which belonged to Jerusalem which is beneath; neither there alone was the feast to be celebrated, but wherever God willed it to be. Now He willed it to be in every place, so that ‘in every place incense and a sacrifice might be offered to Him⁴⁰⁴⁴.’ For although, as in the historical account, in no other place might the feast of the Passover be kept save only in Jerusalem, yet when the things pertaining to that time were fulfilled, and those which belonged to shadows had passed away, and the preaching of the Gospel was about to extend everywhere; when indeed the disciples were spreading the feast in all places, they asked the Saviour, ‘Where wilt Thou that we shall make ready?’ The Saviour also, since He was changing the typical for the spiritual, promised them that they should no longer eat the flesh of a lamb, but His own, saying, ‘Take, eat and drink; this is My body, and My blood⁴⁰⁴⁵.’ When we are thus nourished by these things, we also, my beloved, shall truly keep the feast of the Passover.

5. We begin on the first of Pharmuthi (Mar. 27), and rest on the sixth of the same month (Apr. 1), on the evening of the seventh day; and the holy first day of the week having risen upon us on the seventh of the same Pharmuthi (Apr. 2), celebrate we too the days of holy Pentecost following

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⁴⁰³⁹ Ib. lxxvi. 1; xix. 4.

⁴⁰⁴⁰ Cf. Rom. xiii. 14.

⁴⁰⁴¹ Cf. *Letter* i. (beginning)

⁴⁰⁴² & 139 . I understand this as referring to Christ. Vid. John xiv. 6.

⁴⁰⁴³ Matt. xxvi. 17.

⁴⁰⁴⁴ Mal. i. 11.

⁴⁰⁴⁵ Matt. xxvi. 26–28

thereon, shewing forth through them the world to come⁴⁰⁴⁶, so that henceforth we may be with Christ for ever, praising God over all in Christ Jesus, and through Him, with all saints, we say unto the Lord, Amen. Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the brethren who are with me salute you. We have sent this letter from the Court, by the hand of an attendant officer⁴⁰⁴⁷, to whom it was given by Ablavius⁴⁰⁴⁸, the Præfect of the Prætorium, who fears God in truth. For I am at the Court, having been summoned by the emperor Constantine to see him. But the Meletians, who were present there, being envious, sought our ruin before the Emperor. But they were put to shame and driven away thence as calumniators, being confuted by many things. Those who were driven away were Callinicus, Ison, Eudæmon, and Gelœus⁴⁰⁴⁹ Hieracammon, who, on account of the shame of his name, calls himself Eulogius.

Here endeth the fourth Festal Letter of holy Athanasius.

Letter V.—*For 333. Easter-day*⁴⁰⁵⁰, *Coss. Dalmatius and Zenophilus; Præfect, Paternus*⁴⁰⁵¹; *vi Indict.*; *xvii Kal. Maii, xx Pharmuthi; xv Moon; vii Gods; Æra Dioclet. 49.*

We duly proceed, my brethren, from feasts to feasts, duly from prayers to prayers, we advance from fasts to fasts, and join holy-days to holy-days. Again the time has arrived which brings to us a new beginning⁴⁰⁵², even the announcement of the blessed Passover, in which the Lord was sacrificed. We eat, as it were, the food of life, and constantly thirsting we delight our souls at all times, as from a fountain, in His precious blood. For we continually and ardently desire; He stands ready for those who thirst; and for those who thirst there is the word of our Saviour, which, in His loving-kindness, He uttered on the day of the feast; ‘If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink⁴⁰⁵³.’ Nor was it then alone when any one drew near to Him, that He cured his thirst; but whenever any one seeks, there is free access for him to the Saviour. For the grace of the feast is not limited to one time, nor does its splendid brilliancy decline; but it is always near, enlightening

⁴⁰⁴⁶ Cf. Bingham, xx. ch. 6; Cass. *Coll.* xxi. 11; Cyril uses the same comparison towards the end of his 26th Paschal discourse.

⁴⁰⁴⁷ ‘Officilius.’ Cureton considers this may be an error for the Latin Officialis.

⁴⁰⁴⁸ Ablavius, Præfect of the East, the minister and favourite of Constantine the Great, was murdered after the death of the latter. He was consul in the preceding year. Zozimus ii. 40. (*Smith’s Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Biography.*)

⁴⁰⁴⁹ The name means ‘Laughable.’

⁴⁰⁵⁰ See *supr.* Table D, and note. The full moon (‘Moon xiv’) was really on Pharm. 20, but seems to have been calculated to fall on the previous day.

⁴⁰⁵¹ The Syriac seems to represent ‘Paterius,’ not ‘Paternus’ as Larsow writes it. A former præfect of Egypt was called Paterius, according to Gelas. *Cyz.* in Hard. *Conc.* i. 459.

⁴⁰⁵² Cf. Rev. iii. 14, *c. Apoll.* i. 20.

⁴⁰⁵³ John vii. 37. The Syriac is rather obscure here.

the minds of those who earnestly desire it⁴⁰⁵⁴. For therein is constant virtue, for those who are illuminated in their minds, and meditate on the divine Scriptures day and night, like the man to whom a blessing is given, as it is written in the sacred Psalms; ‘Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of corrupters. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night⁴⁰⁵⁵.’ For it is not the sun, or the moon, or the host of those other stars which illumines him, but he glitters with the high effulgence of God over all.

2. For it is God, my beloved, even the God Who at first established the feast for us, Who vouchsafes the celebration of it year by year. He both brought about the slaying of His Son for salvation, and gave us this reason for the holy feast, to which every year bears witness, as often as at this season the feast is proclaimed. This also leads us on from the cross through this world to that which is before us, and God produces even now from it the joy of glorious salvation, bringing us to the same assembly, and in every place uniting all of us in spirit; appointing us common prayers, and a common grace proceeding from the feast. For this is the marvel of His loving-kindness, that He should gather together in the same place those who are at a distance; and make those who appear to be far off in the body, to be near together in unity of spirit.

3. Wherefore then, my beloved, do we not acknowledge the grace as becometh the feast? Wherefore do we not make a return to our Benefactor? It is indeed impossible to make an adequate return to God; still, it is a wicked thing for us who receive the gracious gift, not to acknowledge it. Nature itself manifests our inability; but our own will reproves our unthankfulness. Therefore the blessed Paul, when admiring the greatness of the gift of God, said, ‘And who is sufficient for these things⁴⁰⁵⁶?’ For He made the world free by the blood of the Saviour; then, again, He has caused the grave to be trodden down by the Saviour’s death, and furnished a way to the heavenly gates free from obstacles to those who are going up⁴⁰⁵⁷. Wherefore, one of the saints, while he acknowledged the grace, but was insufficient to repay it, said, ‘What shall I render unto the Lord for all He has done unto me⁴⁰⁵⁸?’ For instead of death he had received life, instead of bondage⁴⁰⁵⁹, freedom, and instead of the grave, the kingdom of heaven. For of old time, ‘death reigned from Adam to Moses;’ but now the divine voice hath said, ‘To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.’ And the saints, being sensible of this, said, ‘Except the Lord had helped me, my soul had almost dwelt in hell.⁴⁰⁶⁰’

⁴⁰⁵⁴ Vid. note 2, to *Letter 1*.

⁴⁰⁵⁵ Ps. i. 1, 2.

⁴⁰⁵⁶ 2 Cor. ii. 17.

⁴⁰⁵⁷ This sentence is preserved in the original Greek in Cosmas, *Topogr. Christ.* p. 316.

⁴⁰⁵⁸ Ps. cxvi. 12.

⁴⁰⁵⁹ Pseudo-Ath. in *Matt.* xxi. 9. (Migne xxviii. 1025), after quoting the same passage from the Epistle to the Romans, says,

ἀλλ’ ἐπεδήμησεν ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς λυτρούμενος τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους, καὶ ζωοποιῶν τοὺς τεθνατωμένους

⁴⁰⁶⁰ Rom. v. 14; Luke xxiii. 43; Ps. xciv. 17

Besides all this, being powerless to make a return, he yet acknowledged the gift, and wrote finally, saying, ‘I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord; precious in His sight is the death of His saints⁴⁰⁶¹.’

With regard to the cup, the Lord said, ‘Are ye able to drink of that cup which I am about to drink of?’ And when the disciples assented, the Lord said, ‘Ye shall indeed drink of My cup; but that ye should sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give; but to those for whom it is prepared⁴⁰⁶².’ Therefore, my beloved, let us be sensible of the gift, though we are found insufficient to repay it. As we have ability, let us meet the occasion. For although nature is not able, with things unworthy of the Word, to return a recompense for such benefits, yet let us render Him thanks while we persevere in piety. And how can we more abide in piety than when we acknowledge God, Who in His love to mankind has bestowed on us such benefits? (For thus we shall obediently keep the law, and observe its commandments. And, further, we shall not, as unthankful persons, be accounted transgressors of the law, or do those things which ought to be hated, for the Lord loveth the thankful); when too we offer ourselves to the Lord, like the saints, when we subscribe ourselves entirely [as] living henceforth not to ourselves, but to the Lord Who died for us, as also the blessed Paul did, when he said, ‘I am crucified with Christ, yet I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me⁴⁰⁶³.’

4. Now our life, my brethren, truly consists in our denying all bodily things, and continuing steadfast in those only of our Saviour. Therefore the present season requires of us, that we should not only utter such words, but should also imitate the deeds of the saints. But we imitate them, when we acknowledge Him who died, and no longer live unto ourselves, but Christ henceforth lives in us; when we render a recompense to the Lord to the utmost of our power, though when we make a return we give nothing of our own, but those things which we have before received from Him, this being especially of His grace, that He should require, as from us, His own gifts. He bears witness to this when He says, ‘My offerings are My own gifts⁴⁰⁶⁴.’ That is, those things which you give Me are yours, as having received them from Me, but they are the gifts of God. And let us offer to the Lord every virtue, and that true holiness which is in Him, and in piety let us keep the feast to Him with those things which He has hallowed for us. Let us thus engage in the holy fasts, as having been prescribed by Him, and by means of which we find the way to God. But let us not be like the heathen, or the ignorant Jews, or as the heretics and schismatics of the present time. For the heathen think the accomplishment of the feast is in the abundance of food; the Jews, erring in the type and shadow, think it still such; the schismatics keep it in separate places, and with vain imaginations. But let us, my brethren, be superior to the heathen, in keeping the feast with sincerity

⁴⁰⁶¹ Ps. cxvi. 13, 15.

⁴⁰⁶² Matt. xx. 22, 23.

⁴⁰⁶³ Gal. ii. 20.

⁴⁰⁶⁴ Num. xxviii. 2, LXX.



of soul, and purity of body; to the Jews, in no longer receiving the type and the shadow, but as having been gloriously illumined with the light of truth, and as looking upon the Sun of Righteousness⁴⁰⁶⁵; to the schismatics, in not rending the coat of Christ, but in one house, even in the Catholic Church, let us eat the Passover of the Lord, Who, by ordaining His holy laws, guided us towards virtue, and counselled the abstinence of this feast. For the Passover is indeed abstinence from evil for exercise of virtue, and a departure from death unto life. This may be learnt even from the type of old time. For then they toiled earnestly to pass from Egypt to Jerusalem, but now we depart from death to life; they then passed from Pharaoh to Moses, but now we rise from the devil to the Saviour. And as, at that time, the type of deliverance bore witness every year, so now we commemorate our salvation. We fast meditating on death, that we may be able to live; and we watch, not as mourners, but as they that wait for the Lord, when He shall have returned from the wedding, so that we may vie with each other in the triumph, hastening to announce the sign of victory over death.

5. Would therefore, O my beloved, that as the word requires, we might here so govern ourselves at all times and entirely, and so live, as never to forget the noble acts of God, nor to depart from the practice of virtue! As also the Apostolic voice exhorts; ‘Remember Jesus Christ, that He rose from the dead⁴⁰⁶⁶.’ Not that any limited season of remembrance was appointed, for at all times He should be in our thoughts. But because of the slothfulness of many, we delay from day to day. Let us then begin in these days. To this end a time of remembrance is permitted, that it may show forth to the saints the reward of their calling, and may exhort the careless while reproofing them⁴⁰⁶⁷. Therefore in all the remaining days, let us persevere in virtuous conduct, repenting as is our duty, of all that we have neglected, whatever it may be; for there is no one free from defilement, though his course may have been but one hour on the earth, as Job, that man of surpassing fortitude, testifies. But, ‘stretching forth to those things that are to come⁴⁰⁶⁸,’ let us pray that we may not eat the Passover unworthily, lest we be exposed to dangers. For to those who keep the feast in purity, the Passover is heavenly food; but to those who observe it profanely and contemptuously, it is a danger and reproach. For it is written, ‘Whosoever shall eat and drink unworthily, is guilty of the death of our Lord⁴⁰⁶⁹.’ Wherefore, let us not merely proceed to perform the festal rites, but let us be prepared to draw near to the divine Lamb, and to touch heavenly food. Let us cleanse our hands, let us purify the body. Let us keep our whole mind from guile; not giving up ourselves to excess, and to lusts,

⁴⁰⁶⁵ Mal. iv. 2.

⁴⁰⁶⁶ 2 Tim. ii. 8.

⁴⁰⁶⁷ The reasoning of Athan. is to this effect. The due observance of such festival will have its effect in quickening our *habitual* meditation on the resurrection. The same mode of reasoning might be applied to all the other Christian festivals.

⁴⁰⁶⁸ Job xiv. 4 (LXX.); Phil. iii. 13.

⁴⁰⁶⁹ 1 Cor. xi. 27.

but occupying ourselves entirely with our Lord, and with divine doctrines; so that, being altogether pure, we may be able to partake of the Word.⁴⁰⁷⁰

6. We begin the holy fast on the fourteenth of Pharmuthi (Apr. 9), on the [first] evening of the week⁴⁰⁷¹; and having ceased on the nineteenth of the same month Pharmuthi (Apr. 14), the first day of the holy week dawns upon us on the twentieth of the same month Pharmuthi (Apr. 15), to which we join the seven weeks of Pentecost; with prayers, and fellowship with our neighbour, and love towards one another, and that peaceable will which is above all. For so shall we be heirs of the kingdom of heaven, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom to the Father be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. All the brethren who are with me salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss.

Here endeth the fifth Festal Letter of holy Athanasius.

Letter VI.—*For 334. Easter-day, xii Pharmuthi, vii Id. April; xvii Moon; Æra Dioclet. 50; Coss. Optatus Patricius, Anicius Paulinus; Præfect, Philagrius⁴⁰⁷², the Cappadocian; vii Indict.*

Now again, my beloved, has God brought us to the season of the feast, and through His loving-kindness we have reached the period of assembly for it. For that God who brought Israel out of Egypt, even He at this time calls us to the feast, saying by Moses, ‘Observe the month of new fruits⁴⁰⁷³, and keep the Passover to the Lord thy God⁴⁰⁷⁴:’ and by the prophet, ‘Keep thy feasts, O Judah; pay to the Lord thy vows⁴⁰⁷⁵.’ If then God Himself loves the feast, and calls us to it, it is not right, my brethren, that it should be delayed, or observed carelessly; but with alacrity and zeal we should come to it, so that having begun joyfully here, we may also receive an earnest of that heavenly feast. For if we diligently celebrate the feast here, we shall doubtless receive the perfect joy which is in heaven, as the Lord says; ‘With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, that I will not eat it, until it is fulfilled with you in the kingdom of God⁴⁰⁷⁶.’ Now we eat it if, understanding the reason of the feast, and acknowledging the Deliverer, we conduct ourselves in accordance with His grace, as Paul saith; ‘So that we may keep the Feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity

⁴⁰⁷⁰ Cf. 2 Pet. i. 4

⁴⁰⁷¹ Syr. ‘sabbath.’

⁴⁰⁷² The index gives still Paternus for Letters 6 and 7. On Philagrius, see p. 93, note 2.

⁴⁰⁷³ Cf. i. 9, n. 12.

⁴⁰⁷⁴ Deut. xvi. 1.

⁴⁰⁷⁵ Nahum i. 15.

⁴⁰⁷⁶ Luke xxii. 15, 16.

and truth⁴⁰⁷⁷.’ For the Lord died in those days, that we should no longer do the deeds of death. He gave His life, that we might preserve our own from the snares of the devil. And, what is most wonderful, the Word became flesh, that we should no longer live in the flesh, but in spirit should worship God, who is Spirit. He who is not so disposed, abuses the days, and does not keep the feast, but like an unthankful person finds fault with the grace, and honours the days overmuch, while he does not supplicate the Lord who in those days redeemed him. Let him by all means hear, though fancying that he keeps the feast, the Apostolic voice reproving him; ‘Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years: I fear lest I have laboured among you in vain⁴⁰⁷⁸.’

2. For the feast is not on account of the days; but for the Lord’s sake, who then suffered for us, we celebrate it, for ‘our Passover Christ, is sacrificed⁴⁰⁷⁹.’ Even as Moses, when teaching Israel not to consider the feast as pertaining to the days, but to the Lord, said, ‘It is the Lord’s Passover⁴⁰⁸⁰.’ To the Jews, when they thought they were keeping the Passover, because they persecuted the Lord, the feast was useless; since it no longer bore the name of the Lord, even according to their own testimony. It was not the Passover of the Lord, but that of the Jews⁴⁰⁸¹. The Passover was named after the Jews, my brethren, because they denied the Lord of the Passover. On this account, the Lord, turning away His face from such a doctrine of theirs, saith, ‘Your new moons and your sabbaths My soul hateth⁴⁰⁸².’

3. So now, those who keep the Passover in like manner, the Lord again reproves, as He did those lepers who were cleansed, when He loved the one as thankful, but was angry with the others as ungrateful, because they did not acknowledge their Deliverer, but thought more of the cure of the leprosy than of Him who healed them. ‘But one of them when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell on his face at the feet of Jesus giving Him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but those nine—whence are there none found who returned to give glory to God, but this stranger⁴⁰⁸³?’ And there was more given to him than to the rest; for being cleansed from his leprosy, he heard from the Lord, ‘Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee⁴⁰⁸⁴.’ For he who gives thanks, and he who glorifies, have kindred feelings, in that they bless their Helper for the benefits they have received. So the Apostle exhorts all men to this, saying, ‘Glorify God with your body;’ and the prophet

⁴⁰⁷⁷ 1 Cor. v. 8.

⁴⁰⁷⁸ Gal. iv. 10, 11.

⁴⁰⁷⁹ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁴⁰⁸⁰ Exod. xii. 11.

⁴⁰⁸¹ Cf. John vi. 4. ‘And the passover, *a feast of the Jews*, was nigh.’ Cf. Origenis *Comment. in Joannem*, tom. x. §11. p. 172. ed. 1759.

⁴⁰⁸² Is. i. 14.

⁴⁰⁸³ Luke xvii. 15, &c.

⁴⁰⁸⁴ Ib. 19

commands, saying, 'Give glory to God.' Although testimony was borne by Caiaphas⁴⁰⁸⁵ against our Redeemer, and He was set at nought by the Jews, and was condemned by Pilate in those days, yet exalted exceedingly and most mighty was the voice of the Father which came to Him; 'I have glorified, and will glorify again⁴⁰⁸⁶.' For those things which He suffered for our sake have passed away; but those which belong to Him as the Saviour remain for ever.

4. But in our commemoration of these things, my brethren, let us not be occupied with meats, but let us glorify the Lord, let us become fools for Him who died for us, even as Paul said; 'For if we are foolish, it is to God; or if we are sober-minded, it is to you; since because one died for all men, therefore all were dead to Him; and He died for all, that we who live should not henceforth live to ourselves, but to Him who died for us, and rose again⁴⁰⁸⁷.' No longer then ought we to live to ourselves, but, as servants to the Lord. And not in vain should we receive the grace, as the time is especially an acceptable one⁴⁰⁸⁸, and the day of salvation hath dawned, even the death of our Redeemer⁴⁰⁸⁹. For even for our sakes the Word came down, and being incorruptible, put on a corruptible body for the salvation of all of us. Of which Paul was confident, saying, 'This corruptible must put on incorruption⁴⁰⁹⁰.' The Lord too was sacrificed, that by His blood He might abolish death. Full well did He once, in a certain place, blame those who participated vainly in the shedding of His blood, while they did not delight themselves in the flesh of the Word, saying, 'What profit is there in my blood, that I go down to corruption⁴⁰⁹¹?' This does not mean that the descent of the Lord was without profit, for it gained the whole world; but rather that after He had thus suffered, sinners would prefer to suffer loss than to profit by it. For He regarded our salvation as a delight and a peculiar gain; while on the contrary He looked upon our destruction as loss.

5. Also in the Gospel, He praises those who increased the grace twofold, both him who made ten talents of five, and him who made four talents of two, as those who had profited, and turned them to good account; but him who hid the talent He cast out as wanting, saying to him, 'Thou wicked servant! oughtest thou not to have put My money to the exchangers? then at My coming I should have received Mine own with interest. Take, therefore, from him the talent, and give it to him that hath ten talents. For to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth⁴⁰⁹².' For it is not His will



4085 1 Cor. vi. 20; Is. xlii. 12; Matt. xxvi. 65.

4086 John xii. 28.

4087 2 Cor. v. 13–15

4088 Ib. vi. 1, 2.

4089 Cf. S. Cyril. *Hom. Pasch.* xxiv. sub init.

4090 1 Cor. xv. 53.

4091 Ps. xxx. 9.

4092 Matt. xxv. 26–30

that the grace we have received should be unprofitable; but He requires us to take pains to render Him His own fruits, as the blessed Paul saith; ‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace⁴⁰⁹³.’ Having therefore this right resolution, and owing no man anything, but rather giving everything to every man, he was a teacher of the like rightness of principle, saying, ‘Render to all their dues⁴⁰⁹⁴.’ He was like those sent by the householder to receive the fruits of the vineyard from the husbandmen⁴⁰⁹⁵; for he exhorted all men to render a return. But Israel despised and would not render, for their will was not right, nay moreover they killed those that were sent, and not even before the Lord of the vineyard were they ashamed, but even He was slain by them. Verily, when He came and found no fruit in them, He cursed them through the fig-tree, saying, ‘Let there be henceforth no fruit from thee⁴⁰⁹⁶.’ and the fig-tree was dead and fruitless so that even the disciples wondered when it withered away.

6. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet; ‘I will take away from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the scent of myrrh, and the light of a lamp, and the whole land shall be destroyed⁴⁰⁹⁷.’ For the whole service of the law has been abolished from them, and henceforth and for ever they remain without a feast. And they observe not the Passover; for how can they? They have no abiding place, but they wander everywhere. And they eat unleavened bread contrary to the law, since they are unable first to sacrifice the lamb, as they were commanded to do when eating unleavened bread. But in every place they transgress the law, and as the judgments of God require, they keep days of grief instead of gladness. Now the cause of this to them was the slaying of the Lord, and that they did not reverence the Only-Begotten. At this time the altogether wicked heretics and ignorant schismatics are in the same case; the one in that they slay the Word, the other in that they rend the coat. They too remain expelled from the feast, because they live without godliness and knowledge, and emulate the conduct shewn in the matter of Bar-Abbas the robber, whom the Jews desired instead of the Saviour. Therefore the Lord cursed them under the figure of the fig-tree. Yet even thus He spared them in His loving-kindness, not destroying them root and all. For He did not curse the root, but [said], that no man should eat fruit of it thenceforth. When He did this, He abolished the shadow, causing it to wither; but preserved the root, so that we might [not]⁴⁰⁹⁸ be grafted upon it; ‘they too, if they abide not in unbelief, may attain to be grafted into their own olive tree⁴⁰⁹⁹.’ Now when the

⁴⁰⁹³ Gal. v. 22.

