

0330-0395 – Gregorius Nyssenus – Oratio catechetica magna

The Great Catechism

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IV.—Apologetic Works.



The Great Catechism¹⁹³⁴.

Summary.

The Trinity.

PROLOGUE and Chapter 1.—The belief in God rests on the art and wisdom displayed in the order of the world: the belief in the *Unity* of God, on the *perfection* that must belong to Him in respect of power, goodness, wisdom, etc. Still, the Christian who combats polytheism has need of care lest in contending against Hellenism he should fall unconsciously into Judaism. For God has a Logos: else He would be without reason. And this Logos cannot be merely an attribute of God. We are led to a more exalted conception of the Logos by the consideration that in the measure in which God is greater than we, all His predicates must also be higher than those which belong to us. Our logos is limited and transient; but the subsistence of the Divine Logos must be indestructible; and at the same time living, since the rational cannot be lifeless, like a stone. It must also have an independent life, not a participated life, else it would lose its simplicity; and, as living, it must also have the faculty of will. This will of the Logos must be equalled by his power: for a mixture of choice and impotence would, again, destroy the simplicity. His will, as being Divine, must be also good. From this ability and will to work there follows the realization of the good; hence the bringing into existence of the wisely and artfully adjusted world. But since, still further, the logical conception of the Word is in a certain sense a relative one, it follows that together with the Word He Who speaks it, *i.e.* the Father of the Word, must be recognized as existing. Thus the mystery of the faith avoids equally the absurdity of Jewish monotheism, and that of heathen polytheism. On the one

¹⁹³⁴ It is not exactly clear why this Instruction for Catechizers is called the “Great”: perhaps with reference to some lesser manual. For its apologetic intention, see *Prolegomena*, p. 12. Its genuineness, which has been called in question by a few merely on the ground of opinions in it Origenistic and even Eutychian, is confirmed by Theodoret, *Dial.* ii. 3, *contr. Eutych.* Aubertin and Casaubon both recognize Gregory as its author. The division, however, of the chapters, by whoever made, is far from a correct guide to the contents; but, by grouping them, the main argument can be made clear.

hand, we say that the Word has *life and activity*; on the other, we affirm that we find in the Λόγος, whose existence is derived from the Father, *all* the attributes of the Father's nature.

Chapter II.—By the analogy of human breath, which is nothing but inhaled and exhaled fire, *i.e.* an object foreign to us, is demonstrated the community of the Divine Spirit with the essence of God, and yet the independence of Its existence.

Chapter III.—From the Jewish doctrine, then, the unity of the Divine nature has been retained: from Hellenism the distinction into hypostases.

Chapter IV.—The Jew convicted from Scripture.

Reasonableness of the Incarnation.

Chapters V. and VI.—God created the world by His reason and wisdom; for He cannot have proceeded irrationally in that work; but His reason and wisdom are, as above shown, not to be conceived as a spoken word, or as the mere possession of knowledge, but as a personal and willing potency. If the entire world was created by this second Divine hypostasis, then certainly was man also thus created; yet not in view of any necessity, but *from superabounding love*, that there might exist a being who should participate in the Divine perfections. If man was to be receptive of these, it was necessary that his nature should contain an element akin to God; and, in particular, that he should be immortal. Thus, then, man was created in the image of God. He could not therefore be without the gifts of freedom, independence, self-determination; and his participation in the Divine gifts was consequently made dependent on his virtue. Owing to this *freedom* he could decide in favour of evil, which cannot have its origin in the Divine will, but only in our inner selves, where it arises in the form of a deviation from good, and so a privation of it. Vice is opposed to virtue only as the absence of the better. Since, then, all that is created is subject to change, it was possible that, in the first instance, one of the created spirits should turn his eye away from the good, and become envious, and that from this envy should arise a leaning towards badness, which should, in natural sequence, prepare the way for all other evil. He seduced the first men into the folly of turning away from goodness, *by disturbing the Divinely ordered harmony between their sensuous and intellectual natures*; and guilefully tainting their wills with evil.

Chapters VII. and VIII.—God did not, on account of His foreknowledge of the evil that would result from man's creation, leave man uncreated; for it was better to bring back sinners to original grace by the way of repentance and physical suffering than not to create man at all. The raising up of the fallen was a work befitting the Giver of life, Who is the wisdom and power of God; and for this purpose He became man.

Chapter IX.—The Incarnation was not unworthy of Him; for *only evil brings degradation*.

Chapter X.—The objection that the finite cannot contain the infinite, and that therefore the human nature could not receive into itself the Divine, is founded on the false supposition that the Incarnation of the Word means that the infinity of God was contained in the limits of the flesh, as in a vessel.—Comparison of the flame and wick.

Chapters XI., XII., XIII.—For the rest, the manner in which the Divine nature was united to the human surpasses our power of comprehension; although we are not permitted to doubt the fact of that union in Jesus, *on account of the miracles which He wrought*. The supernatural character of those miracles bears witness to their Divine origin.

Chapters XIV., XV., XVI., XVII.—The scheme of the Incarnation is still further drawn out, to show that this way for man's salvation was preferable to a single fiat of God's will. Christ took human *weakness* upon Him; but it was physical, not moral, weakness. In other words the Divine goodness did not change to its opposite, which is only vice. In Him soul and body were united, and then separated, according to the course of nature; but after He had thus purged human life, He reunited them *upon a more general scale*, for all, and for ever, in the Resurrection.

Chapter XVIII.—The ceasing of demon-worship, the Christian martyrdoms, and the devastation of Jerusalem, are accepted by some as proofs of the Incarnation—

Chapters XIX., XX.—But not by the Greek and the Jew. To return, then, to its *reasonableness*. Whether we regard the goodness, the power, the wisdom, or the justice of God, it displays a combination of all these acknowledged attributes, which, if one be wanting, cease to be Divine. It is therefore true to the Divine perfection.

Chapters XXI., XXII., XXIII.—What, then, is the *justice* in it? We must remember that man was necessarily created subject to change (to better or to worse). Moral beauty was to be the direction in which his free will was to move; but then he was deceived, to his ruin, by an illusion of that beauty. After we had thus *freely* sold ourselves to the deceiver, He who of His goodness sought to restore us to liberty could not, because He was just too, for this end have recourse to measures of arbitrary violence. It was necessary therefore that a ransom should be paid, which should exceed in value that which was to be ransomed; and hence it was necessary that the Son of God should surrender Himself to the power of death. God's *justice* then impelled Him to choose a method of exchange, as His *wisdom* was seen in executing it.

Chapters XXIV., XXV.—But how about the *power*? That was more conspicuously displayed in Deity descending to lowliness, than in all the natural wonders of the universe. It was like flame being made to stream downwards. Then, after such a birth, Christ conquered death.

Chapter XXVI.—A certain deception was indeed practised upon the Evil one, by concealing the Divine nature within the human; but for the latter, as himself a deceiver, it was only a just recompense that he should be deceived himself: the great adversary must himself at last find that what has been done is just and salutary, when he also shall experience the benefit of the Incarnation. He, as well as humanity, will be purged.

Chapters XXVII., XXVIII.—A patient, to be healed, must be *touched*; and humanity had to be touched by Christ. It was not in "heaven"; so only through the Incarnation could it be healed.—It was, besides, no more inconsistent with His Divinity to assume a human than a "heavenly" body; all created beings are on a level beneath Deity. Even "abundant honour" is due to the instruments of human birth.



Chapters XXIX., XXX., XXXI.—As to the delay of the Incarnation, it was necessary that human degeneracy should have reached the lowest point, before the work of salvation could enter in. That, however, grace through faith has not come to all must be laid to the account of human freedom; if God were to break down our opposition by violent means, the praise-worthiness of human conduct would be destroyed.

Chapter XXXII.—Even the death on the Cross was sublime: for it was the culminating and necessary point in that scheme of Love in which death was to be followed by blessed resurrection for the whole “lump” of humanity: and the Cross itself has a mystic meaning.

The Sacraments.

Chapters XXXIII., XXXIV., XXXV., XXXVI.—The saving nature of Baptism depends on three things; Prayer, Water, and Faith. 1. It is shown how Prayer secures the Divine Presence. God is a God of truth; and He has promised to come (as Miracles prove that He has come already) if invoked *in a particular way*. 2. It is shown how the Deity gives life from water. In human generation, even without prayer, He gives life from a small beginning. In a higher generation He transforms matter, not into soul, but into spirit. 3. Human freedom, as evinced in faith and repentance, is also necessary to Regeneration. Being thrice dipped in the water is our earliest mortification; coming out of it is a forecast of the ease with which the pure shall rise in a *blessed* resurrection: the whole process is an imitation of Christ.

Chapter XXXVII.—The Eucharist unites the body, as Baptism the soul, to God. Our bodies, having received poison, need an Antidote; and only by eating and drinking can it enter. One Body, the receptacle of Deity, is this Antidote, thus received. But how can it enter whole into each one of the Faithful? This needs an illustration. Water gives its own body to a skin-bottle. So nourishment (bread and wine) by becoming flesh and blood gives bulk to the human frame: the nourishment is the body. Just as in the case of other men, our Saviour’s nourishment (bread and wine) was His Body; but these, nourishment and Body, were in Him changed into the Body of God by the Word indwelling. So now repeatedly the bread and wine, sanctified by the Word (the sacred Benediction), is *at the same time* changed into the Body of that Word; and this Flesh is disseminated amongst all the Faithful.

Chapters XXXVIII., XXXIX.—It is essential for Regeneration to believe that the Son and the Spirit are not created spirits, but of like nature with God the Father; for he who would make his salvation dependent (in the baptismal Invocation) on anything created would trust to an imperfect nature, and one itself needing a saviour.

Chapter XL.—He alone has truly become a child of God who gives evidence of his regeneration by putting away from himself all vice.

Prologue.

THE presiding ministers of the “mystery of godliness”¹⁹³⁵ have need of a system in their instructions, in order that the Church may be replenished by the accession of such as should be saved¹⁹³⁶, through the teaching of the word of Faith being brought home to the hearing of unbelievers. Not that the same method of instruction will be suitable in the case of all who approach the word. The catechism must be adapted to the diversities of their religious worship; with an eye, indeed, to the one aim and end of the system, but not using the same method of preparation in each individual case. The Judaizer has been preoccupied with one set of notions, one conversant with Hellenism, with others; while the Anomœan, and the Manichee, with the followers of Marcion¹⁹³⁷, Valentinus, and Basilides¹⁹³⁸, and the rest on the list of those who have wandered into heresy, each of them being prepossessed with their peculiar notions, necessitate a special controversy with their several opinions. The method of recovery must be adapted to the form of the disease. You will not by the same means cure the polytheism of the Greek, and the unbelief of the Jew as to the Only-begotten God: nor as regards those who have wandered into heresy will you, by the same arguments in each case, upset their misleading romances as to the tenets of the Faith. No one could set Sabellius¹⁹³⁹ right by the same instruction as would benefit the Anomœan¹⁹⁴⁰. The controversy with the Manichee

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¹⁹³⁵ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

¹⁹³⁶ Acts ii. 47.

¹⁹³⁷ Marcion, a disciple of Cerdo, added a third Principle to the two which his master taught. The first is an unnamed, invisible, and good God, but no creator; the second is a visible and creative God, *i.e.* the Demiurge; the third intermediate between the invisible and visible God, *i.e.* the Devil. The Demiurge is the God and Judge of the Jews. Marcion affirmed the Resurrection of the soul alone. He rejected the Law and the Prophets as proceeding from the Demiurge; only Christ came down from the unnamed and invisible Father to save the soul, and to confute this God of the Jews. The only Gospel he acknowledged was S. Luke's, omitting the beginning which details our Lord's Conception and Incarnation. Other portions also both in the middle and the end he curtailed. Besides this broken Gospel of S. Luke he retained ten of the Apostolic letters, but garbled even them. Gregory says elsewhere that the followers of Eunomius got their “duality of Gods” from Marcion, but went beyond him in denying essential goodness to the Only-begotten, the “God of the Gospel.”

¹⁹³⁸ Of the Gnostics Valentinus and Basilides the truest and best account is given in H. L. Mansel's *Gnostics*, and in the articles upon them in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. It is there shown how all their visions of celestial Hierarchies, and the romances connected with them, were born of the attempt to solve the insoluble problem, *i.e.* how that which in modern philosophy would be called the Infinite is to pass into the Finite. They fell into the fatalism of the Emanationist view of the Deity, but still the attempt was an honest one.

¹⁹³⁹ Sabellius. The Sabellian heresy was rife in the century preceding: *i.e.* that Personality is attributed to the Deity only from the exigency of human language, that consequently He is sometimes characterized as the Father, when operations and works more appropriate to the paternal relation are spoken of; and so in like manner of the Son, and the Holy Ghost; as when Redemption is the subject, or Sanctification. In making the Son the Father, it is the opposite pole to Arianism.

¹⁹⁴⁰ “We see also the rise (*i.e.* A.D. 350) of a new and more defiant Arian school, more in earnest than the older generation, impatient of their shuffling diplomacy, and less pliant to court influences. Aetius....came to rest in a clear and simple form of

is profitless against the Jew¹⁹⁴¹. It is necessary, therefore, as I have said, to regard the opinions which the persons have taken up, and to frame your argument in accordance with the error into which each has fallen, by advancing in each discussion certain principles and reasonable propositions, that thus, through what is agreed upon on both sides, the truth may conclusively be brought to light. When, then, a discussion is held with one of those who favour Greek ideas, it would be well to make the ascertaining of this the commencement of the reasoning, *i.e.* whether he presupposes the existence of a God, or concurs with the atheistic view. Should he say there is no God, then, from the consideration of the skilful and wise economy of the Universe he will be brought to acknowledge that there is a certain overmastering power manifested through these channels. If, on the other hand, he should have no doubt as to the existence of Deity, but should be inclined to entertain the presumption of a plurality of Gods, then we will adopt against him some such train of reasoning as this: “does he think Deity is perfect or defective?” and if, as is likely, he bears testimony to the perfection in the Divine nature, then we will demand of him to grant a perfection throughout in everything that is observable in that divinity, in order that Deity may not be regarded as a mixture of opposites, defect and perfection. But whether as respects power, or the conception of goodness, or wisdom and imperishability and eternal existence, or any other notion besides suitable to the nature of Deity, that is found to lie close to the subject of our contemplation, in all he will agree that perfection is the idea to be entertained of the Divine nature, as being a just inference from these premises. If this, then, be granted us, it would not be difficult to bring round these scattered notions of a plurality of Gods to the acknowledgment of a unity of Deity. For if he admits that perfection is in every respect to be ascribed to the subject before us, though there is a plurality of these perfect things which are marked with the same character, he must be required by a logical necessity, either to point out the particularity in each of these things which present no distinctive variation, but are found always with the same marks, or, if (he cannot do that, and) the mind can grasp nothing in them in the way of particular, to give up the idea of any distinction. For if neither as regards “more and less” a person can detect a difference (in as much as the idea of perfection does not admit of it), nor as regards “worse” and “better” (for he cannot entertain a notion of Deity at all where the term “worse” is not got rid of), nor as regards “ancient” and “modern” (for what exists not for ever is foreign to the notion of Deity), but on the contrary the idea of Godhead is one and the same, no

Arianism. Christianity without mystery seems to have been his aim. The Anomœan leaders took their stand on the doctrine of Arius himself and dwelt with emphasis on its most offensive aspects. Arius had long ago laid down the absolute unlikeness of the Son to the Father, but for years past the Arianizers had prudently softened it down. Now, however, ‘unlike’ became the watchword of Aetius and Eunomius”: Gwatkin’s *Arians*. For the way in which this school treated the Trinity see *Against Eunomius*, p. 50.

¹⁹⁴¹ *I.e.* an argument against Dualism would only confirm the Jew in his stern monotheism. Manes had taught also that “those souls who believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God renounce the worship of the God of the Jews, who is the Prince of Darkness,” and that “the Old Testament was the work of this Prince, who was substituted by the Jews in the place of the true God.”

peculiarity being on any ground of reason to be discovered in any one point, it is an absolute necessity that the mistaken fancy of a plurality of Gods would be forced to the acknowledgment of a unity of Deity. For if goodness, and justice, and wisdom, and power may be equally predicated of it, then also imperishability and eternal existence, and every orthodox idea would be in the same way admitted. As then all distinctive difference in any aspect whatever has been gradually removed, it necessarily follows that together with it a plurality of Gods has been removed from his belief, the general identity bringing round conviction to the Unity.

Chapter I.

BUT since our system of religion is wont to observe a distinction of persons in the unity of the Nature, to prevent our argument in our contention with Greeks sinking to the level of Judaism there is need again of a distinct technical statement in order to correct all error on this point.

For not even by those who are external to our doctrine is the Deity held to be without Logos¹⁹⁴². Now this admission of theirs will quite enable our argument to be unfolded. For he who admits that God is not without Logos, will agree that a being who is not without Logos (or word) certainly possesses Logos. Now it is to be observed that the utterance of man is expressed by the same term. If, then, he should say that he understands what the Logos of God is according to the analogy of things with us, he will thus be led on to a loftier idea, it being an absolute necessity for him to believe that the utterance, just as everything else, corresponds with the nature. Though, that is, there is a certain sort of force, and life, and wisdom, observed in the human subject, yet no one from the similarity of the terms would suppose that the life, or power, or wisdom, were in the case of God of such a sort as that, but the significations of all such terms are lowered to accord with the standard of our nature. For since our nature is liable to corruption and weak, therefore is our life short, our strength unsubstantial, our word unstable¹⁹⁴³. But in that transcendent nature, through the greatness of the subject contemplated, every thing that is said about it is elevated with it. Therefore though mention be made of God's Word it will not be thought of as having its realization in the utterance of what is spoken, and as then vanishing away, like our speech, into the nonexistent. On the contrary, as our nature, liable as it is to come to an end, is endued with speech which likewise comes to an end, so that, imperishable and ever-existing nature has eternal, and substantial speech. If, then,

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¹⁹⁴² *the Deity...without Logos.* In another treatise (*De Fide*, p. 40) Gregory bases the argument for the eternity of the Λόγος on John i. 1, where it is not said, "after the beginning," but "in the beginning." The beginning, therefore, never was without the Λόγος.

¹⁹⁴³ *unstable*: ἀπαγής (the reading ἄρπαγίς is manifestly wrong). So afterwards human speech is called ἐπίκτητος. Cf. Athanasius (*Contr. Arian.* 3): "Since man came from the non-existent, therefore his 'word' also has a pause, and does not last. From man we get, day after day, many different words, because the first abide not, but are forgotten."

logic requires him to admit this eternal subsistence of God's Word, it is altogether necessary to admit also that the subsistence¹⁹⁴⁴ of that word consists in a living state; for it is an impiety to suppose that the Word has a soulless subsistence after the manner of stones. But if it subsists, being as it is something with intellect and without body, then certainly it lives, whereas if it be divorced from life, then as certainly it does not subsist; but this idea that the Word of God does not subsist, has been shown to be blasphemy. By consequence, therefore, it has also been shown that the Word is to be considered as in a living condition. And since the nature of the Logos is reasonably believed to be simple, and exhibits in itself no duplicity or combination, no one would contemplate the existence of the living Logos as dependent on a mere participation of life, for such a supposition, which is to say that one thing is within another, would not exclude the idea of compositeness; but, since the simplicity has been admitted, we are compelled to think that the Logos has an independent life, and not a mere participation of life. If, then, the Logos, as being life, lives¹⁹⁴⁵, it certainly has

¹⁹⁴⁴ ὑπόστασιν. About this oft repeated word the question arises whether we are indebted to Christians or to Platonists for the first skilful use of it in expressing that which is *neither substance nor quality*. Abraham Tucker (*Light of Nature*, ii. p. 191) hazards the following remark with regard to the Platonic Triad, *i.e.* Goodness, Intelligence, Activity, viz. that *quality* would not do as a general name for these principles, because the ideas and abstract essences existed in the Intelligence, &c., and qualities cannot exist in one another, *e.g.* yellowness cannot be soft: nor could *substance* be the term, for then they must have been component parts of the Existent, which would have destroyed the unity of the Godhead: "therefore, he (Plato) styled them Hypostases or Subsistencies, which is something between substance and quality, inexisting in the one, and serving as a receptacle for the other's inexistence within it." But he adds, "I do not recommend this explanation to anybody"; nor does he state the authority for this Platonic use, so lucidly explained, of the word. Indeed, if the word had ever been applied to the principles of the Platonic triad, to express in the case of each of them "the distinct subsistence in a common οὐσία," it would have falsified the very conception of the first, *i.e.* Goodness, which was *never relative*. So that this very word seems to emphasize, so far, the antagonism between Christianity and Platonism. Socrates (*E. H.* iii. 7) bears witness to the absence of the word from the ancient Greek philosophy: "it appears to us that the Greek philosophers have given us various definitions of οὐσία, but have not taken the slightest notice of ὑπόστασις...it is not found in any of the ancients except occasionally in a sense quite different from that which is attached to it at the present day (*i.e.* fifth century). Thus Sophocles in his tragedy entitled *Phenix* uses it to signify 'treachery'; in Menander it implies 'sauces' (*i.e.* sediment). But although the ancient philosophical writers scarcely noticed the word, the more modern ones have frequently used it *instead of οὐσία*." But it was, as far as can be traced, the unerring genius of Origen that first threw around the Λόγος that atmosphere of a new term, *i.e.* ὑπόστασις, as well as ὁμοούσιος, αὐτόθεος, which afterward made it possible to present the Second Person to the Greek-speaking world as the member of an equal and indivisible Trinity. It was he who first selected such words and saw what they were capable of; though he did not insist on that fuller meaning which was put upon them when all danger within the Church of Sabellianism had disappeared, and error passed in the guise of Arianism to the opposite extreme.