⁴⁰⁹⁴ Rom. xiii. 7.

⁴⁰⁹⁵ Matt. xxi. 33.

⁴⁰⁹⁶ Ib. 19

⁴⁰⁹⁷ Jer. xxv. 10.

⁴⁰⁹⁸ The negative (which is here placed within brackets) is found in the Syriac text; but there is little doubt that it is an error.

⁴⁰⁹⁹ Rom. xi. 23.

Lord had cursed them because of their negligence, He removed from them the new moons, the true lamb, and that which is truly the Passover.

7. But to us it came: there came too the solemn day, in which we ought to call to the feast with a trumpet⁴¹⁰⁰, and separate ourselves to the Lord with thanksgiving, considering it as our own festival⁴¹⁰¹. For we are bound to celebrate it, not to ourselves but to the Lord; and to rejoice, not in ourselves but in the Lord, who bore our griefs and said, ‘My soul is sorrowful unto death⁴¹⁰².’ For the heathen, and all those who are strangers to our faith, keep feasts according to their own wills, and have no peace, since they commit evil against God. But the saints, as they live to the Lord also keep the feast to Him, saying, ‘I will rejoice in Thy salvation,’ and, ‘my soul shall be joyful in the Lord.’ The commandment is common to them, ‘Rejoice, ye righteous, in the Lord⁴¹⁰³’ — so that they also may be gathered together, to sing that common and festal Psalm, ‘Come, let us rejoice⁴¹⁰⁴,’ not in ourselves, but, ‘in the Lord.’

8. For thus the patriarch Abraham rejoiced not to see his own day, but that of the Lord; and thus looking forward ‘he saw it, and was glad⁴¹⁰⁵.’ And when he was tried, by faith he offered up Isaac, and sacrificed his only-begotten son—he who had received the promises. And, in offering his son, he worshipped the Son of God. And, being restrained from sacrificing Isaac, he saw the Messiah in the ram⁴¹⁰⁶, which was offered up instead as a sacrifice to God. The patriarch was tried, through Isaac, not however that he was sacrificed, but He who was pointed out in Isaiah; ‘He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers he shall be speechless⁴¹⁰⁷,’ but He took away the sin of the world. And on this account [Abraham] was restrained from laying his hand on the lad, lest the Jews, taking occasion from the sacrifice of Isaac, should reject the prophetic declarations concerning our Saviour, even all of them, but more especially those uttered by the Psalmist; ‘Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not; a body Thou hast prepared Me⁴¹⁰⁸,’ and should refer all such things as these to the son of Abraham.



⁴¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Letter i. S. Cyril, Hom. i. de Festis Pasch.* vol. v. pt. 2, p. 6.

⁴¹⁰¹ The Passover is no longer to be a feast of the Jews: it is to be celebrated by Christians as a festival of the Lord. Vid. §2. n. 10.

⁴¹⁰² Matt. xxvi. 38.

⁴¹⁰³ Ps. ix. 14, xxxv. 9; Ib. xxxiii. 1.

⁴¹⁰⁴ Ps. xcvi. 1.

⁴¹⁰⁵ John viii. 56; Heb. xi. 17.

⁴¹⁰⁶ Gen. xxii. 15. The Syriac, here rendered by ‘ram,’ is the usual word for sheep, common gender. It is the same word that is used directly after in the quotation from Isaiah, and rendered ‘lamb.’

⁴¹⁰⁷ Is. liii. 7.

⁴¹⁰⁸ Ps. xl. 6.

9. For the sacrifice was not properly the setting to rights⁴¹⁰⁹ of Isaac, but of Abraham who also offered, and by that was tried. Thus God accepted the will of the offerer, but prevented that which was offered from being sacrificed. For the death of Isaac did not procure freedom to the world, but that of our Saviour alone, by whose stripes we all are healed⁴¹¹⁰. For He raised up the falling, healed the sick, satisfied those who were hungry, and filled the poor, and, what is more wonderful, raised us all from the dead; having abolished death, He has brought us from affliction and sighing to the rest and gladness of this feast, a joy which reacheth even to heaven. For not we alone are affected by this, but because of it, even the heavens rejoice with us, and the whole church of the firstborn, written in heaven⁴¹¹¹, is made glad together, as the prophet proclaims, saying, 'Rejoice, ye heavens, for the Lord hath had mercy upon Israel. Shout, ye foundations of the earth. Cry out with joy, ye mountains, ye high places, and all the trees which are in them, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and Israel hath been glorified⁴¹¹².' And again; 'Rejoice, and be glad, ye heavens; let the hills melt into gladness, for the Lord hath had mercy on His people, and comforted the oppressed of the people⁴¹¹³.'

10. The whole creation keeps a feast, my brethren, and everything that hath breath praises the Lord⁴¹¹⁴, as the Psalmist [says], on account of the destruction of the enemies, and our salvation. And justly indeed; for if there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth⁴¹¹⁵, what should there not be over the abolition of sin, and the resurrection of the dead? Oh what a feast and how great the gladness in heaven! how must all its hosts joy and exult, as they rejoice and watch in our assemblies, those that are held continually, and especially those at Easter? For they look on sinners while they repent; on those who have turned away their faces, when they become converted; on those who formerly persisted in lusts and excess, but who now humble themselves by fastings and temperance; and, finally, on the enemy who lies weakened, lifeless, bound hand and foot, so that we may mock at him; 'Where is thy victory, O Death? where is thy sting, O Grave⁴¹¹⁶?' Let us then sing unto the Lord a song of victory.

11. Who then will lead us to such a company of angels as this? Who, coming with a desire for the heavenly feast, and the angelic holiday, will say like the prophet, 'I will pass to the place of the wondrous tabernacle, unto the house of God; with the voice of joy and praise, with the shouting of

⁴¹⁰⁹ The phrase 'setting to rights' is used for want of one that would better express the meaning. The Syriac noun is that used to render *διόρθωσις* in Heb. ix. 10, from a verb 'to make straight, set upright, or right.'

⁴¹¹⁰ Is. liii. 5.

⁴¹¹¹ Heb. xii. 23.

⁴¹¹² Is. xlv. 23.

⁴¹¹³ Is. xlix. 13.

⁴¹¹⁴ Ps. cl. 6.

⁴¹¹⁵ Luke xv. 7.

⁴¹¹⁶ 1 Cor. xv. 55. Cf. *Incarn.* 27.

those who keep festival⁴¹¹⁷?' To this course the saints also encourage us, saying, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob⁴¹¹⁸.' But not for the impure is this feast, nor is the ascent thereto for sinners; but it is for the virtuous and diligent; and for those who live according to the aim of the saints; for, 'Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place, but he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not devoted his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour. For he,' as the Psalmist adds, when he goes up, 'shall receive a blessing from the Lord⁴¹¹⁹.' Now this clearly also refers to what the Lord gives to them at the right hand, saying, 'Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you⁴¹²⁰.' But the deceitful, and he that is not pure of heart, and possesses nothing that is pure (as the Proverb saith, 'To a deceitful man there is nothing good⁴¹²¹'), shall assuredly, being a stranger, and of a different race from the saints, be accounted unworthy to eat the Passover, for 'a foreigner shall not eat of it⁴¹²².' Thus Judas, when he thought he kept the Passover, because he plotted deceit against the Saviour, was estranged from the city which is above, and from the apostolic company. For the law commanded the Passover to be eaten with due observance; but he, while eating it, was sifted of the devil⁴¹²³, who had entered his soul.

12. Wherefore let us not celebrate the feast after an earthly manner, but as keeping festival in heaven with the angels. Let us glorify the Lord, by chastity, by righteousness, and other virtues. And let us rejoice, not in ourselves, but in the Lord, that we may be inheritors with the saints. Let us keep the feast then, as Moses. Let us watch like David who rose seven times, and in the middle of the night gave thanks for the righteous judgments of God. Let us be early, as he said, 'In the morning I will stand before Thee, and Thou wilt look upon me: in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice⁴¹²⁴.' Let us fast like Daniel; let us pray without ceasing, as Paul commanded; all of us recognising the season of prayer, but especially those who are honourably married; so that having borne witness to these things, and thus having kept the feast, we may be able to enter into the joy of Christ in the kingdom of heaven⁴¹²⁵. But as Israel, when going up to Jerusalem, was first purified in the wilderness, being trained to forget the customs of Egypt, the Word by this typifying to us the holy fast of forty days, let us first be purified and freed from defilement⁴¹²⁶, so that when we

4117 Ps. xlii. 4.

4118 Is. ii. 3.

4119 Ps. xxiv. 3.

4120 Matt. xxv. 34.

4121 Prov. xiii. 13, LXX.

4122 Exod. xii. 43.

4123 Cf. Luke xxii. 31.

4124 Ps. v. 3.

4125 A line or two is preserved here in the original Greek in Cosmas *Topog. Christ.* p. 316.

4126 Gregory Nazianzen speaks of the Lenten fast as καθαρισμός προεόρτιος, vol. i. p. 715. §30. ed. Ben. fol. Par. 1778.

depart hence, having been careful of fasting, we may be able to ascend to the upper chamber⁴¹²⁷ with the Lord, to sup with Him; and may be partakers of the joy which is in heaven. In no other manner is it possible to go up to Jerusalem, and to eat the Passover, except by observing the fast of forty days.

13. We begin the fast of forty days on the first day of the month Phamenoth (Feb. 25); and having prolonged it till the fifth of Pharmuthi (Mar. 31), suspending it upon the Sundays and the Saturdays⁴¹²⁸ preceding them, we then begin again on the holy days of Easter, on the sixth of Pharmuthi (Apr. 1), and cease on the eleventh of the same month (Apr. 6), late in the evening⁴¹²⁹ of the Saturday, whence dawns on us the holy Sunday, on the twelfth of Pharmuthi (Apr. 7), which extends its beams, with unobscured grace, to all the seven weeks of the holy Pentecost. Resting on that day, let us ever keep Easter joy in Christ Jesus our Lord, through Whom, to the Father, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. All the brethren who are with me salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss.

Here endeth the sixth Festal Letter of the holy and God-clad Athanasius.

Letter VII.—*For 335. Easter-day iv Pharmuthi, iii Kal. April; xx Moon; Ær. Dioclet. 51; Coss. Julius Constantius, the brother of Augustus, Rufinus Albinus; Præfect, the same Philagrius; viii Indict.*

The blessed Paul⁴¹³⁰ wrote to the Corinthians⁴¹³¹ that he always bore in his body the dying of Jesus, not as though he alone should make that boast, but also they and we too, and in this let us be followers of him, my brethren. And let this be the customary boast of all of us at all times. In this David participated, saying in the Psalms, ‘For thy sake we die all the day; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter⁴¹³².’ Now this is becoming in us, especially in the days of the feast, when a commemoration of the death of our Saviour is held. For he who is made like Him in His death, is also diligent in virtuous practices, having mortified his members which are upon the earth⁴¹³³,

⁴¹²⁷ Cf. Luke xiv. 15

⁴¹²⁸ The Saturdays and Sundays during Lent were not observed as fasts, with the exception of the day before Easter-day. S. Ambrose says, *Quadragesima tot’s præter Sabbatum et Dominicam jejunatur diebus.* vol. i. p. 545, §34. ed. Par. 1686–90.

⁴¹²⁹ Cf. Dionys Alex. *ad Basilid.* in *Routh Rel. Sac.* iii. 226.

⁴¹³⁰ The twentieth Letter, as far as it is extant, bears a great resemblance with this. In both, the comparison between natural and spiritual food is enlarged upon, and several of the same quotations are adduced in them, to illustrate the character of sinners and their food, as contrasted with righteous, and the nourishment they derive from God.

⁴¹³¹ 2 Cor. iv. 10.

⁴¹³² Ps. xlv. 22.

⁴¹³³ Col. iii. 5.

and crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, he lives in the Spirit, and is conformed to the Spirit⁴¹³⁴. He is always mindful of God, and forgets Him not, and never does the deeds of death. Now, in order that we may bear in our body the dying of Jesus, he immediately adds the way of such fellowship, saying, 'we having the same spirit of faith, as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak⁴¹³⁵.' He adds also, speaking of the grace that arises from knowledge; 'For He that raised up Jesus, will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us before Him with you⁴¹³⁶.'

2. When by such faith and knowledge the saints have embraced this true life, they receive, doubtless, the joy which is in heaven; for which the wicked not caring, are deservedly deprived of the blessedness arising from it. For, 'let the wicked be taken away, so that he shall not see the glory of the Lord⁴¹³⁷.' For although, when they shall hear the universal proclamation of the promise, 'Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead⁴¹³⁸,' they shall rise and shall come even to heaven, knocking and saying, 'Open to us⁴¹³⁹;' nevertheless the Lord will reprove them, as those who put the knowledge of Himself far from them, saying, 'I know you not.' But the holy Spirit cries against them, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the nations that forget God.⁴¹⁴⁰' Now we say that the wicked are dead, but not in an ascetic life opposed to sin; nor do they, like the saints, bear about dying in their bodies. But it is the soul which they bury in sins and follies, drawing near to the dead, and satisfying it with dead nourishment; like young eagles which, from high places, fly upon the carcasses of the dead, and which the law prohibited, commanding figuratively, 'Thou shalt not eat the eagle, nor any other bird that feedeth on a dead carcase⁴¹⁴¹;' and it pronounced unclean whatsoever eateth the dead. But these kill the soul with lusts, and say nothing but, 'let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die⁴¹⁴².' And the kind of fruit those have who thus love pleasures, he immediately describes, adding, 'And these things are revealed in the ears of the Lord of Hosts, that this sin shall not be forgiven you until ye die⁴¹⁴³.' Yea, even while they live they shall be ashamed, because they consider their belly their lord; and when dead, they shall be tormented, because they have made a boast of such a death. To this effect also Paul bears witness, saying,

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4134 Gal. v. 25.
 4135 2 Cor. iv. 13.
 4136 Ib. 14, reading with R.V. marg. and Vulg. against Text. Rec. and Pesh.
 4137 Is. xxvi. 10 (LXX).
 4138 Eph. v. 14.
 4139 Matt. xxv. 11.
 4140 Luke xiii. 25; Ps. ix. 17.
 4141 Lev. xi. 13.
 4142 Is. xxii. 13.
 4143 Ib. 14

‘Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them⁴¹⁴⁴.’ And the divine word declared before concerning them; ‘The death of sinners is evil, and those who hate the righteous commit sin⁴¹⁴⁵.’ For bitter is the worm, and grievous the darkness, which wicked men inherit.

3. But the saints, and they who truly practise virtue, ‘mortify their members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness passions, evil concupiscence⁴¹⁴⁶,’ and, as the result of this, are pure and without spot, confiding in the promise of our Saviour, who said, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God⁴¹⁴⁷.’ These, having become dead to the world, and renounced the merchandise of the world, gain an honourable death; for, ‘precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints⁴¹⁴⁸.’ They are also able, preserving the Apostolic likeness, to say, ‘I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me⁴¹⁴⁹.’ For that is the true life, which a man lives in Christ; for although they are dead to the world, yet they dwell as it were in heaven, minding those things which are above, as he who was a lover of such a habitation said, ‘While we walk on earth, our dwelling is in heaven⁴¹⁵⁰.’ Now those who thus live, and are partakers in such virtue, are alone able to give glory to God, and this it is which essentially constitutes a feast and a holiday⁴¹⁵¹. For the feast does not consist in pleasant intercourse at meals, nor splendour⁴¹⁵² of clothing, nor days of leisure, but in the acknowledgment of God, and the offering of thanksgiving and of praise to Him⁴¹⁵³. Now this belongs to the saints alone, who live in Christ; for it is written, ‘The dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord, neither all those who go down into silence; but we who live will bless the Lord, from henceforth even for ever⁴¹⁵⁴.’ So was it with Hezekiah, who was delivered from death, and therefore praised God, saying, ‘Those who are in hades cannot praise Thee; the dead cannot bless Thee; but the living shall bless Thee, as I also do⁴¹⁵⁵.’ For to praise and bless God belongs to those only who live in Christ, and by means of this they go up to the feast; for the Passover is not of the Gentiles, nor of those who are yet Jews in the flesh; but of those who

4144 1 Cor. vi. 13.

4145 Ps. xxxiv. 21.

4146 Col. iii. 5.

4147 Matt. v. 8.

4148 Ps. cxvi. 15.

4149 Gal. ii. 20.

4150 The quotation is uncertain, but see *ad Diognet.* v. 9; cf. also Phil. iii. 20, with which the passage in the text is coupled, and ascribed to ‘the Apostle,’ in the probably spurious Homily on Matt. xxi. 2 (Migne xxviii. p. 177).

4151 Cf. *Letter* iii. ‘What else is the feast, but the service of God?’

4152 Cf. 1 Tim. ii. 9 *sub fin.*

4153 Cf. *Letter* vi. 3, note 14.

4154 Ps. cxv. 17, 18.

4155 Is. xxxviii. 18.

acknowledge the truth in Christ⁴¹⁵⁶, as he declares who was sent to proclaim such a feast; ‘Our Passover, Christ, is sacrificed⁴¹⁵⁷.’

4. Therefore, although wicked men press forward to keep the feast, and as at a feast praise God, and intrude into the Church of the saints, yet God expostulates, saying to the sinner, ‘Why dost thou talk of My ordinances?’ And the gentle Spirit rebukes them, saying, ‘Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner⁴¹⁵⁸.’ Neither hath sin any place in common with the praise of God; for the sinner has a mouth speaking perverse things, as the Proverb saith, ‘The mouth of the wicked answereth evil things⁴¹⁵⁹.’ For how is it possible for us to praise God with an impure mouth? since things which are contrary to each other cannot coexist. For what communion has righteousness with iniquity? or, what fellowship is there between light and darkness? So exclaims Paul, a minister of the Gospel⁴¹⁶⁰.



Thus it is that sinners, and all those who are aliens from the Catholic Church, heretics, and schismatics, since they are excluded from glorifying (God) with the saints, cannot properly even continue observers of the feast. But the righteous man, although he appears dying to the world, uses boldness of speech, saying, ‘I shall not die, but live, and narrate all Thy marvelous deeds⁴¹⁶¹.’ For even God is not ashamed to be called the God⁴¹⁶² of those who truly mortify their members which are upon the earth⁴¹⁶³, but live in Christ; for He is the God of the living, not of the dead. And He by His living Word quickeneth all men, and gives Him to be food and life to the saints; as the Lord declares, ‘I am the bread of life⁴¹⁶⁴.’ The Jews, because they were weak in perception, and had not exercised the senses of the soul in virtue, and did not comprehend this discourse about bread, murmured against Him, because He said, ‘I am the bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life unto men⁴¹⁶⁵.’

5. For sin has her own special bread, of her death, and calling to those who are lovers of pleasure and lack understanding, she saith, ‘Touch with delight secret bread, and sweet waters which are stolen⁴¹⁶⁶;’ for he who merely touches them knows not that that which is born from the earth perishes with her. For even when the sinner thinks to find pleasure, the end of that food is not pleasant, as

⁴¹⁵⁶ Vid. *Letter* vi. 2, note 10.

⁴¹⁵⁷ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁴¹⁵⁸ Ps. l. 16; *Ecclus.* xv. 9. These two texts are also quoted in juxta-position, *supr.* p. 224.

⁴¹⁵⁹ *Prov.* xv. 28.

⁴¹⁶⁰ 2 Cor. vi. 14.

⁴¹⁶¹ Ps. cxviii. 17.

⁴¹⁶² Cf. *Heb.* xi. 16

⁴¹⁶³ Cf. *Col.* iii. 5

⁴¹⁶⁴ *John* vi. 48.

⁴¹⁶⁵ *Ib.* 51

⁴¹⁶⁶ *Prov.* ix. 17.

the Wisdom of God saith again, ‘Bread of deceit is pleasant to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel⁴¹⁶⁷.’ And, ‘Honey droppeth from the lips of a whorish woman, which for a time is sweet to thy palate; but at the last thou shalt find it more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword⁴¹⁶⁸.’ Thus then he eats and rejoices for a little time; afterwards he spurneth it when he hath removed his soul afar. For the fool knoweth not that those who depart far from God shall perish. And besides, there is the restraint of the prophetic admonition which says, ‘What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Gihon? And what hast thou to do in the way of Asshur, to drink the waters of the rivers⁴¹⁶⁹?’ And the Wisdom of God which loves mankind forbids these things, crying, ‘But depart quickly, tarry not in the place, neither fix thine eye upon it; for thus thou shalt pass over strange waters, and depart quickly from the strange river⁴¹⁷⁰.’ She also calls them to herself, ‘For wisdom hath builded her house, and supported it on seven pillars; she hath killed her sacrifices, and mingled her wine in the goblets, and prepared her table; she hath sent forth her servants, inviting to the goblet with a loud proclamation, and saying, Whoso is foolish, let him turn in to me; and to them that lack understanding she saith, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mingled for you⁴¹⁷¹.’ And what hope is there instead of these things? ‘Forsake folly that ye may live, and seek understanding that ye may abide⁴¹⁷².’ For the bread of Wisdom is living fruit, as the Lord said; ‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever⁴¹⁷³.’ For when Israel ate of the manna, which was indeed pleasant and wonderful, yet he died, and he who ate it did not in consequence live for ever, but all that multitude died in the wilderness. The Lord teaches, saying, ‘I am the bread of life: your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which came down from heaven, that a man should eat thereof, and not die⁴¹⁷⁴.’

6. Now wicked men hunger for bread like this, for effeminate souls will hunger; but the righteous alone, being prepared, shall be satisfied, saying, ‘I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when Thy glory is seen by me⁴¹⁷⁵.’ For he who partakes of divine bread always hungers with desire; and he who thus hungers has a never-failing gift, as Wisdom promises, saying, ‘The Lord will not slay the righteous soul with famine.’ He promises too in the Psalms, ‘I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread.’ We may also hear our Saviour saying,

⁴¹⁶⁷ Ib. xx. 17.

⁴¹⁶⁸ Ib. v. 3.

⁴¹⁶⁹ Jer. ii. 18.

⁴¹⁷⁰ Prov. ix. 18, LXX.

⁴¹⁷¹ Prov. ix. 1–5.

⁴¹⁷² Ib. 6

⁴¹⁷³ John vi. 51.

⁴¹⁷⁴ Ib. 48–51.

⁴¹⁷⁵ Ps. xvii. 15.

‘Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled⁴¹⁷⁶.’ Well then do the saints and those who love the life which is in Christ raise themselves to a longing after this food. And one earnestly implores, saying, ‘As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul thirsteth for the living God, when shall I come and see the face of God?’ And another; ‘My God, my God, I seek Thee early; my soul thirsteth for Thee; often does my flesh, in a dry and pathless land, and without water. So did I appear before Thee in holiness to see Thy power and Thy glory⁴¹⁷⁷.’

7. Since these things are so, my brethren, let us mortify our members which are on the earth⁴¹⁷⁸, and be nourished with living bread, by faith and love to God, knowing that without faith it is impossible to be partakers of such bread as this. For our Saviour, when He called all men to him, and said, ‘If any man thirst, let him [come] to Me and drink⁴¹⁷⁹,’ immediately spoke of the faith without which a man cannot receive such food; ‘He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water⁴¹⁸⁰.’ To this end He continually nourished His believing disciples with His words, and gave them life by the nearness of His divinity, but to the Canaanitish woman, because she was not yet a believer, He deigned not even a reply, although she stood greatly in need of food from Him. He did this not from scorn, far from it (for the Lord is loving to men and good, and on that account He went into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon); but because of her unbelief, and because she was of those who had not the word. And He did it righteously, my brethren; for there would have been nothing gained by her offering her supplication before believing, but by her faith she would support her petition; ‘For He that cometh to God, must first believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him;’ and that ‘without faith it is impossible for a man to please Him⁴¹⁸¹.’ This Paul teaches. Now that she was hitherto an unbeliever, one of the profane, He shews, saying, ‘It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs⁴¹⁸².’ She then, being convinced by the power of the word, and having changed her ways, also gained faith; for the Lord no longer spoke to her as a dog, but conversed with her as a human being, saying, ‘O woman, great is thy faith⁴¹⁸³!’ As therefore she believed, He forthwith granted to her the fruit of faith, and said, ‘Be it to thee as thou desirest. And her daughter was healed in the self-same hour.’

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4176 Prov. x. 3; Matt. v. 6; Ps. cxxxii. 15, he notices the various reading of the LXX, on the latter, *Exp. in Ps. in loc.*

4177 Ps. xlii. 1; lxiii. 1, 2.

4178 Col. iii. 5.

4179 John vii. 37.

4180 Ib. 38

4181 Heb. xi. 6.

4182 Matt. xv. 26.

4183 Ib. 28

8. For the righteous man, being nurtured in faith and knowledge, and the observance of divine precepts, has his soul always in health. Wherefore it is commanded to ‘receive to ourselves him who is weak in the faith⁴¹⁸⁴,’ and to nourish him, even if he is not yet able to eat bread, but herbs, ‘for he that is weak eateth herbs.’ For even the Corinthians were not able to partake of such bread, being yet babes, and like babes they drank milk. ‘For every one that partaketh of milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness⁴¹⁸⁵,’ according to the words of that divine man. The Apostle exhorts his beloved son Timothy, in his first Epistle, ‘to be nourished with the word of faith, and the good doctrine whereto he had attained.’ And in the second, ‘Preserve thou the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus⁴¹⁸⁶.’ And not only here, my brethren, is this bread the food of the righteous, neither are the saints on earth alone nourished by such bread and such blood; but we also eat them in heaven, for the Lord is the food even of the exalted spirits, and the angels, and He is the joy of all the heavenly host⁴¹⁸⁷. And to all He is everything, and He has pity upon all according to His loving-kindness. Already hath the Lord given us angels’ food⁴¹⁸⁸, and He promises to those who continue with Him in His trials, saying, ‘And I promise to you a kingdom, as My Father hath promised to Me; that ye shall eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel⁴¹⁸⁹.’ O what a banquet is this, my brethren, and how great is the harmony and gladness of those who eat at this heavenly table! For they delight themselves not with that food which is cast out, but with that which produces life everlasting. Who then shall be deemed worthy of that assembly? Who is so blessed as to be called, and accounted worthy of that divine feast? Truly, ‘blessed is he who shall eat bread in Thy kingdom⁴¹⁹⁰.’

9. Now he who has been counted worthy of the heavenly calling, and by this calling has been sanctified, if he grow negligent in it, although washed becomes defiled: ‘counting the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a profane thing, and despising the Spirit of grace,’ he hears the words, ‘Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having wedding garments?’ For the banquet of the saints is spotless and pure; ‘for many are called, but few chosen⁴¹⁹¹.’ Judas to wit, though he came to the supper, because he despised it went out from the presence of the Lord, and having abandoned his Life⁴¹⁹², hanged himself. But the disciples who continued with the Redeemer shared

4184 Rom. xiv. 1.

4185 1 Cor. iii. 1; Heb. v. 13.

4186 1 Tim. iv. 6; 2 Tim. i. 13.

4187 Cf. *Letter* i. 6.

4188 Cf. Ps. lxxviii. 25.

4189 Luke xxii. 29, 30.

4190 Ib. xiv. 15.

4191 Heb. x. 29; Matt. xxii. 12; Ib. 14.

4192 Cf. Col. iii. 4

in the happiness of the feast. And that young man who went into a far country, and there wasted his substance, living in dissipation, if he receive a desire for this divine feast, and, coming to himself, shall say, 'How many hired servants of my father have bread to spare, while I perish here with hunger!' and shall next arise and come to his father, and confess to him, saying, 'I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants⁴¹⁹³;' — when he shall thus confess, then he shall be counted worthy of more than he prayed for. For the father does not receive him as a hired servant, neither does he look upon him as a stranger, but he kisses him as a son, he brings him back to life as from the dead, and counts him worthy of the divine feast, and gives him his former and precious robe. So that, on this account, there is singing and gladness in the paternal home.

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10. For this is the work of the Father's loving-kindness and goodness, that not only should He make him alive from the dead, but that He should render His grace illustrious through the Spirit. Therefore, instead of corruption, He clothes him with an incorruptible garment; instead of hunger, He kills the fatted calf; instead of far journeys, [the Father] watched for his return, providing shoes for his feet; and, what is most wonderful, placed a divine signet-ring upon his hand; whilst by all these things He begot him afresh in the image of the glory of Christ. These are the gracious gifts of the Father, by which the Lord honours and nourishes those who abide with Him, and also those who return to Him and repent. For He promises, saying, 'I am the bread of life; he that cometh unto Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst⁴¹⁹⁴.' We too shall be counted worthy of these things, if at all times we cleave to our Saviour, and if we are pure, not only in these six days of Easter⁴¹⁹⁵, but consider the whole course of our life as a feast⁴¹⁹⁶, and continue near and do not go far off, saying to Him, 'Thou hast the words of eternal life, and whither shall we go⁴¹⁹⁷?' Let those of us who are far off return, confessing our iniquities, and having nothing against any man, but by the spirit mortifying the deeds of the body⁴¹⁹⁸. For thus, having first nourished the soul here, we shall partake with angels at that heavenly and spiritual table; not knocking and being repulsed like those five foolish virgins⁴¹⁹⁹, but entering with the Lord, like those who were wise

⁴¹⁹³ Luke xv. 17.

⁴¹⁹⁴ John vi. 35.

⁴¹⁹⁵ Vid. Suicer. *Thes. in. voc.* ἀποκρέως, and the notes of Valesius on Euseb. *Orat. in laud. Constant.* ch. ix. With us, Easter-week includes the six days *following* Easter-Sunday; with the Greeks, the ἑβδομάς τῶν πασχῶν was applied to the *preceding* six days, as here.

⁴¹⁹⁶ Vid. *supr.* *Letters* 5. 1, 7, 3. init.

⁴¹⁹⁷ John vi. 68.

⁴¹⁹⁸ Rom. viii. 13.

⁴¹⁹⁹ Matt. xxv. 1–12.

and loved the bridegroom; and shewing the dying of Jesus in our bodies⁴²⁰⁰, we shall receive life and the kingdom from Him.

11. We begin the fast of forty days on the twenty-third of Mechir (Feb. 17), and the holy fast of the blessed feast on the twenty-eighth of Phamenoth (Mar. 24); and having joined to these six days after them, in fastings and watchings, as each one is able, let us rest on the third of the month Pharmuthi (Mar. 29), on the evening of the seventh day. Also that day which is holy and blessed in everything, which possesses the name of Christ, namely the Lord's day⁴²⁰¹, having risen upon us on the fourth of Pharmuthi (Mar. 30), let us afterwards keep the holy feast of Pentecost. Let us at all times worship the Father in Christ, through Whom to Him and with Him be glory and dominion by the Holy Ghost for ever and ever. Amen. All the brethren who are with me salute you: salute one another with a holy kiss.

There is no eighth or ninth, for he did not send them, for the reason before mentioned⁴²⁰². Here endeth the seventh Festal Letter of holy Athanasius the Patriarch.

Letter X.—*For 338. Coss. Ursus and Polemius; Præf. the same Theodorus, of Heliopolis, and of the Catholics*⁴²⁰³. *After him, for the second year, Philagrius; Indict. xi; Easter-day, vii Kal. Ap.*⁴²⁰⁴ xxx Phamenoth; Moon 18½; Æra Dioclet. 54.

⁴²⁰⁵Although I have travelled all this distance from you, my brethren, I have not forgotten the custom which obtains among you, which has been delivered to us by the fathers⁴²⁰⁶, so as to be silent without notifying to you the time of the annual holy feast, and the day for its celebration. For although I have been hindered by those afflictions of which you have doubtless heard, and severe trials have been laid upon me, and a great distance has separated us; while the enemies of the truth have followed our tracks, laying snares to discover a letter from us, so that by their accusations,

⁴²⁰⁰ 2 Cor. iv. 10.

⁴²⁰¹ κυριώνυμος—κυριακή L. Vid. Suicer *Thes. sub. voc. κυριακή. Expos. in Psalm. cxvii. 24.*

⁴²⁰² See the *Index*. This notice suggests that the present collection of letters has undergone a recension since its union with the *Index*.

⁴²⁰³ The text is difficult; possibly the Syriac translator is responsible for the difficulty. But we know from Ath. (*supr.* p. 273) that the reappointment of Philagrius was in the express interest of the Arians: it is, therefore, probable that Theodorus was not unfavourable to Athanasius. See Prolegg. ch. ii. §6 (1), and Sievers, pp. 101, 102.

⁴²⁰⁴ In the *Chron. Pasch.* tom. ii. p. 202, Easter-day is wrongly given as falling on viii. Kal. Ap.

⁴²⁰⁵ See Prolegg. ch. v. §3 b. The letter may have been finished (see §§3, 11) after Ath. had returned home, but the language of §1 seems to be applicable only to his residence at Treveri, and §11 may be reconciled to this supposition. In this case (§1 *sub. fin.*) it was probably begun as early as the Easter of 337; cf. *Letters* 17 and 18.

⁴²⁰⁶ See above, p. 500.

they might add to the pain of our wounds; yet the Lord, strengthening and comforting us in our afflictions, we have not feared, even when held fast in the midst of such machinations and conspiracies, to indicate and make known to you our saving Easter-feast, even from the ends of the earth. Also when I wrote to the presbyters of Alexandria, I urged that these letters might be sent to you through their instrumentality, although I knew the fear imposed on them by the adversaries. Still, I exhorted them to be mindful of the apostolic boldness of speech, and to say, ‘Nothing separates us from the love of Christ; neither affliction, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword⁴²⁰⁷.’ Thus, keeping the feast myself, I was desirous that you also, my beloved, should keep it; and being conscious that an announcement like this is due from me, I have not delayed to discharge this duty, fearing to be condemned by the Apostolic counsel; ‘Render to every man his due⁴²⁰⁸.’

2. While I then committed all my affairs to God, I was anxious to celebrate the feast with you, not taking into account the distance between us. For although place separate us, yet the Lord the Giver of the feast, and Who is Himself our feast⁴²⁰⁹, Who is also the Bestower of the Spirit⁴²¹⁰, brings us together in mind, in harmony, and in the bond of peace⁴²¹¹. For when we mind and think the same things, and offer up the same prayers on behalf of each other, no place can separate us, but the Lord gathers and unites us together. For if He promises, that ‘when two or three are gathered together in His name, He is in the midst of them⁴²¹²,’ it is plain that being in the midst of those who in every place are gathered together, He unites them, and receives the prayers of all of them, as if they were near, and listens to all of them, as they cry out the same Amen⁴²¹³. I have⁴²¹⁴ borne affliction like this, and all those trials which I mentioned, my brethren, when I wrote to you.

3. And that we may not distress you at all, I would now (only) briefly remind you of these things, because it is not becoming in a man to forget, when more at ease, the pains he experienced in tribulation; lest, like an unthankful and forgetful person, he should be excluded from the divine assembly. For at no time should a man freely praise God, more than when he has passed through afflictions; nor, again, should he at any time give thanks more than when he finds rest from toil and temptations. As Hezekiah, when the Assyrians perished, praised the Lord, and, gave thanks,

⁴²⁰⁷ Rom. viii. 35.

⁴²⁰⁸ Rom. xiii. 7; cf. *Ep.* iii. init.

⁴²⁰⁹ Cf. 1 Cor. v. 7

⁴²¹⁰ Cf. *Orat.* i. 50; ii. 18; Luke xi. 13.

⁴²¹¹ Cf. *Eph.* iv. 3

⁴²¹² Matt. xviii. 20.

⁴²¹³ Cf. *Apol. Const.* 16.

⁴²¹⁴ Thus far Athan. has been referring to the circumstances attending his exile for the last two years. The principal subject of the remaining part consists of the duty incumbent on us to praise and thank God for deliverance from affliction, and to exercise forgiveness towards our enemies. He several times (e.g. §§3, 10) speaks of his restoration to the Church of Alexandria.

saying, ‘The Lord is my salvation⁴²¹⁵; and I will not cease to bless Thee with harp all the days of my life, before the house of the Lord⁴²¹⁶.’ And those valiant and blessed three who were tried in Babylon, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, when they were in safety and the fire became to them as dew, gave thanks, praising and ‘saying words of glory to God⁴²¹⁷.’ I too like them have written, my brethren, having these things in mind; for even in our time, God hath made possible those things which are impossible to men. And those things which could not be accomplished by man, the Lord has shewn to be easy of accomplishment, by bringing us to you. For He does not give us as a prey to those who seek to swallow us up. For it is not so much us, as the Church, and the faith and godliness which they planned to overwhelm with wickedness.

4. But God, who is good, multiplied His loving-kindness towards us, not only when He granted the common salvation of us all through His Word, but now also, when enemies have persecuted us, and have sought to seize upon us. As the blessed Paul saith in a certain place, when describing the incomprehensible riches of Christ: ‘But God, being rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in follies and sins, quickened us with Christ⁴²¹⁸.’ For the might of man and of all creatures, is weak and poor; but the Might which is above man, and uncreated, is rich and incomprehensible, and has no beginning, but is eternal. He does not then possess one method only of healing, but being rich, He works in divers manners for our salvation by means of His Word, Who is not restricted or hindered in His dealings towards us; but since He is rich and manifold, He varies Himself according to the individual capacity of each soul. For He is the Word and the Power and the Wisdom of God, as Solomon testifies concerning Wisdom, that ‘being one, it can do all things, and remaining in itself, it maketh all things new; and passing upon holy souls, fashioneth the friends of God and the prophets⁴²¹⁹.’ To those then who have not yet attained to the perfect way He becomes like a sheep giving milk, and this was administered by Paul: ‘I have fed you with milk, not with meat⁴²²⁰.’ To those who have advanced beyond the full stature of childhood, but still are weak as regards perfection, He is their food, according to their

⁴²¹⁵ The Syriac translator must have found in the Greek copy the reading of the Codex Alex. — the rendering of ‘Jehovah,’ not that of the Vatican text. Θεός

⁴²¹⁶ Is. xxxviii. 20.

⁴²¹⁷ ‘Song of Three Children,’ 25–28.

⁴²¹⁸ Eph. ii. 4, 5.

⁴²¹⁹ Wisd. vii. 27; cf. *Ep.* i.

⁴²²⁰ 1 Cor. iii. 2.



capacity, being again administered by Paul⁴²²¹, ‘Let him that is weak eat herbs.’ But as soon as ever a man begins to walk in the perfect way, he is no longer fed with the things before mentioned, but he has the Word for bread, and flesh for food, for it is written, ‘Strong meat is for those who are of full age, for those who, by reason of their capacity, have their senses exercised⁴²²².’ And further, when the word is sown it does not yield a uniform produce of fruit in this human life, but one various and rich; for it bringeth forth, some an hundred, and some sixty, and some thirty⁴²²³, as the Saviour teaches—that Sower of grace, and Bestower of the Spirit⁴²²⁴. And this is no doubtful matter, nor one that admits no confirmation; but it is in our power to behold the field which is sown by Him; for in the Church the word is manifold and the produce⁴²²⁵ rich. Not with virgins alone is such a field adorned; nor with monks alone, but also with honourable matrimony and the chastity of each one. For in sowing, He did not compel the will beyond the power. Nor is mercy confined to the perfect, but it is sent down also among those who occupy the middle and the third ranks, so that He might rescue all men generally to salvation. To this intent He hath prepared many mansions⁴²²⁶ with the Father, so that although the dwelling-place is various in proportion to the advance in moral attainment, yet all of us are within the wall, and all of us enter within the same fence, the adversary being cast out, and all his host expelled thence. For apart from light there is darkness, and apart from blessing there is a curse, the devil also is apart from the saints, and sin far from virtue. Therefore the Gospel rebukes Satan, saying, ‘Get thee behind Me, Satan⁴²²⁷.’ But us it calls to itself, saying, ‘Enter ye in at the strait gate.’ And again, ‘Come, blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom which is prepared for you⁴²²⁸.’ So also the Spirit cried aforetime in the Psalms, saying, ‘Enter into His gates with psalms⁴²²⁹.’ For through virtue a man enters in unto God, as Moses did into the thick cloud where God was. But through vice a man goes out from the presence of the Lord; as Cain⁴²³⁰

⁴²²¹ Rom. xiv. 2. The sense in the last few lines, and in those that follow, is clear, though the construction appears somewhat obscure. Milks, herbs, and meat are severally mentioned in connection with the different advances made in the Christian course. The translation of Larsow is less satisfactory.

⁴²²² Heb. v. 14.

⁴²²³ Matt. xiii. 8. In the Syriac text, as published by Mr. Cureton, as well as in the German translation by Larsow, there is a hiatus, here, the next two or three pages, as far as the words ‘He wept,’ (§5 *init.*) being wanting. Two more leaves were afterwards discovered among the fragments in the British Museum by the learned Editor. One of them belongs to this part; the other to the eleventh Letter.

⁴²²⁴ Vid. note 9, *supr.*

⁴²²⁵ Syr. ‘virtue,’ a letter (rish) having been inserted by mistake.

⁴²²⁶ John xiv. 2.

⁴²²⁷ Matt. iv. 10.

⁴²²⁸ Matt. vii. 13; xxv. 34.

⁴²²⁹ Ps. c. 4.

⁴²³⁰ Gen. iv. 16; Exod. xix. 9.

when he had slain his brother, went out, as far as his will was concerned, from before the face of God; and the Psalmist enters, saying, ‘And I will go in to the altar of God, even to the God that delighteth my youth⁴²³¹.’ But of the devil the Scripture beareth witness, that the devil went out from before God, and smote Job⁴²³² with sore boils. For this is the characteristic of those who go out from before God—to smite and to injure the men of God. And this is the characteristic of those who fall away from the faith—to injure and persecute the faithful. The saints on the other hand, take such to themselves and look upon them as friends; as also the blessed David, using openness of speech, says, ‘Mine eyes are on the faithful of the earth, that they may dwell with me.’ But those that are weak in the faith⁴²³³, Paul urges that we should especially take to ourselves. For virtue is philanthropic⁴²³⁴, just as in men of an opposite character, sin is misanthropic. So Saul, being a sinner, persecuted David, whereas David, though he had a good opportunity, did not kill Saul. Esau too persecuted Jacob, while Jacob overcame his wickedness by meekness. And those eleven sold Joseph, but Joseph, in his loving-kindness, had pity on them.

5. But what need we many words? Our Lord and Saviour, when He was persecuted by the Pharisees, wept for their destruction. He was injured, but He threatened⁴²³⁵ not; not when He was afflicted, not even when He was killed. But He grieved for those who dared to do such things. He, the Saviour, suffered for man, but they despised and cast from them life, and light, and grace. All these were theirs through that Saviour Who suffered in our stead. And verily for their darkness and blindness, He wept. For if they had understood the things which are written in the Psalms, they would not have been so vainly daring against the Saviour, the Spirit having said, ‘Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?’ And if they had considered the prophecy of Moses, they would not have hanged Him Who was their Life⁴²³⁶. And if they had examined with their understanding the things which were written, they would not have carefully fulfilled the prophecies which were against themselves, so as for their city to be now desolate, grace taken from them, and they themselves without the law, being no longer called children, but strangers. For thus in the Psalms was it before declared, saying, ‘The strange children have acted falsely by Me.’ And by Isaiah the prophet; ‘I have begotten and brought up children, and they have rejected Me.’⁴²³⁷ And they are no longer named the people of God, and a holy nation, but rulers of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah; having exceeded in this even the iniquity of the Sodomites, as the prophet also saith,



⁴²³¹ Ps. xliii. 4.

⁴²³² Job ii. 7. In the ms. *Jesus* is written by mistake for *Job*.

⁴²³³ Ps. ci. 6; Rom. xiv. 1.

⁴²³⁴ Cf. *Letter* xi. sub. init.

⁴²³⁵ The Syriac is ‘was persecuted’—which supplies no good sense.

⁴²³⁶ Ps. ii. 1; Deut. xxviii. 66.

⁴²³⁷ Ps. xviii. 45; Is. i. 2.

‘Sodom is justified before thee⁴²³⁸.’ For the Sodomites raved against angels, but these against the Lord and God and King of all, and these dared to slay the Lord of angels, not knowing that Christ, who was slain by them, liveth. But those Jews who had conspired against the Lord died, having rejoiced a very little in these temporal things, and having fallen away from those which are eternal. They were ignorant of this—that the immortal promise has not respect to temporal enjoyment, but to the hope of those things which are everlasting. For through many tribulations, and labours, and sorrows, the saint enters into the kingdom of heaven; but when he arrives where sorrow, and distress, and sighing, shall flee away, he shall thenceforward enjoy rest; as Job, who, when tried here, was afterwards the familiar friend of the Lord. But the lover of pleasures, rejoicing for a little while, afterwards passes a sorrowful life; like Esau, who had temporal food, but afterwards was condemned thereby.

6. We may take as a type of this distinction, the departure of the children of Israel and the Egyptians from Egypt. For the Egyptians, rejoicing a little while in their injustice against Israel, when they went forth, were all drowned in the deep; but the people of God, being for a time smitten and injured, by the conduct of the taskmasters, when they came out of Egypt, passed through the sea unharmed, and walked in the wilderness as an inhabited place. For although the place was unfrequented by man and desolate, yet, through the gracious gift of the law, and through converse with angels, it was no longer desert, but far more than an inhabited country. As also Elisha⁴²³⁹, when he thought he was alone in the wilderness, was with companies of angels; so in this case, though the people were at first afflicted and in the wilderness, yet those who remained faithful afterwards entered the land of promise. In like manner those who suffer temporal afflictions here, finally having endured, attain comfort, while those who here persecute are trodden under foot, and have no good end. For even the rich man⁴²⁴⁰, as the Gospel affirms, having indulged in pleasure here for a little while, suffered hunger there, and having drunk largely here, he there thirsted exceedingly. But Lazarus, after being afflicted in worldly things, found rest in heaven, and having hungered for bread ground from corn, he was there satisfied with that which is better than manna, even the Lord who came down and said, ‘I am the bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life to mankind⁴²⁴¹.’

7. Oh! my dearly beloved, if we shall gain comfort from afflictions, if rest from labours, if health after sickness, if from death immortality, it is not right to be distressed by the temporal ills that lay hold on mankind. It does not become us to be agitated because of the trials which befall us. It is not right to fear if the gang that contended with Christ, should conspire against godliness; but we should the more please God through these things, and should consider such matters as the probation and exercise of a virtuous life. For how shall patience be looked for, if there be not previously labours and sorrows? Or how can fortitude be tested with no assault from enemies? Or

⁴²³⁸ Ezek. xvi. 48, cf. Lam. iv. 6.