¹⁹⁴⁵ *lives*. This doctrine is far removed from that of Philo, *i.e.* from the Alexandrine philosophy. The very first statement of S. John represents the Λόγος as having a backward movement towards the Deity, as well as a forward movement from Him; as held there, and yet sent thence by a force which he calls Love, so that the primal movement towards the world does not come



the faculty of will, for no one of living creatures is without such a faculty. Moreover that such a will has also capacity to act must be the conclusion of a devout mind. For if you admit not this potency, you prove the reverse to exist. But no; impotence is quite removed from our conception of Deity. Nothing of incongruity is to be observed in connection with the Divine nature, but it is absolutely necessary to admit that the power of that word is as great as the purpose, lest mixture, or concurrence, of contradictions be found in an existence that is incomposite, as would be the case if, in the same purpose, we were to detect both impotence and power, if, that is, there were power

from the Λόγος, but from the Father Himself. The Λόγος here is the Word, and *not the Reason*; He is the living effect of a living cause, not a theory or hypothesis standing at the gateway of an insoluble mystery. The Λόγος speaks because the Father speaks, not because the Supreme cannot and will not speak; and their relations are often the reverse of those they hold in Philo; for the Father becomes at times the mediator between the Λόγος and the world drawing men towards Him and subduing portions of the Creation before His path. Psychology seems to pour a light straight into the Council-chamber of the Eternal; while Metaphysics had turned away from it, with her finger on her lips. Philo may have used, as Tholuck thinks, those very texts of the Old Testament which support the Christian doctrine of the Word, and in the translation of which the LXX. supplied him with the Greek word. But, however derived, his theology eventually ranged itself with those pantheistic views of the universe which subdued all thinking minds not Christianized, for more than three centuries after him. The majority of recent critics certainly favour the supposition that the Λόγος of Philo is a being numerically distinct from the Supreme; but when the relation of the Supreme is attentively traced in each, the actual antagonism of the Christian system and his begins to be apparent. The Supreme of Philo is not and can never be related to the world. The Λόγος is a logical necessity as a mediator between the two; a spiritual being certainly, but only the head of a long series of such beings, who succeed at last in filling the passage between the finite and the infinite. In this system there is no mission of love and of free will; such beings are but as the milestones to mark the distance between man and the Great Unknown. It is significant that Vacherot, the leading historian of the Alexandrine school of philosophy, doubts whether John the Evangelist ever even heard of the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria. It is pretty much the same with the members of the Neoplatonic Triad as with the Λόγος of Philo. The God of Plotinus and Proclus is not a God in three hypostases: he is simply one, Intelligence and Soul being his necessary emanations; they are in God, but they are not God: Soul is but a hypostasis of a hypostasis. The One is not a hypostasis, but above it. This "Trinity" depends on the distinction and succession of the *necessary* movements of the Deity; it consists of three distinct and separate principles of things. The Trinity is really peculiar to Christianity. Three inseparable Hypostases make equally a part of the Divine nature, so that to take away one would be to destroy the whole. The Word and Spirit are Divine, not intermediaries disposed in a hierarchy on the route of the world to God. As Plotinus reproached the Gnostics, the Christian mysticism despises the world, and suppressing the intermediaries who in other doctrines serve to elevate the soul gradually to God, it transports it by one impulse as it were into the Divine nature. The Christian goes straight to God by Faith. The Imagination, Reason, and Contemplation of the Neoplatonists, *i.e.* the three movements of the soul which correspond to their lower "trinity" of Nature, Soul, Intelligence, are no longer necessary. There is an antipathy profound between the two systems; How then could the one be said to influence the other? Neoplatonism may have tinged Christianity, while it was still seeking for language in which to express its inner self: but it never influenced the intrinsically moral character of the Christian Creeds. The Alexandrine philosophy is all metaphysics, and its rock was pantheism; all, even matter, proceeds from God necessarily and eternally. The Church never hesitated: she saw the abyss that opens upon that path; and by severe decrees she has closed the way to pantheism.

to do one thing, but no power to do something else. Also we must suppose that this will in its power to do all things will have no tendency to anything that is evil (for impulse towards evil is foreign to the Divine nature), but that whatever is good, this it also wishes, and, wishing, is able to perform, and, being able, will not fail to perform¹⁹⁴⁶; but that it will bring all its proposals for good to effectual accomplishment. Now the world *is* good, and all its contents are seen to be wisely and skilfully ordered. All of them, therefore, are the works of the Word, of one who, while He lives and subsists, in that He is God's Word, has a will too, in that He lives; of one too who has power to effect what He wills, and who wills what is absolutely good and wise and all else that connotes superiority. Whereas, then, the world is admitted to be something good, and from what has been said the world has been shown to be the work of the Word, who both wills and is able to effect the good, this Word is other than He of whom He is the Word. For this, too, to a certain extent is a term of "relation," inasmuch as the Father of the Word must needs be thought of with the Word, for it would not be word were it not a word of some one. If, then, the mind of the hearers, from the relative meaning of the term, makes a distinction between the Word and Him from whom He proceeds, we should find that the Gospel mystery, in its contention with the Greek conceptions, would not be in danger of coinciding with those who prefer the beliefs of the Jews. But it will equally escape the absurdity of either party, by acknowledging both that the living Word of God is an effective and creative being, which is what the Jew refuses to receive, and also that the Word itself, and He from whom He is, do not differ in their nature. As in our own case we say that the word is from the mind, and no more entirely the same as the mind, than altogether other than it (for, by its being from it, it is something else, and not it; still by its bringing the mind in evidence it can no longer be considered as something other than it; and so it is in its essence one with mind, while as a subject it is different), in like manner, too, the Word of God by its self-subsistence is distinct from Him from whom it has its subsistence; and yet by exhibiting in itself those qualities which are recognized in God it is the same in nature with Him who is recognizable by the same distinctive marks. For whether one adopts goodness¹⁹⁴⁷, or power, or wisdom, or eternal existence, or the incapability of vice, death, and decay, or an entire perfection, or anything whatever of the kind, to mark one's conception of the Father, by means of the same marks he will find the Word that subsists from Him.

¹⁹⁴⁶ *will not fail to perform*; μή ἀνεργητόν εἶναι. This is a favourite word with Gregory, and the Platonist Synesius.

¹⁹⁴⁷ *goodness*. "God is love;" but how is this love above or equal to the Power? "Infinite Goodness, according to our apprehension, requires that it should exhaust omnipotence: that it should give capacities of enjoyment and confer blessings until there were no more to be conferred: but our idea of omnipotence requires that it should be inexhaustible; that nothing should limit its operation, so that it should do no more than it has done. Therefore, it is much easier to conceive an imperfect creature completely good, than a perfect Being who is so.... Since, then, we find our understanding incapable of comprehending *infinite* goodness joined with *infinite* power, we need not be surprised at finding our thoughts perplexed concerning them... we may presume that the obscurity rises from something wrong in our ideas, *not from any inconsistencies in the subjects themselves.*" Abraham Tucker, *L. of N.*, i. 355.

Chapter II.

As, then, by the higher mystical ascent¹⁹⁴⁸ from matters that concern ourselves to that transcendent nature we gain a knowledge of the Word, by the same method we shall be led on to a conception of the Spirit, by observing in our own nature certain shadows and resemblances of His ineffable power. Now in us the spirit (or breath) is the drawing of the air, a matter other than ourselves, inhaled and breathed out for the necessary sustainment of the body. This, on the occasion of uttering the word, becomes an utterance which expresses in itself the meaning of the word. And in the case of the Divine nature it has been deemed a point of our religion that there is a Spirit of God, just as it has been allowed that there is a Word of God, because of the inconsistency of the Word of God being deficient as compared with our word, if, while this word of ours is contemplated in connection with spirit, that other Word were to be believed to be quite unconnected with spirit. Not indeed that it is a thought proper to entertain of Deity, that after the manner of our breath something foreign from without flows into God, and in Him becomes the Spirit; but when we think of God's Word we do not deem the Word to be something unsubstantial, nor the result of instruction, nor an utterance of the voice, nor what after being uttered passes away, nor what is subject to any other condition such as those which are observed in our word, but to be essentially self-subsisting, with a faculty of will ever-working, all-powerful. The like doctrine have we received as to God's Spirit; we regard it as that which goes with the Word and manifests its energy, and not as a mere effluence of the breath; for by such a conception the grandeur of the Divine power would be reduced and humiliated, that is, if the Spirit that is in it were supposed to resemble ours. But we conceive of it as an essential power, regarded as self-centred in its own proper person, yet equally incapable of being separated from God in Whom it is, or from the Word of God whom it accompanies, as from

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¹⁹⁴⁸ by the higher mystical ascent, ἀναγωγικῶς. The common reading was ἀναλογικῶς, which Hervetus and Morell have translated. But Krabinger, from all his Codd. but one, has rightly restored ἀναγωγικῶς. It is not "analogy," but rather "induction," that is here meant; *i.e.* the arguing from the known to the unknown, from the facts of human nature (τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς) to those of the Godhead, or from history to spiritual events. Ἀναγωγή is the chief instrument in Origen's interpretation of the Bible; it is more important than allegory. It alone gives the "heavenly" meaning, as opposed to the moral and practical though *still mystical* (cf. Guericke, *Hist. Schol. Catech.* ii. p. 60) meaning. Speaking of the Tower of Babel, he says that there is a "riddle" in the account. "A competent exposition will have a more convenient season for dealing with this, when there is a direct necessity to explain the passage in its higher mystical meaning" (*c. Cels.* iv. p. 173). Gregory imitates his master in constantly thus dealing with the Old Testament, *i.e.* making inductions about the highest spiritual truths from the "history." So Basil would treat the prophecies (in *Isai.* v. p. 948). Chrysostom, on the Songs of "Degrees" in the Psalms, says that they are so called because they speak of the going up from Babylon, according to history; but, according to their high mysticism, because they lift us into the way of excellence. Here Gregory uses the facts of human nature neither in the way of mere analogy nor of allegory: he argues straight from them, as one reality, to another reality almost of the same *class*, as it were, as the first, man being "in the image of God"; and so ἀναγωγή here comes nearer induction than anything else.

melting into nothingness; but as being, after the likeness of God's Word, existing as a person¹⁹⁴⁹, able to will, self-moved, efficient, ever choosing the good, and for its every purpose having its power concurrent with its will.


Chapter III.

AND SO one who severely studies the depths of the mystery, receives secretly in his spirit, indeed, a moderate amount of apprehension of the doctrine of God's nature, yet he is unable to explain clearly in words the ineffable depth of this mystery. As, for instance, how the same thing is capable of being numbered and yet rejects numeration, how it is observed with distinctions yet is apprehended as a monad, how it is separate as to personality yet is not divided as to subject matter¹⁹⁵⁰. For, in personality, the Spirit is one thing and the Word another, and yet again that from which the Word and Spirit is, another. But when you have gained the conception of what the distinction is in these, the oneness, again, of the nature admits not division, so that the supremacy of the one First Cause is not split and cut up into differing Godships, neither does the statement harmonize with the Jewish dogma, but the truth passes in the mean between these two conceptions, destroying each heresy, and yet accepting what is useful to it from each. The Jewish dogma is destroyed by the acceptance of the Word, and by the belief in the Spirit; while the polytheistic error of the Greek school is made to vanish by the unity of the Nature abrogating this imagination of plurality. While yet again, of the Jewish conception, let the unity of the Nature stand; and of the Hellenistic, only the distinction as to persons; the remedy against a profane view being thus applied, as required, on either side. For it is as if the number of the triad were a remedy in the case of those who are in error as to the One, and the assertion of the unity for those whose beliefs are dispersed among a number of divinities.

¹⁹⁴⁹ καθ' ὑπόστασιν. Ueberweg (*Hist. of Philosophy*, vol. i. 329) remarks: "That the same argumentation, which in the last analysis reposes only on the double sense of ὑπόστασις (viz. : (a) real subsistence; (b) individually independent, not attributive subsistence), could be used with reference to each of the Divine attributes, and so for the complete restoration of polytheism, Gregory leaves unnoticed." Yet Gregory doubtless was well aware of this, for he says, just below, that even a severe study of the mystery can only result in a moderate amount of apprehension of it.

¹⁹⁵⁰ *it is separate as to personality yet is not divided as to subject matter.* The words are respectively ὑπόστασις and ὑποκείμενον. The last word is with Gregory, whose clearness in philosophical distinctions makes his use of words very observable, always equivalent to οὐσία, and οὐσία generally to φύσις. The following note of Casaubon (*Epist. ad Eustath.*) is valuable: In the Holy Trinity there is neither "confusion," nor "composition," nor "coalescing"; neither the Sabellian "contraction," any more than the Arian "division," neither on the other hand "estrangement," or "difference." There is "distinction" or "distribution" without division. This word "distribution" is used by Tertullian and others to express the effect of the "persons" (ιδιότητες, ὑποστάσεις, πρόσωπα) upon the Godhead which forms the definition of the substance (ὁ τῆς οὐσίας λόγος).

Chapter IV.

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BUT should it be the Jew who gainsays these arguments, our discussion with him will no longer present equal difficulty¹⁹⁵¹, since the truth will be made manifest out of those doctrines on which he has been brought up. For that there is a Word of God, and a Spirit of God, powers essentially subsisting, both creative of whatever has come into being, and comprehensive of things that exist, is shown in the clearest light out of the Divinely-inspired Scriptures. It is enough if we call to mind one testimony, and leave the discovery of more to those who are inclined to take the trouble. “By the Word of the Lord,” it is said, “the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the breath of His mouth¹⁹⁵².” What word and what breath? For the Word is not mere speech, nor that breath mere breathing. Would not the Deity be brought down to the level of the likeness of our human nature, were it held as a doctrine that the Maker of the universe used such word and such breath as this? What power arising from speech or breathing could there be of such a kind as would suffice for the establishment of the heavens and the powers that are therein? For if the Word of God is like our speech, and His Breath is like our breath, then from these like things there must certainly come a likeness of power; and the Word of God has just so much force as our word, and no more. But the words that come from us and the breath that accompanies their utterance are ineffective and unsubstantial. Thus, they who would bring down the Deity to a similarity with the word as with us render also the Divine word and spirit altogether ineffective and unsubstantial. But if, as David says, “By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established, and their powers had their framing by His breath,” then has the mystery of the truth been confirmed, which instructs us to speak of a word as in essential being, and a breath as in personality.

Chapter V.

THAT there is, then, a Word of God, and a Breath of God, the Greek, with his “innate ideas”¹⁹⁵³, and the Jew, with his Scriptures, will perhaps not deny. But the dispensation as regards the Word of God, whereby He became man, both parties would perhaps equally reject, as being incredible and unfitting to be told of God. By starting, therefore, from another point we will bring these gainsayers to a belief in this fact. They believe that all things came into being by thought and skill on the part of Him Who framed the system of the universe; or else they hold views that do not conform to this opinion. But should they not grant that reason and wisdom guided the framing of

¹⁹⁵¹ *i.e.* as with the Greek.

¹⁹⁵² Ps. xxxiii. 4, Septuagint version.

¹⁹⁵³ *innate ideas* (κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν). There is a Treatise of Gregory introducing Christianity to the Greeks “from innate ideas.”

This title has been, wrongly, attributed by some to a later hand.

the world, they will install unreason and unskilfulness on the throne of the universe. But if this is an absurdity and impiety, it is abundantly plain that they must allow that thought and skill rule the world. Now in what has been previously said, the Word of God has been shown not to be this actual utterance of speech, or the possession of some science or art, but to be a power essentially and substantially existing, willing all good, and being possessed of strength to execute all its will; and, of a world that is good, this power appetitive and creative of good is the cause. If, then, the subsistence of the whole world has been made to depend on the power of the Word, as the train of the argument has shown, an absolute necessity prevents us entertaining the thought of there being any other cause of the organization of the several parts of the world than the Word Himself, through whom all things in it passed into being. If any one wants to call Him Word, or Skill, or Power, or God, or anything else that is high and prized, we will not quarrel with him. For whatever word or name be invented as descriptive of the subject, one thing is intended by the expressions, namely the eternal power of God which is creative of things that are, the discoverer of things that are not, the sustaining cause of things that are brought into being, the foreseeing cause of things yet to be. This, then, whether it be God, or Word, or Skill, or Power, has been shown by inference to be the Maker of the nature of man, not urged to framing him by any necessity, but in the superabundance of love operating the production of such a creature. For needful it was that neither His light should be unseen, nor His glory without witness, nor His goodness unenjoyed, nor that any other quality observed in the Divine nature should in any case lie idle, with none to share it or enjoy it. If, therefore, man comes to his birth upon these conditions, namely to be a partaker of the good things in God, necessarily he is framed of such a kind as to be adapted to the participation of such good. For as the eye, by virtue of the bright ray which is by nature wrapped up in it, is in fellowship with the light, and by its innate capacity draws to itself that which is akin to it, so was it needful that a certain affinity with the Divine should be mingled with the nature of man, in order that by means of this correspondence it might aim at that which was native to it. It is thus even with the nature of the unreasoning creatures, whose lot is cast in water or in air; each of them has an organization adapted to its kind of life, so that by a peculiar formation of the body, to the one of them the air, to the other the water, is its proper and congenial element. Thus, then, it was needful for man, born for the enjoyment of Divine good, to have something in his nature akin to that in which he is to participate. For this end he has been furnished with life, with thought, with skill, and with all the excellences that we attribute to God, in order that by each of them he might have his desire set upon that which is not strange to him. Since, then, one of the excellences connected with the Divine nature is also eternal existence, it was altogether needful that the equipment of our nature should not be without the further gift of this attribute, but should have in itself the immortal, that by its inherent faculty it might both recognize what is above it, and be possessed with a desire for the divine and eternal life¹⁹⁵⁴. In truth this has been shown in the comprehensive utterance of one



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¹⁹⁵⁴ Cf. Cato's Speech in Addison's *Cato*:—

expression, in the description of the cosmogony, where it is said that man was made “in the image of God”¹⁹⁵⁵. For in this likeness, implied in the word image, there is a summary of all things that characterize Deity; and whatever else Moses relates, in a style more in the way of history, of these matters, placing doctrines before us in the form of a story, is connected with the same instruction. For that Paradise of his, with its peculiar fruits, the eating of which did not afford to them who tasted thereof satisfaction of the appetite, but knowledge and eternity of life, is in entire agreement with what has been previously considered with regard to man, in the view that our nature at its beginnings was good, and in the midst of good. But, perhaps, what has been said will be contradicted by one who looks only to the present condition of things, and thinks to convict our statement of untruthfulness, inasmuch as man is seen no longer under those primeval circumstances, but under almost entirely opposite ones. “Where is the divine resemblance in the soul? Where the body’s freedom from suffering? Where the eternity of life? Man is of brief existence, subject to passions, liable to decay, and ready both in body and mind for every form of suffering.” By these and the like assertions, and by directing the attack against human nature, the opponent will think that he upsets the account that has been offered respecting man. But to secure that our argument may not have to be diverted from its course at any future stage, we will briefly discuss these points. That the life of man is at present subject to abnormal conditions is no proof that man was not created in the midst of good. For since man is the work of God, Who through His goodness brought this creature into being, no one could reasonably suspect that he, of whose constitution goodness is the cause, was created by his Maker in the midst of evil. But there is another reason for our present circumstances being what they are, and for our being destitute of the primitive surroundings: and yet again the starting-point of our answer to this argument against us is not beyond and outside the assent of our opponents. For He who made man for the participation of His own peculiar good, and incorporated in him the instincts for all that was excellent, in order that his desire might be carried forward by a corresponding movement in each case to its like, would never have deprived him of that most excellent and precious of all goods; I mean the gift implied in being his own master, and having a free will. For if necessity in any way was the master of the life of man, the “image” would have been falsified in that particular part, by being estranged owing to this unlikeness to its archetype. How can that nature which is under a yoke and bondage to any kind of necessity be called an image

It must be so; Plato, thou reasonest well! —

Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire

This longing after immortality?

* * * * *

’Tis the divinity that stirs within us;

’Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,

And intimates eternity to man.

¹⁹⁵⁵ Gen. i. 27.

of a Master Being? Was it not, then, most right that that which is in every detail made like the Divine should possess in its nature a self-ruling and independent principle, such as to enable the participation of good to be the reward of its virtue? Whence, then, comes it, you will ask, that he who had been distinguished throughout with most excellent endowments exchanged these good things for the worse? The reason of this also is plain. No growth of evil had its beginning in the Divine will. Vice would have been blameless were it inscribed with the name of God as its maker and father. But the evil is, in some way or other, engendered¹⁹⁵⁶ from within, springing up in the will at that moment when there is a retrocession of the soul from the beautiful¹⁹⁵⁷. For as sight is an activity of nature, and blindness a deprivation of that natural operation, such is the kind of opposition between virtue and vice. It is, in fact, not possible to form any other notion of the origin of vice than as the absence of virtue. For as when the light has been removed the darkness supervenes, but as long as it is present there is no darkness, so, as long as the good is present in the nature, vice is a thing that has no inherent existence; while the departure of the better state becomes the origin of its opposite. Since then, this is the peculiarity of the possession of a free will, that it chooses as it likes the thing that pleases it, you will find that it is not God Who is the author of the present evils, seeing that He has ordered your nature so as to be its own master and free; but rather the recklessness that makes choice of the worse in preference to the better.



Chapter VI.