⁴²³⁹ The reference is to 2 Kings vi. 13–17, though ‘the wilderness’ agrees better with the history of Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 4–8.

⁴²⁴⁰ Luke xvi. 19.

⁴²⁴¹ John vi. 51.

how shall magnanimity be exhibited, unless after contumely and injustice? Or how can long-suffering be proved, unless there has first been the calumny of Antichrist⁴²⁴²? And, finally, how can a man behold virtue with his eyes, unless the iniquity of the very wicked has previously appeared? Thus even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ comes before us, when He would shew men how to suffer, Who when He was smitten bore it patiently, being reviled He reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not, but He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to buffetings, and turned not His face from spitting⁴²⁴³; and at last, was willingly led to death, that we might behold in Him the image of all that is virtuous and immortal, and that we, conducting ourselves after these examples, might truly tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy⁴²⁴⁴.

8. Thus too Paul, while he conducted himself after the example of the Lord, exhorted us, saying, 'Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ⁴²⁴⁵.' In this way he prevailed against all the divisions of the devil, writing, 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ⁴²⁴⁶.' For the enemy draws near to us in afflictions, and trials, and labours, using every endeavour to ruin us. But the man who is in Christ, combating those things that are contrary, and opposing wrath by long-suffering, contumely by meekness, and vice by virtue, obtains the victory, and exclaims, 'I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me;' and, 'In all these things we are conquerors through Christ Who loved us⁴²⁴⁷.' This is the grace of the Lord, and these are the Lord's means of restoration for the children of men. For He suffered to prepare freedom from suffering for those who suffer in Him, He descended that He might raise us up, He took on Him the trial of being born, that we might love Him Who is unbegotten, He went down to corruption, that corruption might put on immortality, He became weak for us, that we might rise with power, He descended to death, that He might bestow on us immortality, and give life to the dead. Finally, He became man, that we who die as men might live again, and that death should no more reign over us; for the Apostolic word proclaims, 'Death shall not have the dominion over us⁴²⁴⁸.'

9. Now because they did not thus consider these matters, the Ario-maniacs⁴²⁴⁹, being opponents of Christ, and heretics, smite Him who is their Helper with their tongue, and blaspheme Him who set [them] free, and hold all manner of different opinions against the Saviour. Because of His coming

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⁴²⁴² i.e. Arians. See *Index* to this vol. *s.v.*
⁴²⁴³ 1 Pet. ii. 23; Isa. l. 6.
⁴²⁴⁴ Cf. Pseudo-Ath. *de Pass. et Cruc.* 19.
⁴²⁴⁵ 1 Cor. xi. 1.
⁴²⁴⁶ Rom. viii. 38, 39.
⁴²⁴⁷ Phil. iv. 13; Rom. viii. 37.
⁴²⁴⁸ Rom. vi. 9, 14, cf. *de Pass. et Cruc.* 11.
⁴²⁴⁹ The Syriac mistranslates *Arius and Manetes*.

down, which was on behalf of man, they have denied His essential Godhead; and seeing that He came forth from the Virgin, they doubt His being truly the Son of God, and considering Him as become incarnate in time, they deny His eternity; and, looking upon Him as having suffered for us, they do not believe in Him as the incorruptible Son from the incorruptible Father. And finally, because He endured for our sakes, they deny the things which concern His essential eternity; allowing the deed of the unthankful, these despise the Saviour, and offer Him insult instead of acknowledging His grace. To them may these words justly be addressed: Oh! unthankful opponent of Christ, altogether wicked, and the slayer of his Lord, mentally blind, and a Jew in his mind, hadst thou understood the Scriptures, and listened to the saints, who said, ‘Cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved;’ or again, ‘Send out Thy light and Thy truth⁴²⁵⁰;’—then wouldest thou have known that the Lord did not descend for His own sake, but for ours; and for this reason, thou wouldest the more have admired His loving kindness. And hadst thou considered what the Father is, and what the Son, thou wouldest not have blasphemed the Son, as of a mutable nature⁴²⁵¹. And hadst thou understood His work of loving-kindness towards us, thou wouldest not have alienated the Son from the Father, nor have looked upon Him as a stranger⁴²⁵², Who reconciled us to His Father. I know these [words] are grievous, not only to those who dispute with Christ⁴²⁵³, but also to the schismatics; for they are united together, as men of kindred feelings. For they have learned to rend the seamless coat⁴²⁵⁴ of God: they think it not strange to divide the indivisible Son from the Father⁴²⁵⁵.

10. I know indeed, that when these things are spoken, they will gnash their teeth upon us, with the devil who stirs them up, since they are troubled by the declaration of the true glory concerning the Redeemer. But the Lord, Who always has scoffed at the devil, does the same even now, saying, ‘I am in the Father, and the Father in Me⁴²⁵⁶.’ This is the Lord, Who is manifested in the Father, and in Whom also the Father is manifested; Who, being truly the Son of the Father, at last became incarnate for our sakes, that He might offer Himself to the Father in our stead, and redeem us through His oblation and sacrifice. This is He Who once brought the people of old time out of Egypt; but Who afterwards redeemed all of us, or rather the whole race of men, from death, and brought them up from the grave. This is He Who in old time was sacrificed as a lamb, He being signified in the lamb; but Who afterwards was slain for us, for ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed⁴²⁵⁷.’

⁴²⁵⁰ Ps. xliii. 3, lxxx. 7.

⁴²⁵¹ Cf. *Orat.* i. 35; ii. 6, and notes there.

⁴²⁵² Cf. *supr.* p. 70.

⁴²⁵³ i.e. the Arians.

⁴²⁵⁴ Syr. . The words translated ‘rend’ and ‘seamless’ are cognate in the Syriac, and answer to *σχίζειν* and its derivatives.

⁴²⁵⁵ The Arians were thence called *Διττομίτται*. Vid. Damascen. *de hæresib.* apud Cotel. *eccles. Gr. monum.* p. 298.

⁴²⁵⁶ John xiv. 11.

⁴²⁵⁷ 1 Cor. v. 7.

This is He Who delivered us from the snare of the hunters, from the opponents of Christ, I say, and from the schismatics, and again rescued us His Church. And because we were then victims of deceit, He has now delivered us by His own self.

11. What then is our duty, my brethren, for the sake of these things, but to praise and give thanks to God, the King of all? And let us first exclaim in the words of the Psalms, ‘Blessed be the Lord, Who hath not given us over as a prey to their teeth⁴²⁵⁸.’ Let us keep the feast in that way which He hath dedicated for us unto salvation—the holy day Easter—so that we may celebrate the feast which is in heaven with the angels. Thus anciently, the people of the Jews, when they came out of affliction into a state of ease, kept the feast, staging a song of praise for their victory. So also the people in the time of Esther, because they were delivered from the edict of death, kept a feast to the Lord⁴²⁵⁹, reckoning it a feast, returning thanks to the Lord, and praising Him for having changed their condition. Therefore let us, performing our vows to the Lord, and confessing our sins, keep the feast to the Lord, in conversation, moral conduct, and manner of life; praising our Lord, Who hath chastened us a little, but hath not utterly failed nor forsaken us, nor altogether kept silence from us. For if, having brought us out of the deceitful and famous Egypt of the opponents of Christ, He hath caused us to pass through many trials and afflictions, as it were in the wilderness, to His holy Church, so that from hence, according to custom, we can send to you, as well as receive letters from you; on this account especially I both give thanks to God myself, and exhort you to thank Him with me and on my behalf, this being the Apostolic custom, which these opponents of Christ, and the schismatics, wished to put an end to, and to break off. The Lord did not permit it, but both renewed and preserved that which was ordained by Him through the Apostle, so that we may keep the feast together, and together keep holy-day, according to the tradition and commandment of the fathers.

12. We begin the fast of forty days on the nineteenth of the month Mechir (Feb. 13); and the holy Easter-fast on the twenty-fourth of the month Phamenoth (Mar. 20). We cease from the fast on the twenty-ninth of the month Phamenoth (Mar. 25), late in the evening of the seventh day. And we thus keep the feast on the first day of the week which dawns on the thirtieth of the month Phamenoth (Mar. 26); from which, to Pentecost, we keep holy-day, through seven weeks, one after the other. For when we have first meditated properly on these things, we shall attain to be counted worthy of those which are eternal, through Christ Jesus our Lord, through Whom to the Father be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Greet one another with a holy kiss, remembering us in your holy prayers. All the brethren who are with me salute you, at all times remembering you. And I pray that ye may have health in the Lord, my beloved brethren, whom we love above all.

Here endeth the tenth Letter of holy Athanasius.

⁴²⁵⁸ Ps. cxxiv. 6.

⁴²⁵⁹ Cf. Esth. iii. 9; ix. 21; *Letter* iv. p. 32.

Letter XI.—*For 339. Coss. Constantius Augustus II, Constans I; Præfect, Philagrius the Cappadocian, for the second time; Indict. xii; Easter-day xvii Kal. Mai, xx Pharmuthi; Æra Dioclet. 55.*

The blessed Paul, being girt about with every virtue⁴²⁶⁰, and called faithful of the Lord—for he was conscious of nothing in himself but what was a virtue and a praise⁴²⁶¹, or what was in harmony with love and godliness—clave to these things more and more, and was carried up even to heavenly places, and was borne to Paradise⁴²⁶²; to the end that, as he surpassed the conversation of men, he should be exalted above men. And when he descended, he preached to every man; ‘We know in part, and we prophesy in part; here I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known⁴²⁶³.’ For, in truth, he was known to those saints who are in heaven, as their fellow-citizen⁴²⁶⁴. And in relation to all that is future and perfect, the things known by him here were in part; but with respect to those things which were committed and entrusted to him by the Lord, he was perfect; as he said, ‘We who are perfect, should be thus minded⁴²⁶⁵.’ For as the Gospel of Christ is the fulfilment and accomplishment of the ministration which was supplied by the law of Israel, so future things will be the accomplishment of such as now exist, the Gospel being then fulfilled, and the faithful receiving those things which, not seeing now, they yet hope for, as Paul saith; ‘For what a man seeth, why doth he also hope for? But if we hope for those things we see [not], we then by patience wait for them⁴²⁶⁶.’ Since then that blessed man was of such a character, and apostolic grace was committed to him, he wrote, wishing ‘that all men should be as he was⁴²⁶⁷.’ For virtue is philanthropic⁴²⁶⁸, and great is the company of the kingdom of heaven, for thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads there serve the Lord. And though a man enters it through a strait and narrow way, yet having entered, he beholds immeasurable space, and a place greater than any other, as they declare, who were eye-witnesses and heirs of these things. ‘Thou didst place afflictions before us.’ But afterwards, having related their afflictions, they say, ‘Thou broughtest us forth into a wide place;’ and again, ‘In affliction Thou hast enlarged us⁴²⁶⁹.’ For truly, my brethren, the course of the saints here is straitened; since they either toil painfully through longing for those things which are

⁴²⁶⁰ Cf. Eph. vi. 14

⁴²⁶¹ Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 4

⁴²⁶² 2 Cor. xii. 4.

⁴²⁶³ 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

⁴²⁶⁴ Cf. Eph. ii. 19

⁴²⁶⁵ Phil. iii. 15.

⁴²⁶⁶ Rom. viii. 24, 25.

⁴²⁶⁷ 1 Cor. vii. 7.

⁴²⁶⁸ Cf. *Letter* 10, §4.

⁴²⁶⁹ Ps. lxvi. 11, 12; iv. 1.

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to come, as he who said, 'Woe is me that my pilgrimage is prolonged⁴²⁷⁰;' or they are distressed and spent for the salvation of other men, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, saying, 'Lest, when I come to you, God should humble me, and I should bewail many of those who have sinned already, and not repented for the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed⁴²⁷¹.' As Samuel bewailed the destruction of Saul, and Jeremiah wept for the captivity of the people. But after this affliction, and sorrow, and sighing, when they depart from this world, a certain divine gladness, and pleasure, and exultation receives them, from which misery and sorrow, and sighing, flee away.

2. Since we are thus circumstanced, my brethren, let us never loiter in the path of virtue; for hereto he counsels us, saying, 'Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ⁴²⁷².' For he gave this advice not to the Corinthians only, since he was not their Apostle only, but being 'a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity⁴²⁷³,' he admonished us all through them; and in short, the things he wrote to each particular person are commandments common to all men⁴²⁷⁴. On this account in writing to different people, some he exhorted as, for instance, in the Epistles to the Romans, and the Ephesians, and Philemon. Some he reprov'd, and was indignant with them, as in the case of the Corinthians and Galatians. To some he gave advice, as to the Colossians and Thessalonians. The Philippians he approved of, and rejoiced in them. The Hebrews he taught that the law was a shadow to them⁴²⁷⁵. But to his elect sons, Timothy and Titus, when they were near, he gave instruction; when far away, he put them in remembrance. For he was all things to all men; and being himself a perfect man, he adapted his teaching to the need of every one, so that by all means he might rescue some of them. Therefore his word was not without fruit; but in every place it is planted and productive even to this day.

3. And wherefore, my beloved? For it is right that we should search into the apostolic mind. Not only in the beginning of the Epistles, but towards their close, and in the middle of them, he used persuasions and admonitions. I hope therefore that, by your prayers, I shall in no respect falsely represent the plan of that holy man. As he was well skilled in these divine matters, and knew the power of the divine teaching, he deemed it necessary, in the first place, to make known the word concerning Christ, and the mystery regarding Him; and then afterwards to point to the correction of habits, so that when they had learned to know the Lord, they might earnestly desire to do those things which He commanded. For when the Guide to the laws is unknown, one does not readily pass on to the observance of them. Faithful Moses, the minister of God, adopted this method; for

⁴²⁷⁰ Ib. cxx. 5, LXX.

⁴²⁷¹ 2 Cor. xii. 21.

⁴²⁷² 1 Cor. xi. 1.

⁴²⁷³ 1 Tim. ii. 7.

⁴²⁷⁴ Cf. *Letter* ii. §1, and *Letter* iii. §5.

⁴²⁷⁵ Vid. *Letter* vii. 8, note 17.

when he promulgated the words of the divine dispensation of laws, he first proclaimed the matters relating to the knowledge of God: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord⁴²⁷⁶.’ Afterwards, having shadowed Him forth to the people, and taught of Him in Whom they ought to believe, and informed their minds of Him Who is truly God, he proceeds to lay down the law relating to those things whereby a man may be well-pleasing to Him, saying, ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal;’ together with the other commandments. For also, according to the Apostolic teaching, ‘He that draweth near to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him⁴²⁷⁷.’ Now He is sought by means of virtuous deeds, as the prophet saith; ‘Seek ye the Lord, and when ye have found Him, call upon Him; when He is near to you, let the wicked forsake his ways, and the lawless man his thoughts⁴²⁷⁸.’

4. It will also be well if a man is not offended at the testimony of the Shepherd, saying in the beginning of his book, ‘Before all things believe that there is one God, Who created and established all these things, and from non-existence called them into being⁴²⁷⁹.’ And, further, the blessed Evangelists—who recorded the words of the Lord—in the beginning of the Gospels, wrote the things concerning our Saviour; so that, having first made known the Lord, the Creator, they might be believed when narrating the events that took place. For how could they have been believed, when writing respecting him who [was blind] from his mother’s womb, and those other blind men who recovered their sight, and those who rose from the dead, and the changing of water into wine, and those lepers who were cleansed; if they had not taught of Him as the Creator, writing, ‘In the beginning was the Word⁴²⁸⁰?’ Or, according to Matthew, that He Who was born of the seed of David, was Emmanuel, and the Son of the living God? He from Whom the Jews, with the Arians, turn away their faces, but Whom we acknowledge and worship. The Apostle therefore, as was meet, sent to different people, but his own son he especially reminded, ‘that he should not despise the things in which he had been instructed by him,’ and enjoined on him, ‘Remember Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my Gospel⁴²⁸¹.’ And speaking of these things being delivered to him, to be always had in remembrance, he immediately writes to him, saying, ‘Meditate on these things: be engaged in them.⁴²⁸²’ For constant meditation, and the remembrance of divine words, strengthens piety towards God, and produces a love to Him



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⁴²⁷⁶ Deut. vi. 4.

⁴²⁷⁷ Heb. xi. 6.

⁴²⁷⁸ Is. lv. 6, 7.

⁴²⁷⁹ Herm. *Mand.* 1.

⁴²⁸⁰ John i. 1.

⁴²⁸¹ 2 Tim. iii. 14; ii. 8.

⁴²⁸² 1 Tim. iv. 15.

inseparable and not merely formal⁴²⁸³; as he, being of this mind, speaks about himself and others like-minded, saying boldly, ‘Who shall separate us from the love of God⁴²⁸⁴?’ For⁴²⁸⁵ such men, being confirmed in the Lord, and possessing an unshaken disposition towards Him, and being one in spirit (for⁴²⁸⁶ ‘he who is joined to the Spirit is one spirit’), are sure ‘as the mount Sion;’ and although ten thousand trials may rage against them, they are founded upon a rock, which is Christ⁴²⁸⁷. In Him the careless take no delight; and having no continuous purpose of good, they are sullied by temporal attacks, and esteem nothing more highly than present things, being unstable and deserving reproof as regards the faith. For ‘either the care of this world, or the deceitfulness of riches, chokes them⁴²⁸⁸;’ or, as Jesus said in that parable which had reference to them, since they have not established the faith that has been preached to them, but continue only for a time, immediately, in time of persecution, or when affliction ariseth through the word, they are offended. Now those who meditate evil we say, [think] not truth, but falsehood and not righteousness, but iniquity, for their tongue learns to speak lies. They have done evil, and have not ceased that they might repent. For, persevering with delight in wicked actions, they hasten thereto without turning back, even treading under foot the commandment with regard to neighbours, and, instead of loving them, devise evil against them, as the saint testifies, saying, ‘And those who seek me evil have spoken vanity, and imagined deceit all the day⁴²⁸⁹.’ But that the cause of such meditation is none other than the want of instruction, the divine proverb has already declared; ‘The son that forsaketh the commandment of his father meditateth evil words⁴²⁹⁰.’ But such meditation, because it is evil, the Holy Spirit blames in these words, and reproves too in other terms, saying, ‘Your hands are polluted with blood, your fingers with sins; your lips have spoken lawlessness, and your tongue imagineth iniquity: no man speaketh right things, nor is there true judgment⁴²⁹¹.’ But what the end is of such perverse imagining, He immediately declares, saying, ‘They trust in vanities and speak falsehood; for they conceive mischief, and bring forth lawlessness. They have hatched the eggs of an asp, and woven a spider’s web; and

⁴²⁸³ The Syriac word here rendered not merely formal is one which stems to take no other meaning than ‘inexpiable’ — a sense scarcely admissible in this place. The Greek was probably ἀγαπῆν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀχώριστον καὶ οὐκ ἀφοσιουμένην. This supposition would account for the Syriac misapprehension of the word.

⁴²⁸⁴ Rom. viii. 35.

⁴²⁸⁵ The Syriac text from here to the words, ‘There is also such a proverb as this’ (end of §), was discovered after Cureton’s edition of the Syriac, and is absent in Larsow.

⁴²⁸⁶ 1 Cor. vi. 17.

⁴²⁸⁷ Ps. cxxv. 1; 1 Cor. x. 4; Matt. vii. 25

⁴²⁸⁸ Matt. xiii. 22.

⁴²⁸⁹ Ps. xxxviii. 12.

⁴²⁹⁰ Prov. xix. 27, LXX.

⁴²⁹¹ Is. lix. 3, 4.

he who is prepared to eat of their eggs, when he breaks them finds gall, and a basilisk therein⁴²⁹².’ Again, what the hope of such is, He has already announced. ‘Because righteousness does not overtake them, when they waited for light, they had darkness; when they waited for brightness, they walked in a thick cloud. They shall grope for the wall like the blind, and as those who have no eyes shall they grope; they shall fall at noon-day as at midnight; when dead, they shall groan. They shall roar together as a bear, or as a dove⁴²⁹³.’

This is the fruit of wickedness, these rewards are given to its familiars, for perverseness does not deliver its own. But in truth, against them it sets itself, and it tears them first, and on them especially it summons ruin. Woe to them against whom these are brought; for ‘it is sharper than a two-edged sword⁴²⁹⁴,’ slaying beforehand and very swiftly those who will lay hold of it. For their tongue, according to the testimony of the Psalmist, is a ‘sharp sword, and their teeth spears and arrows⁴²⁹⁵.’ But the wonderful part is that while often he against whom men imagine [harm] suffers nothing, they are pierced by their own spears: for they possess, even in themselves, before they reach others, anger, wrath, malice, guile, hatred, bitterness. Although they may not be able to bring these upon others, they forthwith return upon and against themselves, as he prays, saying, ‘Let their sword enter into their own heart.’ There is also such a proverb as this: ‘The wicked is held fast by the chain of his sins⁴²⁹⁶.’

5. The Jews in their imaginings, and in their agreeing to act unjustly against the Lord, forgot that they were bringing wrath upon themselves. Therefore does the Word lament for them, saying, ‘Why do the people exalt themselves, and the nations imagine vain things⁴²⁹⁷?’ For vain indeed was the imagination of the Jews, meditating death against the Life⁴²⁹⁸, and devising unreasonable things against the ‘Word of the Father⁴²⁹⁹.’ For who that looks upon their dispersion, and the desolation of their city, may not aptly say, ‘Woe unto them, for they have imagined an evil imagination, saying against their own soul, let us bind the righteous man, because he is not pleasing to us⁴³⁰⁰.’ And full well is it so, my brethren; for when they erred concerning the Scriptures, they knew not that ‘he who diggeth a pit for his neighbour falleth therein; and he who destroyeth a hedge, a serpent shall bite him⁴³⁰¹.’ And if they had not turned their faces from the Lord, they would have feared what

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⁴²⁹² Ib. lix. 4, 5.

⁴²⁹³ Ib. lix. 9–11.

⁴²⁹⁴ Heb. iv. 12.

⁴²⁹⁵ Ps. lvii. 4.

⁴²⁹⁶ Ib. xxxvii. 15; Prov. v. 22.

⁴²⁹⁷ Ps. ii. 1.

⁴²⁹⁸ The parallel clause of this sentence would seem to determine that by ‘Life’ here we must understand Christ.

⁴²⁹⁹ ἄλογα κατὰ τοῦ Λόγου τοῦ Πατρὸς. Cf. Suicer. *Thes. s.v.* ἄλογος tom. i. p. 199.

⁴³⁰⁰ Is. iii. 9, 10, LXX.; cf. Wisd. ii. 12.

⁴³⁰¹ Eccl. x. 8.

was written before in the divine Psalms: ‘The heathen are caught in the pit which they made; in the snare which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known when executing judgments: by the works of his hands is the sinner taken⁴³⁰².’ Let them observe this, and how that ‘the snare they know not shall come upon them, and the net they hid take them⁴³⁰³.’ But they understood not these things, for had they done so, ‘they would not have crucified the Lord of glory⁴³⁰⁴.’