BUT you will perhaps seek to know the cause of this error of judgment; for it is to this point that the train of our discussion tends. Again, then, we shall be justified in expecting to find some starting-point which will throw light on this inquiry also. An argument such as the following we have received by tradition from the Fathers; and this argument is no mere mythical narrative, but one that naturally invites our credence. Of all existing things there is a twofold manner of apprehension, the consideration of them being divided between what appertains to intellect and what appertains to the senses; and besides these there is nothing to be detected in the nature of existing things, as extending beyond this division. Now these two worlds have been separated from each other by a wide interval, so that the sensible is not included in those qualities which mark the intellectual, nor this last in those qualities which distinguish the sensible, but each receives its formal character from qualities opposite to those of the other. The world of thought is bodiless, impalpable, and figureless; but the sensible is, by its very name, bounded by those perceptions which come through the organs of sense. But as in the sensible world itself, though there is a

¹⁹⁵⁶ S. James i. 15: ἡ ἐπιθυμία τίκτει...ἀμαρτίαν

¹⁹⁵⁷ τὸ καλὸν. The Greek word for moral perfection, according to one view of its derivation (καίειν), refers to “brightness”; according to another (cf. κεκαδμενος), to “finish” or perfection.

considerable mutual opposition of its various elements, yet a certain harmony maintained in those opposites has been devised by the wisdom that rules the Universe, and thus there is produced a concord of the whole creation with itself, and the natural contrariety does not break the chain of agreement; in like manner, owing to the Divine wisdom, there is an admixture and interpenetration of the sensible with the intellectual department, in order that all things may equally have a share in the beautiful, and no single one of existing things be without its share in that superior world. For this reason the corresponding locality of the intellectual world is a subtitle and mobile essence, which, in accordance with its supramundane habitation, has in its peculiar nature large affinity with the intellectual part. Now, by a provision of the supreme Mind there is an intermixture of the intellectual with the sensible world, in order that nothing in creation may be thrown aside¹⁹⁵⁸ as worthless, as says the Apostle, or be left without its portion of the Divine fellowship. On this account it is that the commixture of the intellectual and sensible in man is effected by the Divine Being, as the description of the cosmogony instructs us. It tells us that God, taking dust of the ground, formed the man, and by an inspiration from Himself He planted life in the work of His hand, that thus the earthy might be raised up to the Divine, and so one certain grace of equal value might pervade the whole creation, the lower nature being mingled with the supramundane. Since, then, the intellectual nature had a previous existence, and to each of the angelic powers a certain operation was assigned, for the organization of the whole, by the authority that presides over all things, there was a certain power ordained to hold together and sway the earthly region¹⁹⁵⁹, constituted for this purpose by the power that administers the Universe. Upon that there was fashioned that thing moulded of earth, an “image” copied from the superior Power. Now this living being was man. In him, by an ineffable influence, the godlike beauty of the intellectual nature was mingled. He to whom the administration of the earth has been consigned takes it ill and thinks it not to be borne, if, of that nature which has been subjected to him, any being shall be exhibited bearing likeness to his transcendent dignity. But the question, how one who had been created for no evil purpose by Him who framed the system of the Universe in goodness fell away, nevertheless, into this passion of envy, it is not a part of my

¹⁹⁵⁸ 1 Tim. iv. 4; “rejected” (R.V.), better than “refused” (A.V.).

¹⁹⁵⁹ This is not making the Devil the Demiurge, but only the “angel of the Earth.” And as the celestial regions and atmosphere of the earth were assigned to “angelic powers,” so the Earth itself and her nations were assigned to subordinate angels. Origen had already developed, or rather christianized, this doctrine. Speaking of the Confusion of Tongues, he says, “And so each (nation) had to be handed over to the keeping of angels more or less severe, and of this character or of that, according as each had moved a greater or less distance from the East, and had prepared more or less bricks for stone, and more or less slime for mortar; and had built up more or less. This was that they might be punished for their boldness. These angels who had already created for each nation its peculiar tongue, were to lead their charges into various parts according to their deserts: one for instance to some burning clime, another to one which would chastise the dwellers in it with its freezing: . . . those who retained the original speech through not having moved from the East are the only ones that became ‘the portion of the Lord.’ . . . They, too, alone are to be considered as having been under a ruler who did not take them in hand to be punished as the others were’ (c. *Cels.* v. 30–1).

present business minutely to discuss; though it would not be difficult, and it would not take long, to offer an account to those who are amenable to persuasion. For the distinctive difference between virtue and vice is not to be contemplated as that between two actually subsisting phenomena; but as there is a logical opposition between that which is and that which is not, and it is not possible to say that, as regards subsistency, that which is not is distinguished from that which is, but we say that nonentity is only *logically* opposed to entity, in the same way also the word vice is opposed to the word virtue, not as being any existence in itself, but only as becoming thinkable by the absence of the better. As we say that blindness is logically opposed to sight, not that blindness has of itself a natural existence, being only a deprivation of a preceding faculty, so also we say that vice is to be regarded as the deprivation of goodness, just as a shadow which supervenes at the passage of the solar ray. Since, then, the uncreated nature is incapable of admitting of such movement as is implied in turning or change or alteration, while everything that subsists through creation has connection with change, inasmuch as the subsistence itself of the creation had its rise in change, that which was not passing by the Divine power into that which is; and since the above-mentioned power was created too, and could choose by a spontaneous movement whatever he liked, when he had closed his eyes to the good and the ungrudging like one who in the sunshine lets his eyelids down upon his eyes and sees only darkness, in this way that being also, by his very unwillingness to perceive the good, became cognisant of the contrary to goodness. Now this is Envy. Well, it is undeniable that the beginning of any matter is the cause of everything else that by consequence follows upon it, as, for instance, upon health there follows a good habit of body, activity, and a pleasurable life, but upon sickness, weakness, want of energy, and life passed in distaste of everything; and so, in all other instances, things follow by consequence their proper beginnings. As, then, freedom from the agitation of the passions is the beginning and groundwork of a life in accordance with virtue, so the bias to vice generated by that Envy is the constituted road to all these evils which have been since displayed. For when once he, who by his apostacy from goodness had begotten in himself this Envy, had received this bias to evil¹⁹⁶⁰, like a rock, torn asunder from a mountain ridge, which is driven down headlong by its own weight, in like manner he, dragged away from his original natural propension to goodness and gravitating with all his weight in the direction of vice, was deliberately forced and borne away as by a kind of gravitation to the utmost limit of iniquity; and as for that intellectual power which he had received from his Creator to co-operate with the better endowments, this he made his assisting instrument in the discovery of

¹⁹⁶⁰ “We affirm that it is not easy, or perhaps possible, even for a philosopher to know the origin of evil without its being made known to him by an inspiration of God, whence it comes, and how it shall vanish. Ignorance of God is itself in the list of evils; ignorance of His way of healing and of serving Him aright is itself the greatest evil: we affirm that no one whatever can possibly know the origin of evil, who does not see that the standard of piety recognized by the average of established laws is itself an evil. No one, either, can know it who has not grasped the truth about the Being who is called the Devil; what he was at the first, and how he became such as he is.”—Origen (*c. Cels.* iv. 65).

contrivances for the purposes of vice, while by his crafty skill he deceives and circumvents man, persuading him to become his own murderer with his own hands. For seeing that man by the commission of the Divine blessing had been elevated to a lofty pre-eminence (for he was appointed king over the earth and all things on it; he was beautiful in his form, being created an image of the archetypal beauty; he was without passion in his nature, for he was an imitation of the unimpassioned; he was full of frankness, delighting in a face-to-face manifestation of the personal Deity),—all this was to the adversary the fuel to his passion of envy. Yet could he not by any exercise of strength or dint of force accomplish his purpose, for the strength of God’s blessing over-mastered his own force. His plan, therefore, is to withdraw man from this enabling strength, that thus he may be easily captured by him and open to his treachery. As in a lamp when the flame has caught the wick and a person is unable to blow it out, he mixes water with the oil and by this devices will dull the flame, in the same way the enemy, by craftily mixing up badness in man’s will, has produced a kind of extinguishment and dulness in the blessing, on the failure of which that which is opposed necessarily enters. For to life is opposed death, to strength weakness, to blessing curse, to frankness shame, and to all that is good whatever can be conceived as opposite. Thus it is that humanity is in its present evil condition, since that beginning introduced the occasions for such an ending.

Chapter VII.

YET let no one ask, “How was it that, if God foresaw the misfortune that would happen to man from want of thought, He came to create him, since it was, perhaps, more to his advantage not to have been born than to be in the midst of such evils?” This is what they who have been carried away by the false teaching of the Manichees put forward for the establishment of their error, as thus able to show that the Creator of human nature is evil. For if God is not ignorant of anything that is, and yet man is in the midst of evil, the argument for the goodness of God could not be upheld; that is, if He brought forth into life the man who was to be in this evil. For if the operating force which is in accordance with the good is entirely that of a nature which is good, then this painful and perishing life, they say, can never be referred to the workmanship of the good, but it is necessary to suppose for such a life as this another author, from whom our nature derives its tendency to misery. Now all these and the like assertions seem to those who are thoroughly imbued with the heretical fraud, as with some deeply ingrained stain, to have a certain force from their superficial plausibility. But they who have a more thorough insight into the truth clearly perceive that what they say is unsound, and admits of speedy demonstration of its fallacy. In my opinion, too, it is well to put forward the Apostle as pleading with us on these points for their condemnation. In his address to the Corinthians he makes a distinction between the carnal and spiritual dispositions of souls; showing, I think, by what he says that it is wrong to judge of what is morally excellent, or, on the other hand, of what is evil, by the standard of the senses; but that, by withdrawing the

mind from bodily phenomena, we must decide by itself and from itself the true nature of moral excellence and of its opposite. “The spiritual man,” he says, “judgeth all things¹⁹⁶¹.” This, I think, must have been the reason of the invention of these deceptive doctrines on the part of those who propound them, viz. that when they define the good they have an eye only to the sweetness of the body’s enjoyment, and so, because from its composite nature and constant tendency to dissolution that body is unavoidably subject to suffering and sicknesses, and because upon such conditions of suffering there follows a sort of sense of pain, they decree that the formation of man is the work of an evil deity. Since, if their thoughts had taken a loftier view, and, withdrawing their minds from this disposition to regard the gratifications of the senses, they had looked at the nature of existing things dispassionately, they would have understood that there is no evil other than wickedness. Now all wickedness has its form and character in the deprivation of the good; it exists not by itself, and cannot be contemplated as a subsistence. For no evil of any kind lies outside and independent of the will; but it is the non-existence of the good that is so denominated. Now that which is not has no substantial existence, and the Maker of that which has no substantial existence is not the Maker of things that have substantial existence. Therefore the God of things that are is external to the causation of things that are evil, since He is not the Maker of things that are non-existent. He Who formed the sight did not make blindness. He Who manifested virtue manifested not the deprivation thereof. He Who has proposed as the prize in the contest of a free will the guerdon of all good to those who are living virtuously, never, to please Himself, subjected mankind to the yoke of a strong compulsion, as if he would drag it unwilling, as it were his lifeless tool, towards the right. But if, when the light shines very brightly in a clear sky, a man of his own accord shuts his eyelids to shade his sight, the sun is clear of blame on the part of him who sees not.

Chapter VIII.

NEVERTHELESS one who regards only the dissolution of the body is greatly disturbed, and makes it a hardship that this life of ours should be dissolved by death; it is, he says, the extremity of evil that our being should be quenched by this condition of mortality. Let him, then, observe through this gloomy prospect the excess of the Divine benevolence. He may by this, perhaps, be the more induced to admire the graciousness of God’s care for the affairs of man. To live is desirable to those who partake of life, on account of the enjoyment of things to their mind; since, if any one lives in bodily pain, not to be is deemed by such an one much more desirable than to exist in pain. Let us inquire, then, whether He Who gives us our outfit for living has any other object in view than how we may pass our life under the fairest circumstances. Now since by a motion of our self-will we contracted a fellowship with evil, and, owing to some sensual gratification, mixed up this evil with

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1 Cor. ii. 15.

our nature like some deleterious ingredient spoiling the taste of honey, and so, falling away from that blessedness which is involved in the thought of passionlessness, we have been viciously transformed—for this reason, Man, like some earthen potsherd, is resolved again into the dust of the ground, in order to secure that he may part with the soil which he has now contracted, and that he may, through the resurrection, be reformed anew after the original pattern; at least if in this life that now is he has preserved what belongs to that image. A doctrine such as this is set before us by Moses under the disguise of an historical manner¹⁹⁶². And yet this disguise of history contains a teaching which is most plain. For after, as he tells us, the earliest of mankind were brought into contact with what was forbidden, and thereby were stripped naked of that primal blessed condition, the Lord clothed these, His first-formed creatures, with coats of skins. In my opinion we are not bound to take these skins in their literal meaning. For to what sort of slain and flayed animals did this clothing devised for these humanities belong? But since all skin, after it is separated from the animal, is dead, I am certainly of opinion that He Who is the healer of our sinfulness, of His foresight invested man subsequently with that capacity of dying which had been the special attribute of the brute creation. Not that it was to last for ever; for a coat is something external put on us, lending itself to the body for a time, but not indigenous to its nature. This liability to death, then, taken from the brute creation, was, provisionally, made to envelope the nature created for immortality. It enwrapped it externally, but not internally. It grasped the sentient part of man; but laid no hold upon the Divine image. This sentient part, however, does not disappear, but is dissolved. Disappearance is the passing away into non-existence, but dissolution is the dispersion again into those constituent elements of the world of which it was composed. But that which is contained in them perishes not, though it escapes the cognisance of our senses.

Now the cause of this dissolution is evident from the illustration we have given of it. For since the senses have a close connection with what is gross and earthy, while the intellect is in its nature of a nobler and more exalted character than the movements involved in sensation, it follows that as, through the estimate which is made by the senses, there is an erroneous judgment as to what is morally good, and this error has wrought the effect of substantiating a contrary condition, that part of us which has thus been made useless is dissolved by its reception of this contrary. Now the bearing of our illustration is as follows. We supposed that some vessel has been composed of clay, and then, for some mischief or other, filled with melted lead, which lead hardens and remains in a non-liquid state; then that the owner of the vessel recovers it, and, as he possesses the potter's art, pounds to bits the ware which held the lead, and then remoulds the vessel after its former pattern for his own special use, emptied now of the material which had been mixed with it: by a like process the maker of our vessel, now that wickedness has intermingled with our sentient part, I mean that connected with the body, will dissolve the material which has received the evil, and, re-moulding it again by the Resurrection without any admixture of the contrary matter, will recombine the



¹⁹⁶² ἱστορικώτερον καὶ δι' αἰνιγμάτων

elements into the vessel in its original beauty. Now since both soul and body have a common bond of fellowship in their participation of the sinful affections, there is also an analogy between the soul's and body's death. For as in regard to the flesh we pronounce the separation of the sentient life to be death, so in respect of the soul we call the departure of the real life death. While, then, as we have said before, the participation in evil observable both in soul and body is of one and the same character, for it is through both that the evil principle advances into actual working, the death of dissolution which came from that clothing of dead skins does not affect the soul. For how can that which is uncompounded be subject to dissolution? But since there is a necessity that the defilements which sin has engendered in the soul as well should be removed thence by some remedial process, the medicine which virtue supplies has, in the life that now is, been applied to the healing of such mutilations as these. If, however, the soul remains unhealed¹⁹⁶³, the remedy is dispensed in the life that follows this. Now in the ailments of the body there are sundry differences, some admitting of an easier, others requiring a more difficult treatment. In these last the use of the knife, or cauteries, or draughts of bitter medicines are adopted to remove the disease that has attacked the body. For the healing of the soul's sicknesses the future judgment announces something of the same kind, and this to the thoughtless sort is held out as the threat of a terrible correction¹⁹⁶⁴, in order that through fear of this painful retribution they may gain the wisdom of fleeing from wickedness: while by those of more intelligence it is believed to be a remedial process ordered by God to bring back man, His peculiar creature, to the grace of his primal condition. They who use the knife or cautery to remove certain unnatural excrescences in the body, such as wens or warts, do not bring to the person they are serving a method of healing that is painless, though certainly they apply the knife without any intention of injuring the patient. In like manner whatever material excrescences are hardening on our souls, that have been sensualized by fellowship with the body's affections, are, in the day of the judgment¹⁹⁶⁵, as it were cut and scraped away by the ineffable wisdom and power of Him Who, as the Gospel says, "healeth those that are sick"¹⁹⁶⁶. For, as He

¹⁹⁶³ "Here," says Semler, "our Author reveals himself as a scholar of Origen, and other doctors, who had imbibed the heathen thoughts of Plato, and wished to rest their system upon a future (purely) moral improvement." There is certainly too little room left here for the application to the soul and body in this life of Christ's atonement.

¹⁹⁶⁴ σκυθρωπῶν ἐπανόρθωσις, lit. "a correction consisting in terrible (processes)" (subjective genitive). The following passage will illustrate this: "Now this requires a deeper investigation, before it can be decided whether some evil powers have had assigned them... certain duties, like the State-executioners, who hold a melancholy (τεταγμένοι ἐπὶ τῶν σκυθρωπῶν...πραγμάτων) but necessary office in the Constitution." Origen, *c. Cels.* vii. 70.

¹⁹⁶⁵ *in the day of the judgment.* The reading κτίσεως, which Hervetus has followed, must be wrong here.

¹⁹⁶⁶ S. Matt. ix. 12



says again, “they that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick¹⁹⁶⁷.” Since, then, there has been inbred in the soul a strong natural tendency to evil, it must suffer, just as the excision of a wart¹⁹⁶⁸ gives a sharp pain to the skin of the body; for whatever contrary to the nature has been inbred in the nature attaches itself to the subject in a certain union of feeling, and hence there is produced an abnormal intermixture of our own with an alien quality, so that the feelings, when the separation from this abnormal growth comes, are hurt and lacerated. Thus when the soul pines and melts away under the correction of its sins, as prophecy somewhere tells us¹⁹⁶⁹, there necessarily follow, from its deep and intimate connection with evil, certain unspeakable and inexpressible pangs, the description of which is as difficult to render as is that of the nature of those good things which are the subjects of our hope. For neither the one nor the other is capable of being expressed in words, or brought within reach of the understanding. If, then, any one looks to the ultimate aim of the Wisdom of Him Who directs the economy of the universe, he would be very unreasonable and narrow-minded to call the Maker of man the Author of evil; or to say that He is ignorant of the future, or that, if He knows it and has made him, He is not uninfluenced by the impulse to what is bad. He knew what was going to be, yet did not prevent the tendency towards that which actually happened. That humanity, indeed, would be diverted from the good, could not be unknown to Him Who grasps all things by His power of foresight, and Whose eyes behold the coming equally with the past events. As, then, He had in sight the perversion, so He devised man’s recall to good. Accordingly, which was the better way?—never to have brought our nature into existence at all, since He foresaw that the being about to be created would fall away from that which is morally beautiful; or to bring him back by repentance, and restore his diseased nature to its original beauty? But, because of the pains and sufferings of the body which are the necessary accidents of its unstable nature, to call God on that account the Maker of evil, or to think that He is not the Creator of man at all, in hopes thereby to prevent the supposition of His being the Author of what gives us pain,—all this is an instance of that extreme narrow-mindedness which is the mark of those who judge of moral good and moral evil by mere sensation. Such persons do not understand that that only is intrinsically good which sensation does not reach, and that the only evil is estrangement from the good. But to make pains and pleasures the criterion of what is morally good and the contrary, is a characteristic of the unreasoning nature of creatures in whom, from their want of mind and understanding, the apprehension of real goodness has no place. That man is the work

¹⁹⁶⁷ S. Mark ii. 17

¹⁹⁶⁸ *of a wart*; μύρμηκίας. Gregory uses the same simile in his treatise *On the Soul* (iii. p. 204). The following “scholium” in Greek is found in the margin of two MSS. of that treatise, and in that of one MS. of this treatise: “There is an affection of the skin which is called a wart. A small fleshy excrescence projects from the skin, which seems a part of it, and a natural growth upon it: but this is not really so; and therefore it requires removal for its cure. This illustration made use of by Gregory is exceedingly appropriate to the matter in hand.”

¹⁹⁶⁹ Ps. xxxix. (xxxviii.) 11: “When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away” (A.V).

of God, created morally noble and for the noblest destiny, is evident not only from what has been said, but from a vast number of other proofs; which, because they are so many, we shall here omit. But when we call God the Maker of man we do not forget how carefully at the outset¹⁹⁷⁰ we defined our position against the Greeks. It was there shown that the Word of God is a substantial and personified being, Himself both God and the Word; Who has embraced in Himself all creative power, or rather Who is very power with an impulse to all good; Who works out effectually whatever He wills by having a power concurrent with His will; Whose will and work is the life of all things that exist; by Whom, too, man was brought into being and adorned with the highest excellences after the fashion of Deity. But since that alone is unchangeable in its nature which does not derive its origin through creation, while whatever by the uncreated being is brought into existence out of what was nonexistent, from the very first moment that it begins to be, is ever passing through change, and if it acts according to its nature the change is ever to the better, but if it be diverted from the straight path, then a movement to the contrary succeeds,—since, I say, man was thus conditioned, and in him the changeable element in his nature had slipped aside to the exact contrary, so that this departure from the good introduced in its train every form of evil to match the good (as, for instance, on the defection of life there was brought in the antagonism of death; on the deprivation of light darkness supervened; in the absence of virtue vice arose in its place, and against every form of good might be reckoned a like number of opposite evils), by whom, I ask, was man, fallen by his recklessness into this and the like evil state (for it was not possible for him to retain even his prudence when he had estranged himself from prudence, or to take any wise counsel when he had severed himself from wisdom),—by whom was man to be recalled to the grace of his original state? To whom belonged the restoration of the fallen one, the recovery of the lost, the leading back the wanderer by the hand? To whom else than entirely to Him Who is the Lord of his nature? For Him only Who at the first had given the life was it possible, or fitting, to recover it when lost. This is what we are taught and learn from the Revelation of the truth, that God in the beginning made man and saved him when he had fallen.

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Chapter IX.