6. Therefore the righteous and faithful servants of the Lord, who ‘are made disciples for the kingdom of heaven, and bring forth from it things new and old;’ and who ‘meditate on the words of the Lord, when sitting in the house, when lying down or rising up, and when walking by the way⁴³⁰⁵;’ —since they are of good hope because of the promise of the Spirit which said, ‘Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of corrupters; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night⁴³⁰⁶;’ —being grounded in faith, rejoicing in hope, fervent in spirit, they have boldness to say, ‘My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.’ And again, ‘I have meditated on all Thy works, and on the work of Thy hands has been my meditation.’ And, ‘If I have remembered Thee on my bed, and in the morning have meditated on Thee⁴³⁰⁷.’ Afterwards, advancing in boldness, they say, ‘The meditation of my heart is before Thee at all times⁴³⁰⁸.’ And what is the end of such an one? He cites immediately; ‘The Lord is my Helper and my Redeemer⁴³⁰⁹.’ For to those who thus examine themselves, and conform their hearts to the Lord, nothing adverse shall happen; for indeed, their heart is strengthened by confidence in the Lord, as it is written, ‘They who trust in the Lord are as mount Sion: he who dwelleth in Jerusalem shall not be moved for ever⁴³¹⁰.’ For if at any time, the crafty one shall be presumptuously bold against them, chiefly that he may break the rank of the saints, and cause a division among brethren; even in this the Lord is with them, not only as an avenger on their behalf, but also when they have already been beaten, as a deliverer for them. For this is the divine promise; ‘The Lord shall fight for you⁴³¹¹.’ Henceforth, although afflictions and trials from without overtake them, yet, being fashioned after the apostolic words, and ‘being stedfast in tribulations, and persevering in prayers⁴³¹²’

⁴³⁰² Ps. ix. 15.

⁴³⁰³ Ib. xxxv. 8.

⁴³⁰⁴ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

⁴³⁰⁵ Matt. xiii. 52; Deut. vi. 7.

⁴³⁰⁶ Ps. i. 1.

⁴³⁰⁷ Ib. xlix. 3; cxliii. 5; lxiii. 6.

⁴³⁰⁸ Ib. xix. 14.

⁴³⁰⁹ Ib

⁴³¹⁰ Ib. cxxv. 1, LXX.

⁴³¹¹ Exod. xiv. 14.

⁴³¹² Rom. xii. 12.

and in meditation on the law, they stand against those things which befall them, are well-pleasing to God, and give utterance to the words which are written, ‘Afflictions and distresses are come upon me; but Thy commandments are my meditation⁴³¹³.’

7. And whereas, not only in action, but also in the thoughts of the mind, men are moved to deeds of virtue, he afterwards adds, saying, ‘Mine eyes prevent the dawn, that I might meditate on Thy words⁴³¹⁴.’ For it is meet that the spiritual meditations of those who are whole should precede their bodily actions. And does not our Saviour, when intending to teach this very thing begin with the thoughts of the mind? saying, ‘Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery:’ and, ‘Whosoever shall be angry with his brother, is guilty of murder⁴³¹⁵.’ For where there is no wrath, murder is prevented; and where lust is first removed, there can be no accusation of adultery. Hence meditation on the law is necessary, my beloved, and uninterrupted converse with virtue, ‘that the saint may lack nothing, but be perfect to every good work⁴³¹⁶.’ For by these things is the promise of eternal life, as Paul wrote to Timothy, calling constant meditation exercise, and saying, ‘Exercise thyself unto godliness; for bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable for all things, since it has the promise of the present life, and of that which is eternal⁴³¹⁷.’

8. Worthy of admiration is the virtue of that man, my brethren! for through Timothy he enjoins upon all⁴³¹⁸, that they should have regard to nothing more than to godliness, but above everything to adjudge the chief place to faith in God. For what grace has the unrighteous man, though he may feign to keep the commandments? Nay rather, the unrighteous man is unable even to keep a portion of the law, for as is his mind, such of necessity must be his actions; as the Spirit says, reproving such; ‘The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.’ After this the Word, shewing that actions correspond with thoughts, says, ‘They are corrupt; they are profane in their machinations⁴³¹⁹.’ The unrighteous man then, in every respect corrupts his body; stealing, committing adultery, cursing, being drunken, and doing such like things. Even as Jeremiah, the prophet, convicts Israel of these things, crying out and saying, ‘Oh, that I had a lodge far off in the wilderness! then would I leave my people and depart from them: for they are all adulterers, an assembly of oppressors, who draw out their tongue as a bow; lying and not truth has prevailed upon the earth, and they proceed from iniquities to iniquities; but Me they have not known⁴³²⁰.’ Thus, for wickedness and falsehood, and



⁴³¹³ Ps. cxix. 143.

⁴³¹⁴ Ib. cxix. 148.

⁴³¹⁵ Matt. v. 28, 22.

⁴³¹⁶ 2 Tim. iii. 17.

⁴³¹⁷ 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

⁴³¹⁸ Cf. *Letter* 3, §3, note 17; *Apol. Const.* 26.

⁴³¹⁹ Ps. xiv. 1, 2.

⁴³²⁰ Jer. ix. 2.

for deeds, in which they [proceed] from iniquity to iniquity, he reproveth their practices; but, because they knew not the Lord, and were faithless, he charges them with unrighteousness.

9. For faith and godliness are allied to each other, and sisters; and he who believes in Him is godly, and he also who is godly, believes the more⁴³²¹. He therefore who is in a state of wickedness, undoubtedly also wanders from the faith; and he who falls from godliness, falls from the true faith. Paul, for instance, bearing testimony to the same point, advises his disciple, saying, ‘Avoid profane conversations; for they increase unto more ungodliness, and their word takes hold as doth a canker, of whom are Hymenæus and Philetus⁴³²².’ In what their wickedness consisted he declares, saying, ‘Who have erred from the faith, saying that the resurrection is already past⁴³²³.’ But again, desirous of shewing that faith is yoked with godliness, the Apostle says, ‘And all those who will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution⁴³²⁴.’ Afterwards, that no man should renounce godliness through persecution, he counsels them to preserve the faith, adding, ‘Thou, therefore, continue in the things thou hast learned, and hast been assured of⁴³²⁵.’ And as when brother is helped by brother, they become as a wall to each other; so faith and godliness, being of like growth, hang together, and he who is practised in the one, of necessity is strengthened by the other. Therefore, wishing the disciple to be exercised in godliness unto the end, and to contend for the faith, he counsels them, saying, ‘Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life⁴³²⁶.’ For if a man first put away the wickedness of idols, and rightly confesses Him Who is truly God, he next fights by faith with those who war against Him.

10. For of these two things we speak of—faith and godliness—the hope is the same, even everlasting life; for he saith, ‘Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life.’ And, ‘exercise thyself unto godliness, for it hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come⁴³²⁷.’ For this cause, the Ario-maniacs, who now have gone out from the Church, being opponents of Christ, have digged a pit of unbelief, into which they themselves have been thrust; and, since they have advanced in ungodliness, they ‘overthrow the faith of the simple⁴³²⁸,’ blaspheming the Son of God, and saying that He is a creature, and has His being from things which are not. But as then against the adherents of Philetus and Hymenæus, so now the Apostle forewarns all men against ungodliness like theirs, saying, ‘The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His; and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from

⁴³²¹ Cf. John vii. 17

⁴³²² 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.

⁴³²³ Ib. ii. 18.

⁴³²⁴ Ib. iii. 12.

⁴³²⁵ Ib. iii. 14.

⁴³²⁶ 1 Tim. iv. 7.

⁴³²⁷ 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

⁴³²⁸ Rom. xvi. 18.

iniquity⁴³²⁹.’ For it is well that a man should depart from wickedness and deeds of iniquity, that he may be able properly to celebrate the feast; for he who is defiled with the pollutions of the wicked is not able to sacrifice the Passover to the Lord our God. Hence, the people who were then in Egypt said, ‘We cannot sacrifice the Passover in Egypt to the Lord our God⁴³³⁰.’ For God, Who is over all, willed that they should go far away from the servants of Pharaoh, and from the furnace of iron; so that being set free from wickedness, and having carefully put away from them all strange notions, they might receive the knowledge of God and of virtuous actions. For He saith, ‘Go far from them: depart from the midst of them, and touch not the unclean things⁴³³¹.’ For a man will not otherwise depart from sin, and lay hold on virtuous deeds, than by meditation on his acts; and when he has been practised by exercise in godliness, he will lay hold on the confession of faith⁴³³², which also Paul, after he had fought the fight, possessed, namely, the crown of righteousness which was laid up; which the righteous Judge will give, not to him alone, but to all who are like him.

11. For such meditation and exercise in godliness, being at all times the habit of the saints, is urgent on us at the present time, when the divine word desires us to keep the feast with them if we are in this disposition. For what else is the feast, but the constant worship of God, and the recognition of godliness, and unceasing prayers from the whole heart with agreement? So Paul wishing us to be ever in this disposition, commands, saying, ‘Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks⁴³³³.’ Not therefore separately, but unitedly and collectively, let us all keep the feast together, as the prophet exhorts, saying, ‘O come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us make a joyful noise unto God our Saviour⁴³³⁴.’ Who then is so negligent, or who so disobedient to the divine voice, as not to leave everything, and run to the general and common assembly of the feast? which is not in one place only, for not one place alone keeps the feast; but ‘into all the earth their song has gone forth, and to the ends of the world their words.’ And the sacrifice is not offered in one place, but ‘in every nation, incense and a pure sacrifice is offered unto God⁴³³⁵.’ So when in like manner from all in every place, praise and prayer shall ascend to the gracious and good Father, when the whole Catholic Church which is in every place, with gladness and rejoicing, celebrates together the same worship to God, when all men in common send up a song of praise and say, Amen⁴³³⁶; how blessed will it not be, my brethren! who will not, at that time, be engaged, praying rightly? For the walls



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⁴³²⁹ 2 Tim. ii. 19.

⁴³³⁰ Exod. viii. 26.

⁴³³¹ 2 Cor. vi. 17.

⁴³³² The Syriac appears to be a translation of κρατήσει τῆς ὁμολογίας τῆς πίστεως (cf. Heb. iv. 14).

⁴³³³ 1 Thess. v. 16–18

⁴³³⁴ Ps. xcvi. 1.

⁴³³⁵ Ib. xix. 4; Mal. i. 11.

⁴³³⁶ For a parallel passage to this, vid. *Letter x.* 2.

of every adverse power, yea even of Jericho especially, falling down, and the gift⁴³³⁷ of the Holy Spirit being then richly poured upon all men, every man perceiving the coming of the Spirit shall say, ‘We are all filled in the morning with Thy favour, and we rejoice and are made glad in our days⁴³³⁸.’

12. Since this is so, let us make a joyful noise with the saints, and let no one of us fail of his duty in these things; counting as nothing the affliction or the trials which, especially at this time, have been enviously directed against us by the party of Eusebius. Even now they wish to injure us, and by their accusations to compass our death, because of that godliness, whose helper is the Lord. But, as faithful servants of God, knowing that He is our salvation in the time of trouble:—for our Lord promised beforehand, saying, ‘Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for your reward is great in heaven⁴³³⁹.’ Again, it is the Redeemer’s own word, that affliction shall not befall every man in this world, but only those who have a holy fear of Him:—on this account, the more the enemies hem us in, the more let us be at liberty; although they revile us, let us come together; and the more they would turn us aside from godliness, let us the more boldly preach it saying, ‘All these things are come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee⁴³⁴⁰,’ and we have not done evil with the Ario-maniacs, who say that Thou hast existence from those things that exist not. The Word which is eternally with the Father, is also from Him.

13. Let us therefore keep the feast, my brethren, celebrating it not at all as an occasion of distress and mourning, neither let us mingle with heretics through temporal trials brought upon us by godliness. But if anything that would promote joy and gladness should offer, let us attend to it; so that our heart may not be sad, like that of Cain; but that, like faithful and good servants of the Lord, we may hear the words, ‘Enter into the joy of thy Lord⁴³⁴¹.’ For we do not institute days of mourning and sorrow, as some may consider these of Easter to be, but we keep the feast, being filled with joy and gladness. We keep it then, not regarding it after the deceitful error of the Jews, nor according to the teaching of the Arians, which takes away the Son from the Godhead, and numbers Him among creatures; but we look to the correct doctrine we derive from the Lord. For the guile of the Jews, and the unbounded impiety of the Arians, cause nothing but sad reflections, for the former at the beginning slew the Lord; but these latter take away His position of having conquered that death to which the Jews brought Him, in that they say He is not the Creator, but a creature. For if He were a creature, He would have been holden by death; but if He was not holden by death,

⁴³³⁷ Cf. *Letter* x. 2, note 9. Vid. also John vii. 39; Rom. v. 5; John xx. 22

⁴³³⁸ Ps. xc. 14, LXX.

⁴³³⁹ Matt. v. 11, 12.

⁴³⁴⁰ Ps. xlv. 17.

⁴³⁴¹ Matt. xxv. 21.

according to the Scriptures, He is not a creature, but the Lord of the creatures, and the subject⁴³⁴² of this immortal feast.

14. For the Lord of death would abolish death, and being Lord, what He would was accomplished; for we have all passed from death unto life. But the imagination of the Jews, and of those who are like them, was vain, since the result was not such as they contemplated, but turned out adverse to themselves; and ‘at both of them He that sitteth in the heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision⁴³⁴³.’ Hence, when our Saviour was led to death, He restrained the women who followed Him weeping, saying, ‘Weep not for Me⁴³⁴⁴;’ meaning to shew that the Lord’s death is an event, not of sorrow but of joy, and that He Who dies for us is alive. For He does not derive His being from those things which are not, but from the Father. It is truly a subject of joy, that we can see the signs of victory against death, even our own incorruptibility, through the body of the Lord. For since He rose gloriously, it is clear that the resurrection of all of us will take place; and since His body remained without corruption, there can be no doubt regarding our incorruption⁴³⁴⁵. For as by one man⁴³⁴⁶, as saith Paul (and it is the truth), sin passed upon all men, so by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall all rise. ‘For,’ he says, ‘this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality⁴³⁴⁷.’ Now this came to pass in the time of the Passion, in which our Lord died for us, for ‘our Passover, Christ, is sacrificed⁴³⁴⁸.’ Therefore, because He was sacrificed, let each of us feed upon Him, and with alacrity and diligence partake of His sustenance; since He is given to all without grudging, and is in every one ‘a well of water flowing to everlasting life⁴³⁴⁹.’

15. We begin the fast of forty days on the ninth of the month Phamenoth (Mar. 5); and having, in these days, served the Lord with abstinence, and first purified ourselves⁴³⁵⁰, we commence also the holy Easter on the fourteenth of the month Pharmuthi (April 9). Afterwards, extending the fast to the seventh day, on the seventeenth⁴³⁵¹ of the month, let us rest late in the evening. And the light of the Lord having first dawned upon us, and the holy Sunday on which our Lord rose shining upon us, we should rejoice and be glad with the joy which arises from good works, during the seven weeks which remain—to Pentecost—giving glory to the Father, and saying, ‘This is the day which

⁴³⁴² Syr. ὑπόθεσις. Cf. *Letter* x. 2, note 8.

⁴³⁴³ Ps. ii. 4.

⁴³⁴⁴ Luke xxiii. 28.

⁴³⁴⁵ Cf. *de Incarn.* §50.

⁴³⁴⁶ Rom. v. 12.

⁴³⁴⁷ 1 Cor. xv. 53.

⁴³⁴⁸ Ib. v. 7.

⁴³⁴⁹ John iv. 14.

⁴³⁵⁰ Cf. *Letter* vi. 11.

⁴³⁵¹ Read ‘nineteenth.’

the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it,⁴³⁵² through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through Whom to the same, and to His Father, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the brethren who are with me salute you. That ye may have health in the Lord, I pray, brethren beloved.

Here endeth the eleventh Letter of holy Athanasius.

*XII.—(Probably for 340 a.d.) *To the Beloved Brother, and our fellow Minister Serapion*⁴³⁵³.

Thanks be to Divine Providence for those things which, at all times, it vouchsafes to us; for it has vouchsafed to us now to come to the season of the festival. Having, therefore, according to custom, written the Letter respecting the festival, I have sent it to you, my beloved; that through you all the brethren may be able to know the day of rejoicing. But because some Meletians, being come from Syria, have boasted that they had received what does not belong to them, I mean, that they also were reckoned in the Catholic Church; on this account, I have sent to you a copy of one letter of our fellow-ministers who are of Palestine, that when it reaches you, you may know the fraud of the pretenders in this matter. For because they boasted, as I have said before, it was necessary for me to write to the Bishops who are in Syria, and immediately those of Palestine sent us a reply, having agreed in⁴³⁵⁴ the judgment against them, as you may learn from this example. That you may not have to consider the letters of all the Bishops one after the other, I have sent you one, which is of like character with the rest, in order that from it you may know the purport of all of them. I know also that when they are convicted in this matter, they will incur perfect odium at the hands of all men. And thus far concerning the pretenders. But I have further deemed it highly necessary and very urgent, to make known to your modesty—for I have written this to each one—that you should proclaim the fast of forty days to the brethren, and persuade them to fast, lest, while all the world is fasting, we who are in Egypt should be derided, as the only people who do not fast, but take our pleasure in these days. For if, on account of the Letter [not] being yet read, we do not fast, we should take away this pretext, and it should be read before the fast of forty days, so that they may not make this an excuse for neglect or fasting. Also, when it is read, they may be able to learn about the fast. But O, my beloved, whether in this way or any other, persuade and teach them to fast the forty days. For it is a disgrace that when all the world does this, those alone who are in Egypt, instead of fasting, should find their pleasure. For even I being grieved because men deride us for

⁴³⁵² Ps. cxviii. 24.

⁴³⁵³ This Letter being introduced (as it is in the ms.) after the eleventh, with the remark at the end of it, that there is no twelfth; together with the exhortations concerning fasting contained in it, was probably written in lieu of a twelfth. Serapion was doubtless the Bishop of Thmuis (see *Letter 54*).

⁴³⁵⁴ Or, 'fulfilled the judgment.' Cureton.

this, have been constrained to write to you. When therefore you receive the letters, and have read them and given the exhortation, write to me in return, my beloved, that I also may rejoice upon learning it.

2. But I have also thought it necessary to inform⁴³⁵⁵ you of the fact, that Bishops have succeeded those who have fallen asleep. In Tanis in the stead of Elias⁴³⁵⁶, is Theodorus. In Arsenoitis, Silvanus⁴³⁵⁷ instead of Calosiris. In Paralus, Nemesion is instead of Nonnus⁴³⁵⁸. In Bucolia⁴³⁵⁹ is Heraclius. In Tentyra, Andronicus is instead of Saprion⁴³⁶⁰, his father. In Thebes, Philon instead of Philon. In Maximianopolis, Herminus instead of Atras. In the lower Apollon is Sarapion instead of Plution. In Aphroditon, Serenus is in the place of Theodorus. In Rhinocoruron, Salomon. In Stathma, Arabion, and in Marmarica. In the eastern Garyathis, Andragathius⁴³⁶¹ in the place of Hierax. In the southern Garyathis, Quintus⁴³⁶² instead of Nicon⁴³⁶³. So that to these you may write, and from these receive the canonical Letters.

Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the brethren who are with me salute you.

He wrote this from Rome. There is no twelfth Letter.

Letter XIII.—(For 341.) *Coss. Marcellinus, Probinus; Præf. Longinus; Indict. xiv; Easter-day, xiii Kal. Maii, xxiv Pharmuthi; Æra Dioclet. 57.*

⁴³⁵⁵ There is a similar notification of the appointment of fresh Bishops appended to the nineteenth Letter.

⁴³⁵⁶ Larsow writes 'Ilius.' Tanis is situate in Augustamnica Prima. Vid. Quatremère *Mémoires geogr. et histor. sur l'Égypte*, tom. i. p. 284, &c. (L.) The word Τάνις is the LXX. rendering of 'Zoan.' In the *Apol. c. Ar. 50*, we have a list of ninety-four Egyptian Bishops, among others, who subscribed to the letter of the Council of Sardica. A reference to this list explains some names which otherwise would have been obscure. For a list of the Egyptian Bishoprics, the reader is referred to Neale's *Hist. of the Holy Eastern Church*. Gen. Introd. vol. i. pp. 115, 116. To the list there given must be added the names of Bucolia, Stathma, the Eastern Garyathis, the Southern Garyathis. There were two Egyptian Bishops named Elias who subscribed their names to the letter of the Council of Sardica.

⁴³⁵⁷ Silvanus was succeeded by Andreas, as we learn from the postscript to the nineteenth Letter.

⁴³⁵⁸ An Egyptian Bishop named Nonnus was present at the Synod of Tyre. *Apol. c. Ar. §79*.

⁴³⁵⁹ For a dissertation on the situation of Bucolia, see the treatise by Quatremère, already referred, to (tom. i. pp. 224–233). In p. 233, he writes; La contrée de l'Élearchie ou des Bucolies est, si je ne me trompe, parfaitement identique avec la province de Baschmour.

⁴³⁶⁰ An Egyptian Bishop of the name of Saprion was at the Synod of Tyre. *Apol. c. Ar. §79*. He is 'Serapion' in *Vit. Pach.* 20.

⁴³⁶¹ *Apol. Ar. 50*.

⁴³⁶² *Apol. Ar. 50*.

⁴³⁶³ *Apol. Ar. 79*.

Again, my beloved brethren, I am ready to notify to you the saving feast⁴³⁶⁴, which will take place according to annual custom. For although the opponents of Christ⁴³⁶⁵ have oppressed you together with us with afflictions and sorrows; yet, God having comforted us by our mutual faith⁴³⁶⁶, behold, I write to you even from Rome. Keeping the feast here with the brethren, still I keep it with you also in will and in spirit, for we send up prayers in common to God, ‘Who hath granted us not only to believe in Him, but also now to suffer for His sake⁴³⁶⁷.’ For troubled as we are, because we are so far from you, He moves us to write, that by a letter we might comfort ourselves, and provoke one another to good⁴³⁶⁸. For, indeed, numerous afflictions and bitter persecutions directed against the Church have been against us. For heretics, corrupt in their mind, untried in the faith, rising against the truth, violently persecute the Church, and of the brethren, some are scourged and others torn with stripes, and hardest of all, their insults reach even to the Bishops. Nevertheless, it is not becoming, on this account, that we should neglect the feast. But we should especially remember it, and not at all forget its commemoration from time to time. Now the unbelievers do not consider that there is a season for feasts, because they spend all their lives in revelling and follies; and the feasts which they keep are an occasion of grief rather than of joy. But to us in this present life they are above all an uninterrupted passage [to heaven]—it is indeed our season. For such things as these serve for exercise and trial, so that, having approved ourselves zealous and chosen servants of Christ, we may be fellow-heirs with the saints⁴³⁶⁹. For thus Job: ‘The whole world is a place of trial to men upon the earth⁴³⁷⁰.’ Nevertheless, they are proved in this world by afflictions, labours, and sorrows, to the end that each one may receive of God such reward as is meet for him, as He saith by the prophet, ‘I am the Lord, Who trieth the hearts, and searcheth the reins, to give to every one according to his ways⁴³⁷¹.’

2. Not that He first knows the things of a man on his being proved (for He knows them all before they come to pass), but because He is good and philanthropic, He distributes to each a due reward according to his actions, so that every man may exclaim, Righteous is the judgment of God! As the prophet says again, ‘The Lord trieth the just, and discerneth the reins⁴³⁷².’ Again, for this cause He tries each one of us, either that to those who know it not, virtue may be manifested by means of those who are proved, as was said respecting Job; ‘Thinkest thou that I was revealed to

⁴³⁶⁴ Vid. *Letter* x. 1.

⁴³⁶⁵ The Arians (οἱ χριστόμαχοι).

⁴³⁶⁶ Cf. Rom. i. 12

⁴³⁶⁷ Phil. i. 29.

⁴³⁶⁸ Cf. Heb. x. 24

⁴³⁶⁹ Cf. Col. i. 12

⁴³⁷⁰ Job vii. 1. not LXX.

⁴³⁷¹ Jer. xvii. 10.

⁴³⁷² Ib. xx. 12.

thee for any other cause, than that thou shouldest be seen righteous^{4373?} or that, when men come to a sense of their deeds, they may be able to know of what manner they are, and so may either repent of their wickedness, or abide confirmed in the faith. Now the blessed Paul, when troubled by afflictions, and persecutions, and hunger and thirst, 'in everything was a conqueror, through Jesus Christ, Who loved us⁴³⁷⁴.' Through suffering he was weak indeed in body, yet, believing and hoping, he was made strong in spirit, and his strength was made perfect in weakness⁴³⁷⁵.

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3. The other saints also, who had a like confidence in God, accepted a like probation with gladness, as Job said, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord⁴³⁷⁶.' But the Psalmist, 'Search me, O Lord, and try me: prove my reins and my heart⁴³⁷⁷.' For since, when the strength is proved, it convinceth the foolish, they perceiving the cleansing and the advantage resulting from the divine fire, were not discouraged in trials like these, but they rather delighted in them, suffering no injury at all from the things which happened, but being seen to shine more brightly, like gold from the fire⁴³⁷⁸, as he said, who was tried in such a school of discipline as this; 'Thou hast tried my heart, Thou hast visited me in the night-season; Thou hast proved me, and hast not found iniquity in me, so that my mouth shall not speak of the works of men⁴³⁷⁹.' But those whose actions are not restrained by law, who know of nothing beyond eating and drinking and dying, account trials as danger. They soon stumble at them, so that, being untried in the faith, they are given over to a reprobate mind, and do those things which are not seemly⁴³⁸⁰. Therefore the blessed Paul, when urging us to such exercises as these, and having before measured himself by them, says, 'Therefore I take pleasure in afflictions, in infirmities.' And again, 'Exercise thyself unto godliness⁴³⁸¹.' For since he knew the persecutions that befel those who chose to live in godliness, he wished his disciples to meditate beforehand on the difficulties connected with godliness; that when trials should come, and affliction arise, they might be able to bear them easily, as having been exercised in these things. For in those things wherewith a man has been conversant in mind, he ordinarily experiences a hidden joy. In this way, the blessed martyrs, becoming at first conversant with difficulties, were quickly perfected in Christ, regarding as nought the injury of the body, while they contemplated the expected rest.

⁴³⁷³ Job xl. 8, 9, (3, 4, LXX).

⁴³⁷⁴ Rom. viii. 37.

⁴³⁷⁵ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

⁴³⁷⁶ Job i. 21.

⁴³⁷⁷ Ps. xxvi. 2.

⁴³⁷⁸ Cf. Mal. iii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 7.

⁴³⁷⁹ Ps. xvii. 3, 4, LXX.

⁴³⁸⁰ Rom. i. 28.

⁴³⁸¹ 2 Cor. xii. 10; 1 Tim. iv. 7.

4. But all those who ‘call their lands by their own names⁴³⁸²,’ and have wood, and hay, and stubble⁴³⁸³ in their thoughts; such as these, since they are strangers to difficulties, become aliens from the kingdom of heaven. Had they however known that ‘tribulation perfecteth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed,’ they would have exercised themselves, after the example of Paul, who said, ‘I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway⁴³⁸⁴.’ They would easily have borne the afflictions which were brought upon them to prove them from time to time, if the prophetic admonition⁴³⁸⁵ had been listened to by them; ‘It is good for a man to take up Thy yoke in his youth; he shall sit alone and shall be silent, because he hath taken Thy yoke upon him. He will give his cheek to him who smiteth him; he will be filled with reproaches. Because the Lord does not cast away for ever; for when He abases, He is gracious, according to the multitude of His tender mercies⁴³⁸⁶.’ For though all these things should proceed from the enemies, stripes, insults, reproaches, yet shall they avail nothing against the multitude of God’s tender mercies; for we shall quickly recover from them since they are merely temporal, but God is always gracious, pouring out His tender mercies on those who please [Him]. Therefore, my beloved brethren, we should not look at these temporal things, but fix our attention on those which are eternal. Though affliction may come, it will have an end, though insult and persecution, yet are they nothing to the hope which is set [before us]. For all present matters are trifling compared with those which are future; the sufferings of this present time not being worthy to be compared with the hope that is to come⁴³⁸⁷. For what can be compared with the kingdom? or what is there in comparison with life eternal? Or what is all we could give here, to that which we shall inherit yonder? For we are ‘heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ⁴³⁸⁸.’ Therefore it is not right, my beloved, to consider afflictions and persecutions, but the hopes which are laid up for us because of persecutions.

5. Now to this the example of Issachar, the patriarch, may persuade, as the Scripture⁴³⁸⁹ saith, ‘Issachar desires that which is good, resting between the heritages; and when he saw that the rest was good, and the land fertile⁴³⁹⁰, he bowed his shoulder to labour, and became a husbandman.’

⁴³⁸² Ps. xlix. 11 (Larsow mistakes the reference)

⁴³⁸³ Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 12.

⁴³⁸⁴ Rom. v. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 27.

⁴³⁸⁵ Lam. iii. 27.

⁴³⁸⁶ Cf. Serapion *Epistola ad Monachos*, in Mai *Spicileg. Rom.* tom. iv. p. li. (L.)

⁴³⁸⁷ Cf. Rom. viii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 17.

⁴³⁸⁸ Rom. viii. 17.

⁴³⁸⁹ Gen. xlix. 14.

⁴³⁹⁰ Jarchi interprets the passage figuratively of Issachar being strong to bear the yoke of the law. The Jerusalem Targum thus paraphrases the verse. ‘And he saw the rest of the world to come, that it was good, and the portion of the land of Israel, that it was pleasant; therefore he inclined his shoulders to work in the law, and his brethren brought gifts unto him.’



Being consumed by divine love, like the spouse in the Canticles, he gathered abundance from the holy Scriptures, for his mind was captivated not by the old alone, but by both the heritages. And hence as it were, spreading his wings, he beheld afar off ‘the rest’ which is in heaven, and,—since this ‘land’ consists of such beautiful works,—how much more truly the heavenly [country] must also [consist] of such⁴³⁹¹; for the other is ever new, and grows not old. For this ‘land’ passes away, as the Lord said; but that which is ready to receive the saints is immortal. Now when Issachar, the patriarch, saw these things, he joyfully made his boast of afflictions and toils, bowing his shoulders that he might labour. And he did not contend with those who smote him, neither was he disturbed by insults; but like a strong man triumphing the more by these things, and the more earnestly tilling his land, he received profit from it. The Word scattered the seed, but he watchfully cultivated it, so that it brought forth fruit, even a hundred-fold.

6. Now what does this mean, my beloved, but that we also, when the enemies are arrayed against us, should glory in afflictions⁴³⁹², and that when we are persecuted, we should not be discouraged, but should the rather press after the crown of the high calling⁴³⁹³ in Christ Jesus our Lord? and that being insulted, we should not be disturbed, but should give our cheek to the smiter, and bow the shoulder? For the lovers of pleasure and the lovers of enmity are tried, as saith the blessed Apostle James, ‘when they are drawn away by their own lusts and enticed⁴³⁹⁴.’ But let us, knowing that we suffer for the truth, and that those who deny the Lord smite and persecute us, ‘count it all joy, my brethren,’ according to the words of James, ‘when we fall into trials of various temptations, knowing that the trial of our faith worketh patience⁴³⁹⁵.’ Let us rejoice as we keep the feast, my brethren, knowing that our salvation is ordered in the time of affliction. For our Saviour did not redeem us by inactivity, but by suffering for us He abolished death. And respecting this, He intimidated to us before, saying, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation⁴³⁹⁶.’ But He did not say this to every man, but to those who diligently and faithfully perform good service to Him, knowing beforehand, that they should be persecuted who would live godly toward Him.

7. ‘But evil-doers and sorcerers will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived⁴³⁹⁷.’ If therefore, like those expounders of dreams and false prophets who professed to give signs, these ignorant men being drunk, not with wine, but with their own wickedness, make a profession of priesthood, and glory in their threats, believe them not; but since we are tried, let us humble ourselves, not being drawn away by them. For so God warned His people by Moses, saying, ‘If

⁴³⁹¹ Larsow’s rendering of the above is followed.

⁴³⁹² Rom. v. 3.

⁴³⁹³ Cf. Phil. iii. 14 τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως.

⁴³⁹⁴ James i. 14.

⁴³⁹⁵ Ib. i. 2.

⁴³⁹⁶ John xvi. 33.

⁴³⁹⁷ 2 Tim. iii. 13.

there shall rise up among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and shall give signs and tokens, and the sign or the token shall come to pass which he spake to thee, saying, Let us go and serve strange gods, which ye have not known; ye shall not hearken unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God trieth you, that He may know whether you will love the Lord your God with all your heart⁴³⁹⁸.’ So we, when we are tried by these things, will not separate ourselves from the love of God. But let us now keep the feast, my beloved, not as introducing a day of suffering, but of joy in Christ, by Whom we are fed every day. Let us be mindful of Him Who was sacrificed in the days of the Passover; for we celebrate this, because Christ the Passover was sacrificed⁴³⁹⁹. He Who once brought His people out of Egypt, and hath now abolished death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil⁴⁴⁰⁰, will likewise now turn him to shame, and again grant aid to those who are troubled, and cry unto God day and night⁴⁴⁰¹.

8. We begin the fast of forty days on the thirteenth of Phamenoth (9 Mar.), and the holy week of Easter on the eighteenth of Pharmuthi (Apr. 13); and resting on the seventh day, being the twenty-third (Apr. 18), and the first of the great week having dawned on the twenty-fourth of the same month Pharmuthi (Apr. 19), let us reckon from it till Pentecost. And at all times let us sing praises, calling on Christ, being delivered from our enemies by Christ Jesus our Lord, through Whom to the Father be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All those who are here with me salute you. I pray, my beloved brethren, that ye may have health in the Lord.

He wrote this also from Rome. Here endeth the thirteenth Letter.

Letter XIV.—(For 342.) *Coss. Augustus Constantius III, Constans II, Præf. the same Longinus; Indict. xv; Easter-day iii Id. Apr., xvi Pharmuthi; Æra Dioclet. 58.*

The gladness of our feast, my brethren, is always near at hand, and never fails those who wish to celebrate it⁴⁴⁰². For the Word is near, Who is all things on our behalf, even our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, having promised that His habitation with us should be perpetual, in virtue thereof cried, saying, ‘Lo, I am with you all the days of the world⁴⁴⁰³.’ For as He is the Shepherd, and the High Priest, and the Way and the Door, and everything at once to us, so again, He is shewn to us as the

⁴³⁹⁸ Deut. xiii. 1–3.
⁴³⁹⁹ 1 Cor. v. 7.
⁴⁴⁰⁰ Heb. ii. 14.
⁴⁴⁰¹ Luke xviii. 7.
⁴⁴⁰² Cf. *Letter* v. 1.
⁴⁴⁰³ Matt. xxviii. 20.

Feast, and the Holy day, according to the blessed Apostle; ‘Our Passover, Christ, is sacrificed⁴⁴⁰⁴.’ He it was who was expected, He caused a light to shine at the prayer of the Psalmist, who said, ‘My Joy, deliver me from those who surround me⁴⁴⁰⁵,’ this being indeed true rejoicing, this being a true feast, even deliverance from wickedness, whereto a man attains by thoroughly adopting an upright conversation, and being approved in his mind of godly submission towards God⁴⁴⁰⁶. For thus the saints all their lives long were like men rejoicing at a feast. One found rest in prayer to God, as blessed David⁴⁴⁰⁷, who rose in the night, not once but seven times. Another gave glory in songs of praise, as great Moses, who sang a song of praise for the victory over Pharaoh, and those task-masters⁴⁴⁰⁸. Others performed worship with unceasing diligence, like great Samuel and blessed Elijah; who have ceased from their course, and now keep the feast in heaven, and rejoice in what they formerly learnt through shadows, and from the types recognise the truth.

2. But what sprinklings shall we now employ, while we celebrate the feast? Who will be our guide, as we haste to this festival? None can do this, my beloved, but Him Whom you will name with me, even our Lord Jesus Christ Who said, ‘I am the Way.’ For it is He Who, according to the blessed John, ‘taketh away the sin of the world⁴⁴⁰⁹.’ He purifies our souls, as Jeremiah the prophet says in a certain place, ‘Stand in the ways and see, and enquire, and look which is the good path, and ye shall find in it cleansing for your souls⁴⁴¹⁰.’ Of old time, the blood of he-goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkled upon those who were unclean, were fit only to purify the flesh⁴⁴¹¹; but now, through the grace of God the Word, every man is thoroughly cleansed. Following Him, we may, even here, as on the threshold of the Jerusalem which is above, meditate beforehand on the feast which is eternal, as also the blessed Apostles, together following the Saviour Who was their Leader, have now become teachers of a like grace, saying, ‘Behold, we have left all, and followed Thee⁴⁴¹².’ For the following of the Lord, and the feast which is of the Lord, is not accomplished by words only, but by deeds, every enactment of laws and every command involving a distinct performance. For as great Moses, when administering the holy laws, exacted a promise from the people⁴⁴¹³, respecting the practice of them, so that having promised, they might not neglect them, and be accused as liars, thus also, the celebration of the least of the Passover raises no question, and

4404 1 Cor. v. 7.

4405 Ps. xxxi. 7, LXX.

4406 Cf. *Letter* iii. 2.

4407 Ps. cxix. 62, 164.

4408 Exod. xv.

4409 John xiv. 6; i. 29.

4410 Jer. vi. 16.

4411 Heb. ix. 13.

4412 Mark x. 28.

4413 Exod. xix. 8.

demands no reply; but when the word is given, the performance of it follows, for He saith, ‘And the children of Israel shall keep the Passover⁴⁴⁴;’ intending that there should be a ready performance of the commandment, while the command should aid its execution. But respecting these matters, I have confidence in your wisdom, and your care for instruction. Such points as these have been touched upon by us often and in various Letters.

3. But now, which is above all things most necessary, I wish to remind you, and myself with you, how that the command would have us come to the Paschal feast not profanely and without preparation, but with sacramental and doctrinal rites, and prescribed observances, as indeed we learn from the historical account, ‘A man who is of another nation, or bought with money, or uncircumcised, shall not eat the Passover⁴⁴⁵.’ Neither should it be eaten in ‘any’ house, but He commands it to be done in haste; inasmuch as before we groaned and were made sad by the bondage to Pharaoh, and the commands of the task-masters. For when in former time the children of Israel acted in this way, they were counted worthy to receive the type, which existed for the sake of this feast, nor is the feast now introduced on account of the type. As also the Word of God, when desirous of this, said to His disciples, ‘With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you⁴⁴⁶.’ Now that is a wonderful account, for a man might have seen them at that time girded as for a procession or a dance, and going out with staves, and sandals, and unleavened bread. These things, which took place before in shadows, were typical. But now the Truth is nigh unto us, ‘the Image of the invisible God⁴⁴⁷,’ our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Light, Who instead of a staff, is our sceptre, instead of unleavened bread, is the bread which came down from heaven, Who, instead of sandals, hath furnished us with the preparation of the Gospel⁴⁴⁸, and Who, to speak briefly, by all these hath guided us to His Father. And if enemies afflict us and persecute us, He again, instead of Moses, will encourage us with better words, saying, ‘Be of good cheer; I have overcome the wicked one⁴⁴⁹.’ And if after we have passed over the Red Sea heat should again vex us or some bitterness of the waters befall us, even thence again the Lord will appear to us, imparting to us of His sweetness, and His life-giving fountain, saying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink⁴⁴⁰.’

4. Why therefore do we tarry, and why do we delay, and not come with all eagerness and diligence to the feast, trusting that it is Jesus who calleth us? Who is all things for us, and was laden in ten thousand ways for our salvation; Who hungered and thirsted for us, though He gives us food

543

444 Ib. xii. 47.

445 Ib. xii. 43–48.

446 Luke xxii. 15.

447 Col. i. 15.

448 Eph. vi. 15.

449 John xvi. 33; cf. 1 John ii. 13.

440 Ib. vii. 37.

and drink in His saving gifts⁴⁴²¹. For this is His glory, this the miracle of His divinity, that He changed our sufferings for His happiness. For, being life, He died that He might make us alive, being the Word, He became flesh, that He might instruct the flesh in the Word, and being the fountain of life, He thirsted our thirst, that thereby He might urge us to the feast, saying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink⁴⁴²².’ At that time, Moses proclaimed the beginning of the feast, saying, ‘This month is the beginning of months to you⁴⁴²³.’ But the Lord, Who came down in the end of the ages⁴⁴²⁴, proclaimed a different day, not as though He would abolish the law, far from it, but that He should establish the law, and be the end of the law. ‘For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth in righteousness;’ as the blessed Paul saith, ‘Do we make void the law by faith? far from it: we rather establish the law⁴⁴²⁵.’ Now these things astonished even the officers who were sent by the Jews, so that wondering they said to the Pharisees, ‘No man ever thus spake⁴⁴²⁶.’ What was it then that astonished those officers, or what was it which so affected the men as to make them marvel? It was nothing but the boldness and authority of our Saviour. For when of old time prophets and scribes studied the Scriptures, they perceived that what they read did not refer to themselves, but to others. Moses, for instance, ‘A prophet will the Lord raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; to him hearken in all that he commands you.’ Isaiah again, ‘Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and ye shall call his name Emmanuel⁴⁴²⁷.’ And others prophesied in different and various ways, concerning the Lord. But by the Lord, of Himself, and of no other, were these things prophesied; to Himself He limited them all, saying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come to Me⁴⁴²⁸’ — not to any other person, but to ‘Me.’ A man may indeed hear from those concerning My coming, but he must not henceforth drink from others, but from Me.

5. Therefore let us also, when we come to the feast, no longer come as to old shadows, for they are accomplished, neither as to common feasts, but let us hasten as to the Lord, Who is Himself the feast⁴⁴²⁹, not looking upon it as an indulgence and delight of the belly, but as a manifestation of virtue. For the feasts of the heathen are full of greediness, and utter indolence, since they consider they celebrate a feast when they are idle⁴⁴³⁰; and they work the works of perdition when they feast. But our feasts consist in the exercise of virtue and the practice of temperance; as the prophetic word

⁴⁴²¹ Cf. *supr.* p. 88.

⁴⁴²² John vii. 37.

⁴⁴²³ Exod. xii. 2.

⁴⁴²⁴ Heb. ix. 26.

⁴⁴²⁵ Rom. x. 4; iii. 31.

⁴⁴²⁶ John vii. 46.

⁴⁴²⁷ Deut. xviii. 15; Is. vii. 14. These two texts are also quoted together in *Orat.* i. §54.

⁴⁴²⁸ John vii. 37.

⁴⁴²⁹ Cf. 1 Cor. v. 7

⁴⁴³⁰ Cf. *Letter* vii. 3.

testifies in a certain place, saying, ‘The fast of the fourth, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth [month], shall be to the house of Judah for gladness, and rejoicing, and for pleasant feasts⁴⁴³¹.’ Since therefore this occasion for exercise is set before us, and such a day as this is come, and the prophetic voice has gone forth that the feast shall be celebrated, let us give all diligence to this good proclamation, and like those who contend on the race course, let us vie with each other in observing the purity of the fast⁴⁴³², by watchfulness in prayers, by study of the Scriptures, by distributing to the poor, and let us be at peace with our enemies. Let us bind up those who are scattered abroad, banish pride, and return to lowliness of mind, being at peace with all men, and urging the brethren unto love. Thus also the blessed Paul was often engaged in fastings and watchings, and was willing to be accursed for his brethren. Blessed David again, having humbled himself by fastings, used boldness, saying, ‘O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there is any iniquity in my hands, if I have repaid those who dealt evil with me, then may I fall from my enemies as a vain man⁴⁴³³.’ If we do these things, we shall conquer death; and receive an earnest⁴⁴³⁴ of the kingdom of heaven.

6. We begin the holy Easter feast on the tenth of Pharmuthi (April 5), desisting from the holy fasts on the fifteenth of the same month Pharmuthi (April 10), on the evening of the seventh day. And let us keep the holy feast on the sixteenth of the same month Pharmuthi (April 11); adding one by one [the days] till the holy Pentecost, passing on to which, as through a succession of feasts, let us keep the festival to the Spirit, Who is even now near us, in Jesus Christ, through Whom and with Whom to the Father be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.



The fifteenth and sixteenth are wanting.

Letter XVII.—(For 345.) *Coss. Amantius, Albinus; Præf. Nestorius of Gaza; Indict. iii; Easter-day, vii Id. Apr., xii Pharmuthi; Moon 19; Æra Dioclet. 61.*

Athanasius to the Presbyters and Deacons of Alexandria, and to the beloved brethren, greeting in Christ.

According to custom, I give you notice respecting Easter, my beloved, that you also may notify the same to the districts of those who are at a distance, as is usual. Therefore, after this present

⁴⁴³¹ Zech. viii. 19.

⁴⁴³² Cf. 1 Cor. ix. 24–27.

⁴⁴³³ Rom. ix. 3; Ps. vii. 3, 4, LXX.

⁴⁴³⁴ Syr. ἁρῶν 191ἁβῶν. Cf. Eph. i. 13, 14, &c.

festival⁴⁴³⁵, I mean this which is on the twentieth of the month Pharmuthi, the Easter-day following will be on the vii Id. April, or according to the Alexandrians on the twelfth of Pharmuthi. Give notice therefore in all those districts, that Easter-day will be on the vii Id. April, or according to the Alexandrian reckoning on the twelfth of Pharmuthi. That you may be in health in Christ, I pray, my beloved brethren.

Letter XVIII.—(For 346.) *Coss. Augustus Constantius IV, Constans III; Præf. the same Nestorius; Indict. iv; Easter-day iii Kal. Apr., iv Pharmuthi; Moon 21; Æra Dioclet. 62.*

Athanasius, to the Presbyters and Deacons of Alexandria, brethren beloved in the Lord, greeting. You have done well, dearly beloved brethren, that you have given the customary notice of the holy Easter in those districts; for I have seen and acknowledged your exactness. By other letters I have also given you notice, that when this year is finished, ye may know concerning the next. Yet now I have thought it necessary to write the same things that, when you have it exactly, you also may write with care. Therefore, after the conclusion of this feast, which is now drawing to its close, on the twelfth of the month Pharmuthi, which is on the vii Id. Apr.⁴⁴³⁶, Easter-day will be on the iii Kal, April; the fourth of Pharmuthi, according to the Alexandrians. When therefore the feast is finished, give notice again in these districts, according to early custom, thus: Easter Sunday is on the iii Kal. April, which is the fourth of Pharmuthi, according to the Alexandrian reckoning. And let no man hesitate concerning the day, neither let any one contend, saying, It is requisite that Easter should be held on the twenty-seventh of the month Phamenoth; for it was discussed in the holy Synod⁴⁴³⁷, and all there settled it to be on the iii Kal. April. I say then that it is on the fourth of the month Pharmuthi; for the week before this is much too early⁴⁴³⁸. Therefore let there be no dispute, but let us act as becometh us. For I have thus written to the Romans also. Give notice then as it has been notified to you, that it is on the iii Kal. April; the fourth of Pharmuthi, according to the Alexandrian reckoning.

⁴⁴³⁵ Observe that Athan. gives notice at *Easter*, a.d. 344, upon what day Easter is to be observed in a.d. 345, and not immediately after the succeeding Epiphany, as Cassian asserts to have been the custom of the Patriarch of Alexandria. (Cassian. *Collat.* x. 1.) Cf. *Letters* 2, 4, 10, 18, &c.