UP to this point, perhaps, one who has followed the course of our argument will agree with it, inasmuch as it does not seem to him that anything has been said which is foreign to the proper conception of the Deity. But towards what follows and constitutes the strongest part of this Revelation of the truth, he will not be similarly disposed; the human birth, I mean, the growth of infancy to maturity, the eating and drinking, the fatigue and sleep, the sorrow and tears, the false accusation and judgment hall, the cross of death and consignment to the tomb. All these things, included as they are in this revelation, to a certain extent blunt the faith of the more narrow-minded, and so

¹⁹⁷⁰ *i.e.* Chapter 1., throughout.

they reject the sequel itself in consequence of these antecedents. They will not allow that in the Resurrection from the dead there is anything consistent with the Deity, because of the unseemly circumstances of the Death. Well, I deem it necessary first of all to remove our thoughts for a moment from the grossness of the carnal element, and to fix them on what is morally beautiful in itself, and on what is not, and on the distinguishing marks by which each of them is to be apprehended. No one, I think, who has reflected will challenge the assertion that, in the whole nature of things, one thing only is disgraceful, and that is vicious weakness; while whatever has no connection with vice is a stranger to all disgrace; and whatever has no mixture in it of disgrace is certainly to be found on the side of the beautiful; and what is really beautiful has in it no mixture of its opposite. Now whatever is to be regarded as coming within the sphere of the beautiful becomes the character of God. Either, then, let them show that there was viciousness in His birth, His bringing up, His growth, His progress to the perfection of His nature, His experience of death and return from death; or, if they allow that the aforesaid circumstances of His life remain outside the sphere of viciousness, they will perforce admit that there is nothing of disgrace in this that is foreign to viciousness. Since, then, what is thus removed from every disgraceful and vicious quality is abundantly shown to be morally beautiful, how can one fail to pity the folly of men who give it as their opinion that what is morally beautiful is not becoming in the case of God?

Chapter X.

“BUT the nature of man,” it is said, “is narrow and circumscribed, whereas the Deity is infinite. How could the infinite be included in the atom¹⁹⁷¹?” But who is it that says the infinitude of the Deity is comprehended in the envelopment of the flesh as if it were in a vessel? Not even in the case of our own life is the intellectual nature shut up within the boundary of the flesh. On the contrary, while the body’s bulk is limited to the proportions peculiar to it, the soul by the movements of its thinking faculty can coincide¹⁹⁷² at will with the whole of creation. It ascends to the heavens, and sets foot within the deep. It traverses the breadth of the world, and in the restlessness of its curiosity makes its way into the regions that are beneath the earth; and often it is occupied in the scrutiny of the wonders of heaven, and feels no weight from the appendage¹⁹⁷³ of the body. If, then, the soul of man, although by the necessity of its nature it is transfused through the body, yet presents itself everywhere at will, what necessity is there for saying that the Deity is hampered by an

¹⁹⁷¹ τῷ ἀτόμῳ: here, the individual body of man: “individuo corpusculo,” Zinus translates. Theodoret in his second (“Unconfused”) Dialogue quotes this very passage about the “infiniteness of the Deity,” and a “vessel,” to prove the *two* natures of Christ.

¹⁹⁷² ἐφαπλοῦται

¹⁹⁷³ ἐφολκί& 251’.

environment of fleshly nature, and why may we not, by examples which we are capable of understanding, gain some reasonable idea of God's plan of salvation? There is an analogy, for instance, in the flame of a lamp, which is seen to embrace the material with which it is supplied¹⁹⁷⁴. Reason makes a distinction between the flame upon the material, and the material that kindles the flame, though in fact it is not possible to cut off the one from the other so as to exhibit the flame separate from the material, but they both united form one single thing. But let no one, I beg, associate also with this illustration the idea of the perishableness of the flame; let him accept only what is apposite in the image; what is irrelevant and incongruous let him reject. What is there, then, to prevent our thinking (just as we see flame fastening on the material¹⁹⁷⁵, and yet not inclosed in it) of a kind of union or approximation of the Divine nature with humanity, and yet in this very approximation guarding the proper notion of Deity, believing as we do that, though the Godhead be in man, it is beyond all circumscription?

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Chapter XI.

SHOULD you, however, ask in what way Deity is mingled with humanity, you will have occasion for a preliminary inquiry as to what the coalescence is of soul with flesh. But supposing you are ignorant of the way in which the soul is in union with the body, do not suppose that that other question is bound to come within your comprehension; rather, as in this case of the union of soul and body, while we have reason to believe that the soul is something other than the body, because the flesh when isolated from the soul becomes dead and inactive, we have yet no exact knowledge of the method of the union, so in that other inquiry of the union of Deity with manhood, while we are quite aware that there is a distinction as regards degree of majesty between the Divine and the mortal perishable nature, we are not capable of detecting how the Divine and the human elements are mixed up together. The miracles recorded permit us not to entertain a doubt¹⁹⁷⁶ that God was born in the nature of man. But how—this, as being a subject unapproachable by the processes of

¹⁹⁷⁴ There is a touch of Eutychianism in this illustration of the union of the Two Natures; as also in Gregory's answer (c. *Eunom.* iii. 265; v. 589) to Eunomius' charge of Two Persons against the Nicene party, viz. that "the flesh with all its peculiar marks and properties is taken up and transformed into the Divine nature"; whence arose that ἀντιμεθίστασις τῶν ὀνομάτων, i.e. *reciprocal* interchange of the properties human and Divine, which afterwards occasioned the Monophysite controversy. But Origen had used language still more incautious; "with regard to his mortal body and his human soul, we believe that owing to something more than communion with Him, to actual union and intermingling, it has acquired the highest qualities, and partakes of His Divinity, and so has changed into God" (c. *Cels.* iii. 41).

¹⁹⁷⁵ *fastening on the material*. The word (ἄπτεσθαι) could mean either "fastening on," or "depending on," or "kindled from" (it has been used in this last sense just above). Krabinger selects the second, "quæ a subjecto dependet."

¹⁹⁷⁶ διὰ τῶν ἱστορουμένων θαυμάτων οὐκ ἀμφιβάλλομεν

reasoning, we decline to investigate. For though we believe, as we do, that all the corporeal and intellectual creation derives its subsistence from the incorporeal and uncreated Being, yet the *whence* or the *how*, these we do not make a matter for examination along with our faith in the thing itself. While we accept the fact, we pass by the manner of the putting together of the Universe, as a subject which must not be curiously handled, but one altogether ineffable and inexplicable.

Chapter XII.

IF a person requires proofs of God's having been manifested to us in the flesh, let him look at the Divine activities. For of the existence of the Deity at all one can discover no other demonstration than that which the testimony of those activities supplies. When, that is, we take a wide survey of the universe, and consider the dispensations throughout the world, and the Divine benevolences that operate in our life, we grasp the conception of a power overlying all, that is creative of all things that come into being, and is conservative of them as they exist. On the same principle, as regards the manifestation of God in the flesh, we have established a satisfactory proof of that apparition of Deity, in those wonders of His operations; for in all his work as actually recorded we recognize the characteristics of the Divine nature. It belongs to God to give life to men, to uphold by His providence all things that exist. It belongs to God to bestow meat and drink on those who in the flesh have received from Him the boon of life, to benefit the needy, to bring back to itself, by means of renewed health, the nature that has been perverted by sickness. It belongs to God to rule with equal sway the whole of creation; earth, sea, air, and the realms above the air. It is His to have a power that is sufficient for all things, and above all to be stronger than death and corruption. Now if in any one of these or the like particulars the record of Him had been wanting, they who are external to the faith had reasonably taken exception¹⁹⁷⁷ to the gospel revelation. But if every notion that is conceivable of God is to be traced in what is recorded of Him, what is there to hinder our faith?

Chapter XIII.

BUT, it is said, to be born and to die are conditions peculiar to the fleshly nature. I admit it. But what went before that Birth and what came after that Death escapes the mark of our common humanity. If we look to either term of our human life, we understand both from what we take our beginning, and in what we end. Man commenced his existence in a weakness and in a weakness

¹⁹⁷⁷ παρεγράφοντο



completes it. But in the instance of the Incarnation neither did the birth begin with a weakness, nor in a weakness did the death terminate; for neither did sensual pleasure go before the birth, nor did corruption follow upon the death. Do you disbelieve this marvel? I quite welcome your incredulity. You thus entirely admit that those marvellous facts are supernatural, in the very way that you think that what is related is above belief. Let this very fact, then, that the proclamation of the mystery did not proceed in terms that are natural, be a proof to you of the manifestation of the Deity. For if what is related of Christ were within the bounds of nature, where were the Godhead? But if the account surpasses nature, then the very facts which you disbelieve are a demonstration that He who was thus proclaimed was God. A man is begotten by the conjunction of two persons, and after death is left in corruption. Had the Gospel comprised no more than this, you certainly would not have deemed *him* to be God, the testimony to whom was conveyed in terms peculiar only to our nature. But when you are told that He was born, and yet transcended our common humanity both in the manner of His birth, and by His incapacity of a change to corruption, it would be well if, in consequence of this, you would direct your incredulity upon the other point, so as to refuse to suppose Him to be one of those who have manifestly existed as mere men; for it follows of necessity that a person who does not believe that such and such a being is mere man, must be led on to the belief that He is God. Well, he who has recorded that He was born *has* related also that He was born of a Virgin. If, therefore, on the evidence stated, the fact of His being born is established as a matter of faith, it is altogether incredible, on the same evidence, that He was not born in the manner stated. For the author who mentions His birth adds also, that it was of a Virgin; and in recording His death bears further testimony to His resurrection from the dead. If, therefore, from what you are told, you grant that He both was born and died, on the same grounds you must admit that both His birth and death were independent of the conditions of human weakness,—in fact, were above nature. The conclusion, therefore, is that He Who has thus been shown to have been born under supernatural circumstances was certainly Himself not limited by nature.

Chapter XIV.

“THEN why,” it is asked, “did the Deity descend to such humiliation? Our faith is staggered to think that God, that incomprehensible, inconceivable, and ineffable reality, transcending all glory of greatness, wraps Himself up in the base covering of humanity, so that His sublime operations as well are debased by this admixture with the grovelling earth.”

Chapter XV.

EVEN to this objection we are not at a loss for an answer consistent with our idea of God. You ask the reason why God was born among men. If you take away from life the benefits that come to us from God, you would not be able to tell me what means you have of arriving at any knowledge of Deity. In the kindly treatment of us we recognize the benefactor; that is, from observation of that which happens to us, we conjecture the disposition of the person who operates it. If, then, love of man be a special characteristic of the Divine nature, here is the reason for which you are in search, here is the cause of the presence of God among men. Our diseased nature needed a healer. Man in his fall needed one to set him upright. He who had lost the gift of life stood in need of a life-giver, and he who had dropped away from his fellowship with good wanted one who would lead him back to good. He who was shut up in darkness longed for the presence of the light. The captive sought for a ransomer, the fettered prisoner for some one to take his part, and for a deliverer he who was held in the bondage of slavery. Were these, then, trifling or unworthy wants to importune the Deity to come down and take a survey of the nature of man, when mankind was so miserably and pitiably conditioned? "But," it is replied, "man might have been benefited, and yet God might have continued in a passionless state. Was it not possible for Him Who in His wisdom framed the universe, and by the simple impulse of His will brought into subsistence that which was not, had it so pleased Him, by means of some direct Divine command to withdraw man from the reach of the opposing power, and bring him back to his primal state? Whereas He waits for long periods of time to come round, He submits Himself to the condition of a human body, He enters upon the stage of life by being born, and after passing through each age of life in succession, and then tasting death, at last, only by the rising again of His own body, accomplishes His object,—as if it was not optional to Him to fulfil His purpose without leaving the height of His Divine glory, and to save man by a single command¹⁹⁷⁸, letting those long periods of time alone." Needful, therefore, is it that in answer to objections such as these we should draw out the counter-statement of the truth, in order that no obstacle may be offered to the faith of those persons who will minutely examine the reasonableness of the gospel revelation. In the first place, then, as has been partially discussed


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¹⁹⁷⁸ Origin answering the same objections says, "I know not what sort of alteration of mankind it is that Celsus wants, when he doubts whether it were not possible to improve man by a display of Divine power, without any one being sent in the course of nature (φύσει) for that purpose. Does he want this to take place among mankind by a sudden appearance of God destroying evil in their hearts at a blow, and causing virtue to spring up there? One might well inquire if it were fitting or possible that such a thing should happen. But we will suppose that it is so. What then? How will our assent to the truth be (in that case) praiseworthy? You yourself profess to recognize a special Providence: therefore you ought just as much to have told *us*, as we you, why it is that God, knowing the affairs of men, does not correct them, and by a single stroke of His power rid Himself of the whole family of evil. But we confidently assert that He does send messengers for this very purpose: for His words appealing to men's noblest emotions are amongst them. But whereas there had been already great differences between the various ministers of the Word, the reformation of Jesus went beyond them all in greatness; for He did not mean to heal the men of one little corner only of the world, but He came to save all;" *c. Cels.* iv. 3, 4.

before¹⁹⁷⁹, let us consider what is that which, by the rule of contraries, is opposed to virtue. As darkness is the opposite of light, and death of life, so vice, and nothing else besides, is plainly the opposite of virtue. For as in the many objects in creation there is nothing which is distinguished by its opposition to light or life, but only the peculiar ideas which are their exact opposites, as darkness and death—not stone, or wood, or water, or man, or anything else in the world,—so, in the instance of virtue, it cannot be said that any created thing can be conceived of as contrary to it, but only the idea of vice. If, then, our Faith preached that the Deity had been begotten under vicious circumstances, an opportunity would have been afforded the objector of running down our belief, as that of persons who propounded incongruous and absurd opinions with regard to the Divine nature. For, indeed, it were blasphemous to assert that the Deity, Which is very wisdom, goodness, incorruptibility, and every other exalted thing in thought or word, had undergone change to the contrary. If, then, God is real and essential virtue, and no mere existence¹⁹⁸⁰ of any kind is logically opposed to virtue, but only vice is so; and if the Divine birth was not into vice, but into human existence; and if only vicious weakness is unseemly and shameful—and with such weakness neither was God born, nor had it in His nature to be born,—why are they scandalized at the confession that God came into touch with human nature, when in relation to virtue no contrariety whatever is observable in the organization of man? For neither Reason, nor Understanding¹⁹⁸¹, nor Receptivity for science, nor any other like quality proper to the essence of man, is opposed to the principle of virtue.

Chapter XVI.

“BUT,” it is said, “this change in our body by birth is a weakness, and one born under such condition is born in weakness. Now the Deity is free from weakness. It is, therefore, a strange idea in connection with God,” they say, “when people declare that one who is essentially free from weakness thus comes into fellowship with weakness.” Now in reply to this let us adopt the same argument as before, namely that the word “weakness” is used partly in a proper, partly in an adapted sense. Whatever, that is, affects the will and perverts it from virtue to vice is really and truly a weakness; but whatever in nature is to be seen proceeding by a chain peculiar to itself of successive stages would be more fitly called a work than a weakness. As, for instance, birth, growth, the continuance of the underlying substance through the influx and efflux of the aliments, the meeting together of the component elements of the body, and, on the other hand, the dissolution of its component parts and their passing back into the kindred elements. Which “weakness,” then, does

¹⁹⁷⁹ Ch. v.

¹⁹⁸⁰ φύσις.

¹⁹⁸¹ τὸ διανοητικόν

our Mystery assert that the Deity came in contact with? That which is properly called weakness, which is vice, or that which is the result of natural movements? Well, if our Faith affirmed that the Deity was born under forbidden circumstances, then it would be our duty to shun a statement which gave this profane and unsound description of the Divine Being. But if it asserts that God laid hold on this nature of ours, the production of which in the first instance and the subsistence afterwards had its origin in Him, in what way does this our preaching fail in the reverence that befits Him? Amongst our notions of God no disposition tending to weakness goes along with our belief in Him. We do not say that a physician is in weakness when he is employed in healing one who is so¹⁹⁸². For though he touches the infirmity he is himself unaffected by it. If birth is not regarded in itself as a weakness, no one can call life such. But the feeling of sensual pleasure does go before the human birth, and as to the impulse to vice in all living men, this *is* a disease of our nature. But then the Gospel mystery asserts that He Who took our nature was pure from both these feelings. If, then, His birth had no connection with sensual pleasure, and His life none with vice, what “weakness” is there left which the mystery of our religion asserts that God participated in? But should any one call the separation of body and soul a weakness¹⁹⁸³, far more justly might he term the meeting together of these two elements such. For if the severance of things that have been connected is a weakness, then is the union of things that are asunder a weakness also. For there is a feeling of movement in the uniting of things sundered as well as in the separation of what has been welded into one. The same term, then, by which the final movement is called, it is proper to apply to the one that initiated it. If the first movement, which we call birth, is not a weakness, it follows that neither the second, which we call death, and by which the severance of the union of the soul and body is effected, is a weakness. Our position is, that God was born subject to both movements of our nature; first, that by which the soul hastens to join the body, and then again that by which the body is separated from the soul; and that when the concrete humanity was formed by the mixture of these two, I mean the sentient and the intelligent element, through that ineffable and inexpressible conjunction, this result in the Incarnation followed, that after the soul and body had been once united the union continued for ever. For when our nature, following its own proper course, had even in Him been advanced to the separation of soul and body, He knitted together again the disunited elements, cementing them, as it were, together with the cement of His Divine power, and recombining what has been severed in a union never to be broken. And this is the Resurrection,

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¹⁹⁸² So Origen (*c. Cels.* iv. 15) illustrates the κένωσις and συγκατάβασις of Christ: “Nor was this change one from the heights of excellence to the depths of baseness (τὸ πονηρότατον), for how can goodness and love be baseness? If they were, it would be high time to declare that the surgeon who inspects or touches grievous and unsightly cases in order to heal them undergoes such a change from good to bad.”

¹⁹⁸³ There is no one word in English which would represent the full meaning of πάθος. “Sufferance” sometimes comes nearest to it, but not here, where Gregory is attempting to express that which in no way whatever attached to the Saviour, *i.e.* moral weakness, as opposed to physical infirmity.

namely the return, after they have been dissolved, of those elements that had been before linked together, into an indissoluble union through a mutual incorporation; in order that thus the primal grace which invested humanity might be recalled, and we restored to the everlasting life, when the vice that has been mixed up with our kind has evaporated through our dissolution, as happens to any liquid when the vessel that contained it is broken, and it is spilt and disappears, there being nothing to contain it. For as the principle of death took its rise in one person and passed on in succession through the whole of human kind, in like manner the principle of the Resurrection-life extends from one person to the whole of humanity. For He Who reunited to His own proper body the soul that had been assumed by Himself, by virtue of that power which had mingled with both of these component elements at their first framing, then, upon a more general scale as it were¹⁹⁸⁴, conjoined the intellectual to the sentient nature, the new principle freely progressing to the extremities by natural consequence. For when, in that concrete humanity which He had taken to Himself, the soul after the dissolution returned to the body, then this uniting of the several portions passes, as by a new principle, in equal force upon the whole human race. This, then, is the mystery of God's plan with regard to His death and His resurrection from the dead; namely, instead of preventing the dissolution of His body by death and the necessary results of nature, to bring both back to each other in the resurrection; so that He might become in Himself the meeting-ground both of life and death, having re-established in Himself that nature which death had divided, and being Himself the originating principle of the uniting those separated portions.

Chapter XVII.

BUT it will be said that the objection which has been brought against us has not yet been solved, and that what unbelievers have urged has been rather strengthened by all we have said. For if, as our argument has shown, there is such power in Him that both the destruction of death and the

¹⁹⁸⁴ upon a more general scale as it were. The Greek here is somewhat obscure; the best reading is Krabinger's; γενικωτέρω τιμι λόγω τήν νοεράν ούσίαν τῇ αἰσθητῇ συγκατέμιξεν. Hervetus' translation is manifestly wrong; "Is generosiorē quādam intelligentem essentiam commiscuit sensili principio."—Soul and body have been reunited by the Resurrection, on a larger scale and to a wider extent (λόγω), than in the former instance of a single Person (in the Incarnation), the new principle of life progressing to the extremities of humanity by natural consequence: γενικωτέρω will thus refer by comparison to "the first framing of these component elements." Or else it contrasts the amount of life with that of death: and is to be explained by Rom. v. 15, "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, *much more* the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath *abounded* unto many." Krabinger's translation, "generaliori quādam ratione," therefore seems correct. The mode of the union of soul and body is described in Gregory's Treatise on the Soul as κρείττων λόγος, and in his *Making of Man* as ἄφραστος λόγος, but in neither is there any comparison but with other less perfect modes of union; *i.e.* the reference is to *quality*, not to *quantity*, as here.

introduction of life resides in Him, why does He not effect His purpose by the mere exercise of His will, instead of working out our salvation in such a roundabout way, by being born and nurtured as a man, and even, while he was saving man, tasting death; when it was possible for Him to have saved man without subjecting Himself to such conditions? Now to this, with all candid persons, it were sufficient to reply, that the sick do not dictate to their physicians the measures for their recovery, nor cavil with those who do them good as to the method of their healing; why, for instance, the medical man felt the diseased part and devised this or that particular remedy for the removal of the complaint, when they expected another; but the patient looks to the end and aim of the good work, and receives the benefit with gratitude. Seeing, however, as says the Prophet¹⁹⁸⁵, that God's abounding goodness keeps its utility concealed, and is not seen in complete clearness in this present life—otherwise, if the eyes could behold all that is hoped for, every objection of unbelievers would be removed,—but, as it is, abides the ages that are coming, when what is at present seen only by the eye of faith must be revealed, it is needful accordingly that, as far as we may, we should by the aid of arguments, the best within our reach, attempt to discover for these difficulties also a solution in harmony with what has gone before.