⁴⁴³⁶ The number vii is omitted in the ms.

⁴⁴³⁷ Sardica, in 343.

⁴⁴³⁸ The 14th day of the Moon, reckoning from the time of *mean* New Moon, took place on Sunday the 23rd. According to the rule which obtained in later times and continued in use until the Gregorian reformation of the Calendar, the 14th day of the *Ecclesiastical* Moon took place on Saturday the 22nd, which would make Easter-day happen on the 23rd. It would seem, therefore, that the decision of the Synod referred to, brought the Ecclesiastical Moon into closer accordance with that of the heavens, than the later Calendar would have done. In 357 Easter was apparently kept on Mar. 23.

That ye may have health in the Lord, I pray, my dearly beloved brethren.

Letter XIX.—(For 347.) *Coss. Rufinus, Eusebius; Præf. the same Nestorius; Indict. v; Easter-day, Prid. Id. Apr., Pharmuthi xvii; Æra Dioclet. 63; Moon 15.*

‘Blessed is God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ⁴⁴³⁹,’ for such an introduction is fitting for an Epistle, and more especially now, when it brings thanksgiving to the Lord, in the Apostle’s words, because He hath brought us from a distance, and granted us again to send openly to you, as usual, the Festal Letters. For this is the season of the feast, my brethren, and it is near; being not now proclaimed by trumpets, as the history records⁴⁴⁴⁰, but being made known and brought near to us by the Saviour, Who suffered on our behalf and rose again, even as Paul preached, saying, ‘Our Passover, Christ, is sacrificed⁴⁴⁴¹.’ Henceforth the feast of the Passover is ours, not that of a stranger, nor is it any longer of the Jews⁴⁴⁴². For the time of shadows is abolished, and those former things have ceased, and now the month of new things⁴⁴⁴³ is at hand, in which every man should keep the feast, in obedience to Him who said, ‘Observe the month of new things, and keep the Passover to the Lord thy God⁴⁴⁴⁴.’ Even the heathen fancy they keep festival, and the Jews hypo-critically feign to do so. But the feast of the heathen He reproveth, as the bread⁴⁴⁴⁵ of mourners, and He turns His face from that of the Jews, as being outcasts, saying, ‘Your new moons and your sabbaths My soul hateth⁴⁴⁴⁶.’

2. For actions not done lawfully and piously, are not of advantage, though they may be reputed to be so, but they rather argue hypocrisy in those who venture upon them. Therefore, although such persons feign to offer sacrifices, yet they hear from the Father, ‘Your whole burnt-offerings are not acceptable, and your sacrifices do not please Me; and although ye bring fine flour, it is vanity, incense also is an abomination unto Me⁴⁴⁴⁷.’ For God does not need anything⁴⁴⁴⁸; and, since nothing is unclean to Him, He is full in regard to them, as He testifies, by Isaiah, saying, ‘I am full⁴⁴⁴⁹.’ Now

4439 Eph. i. 3.

4440 Cf. *Letter* i. 1.

4441 1 Cor. v. 7, cf. *Letter* i.

4442 Cf. *Letter* 6, §2, and note.

4443 Deut. xvi. 1, LXX.

4444 Deut. xvi. 1, LXX., cf. *Letter* 1, §9, and note.

4445 Hos. ix. 4.

4446 Is. i. 14.

4447 Ib. i. 13; Jer. vi. 20.

4448 *Orat.* ii. 28, 29.

4449 Is. i. 11.

there was a law given about these things, for the instruction of the people, and to prefigure things to come, for Paul saith to the Galatians; ‘Before faith came, we were kept guarded under the law, being shut up in the faith which should afterwards be revealed unto us; wherefore the law was our instructor in Christ, that we might be justified by faith⁴⁴⁵⁰.’ But the Jews knew not, neither did they understand, therefore they walked in the daytime as in darkness, feeling for, but not touching, the truth we possess, which [was contained] in the law; conforming to the letter, but not submitting to the spirit. And when Moses was veiled, they looked on him, but turned away their faces from him when he was uncovered. For they knew not what they read, but erroneously substituted one thing for another. The prophet, therefore, cried against them, saying, ‘Falsehood and faithlessness have prevailed among them.’ The Lord also therefore said concerning them, ‘The strange children have dealt falsely with Me; the strange children have waxen old⁴⁴⁵¹.’ But how gently does He reprove them, saying, ‘Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me⁴⁴⁵².’ But being faithless, they went on to deal falsely with the law, affirming things after their own pleasure, but not understanding the Scripture; and, further, as they had hypocritically made a pretence of the plain text of Scripture, and had confidence in this, He is angry with them, saying by Isaiah, ‘Who hath required these of your hands⁴⁴⁵³?’ And by Jeremiah, since they were very bold, he threatens, ‘Gather together your whole burnt-offerings with your sacrifices, and eat flesh, for I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices⁴⁴⁵⁴.’ For they did not act as was right, neither was their zeal according to law, but they rather sought their own pleasure in such days, as the prophet accuses them, beating down their bondsmen, and gathering themselves together for strifes and quarrels, and they smote the lowly with the fist, and did all things that tended to their own gratification. For this cause, they continue without a feast until the end, although they make a display now of eating flesh, out of place and out of season. For, instead of the legally-appointed lamb, they have learned to sacrifice to Baal; instead of the true unleavened bread, ‘they collect the wood, and their fathers kindle the fire, and their wives prepare the dough, that they may make cakes to the host of heaven, and pour out libations to strange gods, that they may provoke Me to anger, saith the Lord⁴⁴⁵⁵.’ They have the just reward of such devices, since, although they pretend to keep the Passover, yet joy and gladness is taken from their mouth, as saith Jeremiah, ‘There hath been taken away from the cities of Judah, and the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of those who are glad, and the voice of those who

⁴⁴⁵⁰ Gal. iii. 23, 24. Athan. reads into S. Paul’s words the thought that the Law itself, however misunderstood by the Jews, involved the faith of Christ.

⁴⁴⁵¹ Ps. xviii. 44, 45, LXX.

⁴⁴⁵² John v. 46.

⁴⁴⁵³ Is. i. 12.

⁴⁴⁵⁴ Jer. vii. 21, 22.

⁴⁴⁵⁵ Ib. vii. 18.

rejoice; the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride⁴⁴⁵⁶.’ Therefore now, ‘he who among them sacrificeth an ox, is as he who smiteth a man, and he who sacrificeth a lamb is as he who killeth a dog, he that offereth fine flour, is as [if he offered] swine’s blood, he that giveth frankincense for a memorial, is as a blasphemer⁴⁴⁵⁷.’ Now these things will never please God, neither thus hath the word required of them. But He saith, ‘These have chosen their own ways; and their abominations are what their soul delighteth in⁴⁴⁵⁸.’

3. And what does this mean my brethren? For it is right for us to investigate the saying of the prophet, and especially on account of heretics who have turned their mind against the law. By Moses then, God gave commandment respecting sacrifices, and all the book called Leviticus is entirely taken up with the arrangement of these matters, so that He might accept the offerer. So through the Prophets, He blames him who despised these things, as disobedient to the commandment saying, ‘I have not required these at your hands. Neither did I speak to your fathers respecting sacrifices, nor command them concerning whole burnt-offerings⁴⁴⁵⁹.’ Now it is the opinion of some, that the Scriptures do not agree together, or that God, Who gave the commandment, is false. But there is no disagreement whatever, far from it, neither can the Father, Who is truth, lie; ‘for it is impossible that God should lie⁴⁴⁶⁰,’ as Paul affirms. But all these things are plain to those who rightly consider them, and to those who receive with faith the writings of the law. Now it appears to me—may God grant, by your prayers, that the remarks I presume to make may not be far from the truth—that not at first were the commandment and the law concerning sacrifices, neither did the mind of God, Who gave the law, regard whole burnt-offerings, but those things which were pointed out and prefigured by them. ‘For the law contained a shadow of good things to come.’ And, ‘Those things were appointed until the time of reformation⁴⁴⁶¹.’

4. Therefore, the whole law did not treat of sacrifices, though there was in the law a commandment concerning sacrifices, that by means of them it might begin to instruct men and might withdraw them from idols, and bring them near to God, teaching them for that present time. Therefore neither at the beginning, when God brought the people out of Egypt, did He command them concerning sacrifices or whole burnt-offerings, nor even when they came to mount Sinai. For God is not as man, that He should be careful about these things beforehand; but His commandment was given, that they might know Him Who is truly God, and His Word, and might despise those which are falsely called gods, which are not, but appear in outward show. So He made Himself known to them in that He brought them out of Egypt, and caused them to pass through the Red Sea. But when they chose to serve Baal, and dared to offer sacrifices to those that have no existence,

⁴⁴⁵⁶ Ib. vii. 34.

⁴⁴⁵⁷ Is. lxvi. 3.

⁴⁴⁵⁸ Ib

⁴⁴⁵⁹ Is. i. 12; Jer. vii. 22.

⁴⁴⁶⁰ Heb. vi. 18.

⁴⁴⁶¹ Ib. x. 1; ix. 10.

and forgot the miracles which were wrought in their behalf in Egypt, and thought of returning thither again; then indeed, after the law, that commandment concerning sacrifices was ordained as law; so that with their mind, which at one time had meditated on those which are not, they might turn to Him Who is truly God, and learn not, in the first place, to sacrifice, but to turn away their faces from idols, and conform to what God commanded. For when He saith, ‘I have not spoken concerning sacrifices, neither given commandment concerning whole burnt-offerings,’ He immediately adds, ‘But this is the thing which I commanded them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be to you a God, and ye shall be to Me a people, and ye shall walk in all the ways that I command you⁴⁴⁶².’ Thus then, being before instructed and taught, they learned not to do service to any one but the Lord. They attained to know what time the shadow should last, and not to forget the time that was at hand, in which no longer should the bullock of the herd be a sacrifice to God, nor the ram of the flock, nor the he-goat⁴⁴⁶³, but all these things should be fulfilled in a purely spiritual manner, and by constant prayer, and upright conversation, with godly words; as David sings, ‘May my meditation be pleasing to Him. Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice⁴⁴⁶⁴.’ The Spirit also, who is in him, commands, saying, ‘Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay to the Lord thy vows. Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord⁴⁴⁶⁵.’

5. Samuel, that great man, no less clearly reprov'd Saul, saying, ‘Is not the word better than a gift⁴⁴⁶⁶?’ For hereby a man fulfils the law, and pleases God, as He saith, ‘The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me.’ Let a man ‘learn what this means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice⁴⁴⁶⁷,’ and I will not condemn the adversaries. But this wearied them, for they were not anxious to understand, ‘for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory⁴⁴⁶⁸.’ And what their end is, the prophet foretold, crying, ‘Woe unto their soul, for they have devised an evil thought, saying, let us bind the just man, because he is not pleasing to us⁴⁴⁶⁹.’ The end of such abandonment as this can be nothing but error, as the Lord, when reprov'ing them, saith, ‘Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures⁴⁴⁷⁰.’ Afterwards when, being reprov'd, they should have come to their senses, they rather grew insolent, saying, ‘We are Moses’ disciples; and we know that God spake to Moses⁴⁴⁷¹;’ dealing

⁴⁴⁶² Jer. vii. 22, 23.

⁴⁴⁶³ Exod. xii. 5.

⁴⁴⁶⁴ Ps. civ. 34; cxli. 2.

⁴⁴⁶⁵ Ib. l. 14; iv. 5.

⁴⁴⁶⁶ Eccclus. xviii. 17.

⁴⁴⁶⁷ Ps. l. 23; Hosea vi. 6; Matt. ix. 13

⁴⁴⁶⁸ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

⁴⁴⁶⁹ Is. iii. 9, 10; Wisd. ii. 12.

⁴⁴⁷⁰ Matt. xxii. 29.

⁴⁴⁷¹ John ix. 28, 29.

the more falsely by that very expression, and accusing themselves. For had they believed him to whom they hearkened, they would not have denied the Lord, Who spake by Moses, when He was present. Not so did the eunuch in the Acts, for when he heard, ‘Understandest thou what thou readest⁴⁴⁷²?’ he was not ashamed to confess his ignorance, and implored to be taught. Therefore, to him who became a learner, the grace of the Spirit was given. But as for those Jews who persisted in their ignorance; as the proverb saith, ‘Death came upon them. For the fool dies in his sins⁴⁴⁷³.’

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6. Like these too, are the heretics, who, having fallen from true discernment, dare to invent to themselves atheism. ‘For the fool saith in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, and become abominable in their doings⁴⁴⁷⁴.’ Of such as are fools in their thoughts, the actions are wicked, as He saith, ‘can ye, being evil, speak good things⁴⁴⁷⁵,’ for they were evil, because they thought wickedness. Or how can those do just acts, whose minds are set upon fraud? Or how shall he love, who is prepared beforehand to hate? How shall he be merciful, who is bent upon the love of money? How shall he be chaste, who looks upon a woman to lust after her? ‘For from the heart proceed evil thoughts, fornications, adulteries, murders⁴⁴⁷⁶.’ By them the fool is wrecked, as by the waves of the sea, being led away and enticed by his fleshly pleasures; for this stands written, ‘All flesh of fools is greatly tempest-tossed⁴⁴⁷⁷.’ While he associates with folly, he is tossed by a tempest, and perishes, as Solomon says in the Proverbs, ‘The fool and he who lacketh understanding shall perish together, and shall leave their wealth to strangers⁴⁴⁷⁸.’ Now they suffer such things, because there is not among them one sound of mind to guide them. For where there is sagacity, there the Word, who is the Pilot of souls, is with the vessel; ‘for he that hath understanding shall possess guidance⁴⁴⁷⁹,’ but they who are without guidance fall like the leaves. Who has so completely fallen away as Hymenæus and Philetus, who held evil opinions respecting the resurrection, and concerning faith in it suffered shipwreck? And Judas being a traitor, fell away from the Pilot, and perished with the Jews⁴⁴⁸⁰. But the disciples since they were wise, and therefore remained with the Lord, although the sea was agitated, and the ship covered with the waves, for there was a storm, and the wind was contrary, yet fell not away. For they awoke the Word, Who was sailing with them⁴⁴⁸¹, and immediately the sea became smooth at the command of its Lord, and they were saved. They became

4472 Acts viii. 30.

4473 Prov. xxiv. 9, LXX., cf. Ps. lv. 15.

4474 Ps. xiv. 1.

4475 Matt. xii. 34.

4476 Ib. xv. 19.

4477 Prov. xxvi. 10, LXX.

4478 Not Proverbs, but Ps. xlix. 10.

4479 Prov. i. 5, LXX.

4480 *Supr. Letter 7*, §9.

4481 Mark iv. 37–41

preachers and teachers at the same time; relating the miracles of our Saviour, and teaching us also to imitate their example. These things were written on our account and for our profit, so that through these signs we may acknowledge the Lord Who wrought them.

7. Let us, therefore, in the faith of the disciples, hold frequent converse with our Master. For the world is like the sea to us, my brethren, of which it is written, ‘This is the great and wide sea, there go the ships; the Leviathan, which Thou hast created to play therein⁴⁴⁸².’ We float on this sea, as with the wind, through our own free-will, for every one directs his course according to his will, and either, under the pilotage of the Word, he enters into rest, or, laid hold on by pleasure, he suffers shipwreck, and is in peril by storm. For as in the ocean there are storms and waves, so in the world there are many afflictions and trials. The unbelieving therefore ‘when affliction or persecution ariseth is offended⁴⁴⁸³,’ as the Lord said. For not being confirmed in the faith, and having his regard towards temporal things, he cannot resist the difficulties which arise from afflictions. But like that house, built on the sand by the foolish man, so he, being without understanding⁴⁴⁸⁴, falls before the assault of temptations, as it were by the winds. But the saints, having their senses exercised in self-possession⁴⁴⁸⁵, and being strong in faith, and understanding the word, do not faint under trials; but although, from time to time, circumstances of greater trial are set against them, yet they continue faithful, and awaking the Lord Who is with them, they are delivered. So, passing through water and fire, they find relief and duly keep the feast, offering up prayers with thanksgiving to God Who has redeemed them. For either being tempted they are known, like Abraham, or suffering they are approved, like Job, or being oppressed and deceitfully treated, like Joseph, they patiently endure it, or being persecuted, they are not overtaken; but as it is written, through God they ‘leap over the wall⁴⁴⁸⁶’ of wickedness, which divides and separates between brethren, and turns them from the truth. In this manner the blessed Paul, when he took pleasure in infirmities, in reproach, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses for Christ, rejoiced, and wished all of us to rejoice saying, ‘Rejoice always; in everything give thanks⁴⁴⁸⁷.’

8. For what is so fitting for the feast, a turning from wickedness, and a pure conversation, and prayer offered without ceasing to God, with thanksgiving? Therefore let us, my brethren, looking forward to celebrate the eternal joy in heaven, keep the feast here also, rejoicing at all times, praying incessantly, and in everything giving thanks to the Lord. I give thanks to God, for those other

⁴⁴⁸² Ps. civ. 25, 26.

⁴⁴⁸³ Mark iv. 17.

⁴⁴⁸⁴ Luke vi. 49.

⁴⁴⁸⁵ Heb. v. 14.

⁴⁴⁸⁶ Ps. xviii. 29.

⁴⁴⁸⁷ 1 Thess. v. 18.



wonders He has done, and for the various helps that have now been granted us, in that though He hath chastened us sore, He did not deliver us over to death, but brought us from a distance even as from the ends of the earth, and hath united us again with you. I have been mindful while I keep the feast, to give you also notice of the great feast of Easter, that so we may go up together, as it were, to Jerusalem, and eat the Passover, not separately but as in one house⁴⁴⁸⁸; let us not as sodden in water, water down the word of God; neither let us, as having broken its bones, destroy the commands of the Gospel. But as roasted with fire, with bitterness, being fervent in spirit, in fastings and watchings, with lying on the ground, let us keep it with penitence and thanksgiving.

9. We begin the fast of forty days on the sixth day of Phamenoth (Mar. 2); and having passed through that properly, with fasting and prayers, we may be able to attain to the holy day. For he who neglects to observe the fast of forty days, as one who rashly and impurely treads on holy things, cannot celebrate the Easter festival. Further, let us put one another in remembrance, and stimulate one another not to be negligent, and especially that we should fast those days, so that fasts may receive us in succession, and we may rightly bring the feast to a close.

10. The fast of forty days begins then, as was already said, on the sixth of Phamenoth (Mar. 2), and the great week of the Passion on the eleventh of Pharmuthi (Apr. 6). And let us rest from the fast on the sixteenth of it (Apr. 11), on the seventh day, late in the evening. Let us keep the feast when the first of the week dawns upon us, on the seventeenth of the same month Pharmuthi (Apr. 12). Let us then add, one after the other, the seven holy weeks of Pentecost, rejoicing and praising God, that He hath by these things made known to us beforehand, joy and rest everlasting, prepared in heaven for us and for those who truly believe in Christ Jesus our Lord; through Whom, and with Whom, be glory and dominion to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Salute one another with a holy kiss. The brethren who are with me salute you.

⁴⁴⁸⁹I have also thought it necessary to inform you of the appointment of Bishops, which has taken place in the stead of our blessed fellow-ministers, that ye may know to whom to write, and from whom ye should receive letters. In Syene, therefore, Nilammon, instead of Nilammon of the same name. In Latopolis, Masis, instead of Ammonius. In Coptos, Psenosiris⁴⁴⁹⁰, instead of Theodorus⁴⁴⁹¹. In Panopolis, because Artemidorus⁴⁴⁹² desired it, on account of his old age, and weakness of body, Arius is appointed coadjutor. In Hypsele, Arsenius, having become reconciled to the Church. In Lycopolis, Eudæmon⁴⁴⁹³ in the stead of Plusianus⁴⁴⁹⁴. In Antinoöpolis, Arion⁴⁴⁹⁵,

⁴⁴⁸⁸ Exod. xii. 8, 9, 46.

⁴⁴⁸⁹ Vid. *Letter 2*, note.

⁴⁴⁹⁰ *Supr.*p. 127?

⁴⁴⁹¹ *Supr.*p. 142.

⁴⁴⁹² *Supr.*p. 136, &c.

⁴⁴⁹³ p. 127?

⁴⁴⁹⁴ p. 136.

⁴⁴⁹⁵ p. 127?

instead of Ammonius and Tyrannus⁴⁴⁹⁶. In Oxyrynchus, Theodorus, instead of Pelagius. In Nilopolis, instead of Theon, Amatus⁴⁴⁹⁷, and Isaac, who are reconciled to each other. In Arsenoitis, Andreas⁴⁴⁹⁸, instead of Silvanus⁴⁴⁹⁹. In Prosopitis, Triadelphus, instead of Serapammon⁴⁵⁰⁰. In Diosphacus, on the river side, Theodorus, instead of Serapammon. In Sais, Paphnutius, instead of Nemesion. In Xoïs, Theodorus, instead of Anubion; and there is also with him Isidorus, who is reconciled to the Church. In Sethroitis, Orion⁴⁵⁰¹, instead of Potammon⁴⁵⁰². In Clysmā, Tithonas⁴⁵⁰³, instead of Jacob; and there is with him Paulus, who has been reconciled to the Church.

Letter XX.—(For 348.) *Coss. Philippus, Salia; Præfect the same Nestorius; Indict. vi; Easter-day iii Non. Apr., viii Pharmuthi; Æra Dioclet. 64; Moon 18.*

Let us now keep the feast, my brethren, for as our Lord then gave notice to His disciples, so He now tells us beforehand, that ‘after some days is the Passover⁴⁵⁰⁴,’ in which the Jews indeed betrayed the Lord, but we celebrate His death as a feast, rejoicing because we then obtained rest from our afflictions. We are diligent in assembling ourselves together, for we were scattered in time past and were lost, and are found. We were far off, and are brought nigh, we were strangers, and have become His, Who suffered for us, and was nailed on the cross, Who bore our sins, as the prophet⁴⁵⁰⁵ saith, and was afflicted for us, that He might put away from all of us grief, and sorrow, and sighing. When we thirst, He satisfies us on the feast-day itself; standing and crying, ‘If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink⁴⁵⁰⁶.’ For such is the love of the saints at all times, that they never once leave off, but offer the uninterrupted, constant sacrifice to the Lord, and continually thirst, and ask of Him to drink⁴⁵⁰⁷; as David sang, ‘My God, my God, early will I seek Thee, my soul thirsteth for Thee; many times my heart and flesh longeth for Thee in a barren land, without

⁴⁴⁹⁶ p. 142.

⁴⁴⁹⁷ p. 127.

⁴⁴⁹⁸ Cf. *Tom. ad Ant.* 10.

⁴⁴⁹⁹ *Supr. Letter* 12.

⁴⁵⁰⁰ pp. 127, 273.

⁴⁵⁰¹ p. 127.

⁴⁵⁰² p. 273.

⁴⁵⁰³ Tithoes, p. 127.

⁴⁵⁰⁴ Matt. xxvi. 2.

⁴⁵⁰⁵ Isa. liii. 4.

⁴⁵⁰⁶ John vii. 37.

⁴⁵⁰⁷ Cf. *Letter* vii. 5–7. The striking similarity between the seventh and the twentieth Letters has been already noticed.

a path, and without water. Thus was I seen by Thee in the sanctuary⁴⁵⁰⁸.’ And Isaiah the prophet says, ‘From the night my spirit seeketh Thee early, O God, because Thy commandments are light⁴⁵⁰⁹.’ And another says, ‘My soul fainteth for the longing it hath for Thy judgments at all times.’ And again he says, ‘For Thy judgments I have hoped, and Thy law will I keep at all times⁴⁵¹⁰.’ Another boldly cries out, saying, ‘Mine eye is ever towards the Lord.’ And with him one says, ‘The meditation of my heart is before Thee at all times.’ And Paul further advises, ‘At all times give thanks; pray without ceasing⁴⁵¹¹.’ Those who are thus continually engaged, are waiting entirely on the Lord, and say, ‘Let us follow on to know the Lord: we shall find Him ready as the morning, and He will come to us as the early and the latter rain for the earth⁴⁵¹².’ For not only does He satisfy them in the morning; neither does He give them only as much to drink as they ask; but He gives them abundantly according to the multitude of His lovingkindness, vouchsafing to them at all times the grace of the Spirit. And what it is they thirst for He immediately adds, saying, ‘He that believeth on Me.’ For, ‘as cold waters are pleasant to those who are thirsty⁴⁵¹³,’ according to the proverb, so to those who believe in the Lord, the coming of the Spirit is better than all refreshment and delight.

2. It becomes us then in these days of the Passover, to rise early with the saints, and approach the Lord with all our soul, with purity of body, with confession and godly faith in Him; so that when we have here first drunk, and are filled with these divine waters which [flow] from Him, we may be able to sit at table with the saints in heaven, and may share in the one voice of gladness which is there. From this sinners, because it wearied them, are rightly cast out, and hear the words, ‘Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment⁴⁵¹⁴?’ Sinners indeed thirst, but not for the grace of the Spirit; but being inflamed with wickedness, they are wholly set on fire by pleasures, as saith the Proverb, ‘All day long he desires evil desires.’ But the Prophet cries against them, saying, ‘Wo unto those who rise up early, and follow strong drink; who continue until the evening, for wine inflameth them⁴⁵¹⁵.’ And since they run wild in wantonness, they dare to thirst for the destruction of others. Having first drunk of lying and unfaithful waters, those things have come upon them, which are stated by the Prophet; ‘My wound,’ saith he, ‘is grievous, whence shall I be healed; it hath surely been to me like deceitful waters, in which there is no trust⁴⁵¹⁶.’ Secondly, while they drink with their companions, they lead astray and disturb the right mind, and turn away

⁴⁵⁰⁸ Ps. lxiii. 1, 2, LXX.

⁴⁵⁰⁹ Is. xxvi. 9.

⁴⁵¹⁰ Ps. cxix. 20, 43, 44.

⁴⁵¹¹ Ib. xxv. 15; xix. 14; 1 Thess. v. 17.

⁴⁵¹² Hos. vi. 3.

⁴⁵¹³ John vii. 38; Prov. xxv. 25.

⁴⁵¹⁴ Matt. xxii. 12.

⁴⁵¹⁵ Prov. xxi. 26; Is. v. 11.

⁴⁵¹⁶ Jer. xv. 18.

the simple from it. And what does he cry? ‘Wo unto him who causeth his neighbour to drink turbid destruction, and maketh him drunk, that he may look upon his caverns⁴⁵¹⁷.’ But those who dissemble, and steal away the truth, quench their hearts. Having first drunk of these things, they go on to say those things which the whore saith in the Proverbs, ‘Lay hold with delight on hidden bread, and sweet stolen waters⁴⁵¹⁸.’ They lay snares secretly, because they have not the freedom of virtue, nor the boldness of Wisdom⁴⁵¹⁹, who praises herself in the gates, and employs freedom of speech in the broad ways, preaching on high walls. For this reason, they are bidden to ‘lay hold with delight⁴⁵²⁰,’ because, having the choice between faith and pleasures, they steal the sweetness of truth, and disguise their own bitter waters [to escape] from the blame of their wickedness, which would have been speedy and public. On this account, the wolf puts on the skin of the sheep, sepulchres deceive by their whitened exteriors⁴⁵²¹. Satan, that is⁴⁵²²...

From Letter XXII⁴⁵²³.—(*For 350.*)

Where our Lord Jesus Christ, who took upon Him to die for all, stretched forth His hands, not somewhere on the earth beneath, but in the air itself, in order that the Salvation effected by the Cross might be shewn to be for all men everywhere: destroying the devil who was working in the air: and that He might consecrate our road up to Heaven, and make it free.

From Letter XXIV⁴⁵²⁴.—(*For 352.*)

And at that time when they went forth and crossed over Egypt, their enemies were the sport of the sea; but now, when we pass over from earth to Heaven, Satan himself henceforth falls like lightning from Heaven.



⁴⁵¹⁷ Hab. ii. 15, LXX.

⁴⁵¹⁸ Prov. ix. 17.

⁴⁵¹⁹ Ib. viii. 2.

⁴⁵²⁰ Cf. *Letter* vii. §5.

⁴⁵²¹ Matt. vii. 15; xxiii. 27.

⁴⁵²² The Syriac ms. (which is imperfect) ends here. The fragments that follow are derived from different sources, mention whereof is made in the notes.

⁴⁵²³ The above fragments are from *Cosmos Indicopleustes*: the Greek in Migne xxvi. 1432, *sqq.*

⁴⁵²⁴ The above fragments are from *Cosmas Indicopleustes*: the Greek in Migne xxvi. 1432, *sqq.*

From Letter XXVII.—(For 355.) *From the twenty-seventh Festal Letter of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria and Confessor; of which the commencement is, ‘Again the season of the day of the living Passover⁴⁵²⁵.’*

For who is our joy and boast, but our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who suffered for us, and by Himself made known to us the Father? For He is no other than He Who of old time spoke by the Prophets; but now He saith to every man, ‘I Who speak am near⁴⁵²⁶.’ Right well is this word spoken, for He does not at one time speak, at another keep silence; but continually and at all times, from the beginning without ceasing, He raises up every man, and speaks to every man in his heart.

From Letter XXVIII⁴⁵²⁷.—(For 356.)

...In order that while He might become a sacrifice for us all, we, nourished up in the words of truth, and partaking of His living doctrine, might be able with the saints to receive also the joy of Heaven. For thither, as He called the disciples to the upper chamber, so does the Word call us with them to the divine and incorruptible banquet; having suffered for us here, but there, preparing the heavenly tabernacles for those who most readily hearken to the summons, and unceasingly, and [gazing] at the goal, pursue the prize of their high calling; where for them who come to the banquet, and strive with those who hinder them, there is laid up both a crown, and incorruptible joy. For even though, humanly speaking, the labour of such a journey is great, yet the Saviour Himself has rendered even it light and kindly.

Another Fragment.

But let us, brethren, who have received the vineyard from the Saviour, and are invited to the heavenly banquet, inasmuch as the Feast is now drawing nigh, take the branches of the palm⁴⁵²⁸ trees, and proving conquerors of sin, let us too like those, who on that occasion went to meet the

⁴⁵²⁵ The fragment here given of the twenty-seventh Letter, as well as fragments of the twenty-ninth and forty-fourth, are from Syriac translations, discovered by Mr. Cureton as quoted by Severus Patriarch of Antioch, in his work against Johannes Grammaticus contained in the Syriac collection of the British Museum (Cod. Add. 12, 157, fol. 202), and published by him with the preceding Letters. Their style would argue them to be part of the same translation.

⁴⁵²⁶ John iv. 26.

⁴⁵²⁷ From Cosmas, see Migne xxvi. p. 1433.

⁴⁵²⁸ John xii. 13.

Saviour, make ourselves ready by our conduct, both to meet Him when He comes, and to go in with Him and partake of the immortal food, and from thenceforth live eternally in the heavens.

From Letter XXIX⁴⁵²⁹.—(For 357.) *From the twenty-ninth Letter, of which the beginning is, 'Sufficient for this present time is that which we have already written.'*

The Lord proved the disciples⁴⁵³⁰, when He was asleep on the pillow, at which time a miracle was wrought, which is especially calculated to put even the wicked to shame. For when He arose, and rebuked the sea, and silenced the storm, He plainly shewed two things; that the storm of the sea was not from the winds, but from fear of its Lord Who walked upon it, and that the Lord Who rebuked it was not a creature, but rather its Creator, since a creature is not obedient to another creature. For although the Red Sea was divided before by Moses⁴⁵³¹, yet it was not Moses who did it, for it came to pass, not because he spoke, but because God commanded. And if the sun stood still in Gibeon⁴⁵³², and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, yet this was the work, not of the son of Nun, but of the Lord, Who heard his prayer. He it was Who both rebuked the sea, and on the cross caused the sun to be darkened⁴⁵³³.

Another Fragment⁴⁵³⁴.

And whereas what is human comes to an end, what is divine does not. For which reason also when we are dead, and when our nature is tired out, he raises us up, and leads us up [though] born of earth to heaven.

Another Fragment⁴⁵³⁵.

⁴⁵²⁹ If these fragments are authentic, the statement in the *Index*, that this year no letter could be sent, is an error.

⁴⁵³⁰ Mark iv. 37–41

⁴⁵³¹ Exod. xiv. 21.

⁴⁵³² Josh. x. 12.

⁴⁵³³ Matt. xxvii. 45.

⁴⁵³⁴ From Cosmas; Migne xxvi. 1436.

⁴⁵³⁵ The following fragment (Migne, *ib.* p. 1189), was published by Montfaucon from a Colbertine Latin ms. of about 800 a.d. He conjectured that it belonged to a Festal Letter. On this hypothesis, which is, however, as Mai observes, by no means

Here begins a letter of S. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, to his children. May God comfort you. I know moreover that not only this thing saddens you, but also the fact that while others have obtained the churches by violence, you are meanwhile cast out from your places. For they hold the places, but you the Apostolic Faith. They are, it is true, in the places, but outside of the true Faith; while you are outside the places indeed, but the Faith, within you. Let us consider whether is the greater, the place or the Faith. Clearly the true Faith. Who then has lost more, or who possesses more? He who holds the place, or he who holds the Faith? Good indeed is the place, when the Apostolic Faith is preached there, holy is it if the Holy One dwell there. (*After a little:*) But ye are blessed, who by faith are in the Church, dwell upon the foundations of the faith, and have full satisfaction, even the highest degree of faith which remains among you unshaken. For it has come down to you from Apostolic tradition, and frequently has accursed envy wished to unsettle it, but has not been able. On the contrary, they have rather been cut off by their attempts to do so. For this is it that is written, ‘Thou art the Son of the Living God⁴⁵³⁶,’ Peter confessing it by revelation of the Father, and being told, ‘Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood did not reveal it to thee,’ but ‘My Father Who is in heaven,’ and the rest. No one therefore will ever prevail against your Faith, most beloved brethren. For if ever God shall give back the churches (for we think He will) yet without⁴⁵³⁷ such restoration of the churches the Faith is sufficient for us. And lest, speaking without the Scriptures, I should [seem to] speak too strongly, it is well to bring you to the testimony of Scriptures, for recollect that the Temple indeed was at Jerusalem; the Temple was not deserted, aliens had invaded it, whence also the Temple being at Jerusalem, those exiles went down to Babylon by the judgment of God, who was proving, or rather correcting them; while manifesting to them in their ignorance punishment [by means] of blood-thirsty enemies⁴⁵³⁸. And aliens indeed had held the Place, but knew not the Lord of the Place, while in that He neither gave answer nor spoke, they were deserted by the truth. What profit then is the Place to them?

For behold they that hold the Place are charged by them that love God with making it a den of thieves, and with madly making the Holy Place a house of merchandise, and a house of judicial business for themselves to whom it was unlawful to enter there. For this and worse than this is what we have heard, most beloved, from those who are come from thence. However really, then, they seem to hold the church, so much the more truly are they cast out. And they think themselves to be within the truth, but are exiled, and in captivity, and [gain] no advantage by the church alone. For the truth of things is judged...

self-evident, we append it to the above fragments of *Letter 29*, since internal evidence connects it with the handing over of the churches at Alexandria to the partisans of George, June, 356. At any rate, in spite of the heading of the fragment, its beginning is clearly not preserved.

⁴⁵³⁶ Matt. xvi. 16, 17.

⁴⁵³⁷ Text corrupt.

⁴⁵³⁸ Lat. somewhat obscure.

From Letter XXXIX.—(For 367.) *Of the particular books and their number, which are accepted by the Church. From the thirty-ninth Letter of Holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, on the Paschal festival; wherein he defines canonically what are the divine books which are accepted by the Church.*

...1. They have⁴⁵³⁹ fabricated books which they call books of tables⁴⁵⁴⁰, in which they shew stars, to which they give the names of Saints. And therein of a truth they have inflicted on themselves a double reproach: those who have written such books, because they have perfected themselves in a lying and contemptible science; and as to the ignorant and simple, they have led them astray by evil thoughts concerning the right faith established in all truth and upright in the presence of God.

...2. But⁴⁵⁴¹ since we have made mention of heretics as dead, but of ourselves as possessing the Divine Scriptures for salvation; and since I fear lest, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians⁴⁵⁴², some few of the simple should be beguiled from their simplicity and purity, by the subtilty of certain men, and should henceforth read other books—those called apocryphal—led astray by the similarity of their names with the true books; I beseech you to bear patiently, if I also write, by way of remembrance, of matters with which you are acquainted, influenced by the need and advantage of the Church.

3. In proceeding to make mention of these things, I shall adopt, to commend my undertaking, the pattern of Luke the Evangelist, saying on my own account: ‘Forasmuch as some have taken in hand⁴⁵⁴³,’ to reduce into order for themselves the books termed apocryphal, and to mix them up with the divinely inspired Scripture, concerning which we have been fully persuaded, as they who

⁴⁵³⁹ This section is preserved in the Coptic (Memphitic) Life of S. Theodore (*Amélineau Ann. du Musée Guimet*. xvii. p. 239). Its contents and the context in which it is quoted appear decisive for its identification as part of *Letter 39*. But the Letter from which the fragment comes is stated in the context to have been received by Theodore in the spring previous to his death. If Theodore died in 364, as seems probable on other grounds (see p. 569, note 3), the speech from which our fragment comes must have been written for him by his biographer. This is not unlikely, nor does it throw any suspicion on the genuineness of the fragment itself.

⁴⁵⁴⁰ Copt. ἀπογράμμων: astrological charts or tables appear to be meant.

⁴⁵⁴¹ The remainder of the thirty-ninth Letter has long been before the world, having been preserved, with the heading of the Letter, in the original Greek, by Theodorus Balsamon. It may be found in the first volume of the Benedictine edition of the works of S. Athan. tom. i. p. 767. ed. 1777. [Migne, *ubi supra*]. A Syriac translation of it was discovered by Cureton in an anonymous Commentary on the Scriptures in the collection of the British Museum (*Cod.* 12, 168). This translation commences only at the quotation from S. Luke. The Syriac is apparently the work of a different translator.

⁴⁵⁴² 2 Cor. xi. 3.

⁴⁵⁴³ Luke i. 1.



from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, delivered to the fathers; it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon, and handed down, and accredited as Divine; to the end that any one who has fallen into error may condemn those who have led him astray; and that he who has continued stedfast in purity may again rejoice, having these things brought to his remembrance.

4. There are, then, of the Old Testament, twenty-two books in number; for, as I have heard, it is handed down that this is the number of the letters among the Hebrews; their respective order and names being as follows. The first is Genesis, then Exodus, next Leviticus, after that Numbers, and then Deuteronomy. Following these there is Joshua, the son of Nun, then Judges, then Ruth. And again, after these four books of Kings, the first and second being reckoned as one book, and so likewise the third and fourth as one book. And again, the first and second of the Chronicles are reckoned as one book. Again Ezra, the first and second⁴⁵⁴ are similarly one book. After these there is the book of Psalms, then the Proverbs, next Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Job follows, then the Prophets, the twelve being reckoned as one book. Then Isaiah, one book, then Jeremiah with Baruch, Lamentations, and⁴⁵⁵ the epistle, one book; afterwards, Ezekiel and Daniel, each one book. Thus far constitutes the Old Testament.

5. Again it is not tedious to speak of the [books] of the New Testament. These are, the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Afterwards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, written in this order. The first, to the Romans; then two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then to the Philippians; then to the Colossians; after these, two to the Thessalonians, and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John.

6. These are fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone is proclaimed the doctrine of godliness. Let no man add to these, neither let him take ought from these. For concerning these the Lord put to shame the Sadducees, and said, ‘Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.’ And He reproveth the Jews, saying, ‘Search the Scriptures, for these are they that testify of Me⁴⁵⁶.’

7. But for greater exactness I add this also, writing of necessity; that there are other books besides these not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness. The Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Sirach, and Esther, and Judith, and Tobit, and that which is called the Teaching of the Apostles, and the Shepherd. But the former, my brethren, are included in the Canon, the

⁴⁵⁴ i.e. Ezra and Nehemiah.

⁴⁵⁵ i.e. Baruch vi.—The Syriac has the conjunction, which is rejected by the Benedictine editors.

⁴⁵⁶ Matt. xxii. 29; John v. 39.

latter being [merely] read; nor is there in any place a mention of apocryphal writings. But they are an invention of heretics, who write them when they choose, bestowing upon them their approbation, and assigning to them a date, that so, using them as ancient writings, they may find occasion to lead astray the simple.

From Letter XL⁴⁵⁴⁷.—(*For 368.*)

‘Ye are they that have continued with Me in My temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom⁴⁵⁴⁸.’ Being called, then, to the great and heavenly Supper, in that upper room which has been swept, let us ‘cleanse ourselves,’ as the Apostle exhorted, ‘from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God⁴⁵⁴⁹,’ that so, being spotless within and without,—without, clothing ourselves with temperance and justice; within, by the Spirit, rightly dividing the word of truth—we may hear, ‘Enter into the joy of thy Lord⁴⁵⁵⁰.’

From Letter XLII.—(*For 370.*)

For we have been called, brethren, and are now called together, by Wisdom, and according to the Evangelical parable, to that great and heavenly Supper, and sufficient for every creature; I mean, to the Passover,—to Christ, Who is sacrificed; for ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed.’ (*And afterwards:*) They, therefore, that are thus prepared shall hear, ‘Enter into the joy of thy Lord⁴⁵⁵¹.’

From Letter XLIII.—(*For 371.*)

Of us, then, whose also is the Passover, the calling is from above, and ‘our conversation is in heaven,’ as Paul says; ‘For we have here no abiding city, but we seek that which is to come⁴⁵⁵²,’ whereto, also, looking forward, we properly keep the feast. (*And again, afterwards:*) Heaven truly



⁴⁵⁴⁷ The following fragments are, except *Letter 44*, preserved in the original Greek, by Cosmas (Migne xxvi. 1440 *sqq.*).

⁴⁵⁴⁸ Luke xxii. 28–30

⁴⁵⁴⁹ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

⁴⁵⁵⁰ Matt. xxv. 21.

⁴⁵⁵¹ *Ib.* and 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁴⁵⁵² Phil. iii. 20; Heb. xiii. 14.

is high, and its distance from us infinite; for ‘the heaven of heavens,’ says he, ‘is the Lord’s⁴⁵⁵³.’ But not, on that account, are we to be negligent or fearful, as though the way thereto were impossible; but rather should we be zealous. Yet not, as in the case of those who formerly, removing from the east and finding a plain in Senaar, began [to build a tower], is there need for us to bake bricks with fire, and to seek slime for mortar; for their tongues were confounded, and their work was destroyed. But for us the Lord has consecrated a way through His blood, and has made it easy. (*And again:*) For not only has He afforded us consolation respecting the distance, but also in that He has come and opened the door for us which was once shut. For, indeed, it was shut from the time He cast out Adam from the delight of Paradise, and set the Cherubim and the flaming sword, that turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life—now, however, opened wide. And He that sitteth upon the Cherubim having appeared with greater grace and loving-kindness, led into Paradise with himself the thief who confessed, and having entered heaven as our forerunner, opened the gates to all. (*And again:*) Paul also, ‘pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling⁴⁵⁵⁴,’ by it was taken up to the third heaven, and having seen those things which are above, and then descended, he teaches us, announcing what is written to the Hebrews, and saying, ‘For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and clouds, and darkness, and a tempest, and to the voice of words. But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven⁴⁵⁵⁵.’ Who would not wish to enjoy the high companionship with these! Who not desire to be enrolled with these, that he may hear with them, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world⁴⁵⁵⁶.’

From Letter XLIV.—(*For 372.*) *And again, from the forty-fourth Letter, of which the commencement is, ‘All that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did instead of us and for us⁴⁵⁵⁷.’*

When therefore the servants of the Chief Priests and the Scribes saw these things, and heard from Jesus, ‘Whosoever is athirst, let him come to Me and drink⁴⁵⁵⁸,’ they perceived that this was not a mere man like themselves, but that this was He Who gave water to the saints, and that it was

⁴⁵⁵³ Ps. cxv. 16.

⁴⁵⁵⁴ Phil. iii. 14.

⁴⁵⁵⁵ Heb. xii. 18–23

⁴⁵⁵⁶ Matt. xxv. 34.

⁴⁵⁵⁷ See *Letter 27*, note 1.

⁴⁵⁵⁸ John vii. 37.

He Who was announced by the prophet Isaiah. For He was truly the splendour of the light⁴⁵⁵⁹, and the Word of God. And thus as a river from the fountain he gave drink also of old to Paradise; but now to all men He gives the same gift of the Spirit, and says, 'If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink.' Whosoever 'believeth on Me, as saith the Scripture, rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly⁴⁵⁶⁰.' This was not for man to say, but for the living God, Who truly vouchsafes life, and gives the Holy Spirit.

From Letter XLV.—(*For 373.*)

Let us all take up our sacrifices, observing distribution to the poor, and enter into the holy place, as it is written; 'whither also our forerunner Jesus is entered for us, having obtained eternal redemption⁴⁵⁶¹.'...(*From the same:*)...And this is a great proof that, whereas we were strangers, we are called friends; from being formerly aliens, we are become fellow-citizens with the saints, and are called children of the Jerusalem which is above, whereof that which Solomon built was a type. For if Moses made all things according to the pattern shewed him in the mount, it is clear that the service performed in the tabernacle was a type of the heavenly mysteries, whereto the Lord, desirous that we should enter, prepared for us the new and abiding way. And as all the old things were a type of the new, so the festival that now is, is a type of the joy which is above, to which coming with psalms and spiritual songs, let us begin the fasts⁴⁵⁶².



II. Personal Letters.

Letter XLVI.—*Letter*⁴⁵⁶³ *to the Mareotis from Sardica*, a.d. 343–4.

⁴⁵⁵⁹ Cf. Heb. i. 3

⁴⁵⁶⁰ John vii. 37, 38.

⁴⁵⁶¹ Heb. vi. 20; ix. 12.

⁴⁵⁶² This fragment is the latest writing of Athanasius that we possess.

⁴⁵⁶³ This and the following letters were first printed by Scipio Maffei from a Latin ms. in the Chapter Library of Verona, along with the *Historia Acephala*. They were included in Galland, *Bibl. Patr.* vol. 5, and in Justiniani's Ed. of Athanasius (Padua, 1777). The letters are printed in Migne, xxvi. 1333, *sqq.*, along with one (from the same source) addressed by the Council to the Mareotic Churches. Hefele doubts their genuineness, but without reason (ii. 166, *E. Tra.*) The list of signatures (an independent source of information, *supr.* p. 147) alone proves the contrary. The two letters may be taken as a supplement to the documents