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Chapter XVIII.

AND yet it is perhaps straining too far for those who do believe that God sojourned here in life to object to the manner of His appearance¹⁹⁸⁶, as wanting wisdom or conspicuous reasonableness. For to those who are not vehemently antagonistic to the truth there exists no slight proof of the Deity having sojourned here; I mean that which is exhibited now in this present life before the life to come begins, the testimony which is borne by actual facts. For who is there that does not know that every part of the world was overspread with demoniacal delusion which mastered the life of man through the madness of idolatry; how this was the customary rule among all nations, to worship demons under the form of idols, with the sacrifice of living animals and the polluted offerings on their altars? But from the time when, as says the Apostle, “the grace of God that bringeth salvation

¹⁹⁸⁵ *the Prophet*, i.e. David; Ps. xxxi. 19: ὡς πολὺ τὸ πλῆθος τῆς χρηστότητός σου, κ.τ.λ. Hervetus translates Gregory here “divitiæ benignitatis,” as if he had found πλοῦτος in the text, which does not appear. Jerome twice translates the χρηστότης of LXX. by “bonitas”; Aquila and Symmachus have τί πολὺ τὸ ἀγαθόν σου. This is the later sense of χρηστότης, which originally meant “serviceableness” and then “uprightness” (Psalm xiii. 2, 4; xxxvi. 3; cxix. 66), rather than “kindness.”

¹⁹⁸⁶ *appearance*, παρουσίαν. Casaubon in his notes to Gregory's *Ep. to Eustathia*, gives a list of the various terms applied by the Greek Fathers to the Incarnation, viz. (besides παρουσία),—ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιφάνεια; ἡ δεσποτική ἐπιδημία; ἡ διὰ σαρκὸς ὁμιλία; ἡ τοῦ λόγου ἐνσάρκωσις; ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις; ἡ ἔλευσις; ἡ κένωσις; ἡ συγκατάβασις; ἡ οἰκονομία (none more frequent than this); and others.

to all men appeared¹⁹⁸⁷,” and dwelt among us in His human nature, all these things passed away like smoke into nothingness, the madness of their oracles and prophesyings ceased, the annual pomps and pollutions of their bloody hecatombs came to an end, while among most nations altars entirely disappeared, together with porches, precincts, and shrines, and all the ritual besides which was followed out by the attendant priest of those demons, to the deception both of themselves and of all who came in their way. So that in many of these places no memorial exists of these things having ever been. But, instead, throughout the whole world there have arisen in the name of Jesus temples and altars and a holy and unbloody Priesthood¹⁹⁸⁸, and a sublime philosophy, which teaches, by deed and example more than by word, a disregard of this bodily life and a contempt of death, a contempt which they whom tyrants have tried to force to apostatize from the faith have manifestly displayed, making no account of the cruelties done to their bodies or of their doom of death: and yet, plainly, it was not likely that they would have submitted to such treatment unless they had had a clear and indisputable proof of that Divine Sojourn among men. And the following fact is, further, a sufficient mark, as against the Jews, of the presence among them¹⁹⁸⁹ of Him in Whom they disbelieve; up to the time of the manifestation of Christ the royal palaces in Jerusalem were in all their splendour: there was their far-famed Temple; there was the customary round of their sacrifices throughout the year: all the things, which had been expressed by the Law in symbols to those who knew how to read its secrets, were up to that point of time unbroken in their observance, in

¹⁹⁸⁷ Tit. ii. 11. This is the preferable rendering; not as in the A.V., “appeared to all men.”

¹⁹⁸⁸ *unbloody Priesthood*, ἀναιμάκτων ἱερωσύνην, *i.e.* “sacerdotium,” *not* “sacrificium.” This, not θυσίαν, is supported by the Codd. The Eucharist is often called by the Fathers “the unbloody sacrifice” (*e.g.* Chrysost. in Ps. xcvi., citing Malachi), and the Priesthood which offers it can be called “unbloody” too. Cf. Greg. Naz. in *Poem*. xi. 1—

Ὡ θυσίας πέμποντες ἀναιμάκτους ἱερεῖς.

While these terms assert the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, might they not at the same time supply an argument against the Roman view of Transubstantiation, which teaches that the actual blood of Christ is received, and makes it still a bloody sacrifice?

¹⁹⁸⁹ *of the presence among them*, &c. Cf. a striking passage in Origen; “One amongst the convincing proofs that Jesus was something Divine and holy is this; that the Jews after what they did to Him have suffered so many terrible afflictions for so long. And we shall be bold to say that they never will be restored again. They have committed the most impious of crimes. They plotted against the Saviour of mankind in that city where the ceremonies they continually performed for God enshrined great mysteries. It was right that that city where Jesus suffered should be utterly destroyed, and the Jewish nation expelled, and that God’s call to blessedness should be made to others, I mean the Christians, to whom have passed the doctrines of a religion of stainless purity, and who have received new laws fitted for any form of government that exists” (*c. Celsum*, iv. 22). The Jews, he says, will even “suffer more than others in the judgment which they anticipate, in addition to what they have suffered already,” ii. 8. But he says, v. 43, “Would that they had not committed the error of having broken their own law; first killing their prophets, and at last taking Jesus by stealth; for then we should still have amongst us the model of that heavenly city which Plato attempted to sketch, though I cannot say that his powers came up to those of Moses and his successors.”

accordance with that form of worship which had been established from the beginning. But when at length they saw Him Whom they were looking for, and of Whom by their Prophets and the Law they had before been told, and when they held in more estimation than faith in Him Who had so manifested Himself that which for the future became but a degraded superstition, because they took it in a wrong sense¹⁹⁹⁰, and clung to the mere phrases of the Law in obedience to the dictates of custom rather than of intelligence, and when they had thus refused the grace which had appeared,—then even¹⁹⁹¹ those holy monuments of their religion were left standing, as they do, in history alone; for no traces even of their Temple can be recognized, and their splendid city has been left in ruins, so that there remains to the Jews nothing of the ancient institutions; while by the command of those who rule over them the very ground of Jerusalem which they so venerated is forbidden to them.



Chapter XIX.

NEVERTHELESS, since neither those who take the Greek view, nor yet the leaders of Jewish opinions, are willing to make such things the proofs of that Divine manifestation, it may be as well, as regards these demurrers to our statement, to treat more particularly the reason by virtue of which the Divine nature is combined with ours, saving, as it does, humanity by means of itself, and not working out its proposed design by means of a mere command. With what, then, must we begin, so as to conduct our thinking by a logical sequence to the proposed conclusion? What but this, viz. with a succinct detail of the notions that can religiously be entertained of God¹⁹⁹²?

Chapter XX.

It is, then, universally acknowledged that we must believe the Deity to be not only almighty, but just, and good, and wise, and everything else that suggests excellence. It follows, therefore, in

¹⁹⁹⁰ *they took it* (i.e. the religion, which for the future, &c.) *in a wrong sense*: κακῶς ἐκλαβόντες (Hasius, *ad Leon. Diacon.*, shows how λαμβάνειν and μεταλαμβάνειν also have this meaning “interpret,” “accipere”). This is a better reading than ἐκβαλόντες, and is supported by two MSS.

¹⁹⁹¹ *then even*. The apodosis begins here, and ὥστε must be understood after ὑπολέλειπται, to govern μεῖναι, “were left standing, &c....so that there remains.”

¹⁹⁹² The Greek Fathers and the English divines for the most part confine themselves to showing this moral fitness and consonance with God’s nature in the Incarnation, and do not attempt to prove its absolute necessity. Cf. Athanasius, *De Incarn. Verb.* c. 6; Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* V. li. 3; Butler’s *Analogy*, pt. ii. c. 5.

the present dispensation of things, that it is not the case that some particular one¹⁹⁹³ of these Divine attributes freely displays itself in creation, while there is another that is not present there; for, speaking once for all, no one of those exalted terms, when disjoined from the rest, is by itself alone a virtue, nor is the good really good unless allied with what is just, and wise, and mighty (for what is unjust, or unwise, or powerless, is not good, neither is power, when disjoined from the principle of justice and of wisdom, to be considered in the light of virtue; such species of power is brutal and tyrannous; and so, as to the rest, if what is wise be carried beyond the limits of what is just, or if what is just be not contemplated along with might and goodness, cases of that sort one would more properly call vice; for how can what comes short of perfection be reckoned among things that are good?). If, then, it is fitting that all excellences should be combined in the views we have of God, let us see whether this Dispensation as regards man fails in any of those conceptions which we should entertain of Him. The object of our inquiry in the case of God is before all things the indications of His goodness. And what testimony to His goodness could there be more palpable than this, viz. His regaining to Himself the allegiance of one who had revolted to the opposite side, instead of allowing the fixed goodness of His nature to be affected by the variableness of the human will? For, as David says, He had not come to save us had not “goodness” created in Him such a purpose¹⁹⁹⁴; and yet His goodness had not advanced His purpose had not wisdom given efficacy to His love for man. For, as in the case of persons who are in a sickly condition, there are probably many who wish that a man were not in such evil plight, but it is only they in whom there is some technical ability operating in behalf of the sick, who bring their good-will on their behalf to a practical issue, so it is absolutely needful that wisdom should be conjoined with goodness. In what way, then, is wisdom contemplated in combination with goodness; in the actual events, that is, which have taken place? because one cannot observe a good purpose in the abstract; a purpose cannot possibly be revealed unless it has the light of some events upon it. Well, the things accomplished, progressing as they did in orderly series and sequence, reveal the wisdom and the skill of the Divine economy. And since, as has been before remarked, wisdom, when combined with justice, then absolutely becomes a virtue, but, if it be disjoined from it, cannot in itself alone be good, it were well moreover in this discussion of the Dispensation in regard to man, to consider attentively in the light of each other these two qualities; I mean, its wisdom and its justice.

¹⁹⁹³ τὸ μὲν τι (for τοι). There is the same variety of reading in c. i. and xxi., where Krabinger has preserved the τι: he well quotes Synesius, *de Prov.* ii. 2; Ὁ μὲν τις ἀποθνήσκει πληγείς, ὁ δὲ κ.τ.λ. (and refers to his note there).

¹⁹⁹⁴ Ps. cvi. (cv.) 4, 5; cxix. (cxviii.) 65, 66, 68. In the first passage the LXX. has τοῦ ἰδεῖν ἐν τῇ χρηστότητι τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν σου (Heb. “the felicity of Thy chosen”): evidently referring to *God’s* εὐδοκία in them; He, good Himself (χρηστὸς, v. 1), will save them, “in order to approve their goodness.” The second passage mentions four times this χρηστότης (bonitas).

Chapter XXI.

WHAT, then, is justice? We distinctly remember what in the course of our argument we said in the commencement of this treatise; namely, that man was fashioned in imitation of the Divine nature, preserving his resemblance to the Deity as well in other excellences as in possession of freedom of the will, yet being of necessity of a nature subject to change. For it was not possible that a being who derived his origin from an alteration should be altogether free from this liability. For the passing from a state of non-existence into that of existence is a kind of alteration; when being, that is, by the exercise of Divine power takes the place of nonentity. In the following special respect, too, alteration is necessarily observable in man, namely, because man was an imitation of the Divine nature, and unless some distinctive difference had been occasioned, the imitating subject would be entirely the same as that which it resembles; but in this instance, it is to be observed, there is a difference between that which “was made in the image” and its pattern; namely this, that the one is not subject to change, while the other is (for, as has been described, it has come into existence through an alteration), and being thus subject to alteration does not always continue in its existing state. For alteration is a kind of movement ever advancing from the present state to another; and there are two forms of this movement; the one being ever towards what is good, and in this the advance has no check, because no goal of the course to be traversed¹⁹⁹⁵ can be reached, while the other is in the direction of the contrary, and of it this is the essence, that it has no subsistence; for, as has been before stated, the contrary state to goodness conveys some such notion of opposition, as when we say, for instance, that that which is is logically opposed to that which is not, and that existence is so opposed to non-existence. Since, then, by reason of this impulse and movement of changeful alteration it is not possible that the nature of the subject of this change should remain self-centred and unmoved, but there is always something towards which the will is tending, the appetency for moral beauty naturally drawing it on to movement, this beauty is in one instance really such in its nature, in another it is not so, only blossoming with an illusive appearance of beauty; and the criterion of these two kinds is the mind that dwells within us. Under these circumstances it is a matter of risk whether we happen to choose the real beauty, or whether we are diverted from its choice by some deception arising from appearance, and thus drift away to the opposite; as happened, we are told in the heathen fable, to the dog which looked askance at the reflection in the water of what it carried in its mouth, but let go the real food, and, opening its mouth wide to swallow the image of it, still hungered. Since, then, the mind has been disappointed in its craving for the real good, and diverted to that which is not such, being persuaded, through the deception of the great advocate and inventor of vice, that that was beauty which was just the opposite (for this deception would never have succeeded, had not the glamour of beauty been spread over

¹⁹⁹⁵ *of the course to be traversed*: τοῦ διεξοδευομένου. Glauber remarks that the Latin translation here, “ejus qui transit,” gives no sense, and rightly takes the word as a passive. Krabinger also translates, “ejus quod evolvitur.” Here again there is unconscious Platonism: αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν is eternal.

the hook of vice like a bait),—the man, I say, on the one hand, who had enslaved himself by indulgence to the enemy of his life, being of his own accord in this unfortunate condition,—I ask you to investigate, on the other hand, those qualities which suit and go along with our conception of the Deity, such as goodness, wisdom, power, immortality, and all else that has the stamp of superiority. As good, then, the Deity entertains pity for fallen man; as wise He is not ignorant of the means for his recovery; while a just decision must also form part of that wisdom; for no one would ascribe that genuine justice to the absence of wisdom.

Chapter XXII.

WHAT, then, under these circumstances is justice? It is the not exercising any arbitrary sway over him who has us in his power¹⁹⁹⁶, nor, by tearing us away by a violent exercise of force from his hold, thus leaving some colour for a just complaint to him who enslaved man through sensual pleasure. For as they who have bartered away their freedom for money are the slaves of those who have purchased them (for they have constituted themselves their own sellers, and it is not allowable either for themselves or any one else in their behalf to call freedom to their aid, not even though those who have thus reduced themselves to this sad state are of noble birth; and, if any one out of regard for the person who has so sold himself should use violence against him who has bought him, he will clearly be acting unjustly in thus arbitrarily rescuing one who has been legally purchased as a slave, whereas, if he wishes to pay a price to get such a one away, there is no law to prevent that), on the same principle, now that we had voluntarily bartered away our freedom, it was requisite that no arbitrary method of recovery, but the one consonant with justice¹⁹⁹⁷ should be devised by Him Who in His goodness had undertaken our rescue. Now this method is in a measure this; to make over to the master of the slave whatever ransom he may agree to accept for the person in his possession.

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¹⁹⁹⁶ Compare a passage in Dionysius Areop. (*De eccles. hierarch.* c. iii. p. 297). “The boundless love of the Supreme Goodness did not refuse a personal providing for us, but perfectly participating in all that belongs to us, and united to our lowliness, along with an undiluted and unimpaired possession of its own qualities, has gifted us for ever with a communion of kinship with itself, and exhibited us as partners in Its glories: undoing the adverse power of the Rebel throng, as the secret Tradition says, “*not by might, as if it was domineering, but, according to the oracle secretly delivered to us, by right and justice*” (quoted by Krabinger). To the words “not by might,” S. Maximus has added the note, “This is what Gregory of Nyssa says in the Catechetic.” See next note.

¹⁹⁹⁷ *one consonant with justice.* This view of Redemption, as a coming to terms with Satan and making him a party or defender in the case, is rather remarkable. The Prologue to the Book of Job furnishes a basis for it, where Satan enters into terms with God. It appears to be the Miltonic view: as also that Envy was the first sin of Satan.

Chapter XXIII.

WHAT, then, was it likely that the master of the slave would choose to receive in his stead? It is possible in the way of inference to make a guess as to his wishes in the matter, if, that is, the manifest indications of what we are seeking for should come into our hands. He then, who, as we before stated in the beginning of this treatise, shut his eyes to the good in his envy of man in his happy condition, he who generated in himself the murky cloud of wickedness, he who suffered from the disease of the love of rule, that primary and fundamental cause of propension to the bad and the mother, so to speak, of all the wickedness that follows,— what would he accept in exchange for the thing which he held, but something, to be sure, higher and better, in the way of ransom, that thus, by receiving a gain in the exchange, he might foster the more his own special passion of pride? Now unquestionably in not one of those who had lived in history from the beginning of the world had he been conscious of any such circumstance as he observed to surround Him Who then manifested Himself, *i.e.* conception without carnal connection, birth without impurity, motherhood with virginity, voices of the unseen testifying from above to a transcendent worth, the healing of natural disease, without the use of means and of an extraordinary character, proceeding from Him by the mere utterance of a word and exercise of His will, the restoration of the dead to life, the absolution of the damned¹⁹⁹⁸, the fear with which He inspired devils, His power over tempests, His walking through the sea, not by the waters separating on either side, and, as in the case of Moses' miraculous power, making bare its depths for those who passed through, but by the surface of the water presenting solid ground for His feet, and by a firm and hard resistance supporting His steps; then, His disregard for food as long as it pleased Him to abstain, His abundant banquets in the wilderness wherewith many thousands were fully fed (though neither did the heavens pour down manna on them, nor was their need supplied by the earth producing corn for them in its natural way, but that instance of munificence¹⁹⁹⁹ came out of the ineffable store-houses of His Divine power), the bread ready in the hands of those who distributed it, as if they were actually reaping it, and becoming more, the more the eaters were filled; and then, the banquet on the fish; not that the sea supplied their need, but He Who had stocked the sea with its fish. But how is it possible to narrate in succession each one of the Gospel miracles? The Enemy, therefore, beholding in Him such power, saw also in Him an opportunity for an advance, in the exchange, upon the value of what he held. For this reason he chooses Him as a ransom²⁰⁰⁰ for those who were shut up in the

¹⁹⁹⁸ *the absolution of the damned.* These words, wanting in all others, Krabinger has restored from the Codex B. Morell translates "damnatorum absolutio." The Greek is τὴν τῶν καταδίκων ἀνά& 207'ῤυσιν. "Hæc Origenem sapiunt, qui damnatorum pœnis finem statuit:" Krabinger. But here at all events it is not necessary to accuse Gregory of this, since he is clearly speaking only of Christ's forgiveness of sins during His earthly ministry.

¹⁹⁹⁹ φιλοτιμία

²⁰⁰⁰ *he chooses Him as a ransom.* This peculiar teaching of Gregory of Nyssa, that it was to the Devil, not God the Father, that the ransom, *i.e.* Christ's blood, was paid, is shared by Origen, Ambrose, and Augustine. The latter says, "Sanguine Christi

prison of death. But it was out of his power to look on the unclouded aspect of God; he must see in Him some portion of that fleshly nature which through sin he had so long held in bondage. Therefore it was that the Deity was invested with the flesh, in order, that is, to secure that he, by looking upon something congenial and kindred to himself, might have no fears in approaching that supereminent power; and might yet by perceiving that power, showing as it did, yet only gradually, more and more splendour in the miracles, deem what was seen an object of desire rather than of fear. Thus, you see how goodness was conjoined with justice, and how wisdom was not divorced from them. For to have devised that the Divine power should have been containable in the envelopment of a body, to the end that the Dispensation in our behalf might not be thwarted through any fear inspired by the Deity actually appearing, affords a demonstration of all these qualities at once—goodness, wisdom, justice. His choosing to save man is a testimony of his goodness; His making the redemption of the captive a matter of exchange exhibits His justice, while the invention whereby He enabled the Enemy to apprehend that of which he was before incapable, is a manifestation of supreme wisdom.



Chapter XXIV.

BUT possibly one who has given his attention to the course of the preceding remarks may inquire: “wherein is the power of the Deity, wherein is the imperishableness of that Divine power, to be traced in the processes you have described?” In order, therefore, to make this also clear, let us take a survey of the sequel of the Gospel mystery, where that Power conjoined with Love is more especially exhibited. In the first place, then, that the omnipotence of the Divine nature should have had strength to descend to the humiliation of humanity, furnishes a clearer proof of that omnipotence than even the greatness and supernatural character of the miracles. For that something pre-eminently great should be wrought out by Divine power is, in a manner, in accordance with, and consequent upon the Divine nature; nor is it startling to hear it said that the whole of the created world, and all that is understood to be beyond the range of visible things, subsists by the power of God, His will giving it existence according to His good pleasure. But this His descent to the humility of man is a kind of superabundant exercise of power, which thus finds no check even in directions which contravene nature. It is the peculiar property of the essence of fire to tend upwards; no one therefore, deems it wonderful in the case of flame to see that natural operation. But should the flame be seen to stream downwards, like heavy bodies, such a fact would be regarded as a miracle; namely, how fire still remains fire, and yet, by this change of direction in its motion, passes out of its nature by being borne downward. In like manner, it is not the vastness of the heavens, and the bright shining

diabolus non ditatus est, sed ligatus,” *i.e.* bound by compact. On the other hand Gregory Naz. (tom. I. *Orat.* 42) and John Damascene (*De Fid. Orthod.* iii. c. 27) give the ransom to the Father.

of its constellations, and the order of the universe and the unbroken administration over all existence that so manifestly displays the transcendent power of the Deity, as this condescension to the weakness of our nature; the way, in fact, in which sublimity, existing in lowliness, is actually seen in lowliness, and yet descends not from its height, and in which Deity, entwined as it is with the nature of man, becomes this, and yet still is that. For since, as has been said before, it was not in the nature of the opposing power to come in contact with the undiluted presence of God, and to undergo His unclouded manifestation, therefore, in order to secure that the ransom in our behalf might be easily accepted by him who required it, the Deity was hidden under the veil of our nature, that so, as with ravenous fish²⁰⁰¹, the hook of the Deity might be gulped down along with the bait of flesh, and thus, life being introduced into the house of death, and light shining in darkness, that which is diametrically opposed to light and life might vanish; for it is not in the nature of darkness to remain when light is present, or of death to exist when life is active. Let us, then, by way of summary take up the train of the arguments for the Gospel mystery, and thus complete our answer to those who question this Dispensation of God, and show them on what ground it is that the Deity by a personal intervention works out the salvation of man. It is certainly most necessary that in every point the conceptions we entertain of the Deity should be such as befit the subject, and not that, while one idea worthy of His sublimity should be retained, another equally belonging to that estimate of Deity should be dismissed from it; on the contrary, every exalted notion, every devout thought, must most surely enter into our belief in God, and each must be made dependent on each in a necessary sequence. Well, then; it has been pointed out that His goodness, wisdom, justice, power, incapability of decay, are all of them in evidence in the doctrine of the Dispensation in which we are. His goodness is caught sight of in His election to save lost man; His wisdom and justice have been displayed in the method of our salvation; His power, in that, though born in the likeness and fashion of a man, on the lowly level of our nature, and in accordance with that likeness raising the expectation that he could be overmastered by death, he, after such a birth, nevertheless produced the effects peculiar and natural to Him. Now it is the peculiar effect of light to make darkness vanish, and of life to destroy death. Since, then, we have been led astray from the right path, and diverted from that life which was ours at the beginning, and brought under the sway of death, what is there improbable in the lesson we are taught by the Gospel mystery, if it be this; that cleansing reaches those who are befouled with sin, and life the dead, and guidance the wanderers, in order that defilement may be cleansed, error corrected, and what was dead restored to life?

²⁰⁰¹ *as with ravenous fish.* The same simile is found in John of Damascus (*De Fid.* iii. 27), speaking of Death. "Therefore Death will advance, and, gulping down the bait of the Body, be transfixed with the hook of the Divinity: tasting that sinless and life-giving Body, he is undone, and disgorges all whom he has ever engulfed: for as darkness vanishes at the letting in of light, so corruption is chased away by the onset of life, and while there is life given to all else, there is corruption only for the Corrupter."

Chapter XXV.

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THAT Deity should be born in our nature, ought not reasonably to present any strangeness to the minds of those who do not take too narrow a view of things. For who, when he takes a survey of the universe, is so simple as not to believe that there is Deity in everything, penetrating it, embracing it, and seated in it? For all things depend on Him Who is²⁰⁰², nor can there be anything which has not its being in Him Who is. If, therefore, all things are in Him, and He in all things, why are they scandalized at the plan of Revelation when it teaches that God was born among men, that same God Whom we are convinced is even now not outside mankind? For although this last form of God's presence amongst us is not the same as that former presence, still His existence amongst us equally both then and now is evidenced; only now He Who holds together Nature in existence is transfused in *us*; while at that other time He was transfused throughout *our nature*, in order that our nature might by this transfusion of the Divine become itself divine, rescued as it was from death, and put beyond the reach of the caprice of the antagonist. For His return from death becomes to our mortal race the commencement of our return to the immortal life.

Chapter XXVI.

STILL, in his examination of the amount of justice and wisdom discoverable in this Dispensation a person is, perhaps, induced to entertain the thought that it was by means of a certain amount of deceit that God carried out this scheme on our behalf. For that not by pure Deity alone, but by Deity veiled in human nature, God, without the knowledge of His enemy, got within the lines of him who had man in his power, is in some measure a fraud and a surprise; seeing that it is the peculiar way with those who want to deceive to divert in another direction the expectations of their intended victims, and then to effect something quite different from what these latter expected. But he who has regard for truth will agree that the essential qualities of justice and wisdom are before all things these; viz. of justice, to give to every one according to his due; of wisdom, not to pervert justice, and yet at the same time not to dissociate the benevolent aim of the love of mankind from the verdict of justice, but skilfully to combine both these requisites together, in regard to justice²⁰⁰³ returning the due recompense, in regard to kindness not swerving from the aim of that love of man. Let us see, then, whether these two qualities are not to be observed in that which took place. That repayment, adequate to the debt, by which the deceiver was in his turn deceived, exhibits the justice of the dealing, while the object aimed at is a testimony to the goodness of Him who effected it. It is,

2002 Exod. iii. 14.

2003 τῆ μὲν δικαιοσύνη. The dative is not governed by ἀντιδιδόντα but corresponds to τῆ δὲ ἀγαθότητι (a dative of reference), which has no such verb after it. Krabinger therefore hardly translates correctly “justitiæ quod datur, pro meritis tribuendo.”

indeed, the property of justice to assign to every one those particular results of which he has sunk already the foundations and the causes, just as the earth returns its harvests according to the kinds of seeds thrown into it; while it is the property of wisdom, in its very manner of giving equivalent returns, not to depart from the kinder course. Two persons may both mix poison with food, one with the design of taking life, the other with the design of saving that life; the one using it as a poison, the other only as an antidote to poison; and in no way does the manner of the cure adopted spoil the aim and purpose of the benefit intended; for although a mixture of poison with the food may be effected by both of these persons alike, yet looking at their intention we are indignant with the one and approve the other; so in this instance, by the reasonable rule of justice, he who practised deception receives in return that very treatment, the seeds of which he had himself sown of his own free will. He who first deceived man by the bait of sensual pleasure is himself deceived by the presentment of the human form. But as regards the aim and purpose of what took place, a change in the direction of the nobler is involved; for whereas he, the enemy, effected his deception for the ruin of our nature, He Who is at once the just, and good, and wise one, used His device, in which there was deception, for the salvation of him who had perished, and thus not only conferred benefit on the lost one, but on him, too, who had wrought our ruin. For from this approximation of death to life, of darkness to light, of corruption to incorruption, there is effected an obliteration of what is worse, and a passing away of it into nothing, while benefit is conferred on him who is freed from those evils. For it is as when some worthless material has been mixed with gold, and the gold-refiners²⁰⁰⁴ burn up the foreign and refuse part in the consuming fire, and so restore the more precious substance to its natural lustre: (not that the separation is effected without difficulty, for it takes time for the fire by its melting force to cause the baser matter to disappear; but for all that, this melting away of the actual thing that was embedded in it to the injury of its beauty is a kind of healing of the gold.) In the same way when death, and corruption, and darkness, and every other offshoot of evil had grown into the nature of the author of evil, the approach of the Divine power, acting like fire²⁰⁰⁵, and making that unnatural accretion to disappear, thus by purgation²⁰⁰⁶ of the evil becomes a blessing to that nature, though the separation is agonizing. Therefore even the adversary himself will not be likely to dispute that what took place was both just and salutary, that is, if he shall have attained to a perception of the boon. For it is now as with those who for their cure are subjected to the knife and the cautery; they are angry with the doctors, and wince with the pain of the incision; but if recovery of health be the result of this treatment, and the pain of the


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²⁰⁰⁴ οἱ θεραπευταὶ τοῦ χρυσίου On the margin of one of Krabinger's Codd. is written here in Latin, "This must be read with caution: it seems to savour of Origen's opinion," *i.e.* the curing of Satan.

²⁰⁰⁵ Mal. iii. 2, 3.

²⁰⁰⁶ τῇ καθάρσει. This is the reading of three of Krabinger's Codd. and that of Hervetus and Zinus; "purgatione," "purgationis": the context too of the whole chapter seems to require it. But Morell's Cod. had τῇ ἀφθαρσίᾳ 139', and Ducæus approved of retaining it. For this κάθαρσις see especially Origen, *c. Cels.* vi. 44.

cautery passes away, they will feel grateful to those who have wrought this cure upon them. In like manner, when, after long periods of time, the evil of our nature, which now is mixed up with it and has grown with its growth, has been expelled, and when there has been a restoration of those who are now lying in Sin to their primal state, a harmony of thanksgiving will arise from all creation²⁰⁰⁷, as well from those who in the process of the purgation have suffered chastisement, as from those who needed not any purgation at all. These and the like benefits the great mystery of the Divine incarnation bestows. For in those points in which He was mingled with humanity, passing as He did through all the accidents proper to human nature, such as birth, rearing, growing up, and advancing even to the taste of death, He accomplished all the results before mentioned, freeing both man from evil, and healing even the introducer of evil himself. For the chastisement, however painful, of moral disease is a healing of its weakness.

Chapter XXVII.

It is, then, completely in keeping with this, that He Who was thus pouring Himself into our nature should accept this commixture in all its accidents. For as they who wash clothes do not pass over some of the dirt and cleanse the rest, but clear the whole cloth from all its stains, from one end to the other, that the cloak by being uniformly brightened from washing may be throughout equal to its own standard of cleanness, in like manner, since the life of man was defiled by sin, in its beginning, end, and all its intermediate states, there needed an abstergent force to penetrate the whole, and not to mend some one part by cleansing, while it left another unattended to. For this reason it is that, seeing that our life has been included between boundaries on either side, one, I mean, at its beginning, and the other at its ending, at each boundary the force that is capable of correcting our nature is to be found, attaching itself to the beginning, and extending to the end, and touching all between those two points²⁰⁰⁸. Since, then, there is for all men only one way of entrance into this life of ours, from whence was He Who was making His entrance amongst us to transport Himself into our life? From heaven, perhaps some one will say, who rejects with contempt, as base

²⁰⁰⁷ “Far otherwise was it with the great thinkers of the early Church....They realized that redemption was a means to an end, and that end the reconsecration of the whole universe to God. And so the very completeness of their grasp upon the Atonement led them to dwell upon the cosmical significance of the Incarnation, its purpose to ‘gather together all things in one.’ For it was an age in which the problems of the universe were keenly felt.”—*Lux Mundi*, p. 134.

²⁰⁰⁸ “In order that the sacrifice might be representative, He took upon Him the whole of our human nature and became flesh, conditioned though that fleshly nature was throughout by sin. It was not only in His death that we contemplate Him as the sin-bearer: but throughout His life He was as it were conditioned by the sinfulness of those with whom His human nature brought Him into close and manifold relations.”—*Lux Mundi*, p. 217 (Augustine, *de Musicâ*, vi. 4, quoted in note, “Hominem sine peccato, non sine peccatoris conditione, suscepit”).

and degraded, this species of birth, *i.e.* the human. But there was no humanity in heaven: and in that supramundane existence no disease of evil had been naturalized; but He Who poured Himself into man adopted this commixture with a view to the *benefit* of it. Where, then, evil was not and the human life was not lived, how is it that any one seeks *there* the scene of this wrapping up of God in man, or, rather, not man, but some phantom resemblance of man? In what could the recovery of our nature have consisted if, while this earthly creature was diseased and needed this recovery, something else, amongst the heavenly beings, had experienced the Divine sojourning? It is impossible for the sick man to be healed, unless his suffering member receives the healing. If, therefore, while this sick part was on earth, omnipotence had touched it not, but had regarded only its own dignity, this its pre-occupation with matters with which we had nothing in common would have been of no benefit to man. And with regard to the undignified in the case of Deity we can make no distinction; that is, if it is allowable to conceive at all of anything beneath the dignity of Deity beside evil. On the contrary, for one who forms such a narrow-minded view of the greatness of the Deity as to make it consist in inability to admit of fellowship with the peculiarities of our nature, the degradation is in no point lessened by the Deity being conformed to the fashion of a heavenly rather than of an earthly body. For every *created* being is distant, by an equal degree of inferiority, from that which is the Highest, Who is unapproachable by reason of the sublimity of His Being: the whole universe is in value the same distance beneath Him. For that which is absolutely inaccessible does not allow access to some one thing while it is unapproachable by another, but it transcends all existences by an equal sublimity. Neither, therefore, is the earth further removed from this dignity, nor the heavens closer to it, nor do the things which have their existence within each of these elemental worlds differ at all from each other in this respect, that some are allowed to be in contact with the inaccessible Being, while others are forbidden the approach. Otherwise we must suppose that the power which governs the Universe does not equally pervade the whole, but in some parts is in excess, in others is deficient. Consequently, by this difference of less or more in quantity or quality, the Deity will appear in the light of something composite and out of agreement with itself; if, that is, we could suppose it, as viewed in its essence, to be far away from us, whilst it is a close neighbour to some other creature, and from that proximity easily apprehended. But on this subject of that exalted dignity true reason looks neither downward nor upward in the way of comparison; for all things sink to a level beneath the power which presides over the Universe: so that if it shall be thought by them that any earthly nature is unworthy of this intimate connection with the Deity, neither can any other be found which has such worthiness. But if all things equally fall short of this dignity, one thing there is that is not beneath the dignity of God, and that is, to do good to him that needed it. If we confess, then, that where the disease was, there the healing power attended, what is there in this belief which is foreign to the proper conception of the Deity?

BUT they deride our state of nature, and din into our ears the manner of our being born, supposing in this way to make the mystery ridiculous, as if it were unbecoming in God by such an entrance into the world as this to connect Himself with the fellowship of the human life. But we touched upon this point before, when we said that the only thing which is essentially degraded is moral evil or whatever has an affinity with such evil; whereas the orderly process of Nature, arranged as it has been by the Divine will and law, is beyond the reach of any misrepresentation on the score of wickedness: otherwise this accusation would reach up to the Author of Nature, if anything connected with Nature were to be found fault with as degraded and unseemly. If, then, the Deity is separate only from evil, and if there is no nature in evil, and if the mystery declares that God was born in man but not in evil; and if, for man, there is but one way of entrance upon life, namely that by which the embryo passes on to the stage of life, what other mode of entrance upon life would they prescribe for God? these people, I mean, who, while they judge it right and proper that the nature which evil had weakened should be visited by the Divine power, yet take offence at this special method of the visitation, not remembering that the whole organization of the body is of equal value throughout, and that nothing in it, of all the elements that contribute to the continuance of the animal life, is liable to the charge of being worthless or wicked. For the whole arrangement of the bodily organs and limbs has been constructed with one end in view, and that is, the continuance in life of humanity; and while the other organs of the body conserve the present actual vitality of men, each being apportioned to a different operation, and by their means the faculties of sense and action are exercised, the generative organs on the contrary involve a forecast of the future, introducing as they do, by themselves, their counteracting transmission for our race. Looking, therefore, to their utility, to which of those parts which are deemed more honourable are these inferior²⁰⁰⁹? Nay, than which must they not in all reason be deemed more worthy of honour? For not by the eye, or ear, or tongue, or any other sense, is the continuation of our race carried on. These, as has been remarked, pertain to the enjoyment of the present. But by those other organs the immortality of humanity is secured, so that death, though ever operating against us, thus in a certain measure becomes powerless and ineffectual, since Nature, to baffle him, is ever as it were throwing herself into the breach through those who come successively into being. What unseemliness, then, is contained in our revelation of God mingled with the life of humanity through those very means by which Nature carries on the combat against death?

Chapter XXIX.

²⁰⁰⁹ Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 14–24.

BUT they change their ground and endeavour to vilify our faith in another way. They ask, if what took place was not to the dishonour of God or unworthy of Him, why did He delay the benefit so long? Why, since evil was in the beginning, did He not cut off its further progress?—To this we have a concise answer; viz. that this delay in conferring the benefit was owing to wisdom and a provident regard for that which would be a gain for our nature. In diseases, for instance, of the body, when some corrupt humour spreads unseen beneath the pores, before all the unhealthy secretion has been detected on the skin, they who treat diseases by the rules of art do not use such medicines as would harden the flesh, but they wait till all that lurks within comes out upon the surface, and then, with the disease unmasked, apply their remedies. When once, then, the disease of evil had fixed itself in the nature of mankind, He, the universal Healer, waited for the time when no form of wickedness was left still hidden in that nature. For this reason it was that He did not produce his healing for man's disease immediately on Cain's hatred and murder of his brother; for the wickedness of those who were destroyed in the days of Noah had not yet burst into a flame, nor had that terrible disease of Sodomite lawlessness been displayed, nor the Egyptians' war against God²⁰¹⁰, nor the pride of Assyria, nor the Jews' bloody persecution of God's saints, nor Herod's cruel murder of the children, nor whatever else is recorded, or if unrecorded was done in the generations that followed, the root of evil budding forth in divers manners in the wilful purposes of man. When, then, wickedness had reached its utmost height, and there was no form of wickedness which men had not dared to do, to the end that the healing remedy might pervade the whole of the diseased system, He, accordingly, ministers to the disease; not at its beginning, but when it had been completely developed.

Chapter XXX.

IF, however, any one thinks to refute our argument on this ground, that even after the application of the remedial process the life of man is still in discord through its errors, let us lead him to the truth by an example taken from familiar things. Take, for instance, the case of a serpent; if it receives a deadly blow on the head, the hinder part of the coil is not at once deadened along with it; but, while the head is dead, the tail part is still animated with its own particular spirit, and is not deprived of its vital motion: in like manner we may see Sin struck its deadly blow and yet in its remainders still vexing the life of man. But then they give up finding fault with the account of Revelation on these points, and make another charge against it; viz. that the Faith does not reach all mankind. "But why is it," they ask, "that all men do not obtain the grace, but that, while some adhere to the Word, the portion who remain unbelieving is no small one; either because God was unwilling to

²⁰¹⁰ θεομαχία, a word often applied by the Greek Fathers to the conduct of the Egyptians, in reference, of course, to Pharaoh.

bestow his benefit ungrudgingly upon all, or because He was altogether unable to do so?" Now neither of these alternatives can defy criticism. For it is unworthy of God, either that He should not will what is good, or that He should be unable to do it. "If, therefore, the Faith is a good thing, why," they ask, "does not its grace come upon all men?" Now²⁰¹¹, if in our representation of the Gospel mystery we had so stated the matter as that it was the Divine will that the Faith should be so granted away amongst mankind that some men should be called, while the rest had no share in the calling, occasion would be given for bringing such a charge against this Revelation. But if the call came with equal meaning to all and makes no distinction as to worth, age, or different national characteristics (for it was for this reason that at the very first beginning of the proclamation of the Gospel they who ministered the Word were, by Divine inspiration, all at once enabled to speak in the language of any nation, viz. in order that no one might be destitute of a share in the blessings of evangelical instruction), with what reasonableness can they still charge it upon God that the Word has not influenced all mankind? For He Who holds the sovereignty of the universe, out of the excess of this regard for man, permitted something to be under our own control, of which each of us alone is master. Now this is the will, a thing that cannot be enslaved, and of self-determining power, since it is seated in the liberty of thought and mind. Therefore such a charge might more justly be transferred to those who have not attached themselves to the Faith, instead of resting on Him Who has called them to believe. For even when Peter at the beginning preached the Gospel in a crowded assembly of the Jews, and three thousand at once received the Faith, though those who disbelieved were more in number than the believers, they did not attach blame to the Apostle on the ground of their disbelief. It was, indeed, not in reason, when the grace of the Gospel had been publicly set forth, for one who had absented himself from it of his own accord to lay the blame of his exclusion on another rather than himself.



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Chapter XXXI.

YET, even in their reply to this, or the like, they are not at a loss for a contentious rejoinder. For they assert that God, if He had been so pleased, might have forcibly drawn those, who were not inclined to yield, to accept the Gospel message. But where then would have been their free will? Where their virtuous merit? Where their meed of praise from their moral directors? It belongs only to inanimate or irrational creatures to be brought round by the will of another to his purpose; whereas the reasoning and intelligent nature, if it lays aside its freedom of action, loses at the same time the gracious gift of intellect. For upon what is he to employ any faculty of thought, if his power of

²⁰¹¹ The following passage is anti-Calvinistic. Gregory here, as continually elsewhere, asserts the freedom of the will; and is strongly supported by Justin Martyr, i. 43: "If it has been fixed by fate that one man shall be good, and another bad, the one is not praiseworthy, the other not culpable. And again, if mankind has not power by a free choice to flee the evil and to choose the good, it is not responsible for any results, however shocking."

choosing anything according to his inclination lies in the will of another? But then, if the will remains without the capacity of action, virtue necessarily disappears, since it is shackled by the enforced quiescence of the will. Then, if virtue does not exist, life loses its value, reason moves in accordance with fatalism, the praise of moral guardians²⁰¹² is gone, sin may be indulged in without risk, and the difference between the courses of life is obliterated. For who, henceforth, could with any reason condemn profligacy, or praise sobriety? Since²⁰¹³ every one would have this ready answer, that nothing of all the things we are inclined to is in our own power, but that by some superior and ruling influence the wills of men are brought round to the purpose of one who has the mastery over them. The conclusion, then is that it is not the goodness of God that is chargeable with the fact that the Faith is not engendered in all men, but rather the disposition of those by whom the preaching of the Word is received.

Chapter XXXII.

WHAT other objection is alleged by our adversaries? This; that (to take the preferable view²⁰¹⁴) it was altogether needless that that transcendent Being should submit to the experience of death, but He might independently of this, through the superabundance of His power, have wrought with ease His purpose; still, if for some ineffable reason or other it was absolutely necessary that so it should be, at least He ought not to have been subjected to the contumely of such an ignominious kind of death. What death, they ask, could be more ignominious than that by crucifixion? What answer can we make to this? Why, that the death is rendered necessary by the birth, and that He Who had determined once for all to share the nature of man must pass through all the peculiar conditions of that nature. Seeing, then, that the life of man is determined between two boundaries, had He, after having passed the one, not touched the other that follows, His proposed design would have remained only half fulfilled, from His not having touched that second condition of our nature. Perhaps, however, one who exactly understands the mystery would be justified rather in saying that, instead of the death occurring in consequence of the birth, the birth on the contrary was accepted by Him for the sake of the death; for He Who lives for ever did not sink down into the conditions of a bodily birth from any need to live, but to call us back from death to life. Since, then, there was needed a lifting up from death for the whole of our nature, He stretches forth a hand as it were to prostrate man, and stooping down to our dead corpse He came so far within the grasp of death as to touch a state of deadness, and then in His own body to bestow on our nature the principle of the resurrection, raising as He did by His power along with Himself the whole man. For since from no

²⁰¹² τῶν κατορθούντων

²⁰¹³ This is an answer to modern "Ethical Determinants."

²⁰¹⁴ μάλιστα μιν.

other source than from the concrete lump of our nature²⁰¹⁵ had come that flesh, which was the receptacle of the Godhead and in the resurrection was raised up together with that Godhead, therefore just in the same way as, in the instance of this body of ours, the operation of one of the organs of sense is felt at once by the whole system, as one with that member, so also the resurrection principle of this Member, as though the whole of mankind was a single living being, passes through the entire race, being imparted from the Member to the whole by virtue of the continuity and oneness of the nature. What, then, is there beyond the bounds of probability in what this Revelation teaches us; viz. that He Who stands upright stoops to one who has fallen, in order to lift him up from his prostrate condition? And as to the Cross, whether it possesses some other and deeper meaning, those who are skilled in mysticism may explain; but, however that may be, the traditional teaching which has reached us is as follows. Since all things in the Gospel, both deeds and words, have a sublime and heavenly meaning, and there is nothing in it which is not such, that is, which does not exhibit a complete mingling of the human with the Divine, where the utterance exerted and the deeds enacted are human but the secret sense represents the Divine, it would follow that in this particular as well as in the rest we must not regard only the one element and overlook the other; but in the *fact* of this death we must contemplate the human feature, while in the *manner* of it we must be anxious to find the Divine²⁰¹⁶. For since it is the property of the Godhead to pervade all things, and to extend itself through the length and breadth of the substance of existence in every part—for nothing would continue to be if it remained not within the existent; and that which is this existent properly and primarily is the Divine Being, Whose existence in the world the continuance of all things that are forces us to believe in,—this is the very thing we learn from the figure of the Cross; it is divided into four parts, so that there are the projections, four in number, from the central point where the whole converges upon itself; because He Who at the hour of His pre-arranged death was stretched upon it is He Who binds together all things into Himself, and by Himself brings to one harmonious agreement the diverse natures of actual existences. For in these existences there is the idea either of something above, or of something below, or else the thought passes to the confines sideways. If, therefore, you take into your consideration the system of things above the



²⁰¹⁵ Cf. Rom. ix. 21: φούραμα is used for the human body often in the Greek Fathers, *i.e.* Athanasius, Chrysostom, John Damascene: by all of whom Christ is called ἀπαρχὴ τοῦ ἡμετέρου φουράματος. Cf. Gen. ii. 7; Job x. 9: Epictetus also calls the human body πηλω κομψῶς πεφυραμένον.

²⁰¹⁶ ἐν μὲν τῷ θανάτῳ καθορᾶν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, ἐν δὲ τῷ τρόπῳ πολυπραγμονεῖν τὸ θεϊότερον. This is Krabinger's reading (for ἐν τῷ ἀθανάτῳ...ἐν δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ) on the authority of Theodoret's quotation and two Codd. for the first, and of all his Codd. for the second. Huetus also seems to have read the same, "in *morte* quidem quod est humanum intueri, in *modo* autem perscrutari quod est divinius." Glauber, however, translates the common text, "Man muss *bei dem Unsterblichen* zwar das Menschliche betrachten, aber *bei dem Menschen* auch das Göttliche hervorsuchen;" notwithstanding that he hints his preference for another reading, σκοπῶ for this last; cf. just above, "but the secret sense represents the Divine," which would then be parallel to this last sentence.

heavens or of things below the earth, or of things at the boundaries of the universe on either side, everywhere the presence of Deity anticipates your thought as the sole observable power that in every part of existing things holds in a state of being all those things. Now whether we ought to call this Existence Deity, or Mind, or Power, or Wisdom, or any other lofty term which might be better able to express Him Who is above all, our argument has no quarrel with the appellation or name or form of phrase used. Since, then, all creation looks to Him, and is about and around Him, and through Him is coherent with itself, things above being through Him conjoined to things below and things lateral to themselves, it was right that not by hearing only we should be conducted to the full understanding of the Deity, but that sight also should be our teacher in these sublime subjects for thought; and it is from sight that the mighty Paul starts when he initiates²⁰¹⁷ the people of Ephesus in the mysteries, and imbues them through his instructions with the power of knowing what is that “depth and height and breadth and length.” In fact he designates each projection of the Cross by its proper appellation. The upper part he calls height, the lower depth, and the side extensions breadth and length; and in another passage²⁰¹⁸ he makes his thought still clearer to the Philippians, to whom he says, “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” In that passage he includes in one appellation the centre and projecting arms²⁰¹⁹, calling “things in earth” all that is in the middle between things in heaven and things under the earth. Such is the lesson we learn in regard to the mystery of the Cross. And the subsequent events which the narrative contains follow so appropriately that, as even unbelievers must admit, there is nothing in them adverse to the proper conceptions of the Deity. That He did not abide in death, that the wounds which His body had received from the iron of the nails and spear offered no impediment to His rising again, that after His resurrection He showed Himself as He pleased to His disciples, that when He wished to be present with them He was in their midst without being seen, as needing no entrance through open doors, and that He strengthened the disciples by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that He promised to be amongst them, and that no partition wall should intervene between them and Him, and that to the sight He ascended to Heaven while to the mind He was everywhere; all these, and whatever like facts the history of Him comprises, need no assistance from arguments to show that they are signs of deity and of a sublime and supereminent power. With regard to them therefore I do not deem it necessary to go into any detail, inasmuch as their description of itself shows the supernatural character. But since the dispensation of the washing (whether we choose to call it baptism, or illumination, or regeneration;

²⁰¹⁷ Eph. iii. 18.

²⁰¹⁸ Philip. ii. 10.

²⁰¹⁹ κεραίαν. The Fathers were fond of tracing similitudes to the form of the Cross, in nature and art: in the sail-yards of a ship, as here, and in the flight of birds on the wing. This is the reading of Codd. Morell., Reg., and three of Krabinger’s: but γαῖαν in the margin of that of J. Vulcobi (Abbot of Belpré) has got into the text of both Paris Editt., though the second asterisks it. Hervetus (“et fastigium”) seems to have read καὶ ἄκραν.

for we make the name no subject of controversy) is a part of our revealed doctrines, it may be as well to enter on a short discussion of this as well.



Chapter XXXIII.

FOR when they have heard from us something to this effect—that when the mortal passes into life it follows necessarily that, as that first birth leads only to the existence of mortality, another birth should be discovered, a birth which neither begins nor ends with corruption, but one which conducts the person begotten to an immortal existence, in order that, as what is begotten of a mortal birth has necessarily a mortal subsistence, so from a birth which admits not corruption that which is born may be superior to the corruption of death; when, I say, they have heard this and the like from us, and are besides instructed as to the process,—namely that it is prayer and the invocation of heavenly grace, and water, and faith, by which the mystery of regeneration is accomplished,—they still remain incredulous and have an eye only for the outward and visible, as if that which is operated corporeally²⁰²⁰ concurred not with the fulfilment of God’s promise. How, they ask, can prayer and the invocation of Divine power over the water be the foundation of life in those who have been thus initiated? In reply to them, unless they be of a very obstinate disposition, one single consideration suffices to bring them to an acquiescence in our doctrine. For let us in our turn ask them about that process of the carnal generation which every one can notice. How does that something which is cast for the beginnings of the formation of a living being become a Man? In that case, most certainly, there is no method whatever that can discover for us, by any possible reasoning, even the probable truth. For what correlation is there between the definition of man and the quality observable in that something? Man, when once he is put together, is a reasoning and intellectual being, capable of thought and knowledge; but that something is to be observed only in its quality of humidity, and the mind grasps nothing in it beyond that which is seen by the sense of sight. The reply, therefore, which we might expect to receive from those whom we questioned as to how it is credible that a man is compounded from that humid element, is the very reply which we make when questioned about the regeneration that takes place through the water. Now in that other case any one so questioned has this reply ready at hand, that that element becomes a man by a Divine power, wanting which, the element is motionless and inoperative. If, therefore, in that instance the subordinate matter does not make the man, but the Divine power changes that visible thing into a man’s nature, it would be utterly unfair for them, when in the one case they testify to such power in God, in this other department to suppose that the Deity is too weak to accomplish His will. What is there common, they ask, between water and life? What is there common, we ask

²⁰²⁰ σωματικῶς: with a general reference both to the recipient, the words (the “form”), and the water (the “matter,” in the Aristotelian sense). Cf. questions in *Private Baptism of Infants*: and Hampden’s *Bampton Lectures*, p. 336 n.

them in return, between humidity and God's image? In that case there is no paradox if, God so willing, what is humid changes into the most rare creature²⁰²¹. Equally, then, in this case we assert that there is nothing strange when the presence of a Divine influence transforms what is born with a corruptible nature into a state of incorruption.

Chapter XXXIV.

BUT they ask for proof of this presence of the Deity when invoked for the sanctification of the baptismal process²⁰²². Let the person who requires this evidence recall to mind the result of our inquiries further back. The reasoning by which we established that the power which was manifested to us through the flesh was really a Divine power, is the defence of that which we now say. For when it has been shown that He Who was manifested in the flesh, and then exhibited His nature by the miracles which He wrought, was God, it is also at the same time shown that He is present in that process, as often as He is invoked. For, as of everything that exists there is some peculiarity which indicates its nature, so truth is the distinctive peculiarity of the Divine nature. Well, then, He has promised that He will always be present with those that call upon Him, that He is in the midst of those that believe, that He remains among them collectively and has special intercourse with each one. We can no longer, then, need any other proof of the presence of the Deity in the things that are done in Baptism, believing as we do that He is God by reason of the miracles which He wrought, and knowing as we do that it is the peculiarity of the Godhead to be free from any touch of falsehood, and confidently holding as we do that the thing promised was involved in the truthfulness of its announcement. The invocation by prayer, then, which precedes this Divine Dispensation constitutes an abundance of proof that what is effected is done by God. For if in the case of that other kind of man-formation the impulses of the parents, even though they do not invoke the Deity, yet by the power of God, as we have before said, mould the embryo, and if this power is withheld their eagerness is ineffectual and useless, how much more will the object be accomplished in that spiritual mode of generation, where both God has promised that He will be present in the process and, as we have believed, has put power from Himself into the work, and, besides, our own will is bent upon that object; supposing, that is, that the aid which comes through prayer has at the same time been duly called in? For as they who pray God that the sun may shine on them in no way blunt the promptitude of that which is actually going to take place, yet no one will say that the zeal of those who thus pray is useless on the ground that they pray God for what must happen, in the same way they who, resting on the truthfulness of His promise, are firmly persuaded that His



²⁰²¹ τιμώτατον (τιμή = "price") ζῶον. So Plato, *Laws*, p. 766: "Man, getting right training and a happy organization, is wont to become a most godlike and cultivated creature."

²⁰²² τῶν γινομένων

grace is surely present in those who are regenerate in this mystical Dispensation, either themselves make²⁰²³ an actual addition to that grace, or at all events do not cause the existing grace to miscarry. For that the grace is there is a matter of faith, on account of Him Who has promised to give it being Divine; while the testimony as to His Divinity comes through the Miracles²⁰²⁴. Thus, then, that the Deity is present in all the baptismal process²⁰²⁵ admits of no question.

Chapter XXXV.

BUT the descent into the water, and the trine immersion of the person in it, involves another mystery. For since the method of our salvation was made effectual not so much by His precepts in the way of teaching²⁰²⁶ as by the deeds of Him Who has realized an actual fellowship with man, and has effected life as a living fact, so that by means of the flesh which He has assumed, and at the same time deified²⁰²⁷, everything kindred and related may be saved along with it, it was necessary

²⁰²³ ποιοῦνται (middle), *i.e.* by their prayers.

²⁰²⁴ ἡ δε τῆς θεότητος μαρτυρία διὰ τῶν θαυμάτων ἐστίν: a noteworthy sentence.

²⁰²⁵ τῶν γινομένων (cf. above) being understood.

²⁰²⁶ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ διδαχὴν ὑφηγήσεως. This is what Krabinger finds in three Codd., and Morell and Hervetus have rendered in the Latin. But the editions have διαδοχὴν Ὑφήγησις does not refer to any “preceding” (“præeunte,” Hervetus) teaching; but to “instruction” of any kind, whether “in the way of teaching,” or of *example*, as below.

²⁰²⁷ *the flesh which He has assumed, and at the same time deified.* “Un terme cher aux Pères du IV^e siècle, de nous *déifier*” (Denis, *Philosophie d’Origène*, p. 458). This θεοποίησις or θέωσις is more than a metaphor even from the first; “vere fideles vocantur θεοί, non naturâ quidem, sed τῆ ὁμοιώσει, ait Athanasius;” Casaubon, *In Epist. ad Eustath.* “We become ‘gods’ by grasping the Divine power and substance;” Clement, *Stromata*, iv. That the Platonists had thus used the word of τὸ πρὸς μείζονα δόξαν ἀνυψωθὲν is clear. Synesius in one of his *Hymns* says to his soul:—

“Soon commingled with the Father

Thou shalt dance a ‘god’ with God.”

Just as elsewhere (*in Dione*, p. 50) he says, “it is not sufficient not to be bad; each must be even a ‘god.’” Cf. also Gregory Thaum. *Panegy Origenis*, §142. When we come to the Fathers of the 4th century and later, these words are used more especially of the *work of the Holy Spirit* upon man. Cf. Cyrill. Alex.: “If to be able to ‘deify’ is a greater thing than a creature can do, and if the Spirit does ‘deify,’ how can he be created or anything but God, seeing that he ‘deifies’?” “If the Spirit is not God,” says Gregory Naz., “let him first be deified, and then let him deify me his equal;” where two things are implied, 1. that the recognized work of the Holy Spirit is to ‘deify,’ 2. that this “deification” is *not* Godhead. It is “the comparative god-making” of Dionysius Areopag. whereby we are “partakers of the Divine nature” (2 Pet. i. 4). On the word as applied to the human nature of our Saviour Himself, Huet (*Origeniana*, ii. 3, c. 17), in discussing the statement of Origen, in his Commentary on S. Matthew (*Tract 27*),

that some means should be devised by which there might be, in the baptismal process, a kind of affinity and likeness between him who follows and Him Who leads the way. Needful, therefore, is it to see what features are to be observed in the Author of our life, in order that the imitation on the part of those that follow may be regulated, as the Apostle says, after the pattern of the Captain of our salvation²⁰²⁸. For, as it is they who are actually drilled into measured and orderly movements in arms by skilled drill-masters, who are advanced to dexterity in handling their weapons by what they see with their eyes, whereas he who does not practise what is shown him remains devoid of such dexterity, in the same way it is imperative on all those who have an equally earnest desire for the Good as He has, to be followers by the path of an exact imitation of Him Who leads the way to salvation, and to carry into action what He has shown them. It is, in fact, impossible for persons to reach the same goal unless they travel by the same ways. For as persons who are at a loss how to thread the turns of mazes, when they happen to fall in with some one who has experience of them, get to the end of those various misleading turnings in the chambers by following him behind, which they could not do, did they not follow him their leader step by step, so too, I pray you mark, the labyrinth of this our life cannot be threaded by the faculties of human nature unless a man pursues that same path as He did Who, though once in it, yet got beyond the difficulties which hemmed Him in. I apply this figure of a labyrinth to that prison of death, which is without an egress²⁰²⁹ and environs the wretched race of mankind. What, then, have we beheld in the case of the Captain of our salvation? A three days' state of death and then life again. Now some sort of resemblance in us to such things has to be planned. What, then, is the plan by which in us too a

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that "Christ after His resurrection 'deified' the human nature which He had taken," remarks, "If we take this word so as to make Origen mean that the Word was changed into the human nature, and that the flesh itself was changed into God and made of the same substance as the Word, he will clearly be guilty of that deadly error which Apollinaris brought into the Church (*i.e.* that the Saviour's soul is not 'reasonable,' nor His flesh human); or rather of the heresy perpetrated by some sects of the Eutyrians, who asserted that the human nature was changed into the Divine after the Resurrection. But if we take him to mean that Christ's human nature, after being divested of weakness after death, assumed a *certain* Divine quality, we shall be doing Him no wrong." He then quotes a line from Gregory's *Iambics*:—

"The thing 'deifying,' and the thing 'deified,' are one God:"

and this is said even of Christ's Incarnation; how much more then can it be said of His Resurrection state, as in this passage of the *Great Catechism*? Huet adds one of Origen's answers to Celsus: "His mortal body and the human soul in Him, by virtue of their junction or rather union and blending with that (deity), assumed, we assert, qualities of the very greatest kind...What incredibility is there in the quality of mortality in the body of Jesus changing, when God so planned and willed it, into an ethereal and Divine" (*i.e.* the matter, as the receptacle of these qualities, remaining the same)? It is in this sense that Chrysostom can say that "Christ came to us, and took upon Him our nature and deified it;" and Augustine, "your humanity received the name of that deity" (*contr. Arian.*).

²⁰²⁸ Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2.

²⁰²⁹ ἀδιέξοδον...φρουράν. Krabinger's excellent reading. Cf. Plato, *Phaed.* p. 62 B, "We men are in a sort of prison."

resemblance to that which took place in Him is completed? Everything that is affected by death has its proper and natural place, and that is the earth in which it is laid and hidden. Now earth and water have much mutual affinity. Alone of the elements they have weight and gravitate downwards; they mutually abide in each other; they are mutually confined. Seeing, then, the death of the Author of our life subjected Him to burial in earth and was in accord with our common nature, the imitation which we enact of that death is expressed in the neighbouring element. And as He, that Man from above²⁰³⁰, having taken deadness on Himself, after His being deposited in the earth, returned back to life the third day, so every one who is knitted to Him by virtue of his bodily form, looking forward to the same successful issue, I mean this arriving at life by having, instead of earth, water poured on him²⁰³¹, and so submitting to that element, has represented for him in the three movements the three-days-delayed grace of the resurrection. Something like this has been said in what has gone before, namely, that by the Divine providence death has been introduced as a dispensation into the nature of man, so that, sin having flowed away at the dissolution of the union of soul and body, man, through the resurrection, might be refashioned, sound, passionless, stainless, and removed from any touch of evil. In the case however of the Author of our Salvation this dispensation of death reached its fulfilment, having entirely accomplished its special purpose. For in His death, not only were things that once were one put asunder, but also things that had been disunited were again brought together; so that in this dissolution of things that had naturally grown together, I mean, the soul and body, our nature might be purified, and this return to union of these severed elements might secure freedom from the contamination of any foreign admixture. But as regards those who follow this Leader, their nature does not admit of an exact and entire imitation, but it receives now as much as it is capable of receiving, while it reserves the remainder for the time that comes after. In what, then, does this imitation consist? It consists in the effecting the suppression of that admixture of sin, in the figure of mortification that is given by the water, not certainly a complete effacement, but a kind of break in the continuity of the evil, two things concurring to this removal of sin—the penitence of the transgressor and his imitation of the death. By these two things the man is in a measure freed from his congenital tendency to evil; by his penitence he advances to a hatred of and averseness from sin, and by his death he works out the suppression of the evil. But had it been possible for him in his imitation to undergo a complete dying, the result would be not imitation but identity; and the evil of our nature would so entirely vanish that, as the Apostle says, “he would die unto sin once for all²⁰³².” But since, as has been said, we only so far imitate the transcendent Power as the poverty of our nature is capable of, by having the water thrice poured on us and ascending again up from the water, we enact that saving burial and resurrection which took place on the third day, with this thought in our mind, that as we have power over the water both to be in

²⁰³⁰ S. John iii. 31: 1 Cor. xv. 47 (ἀνωθεν = ἐξ οὐρανοῦ).

²⁰³¹ ἐπιχέομενος. This may be pressed to imply that immersion was not absolutely necessary. So below τὸ ὕδωρ τρις ἐπιχέομενοι

²⁰³² ἐφάπαξ. So Rom. vi. 10, “He died unto sin once” (A.V.); *i.e.* once for all.

it and arise out of it, so He too, Who has the universe at His sovereign disposal, immersed Himself in death, as we in the water, to return²⁰³³ to His own blessedness. If, therefore, one looks to that which is in reason, and judges of the results according to the power inherent in either party, one will discover no disproportion in these results, each in proportion to the measure of his natural power working out the effects that are within his reach. For, as it is in the power of man, if he is so disposed, to touch the water and yet be safe, with infinitely greater ease may death be handled by the Divine Power so as to be in it and yet not to be changed by it injuriously. Observe, then, that it is necessary for us to rehearse beforehand in the water the grace of the resurrection, to the intent that we may understand that, as far as facility goes, it is the same thing for us to be baptized with water and to rise again from death. But as in matters that concern our life here, there are some which take precedence of others, as being those without which the result could not be achieved, although if the beginning be compared with the end, the beginning so contrasted will seem of no account (for what equality, for instance, is there between the man and that which is laid as a foundation for the constitution of his animal being? And yet if that had never been, neither would this be which we see), in like manner that which happens in the great resurrection, essentially vaster though it be, has its beginnings and its causes here; it is not, in fact, possible that that should take place, unless this had gone before; I mean, that without the laver of regeneration it is impossible for the man to be in the resurrection; but in saying this I do not regard the mere remoulding and refashioning of our composite body; for towards this it is absolutely necessary that human nature should advance, being constrained thereto by its own laws according to the dispensation of Him Who has so ordained, whether it have received the grace of the laver, or whether it remains without that initiation: but I am thinking of the restoration to a blessed and divine condition, separated from all shame and sorrow. For not everything that is granted in the resurrection a return to existence will return to the same kind of life. There is a wide interval between those who have been purified, and those who still need purification. For those in whose life-time here the purification by the laver has preceded, there is a restoration to a kindred state. Now, to the pure, freedom from passion is that kindred state, and that in this freedom from passion blessedness consists, admits of no dispute. But as for those whose weaknesses have become inveterate²⁰³⁴, and to whom no purgation of their defilement has been applied, no mystic water, no invocation of the Divine power, no amendment by repentance, it is absolutely necessary that they should come to be in something proper to their case,—just as the furnace is the proper thing for gold alloyed with dross,—in order that, the vice which has been mixed up in them being melted away after long succeeding ages, their nature may be restored pure again to God. Since, then, there is a cleansing virtue in fire and water, they who by the mystic water have washed away the defilement of their sin have no further need of the other

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²⁰³³ ἀναλύειν. Cf. Philip. i. 23 (ἀναλύσαι).

²⁰³⁴ οἷς δὲ προσεπωρώθη τὰ πάθη.

form of purification, while they who have not been admitted to that form of purgation must needs be purified by fire.

Chapter XXXVI.

FOR common sense as well as the teaching of Scripture shows that it is impossible for one who has not thoroughly cleansed himself from all the stains arising from evil to be admitted amongst the heavenly company. This is a thing which, though little in itself, is the beginning and foundation of great blessings. I call it little on account of the facility of the means of amendment. For what difficulty is there in this matter? viz. to believe that God is everywhere, and that being in all things He is also present with those who call upon Him for His life-supporting power, and that, thus present, He does that which properly belongs to Him to do. Now, the work properly belonging to the Divine energy is the salvation of those who need it; and this salvation proves effectual²⁰³⁵ by means of the cleansing in the water; and he that has been so cleansed will participate in Purity; and true Purity is Deity. You see, then, how small a thing it is in its beginning, and how easily effected; I mean, faith and water; the first residing within the will, the latter being the nursery companion of the life of man. But as to the blessing which springs from these two things, oh! how great and how wonderful it is, that it should imply relationship with Deity itself!

Chapter XXXVII.

BUT since the human being is a twofold creature, compounded of soul and body, it is necessary that the saved should lay hold of²⁰³⁶ the Author of the new life through both their component parts. Accordingly, the soul being fused into Him through faith derives from that the means and occasion of salvation; for the act of union with the life implies a fellowship with the life. But the body comes into fellowship and blending with the Author of our salvation in another way. For as they who owing to some act of treachery have taken poison, allay its deadly influence by means of some other drug (for it is necessary that the antidote should enter the human vitals in the same way as the deadly poison, in order to secure, through them, that the effect of the remedy may be distributed

²⁰³⁵ S. John iii. 5

²⁰³⁶ ἐφάπτεσθαι. Krabinger prefers this to ἐφέπεσθαι (Paris Edit.), as more suitable to what follows.

through the entire system), in like manner we, who have tasted the solvent of our nature²⁰³⁷, necessarily need something that may combine what has been so dissolved, so that such an antidote entering within us may, by its own counter-influence, undo the mischief introduced into the body by the poison. What, then, is this remedy to be? Nothing else than that very Body which has been shown to be superior to death, and has been the First-fruits of our life. For, in the manner that, as the Apostle says²⁰³⁸, a little leaven assimilates to itself the whole lump, so in like manner that body to which immortality has been given it by God, when it is in ours, translates and transmutes the whole into itself. For as by the admixture of a poisonous liquid with a wholesome one the whole drought is deprived of its deadly effect, so too the immortal Body, by being within that which receives it, changes the whole to its own nature. Yet in no other way can anything enter within the body but by being transfused through the vitals by eating and drinking. It is, therefore, incumbent on the body to admit this life-producing power in the one way that its constitution makes possible. And since that Body only which was the receptacle of the Deity received this grace of immortality, and since it has been shown that in no other way was it possible for our body to become immortal, but by participating in incorruption through its fellowship with that immortal Body, it will be necessary to consider how it was possible that that one Body, being for ever portioned to so many myriads of the faithful throughout the whole world, enters through that portion, whole into each individual, and yet remains whole in itself. In order, therefore, that our faith, with eyes fixed on logical probability, may harbour no doubt on the subject before us, it is fitting to make a slight digression in our argument, to consider the physiology of the body. Who is there that does not know that our bodily frame, taken by itself, possesses no life in its own proper subsistence, but that it is by the influx of a force or power from without that it holds itself together and continues in existence, and by a ceaseless motion that it draws to itself what it wants, and repels what is superfluous? When a leathern bottle is full of some liquid, and then the contents leak out at the bottom, it would not retain the contour of its full bulk unless there entered in at the top something else to fill up the vacuum; and thus a person, seeing the circumference of this bottle swollen to its full size, would know that this circumference did not really belong to the object which he sees, but that what was being poured in, by being in it, gave shape and roundness to the bulk. In the same way the mere framework of our body possesses nothing belonging to itself that is cognizable by us, to hold it together, but remains in existence owing to a force that is introduced into it. Now this power or force both is, and is called, nourishment. But it is not the same in all bodies that require aliment, but to each of them has been assigned a food adapted to its condition by Him who governs Nature. Some animals feed on roots which they dig up. Of others grass is the food, of others different kinds

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²⁰³⁷ Gregory seems here to refer to Eve's eating the apple, which introduced a moral and *physical* poison into our nature. General Gordon's thoughts ("in Palestine") took the same direction as the whole of this passage; which Fronto Ducæus (as quoted by Krabinger) would even regard as a proof of transubstantiation.

²⁰³⁸ 1 Cor. v. 6.

of flesh, but for man above all things bread; and, in order to continue and preserve the moisture of his body, drink, not simply water, but water frequently sweetened with wine, to join forces with our internal heat. He, therefore, who thinks of these things, thinks by implication²⁰³⁹ of the particular bulk of our body. For those things by being within me became my blood and flesh, the corresponding nutriment by its power of adaptation being changed into the form of my body. With these distinctions we must return to the consideration of the question before us. The question was, how can that one Body of Christ vivify the whole of mankind, all, that is, in whomsoever there is Faith, and yet, though divided amongst all, be itself not diminished? Perhaps, then, we are now not far from the probable explanation. If the subsistence of every body depends on nourishment, and this is eating and drinking, and in the case of our eating there is bread and in the case of our drinking water sweetened with wine, and if, as was explained at the beginning, the Word of God, Who is both God and the Word, coalesced with man's nature, and when He came in a body such as ours did not innovate on man's physical constitution so as to make it other than it was, but secured continuance for His own body by the customary and proper means, and controlled its subsistence by meat and drink, the former of which was bread,—just, then, as in the case of ourselves, as has been repeatedly said already, if a person sees bread he also, in a kind of way, looks on a human body, for by the bread being within it the bread becomes it, so also, in that other case, the body into which God entered, by partaking of the nourishment of bread, was, in a certain measure, the same with it; that nourishment, as we have said, changing itself into the nature of the body. For that which is peculiar to all flesh is acknowledged also in the case of that flesh, namely, that that Body too was maintained by bread; which Body also by the indwelling of God the Word was transmuted to the dignity of Godhead. Rightly, then, do we believe that now also the bread which is consecrated by the Word of God is changed into the Body of God the Word. For that Body was once, by implication, bread, but has been consecrated by the inhabitation of the Word that tabernacled in the flesh. Therefore, from the same cause as that by which the bread that was transformed in that Body was changed to a Divine potency, a similar result takes place now. For as in that case, too, the grace of the Word used to make holy the Body, the substance of which came of the bread, and in a manner was itself bread, so also in this case the bread, as says the Apostle²⁰⁴⁰, “is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer”; not that it advances by the process of eating²⁰⁴¹ to the stage of passing into the body of the Word, but it is at once changed into the body by means of the Word, as the Word itself said, “This is My Body.” Seeing, too, that all flesh is nourished by what is moist (for without this combination



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²⁰³⁹ δυνάμει.

²⁰⁴⁰ 1 Tim. iv. 5.

²⁰⁴¹ *by the process of eating*, διὰ βρώσεως. There is very little authority for καὶ πόσεως which follows in some Codd. If Krabinger's text is here correct, Gregory distinctly teaches a transmutation of the elements very like the later transubstantiation: he also distinctly teaches that the words of consecration effect the change. There seems no reason to doubt that the text is correct. The three Latin interpretations, “a verbo transmutatus,” “statim a verbo transmutatus,” “per verbum mutatus,” of Hervetus,

our earthly part would not continue to live), just as we support by food which is firm and solid the solid part of our body, in like manner we supplement the moist part from the kindred element; and this, when within us, by its faculty of being transmitted, is changed to blood, and especially if through the wine it receives the faculty of being transmuted into heat. Since, then, that God-containing flesh partook for its substance and support of this particular nourishment also, and since the God who was manifested infused Himself into perishable humanity for this purpose, viz. that by this communion with Deity mankind might at the same time be deified, for this end it is that, by dispensation of His grace, He disseminates Himself in every believer through that flesh, whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending Himself with the bodies of believers, to secure that, by this union with the immortal, man, too, may be a sharer in incorruption. He gives these gifts by virtue of the benediction through which He transelements²⁰⁴² the natural quality of these visible things to that immortal thing.

Morell, and Zinus, all point to their having found πρὸς τὸ σῶμα διὰ τοῦ λόγου μεταποιούμενος in the text: and this is the reading of Cod. Reg. (the other reading is πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τοῦ λόγου). A passage from Justin Mart., *Apol.* ii. p. 77, also supports Krabinger's text. Justin says, "so we are taught that that food which has been blessed by the pronouncing of the word that came from Him, which food by changing nourishes our blood and flesh, is the flesh and blood of that Incarnate Jesus." As to the nature of the change (πρὸς τὸ σῶμα μεταποιούμενος), another passage in Gregory (*In Baptism. Christi*, 370 A) should be compared: "The bread again, was for a while common bread, but when the mystic word shall have consecrated it (ιερουργήση), it is called, *and moreover is*, the body of Christ." He says also at the end of this chapter, "He gives these gifts by virtue of the benediction through which He *transelements* (μεταστοιχειώσας) the natural quality (φύσιν) of these visible things to that immortal thing." Harnack does not attempt to weaken the force of these and other passages, but only points out that the idea of this change does not exactly correspond (how could it?) with the mediæval scholastically-philosophical "transubstantiation." Gregory's belief is that, just as the Word, when Christ was here in the flesh, rendered holy His body that assimilated bread, which still *in a manner remained bread*, so now the bread is sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer. "The idea," says Neander, "of the repetition of the consecration of the Λόγος had taken hold of his mind." The construction is προί& 241·ν (ὥστε) γενέσθαι εἰς τὸ σῶμα τοῦ λόγου, "eo progrediens, ut verbi corpus evadat."

²⁰⁴² μεταστοιχειώσας. Suicer labours, without success, to show that the word is not equivalent to *transelementare* or μετουσιοῦν, but only to *substantiam convertere*, i.e. to change by an addition of grace into another *mode* or *use*. In the passages from Epiphanius which Suicer adduces for "figure," "mode," as a meaning of στοιχεῖον itself, that word means a sign of the zodiac (as in our Gregory's *De Animâ et Resurr.*, it means the moon), only because the heavenly bodies are the *elements or first principles* as it were of the celestial alphabet. The other meaning of μεταστοιχειοῦν which he gives, i.e. to unteach, with a view to obscure the literal meaning here, is quite inapplicable. Gregory defines more clearly than Chrysostom (μεταρρυθμίζεσθαι), Theophylact (μεταποιεῖσθαι), and John Damascene (μεταβάλλεσθαι), the change that takes place: but all go beyond Theodoret's (*Dial.* ii), "not changing nature, but adding grace to the nature," which Suicer endeavours to read into this word of Gregory's. It is to be noticed, too, that in Philo the word is used of Xerxes changing in his march one element into another, i.e. *earth into water*, not the mere use of the one into the use of the other.

Chapter XXXVIII.

THERE IS NOW, I think, wanting in these remarks no answer to inquiries concerning the Gospel mystery, except that on Faith²⁰⁴³; which we give briefly in the present treatise. For those who require a more elaborate account we have already published it in other works of ours, in which we have explained the subject with all the earnestness and accuracy in our power. In those treatises we have both fought²⁰⁴⁴ controversially with our opponents, and also have taken private consultation with ourselves as to the questions which have been brought against us. But in the present discussion we have thought it as well only to say just so much on the subject of faith as is involved in the language of the Gospel, namely, that one who is begotten by the spiritual regeneration may know who it is that begets him, and what sort of creature he becomes. For it is only this form of generation which has in it the power to become what it chooses to be.

Chapter XXXIX.

FOR, while all things else that are born are subject to the impulse of those that beget them, the spiritual birth is dependent on the power of him who is being born. Seeing, then, that here lies the hazard, namely, that he should not miss what is for his advantage, when to every one a free choice is thus open, it were well, I think, for him who is moved towards the begetting of himself, to determine by previous reasoning what kind of father is for his advantage, and of what element it is better for him that his nature should consist. For, as we have said, it is in the power of such a child as this to choose its parents. Since, then, there is a twofold division of existences, into created and uncreated, and since the uncreated world possesses within itself immutability and immobility, while the created is liable to change and alteration, of which will he, who with calculation and deliberation is to choose what is for his benefit, prefer to be the offspring; of that which is always found in a state of change, or of that which possesses a nature that is changeless, steadfast, and ever consistent and unvarying in goodness? Now there have been delivered to us in the Gospel three Persons and names through whom the generation or birth of believers takes place, and he who is begotten by this Trinity is equally begotten of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—for

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²⁰⁴³ *Faith*. Cf. Church Catechism; “Faith whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament (of Baptism).”

²⁰⁴⁴ συνεπλάκημεν, *i.e.* against Eunomius, in defence of the equality of the Trinity in the Baptismal symbol. Often as Gregory in that treatise opposes Eunomius for placing the essence of Christianity in mere γνώσις and δογμάτων ἀκρίβεια, as against God’s incomprehensibility, and knowledge only by the heart, he had yet spent his whole life in showing the supreme importance of accuracy in the formulas upon which the Faith rested. This helps to give a date for the *Great Catechism*.

thus does the Gospel speak of the Spirit, that “that which is born of Spirit is spirit²⁰⁴⁵,” and it is “in Christ²⁰⁴⁶” that Paul begets, and the Father is the “Father of all;” here, then, I beg, let the mind of the hearer be sober in its choice, lest it make itself the offspring of some inconstant nature, when it has it in its power to make the steadfast and unalterable nature the founder of its life. For according to the disposition of heart in one who comes to the Dispensation will that which is begotten in him exhibit its power; so that he who confesses that the Holy Trinity is uncreate enters on the steadfast unalterable life; while another, who through a mistaken conception sees only a created nature in the Trinity and then is baptized in *that*, has again been born into the shifting and alterable life. For that which is born is of necessity of one kindred with that which begets. Which, then, offers the greater advantage; to enter on the unchangeable life, or to be again tossed about by the waves of this lifetime of uncertainty and change? Well, since it is evident to any one of the least understanding that what is stable is far more valuable than what is unstable, what is perfect than what is deficient, what needs not than what needs, and what has no further to advance, but ever abides in the perfection of all that is good, than what climbs by progressive toil, it is incumbent upon every one, at least upon every one who is possessed of sense, to make an absolute choice of one or other of these two conditions, either to believe that the Holy Trinity belongs to the uncreated world, and so through the spiritual birth to make It the foundation of his own life, or, if he thinks that the Son or the Holy Ghost is external to the being of the first, the true, the good, God, I mean, of the Father, not to include these Persons in the belief which he takes upon him at the moment of his new birth, lest he unconsciously make himself over to that imperfect nature²⁰⁴⁷ which itself needs some one to make it good, and in a manner bring himself back again to something of the same nature as his own by thus removing his faith²⁰⁴⁸ from that higher world. For whoever has bound himself to any created thing forgets that, as from the Deity, he has no longer hope of salvation. For all creation, owing to the whole equally proceeding from non-existence into being, has an intimate connection with itself; and as in the bodily organization all the limbs have a natural and mutual coherence, though some have a downward, some an upward direction, so the world of created things is, viewed as the creation, in oneness with itself, and the differences in us, as regards abundance or deficiency, in no wise disjoint it from this natural coherence with itself. For in things which equally imply the idea of a previous non-existence, though there be a difference between them in other respects, as regards this point we discover no variation of nature. If, then, man, who is himself a created being,

²⁰⁴⁵ S. John iii. 6

²⁰⁴⁶ I Cor. iv. 15.

²⁰⁴⁷ *imperfect nature*: i.e. of a creature (κτιστός); for instance, of a merely human Christ, which himself needs, and therefore cannot give, perfection.

²⁰⁴⁸ *removing his faith*: i.e. as he would do, if he placed it on beings whom he *knew* were not of that higher, uncreated, world

thinks that the Spirit and the Only-begotten God²⁰⁴⁹ are likewise created, the hope which he entertains of a change to a better state will be a vain one; for he only returns to himself²⁰⁵⁰. What happens then is on a par with the surmises of Nicodemus; he, when instructed by our Lord as to the necessity of being born from above, because he could not yet comprehend the meaning of the mystery, had his thoughts drawn back to his mother's womb²⁰⁵¹. So that if a man does not conduct himself towards the uncreated nature, but to that which is kindred to, and equally in bondage with, himself, he is of the birth which is from below, and not of that which is from above. But the Gospel tells us that the birth of the saved is from above.

Chapter XL.

BUT, as far as what has been already said, the instruction of this Catechism does not seem to me to be yet complete. For we ought, in my opinion, to take into consideration the sequel of this matter; which many of those who come to the grace of baptism²⁰⁵² overlook, being led astray, and self-deceived, and indeed only seemingly, and not really, regenerate. For that change in our life which takes place through regeneration will not be change, if we continue in the state in which we were. I do not see how it is possible to deem one who is still in the same condition, and in whom there has been no change in the distinguishing features of his nature, to be any other than he was, it being palpable to every one that it is for a renovation and change of our nature that the saving birth is received. And yet human nature does not of itself admit of any change in baptism; neither the reason, nor the understanding, nor the scientific faculty, nor any other peculiar characteristic of man is a subject for change. Indeed the change would be for the worse if any one of these properties of our nature were exchanged away²⁰⁵³ for something else. If, then, the birth from above is a definite refashioning of the man, and yet these properties do not admit of change, it is a subject for inquiry what that is in him, by the changing of which the grace of regeneration is perfected. It

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²⁰⁴⁹ *and the Only-begotten God.* One Cod. reads here *ὁ ἰσὺς* 231^v (not *θεόν*), as it is in S. John i. 18, though even there “many very ancient authorities” (R.V.) read *θεόν*. The Latin of Hervetus implies an *οὐκ* here; “et unigenitum Deum *non* esse existimant;” and Glauber would retain it, making *κτιστὸν* = *θεόν οὐκ εἶναι*. But Krabinger found no *οὐκ* in any of his Codd.

²⁰⁵⁰ *πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἀναλύων*, as explained above, *i.e.* εἰς τὸ ὁμογενὲς ἑαυτὸν εἰσαγάγη.

²⁰⁵¹ S. John iii. 4

²⁰⁵² We need not consider this passage about Regeneration as an interpolation, with Aubertin, *De Sacram. Eucharist.* lib. ii. p. 487, because Gregory has already dealt with Baptism in ch. xxxv.–xxxvi.; and then with the Eucharist: his view of the relation between the two Sacraments, that the Eucharist unites the body, as Baptism the soul to God, quite explains this return to the preliminaries of this double union.

²⁰⁵³ *ὕπαμειφθείη*. A word almost peculiar to this Gregory.

is evident that when those evil features which mark our nature have been obliterated a change to a better state takes place. If, then, by being “washed,” as says the Prophet²⁰⁵⁴, in that mystic bath we become “clean” in our wills and “put away the evil” of our souls, we thus become better men, and are changed to a better state. But if, when the bath has been applied to the body, the soul has not cleansed itself from the stains of its passions and affections, but the life after initiation keeps on a level with the uninitiate life, then, though it may be a bold thing to say, yet I will say it and will not shrink; in these cases the water is but water, for the gift of the Holy Ghost in no ways appears in him who is thus baptismally born; whenever, that is, not only the deformity of anger²⁰⁵⁵, or the passion of greed, or the unbridled and unseemly thought, with pride, envy, and arrogance, disfigures the Divine image, but the gains, too, of injustice abide with him, and the woman he has procured by adultery still even after that ministers to his pleasures. If these and the like vices, after, as before, surround the life of the baptized, I cannot see in what respects he has been changed; for I observe him the same man as he was before. The man whom he has unjustly treated, the man whom he has falsely accused, the man whom he has forcibly deprived of his property, these, as far as they are concerned, see no change in him though he has been washed in the laver of baptism. They do not hear the cry of Zacchæus from him as well: “If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore fourfold²⁰⁵⁶.” What they said of him before his baptism, the same they now more fully declare; they call him by the same names, a covetous person, one who is greedy of what belongs to others, one who lives in luxury at the cost of men’s calamities. Let such an one, therefore, who remains in the same moral condition as before, and then babbles to himself of the beneficial change he has received from baptism, listen to what Paul says: “If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself²⁰⁵⁷.” For what you have not become, that you are not. “As many as received Him,” thus speaks the Gospel of those who have been born again, “to them gave He power to become the sons of God²⁰⁵⁸.” Now the child born of any one is entirely of a kindred nature with his parent. If, then, you have received God, if you have become a child of God, make manifest in your disposition the God that is in you, manifest in yourself Him that begot you. By the same marks whereby we recognize God, must this relationship to God of the son so born be exhibited. “He openeth His hand and filleth every living thing with His good pleasure.” “He passeth over transgressions.” “He repenteth Him of the evil.” “The Lord is good to all, and bringeth not on us His anger every day.” “God is a righteous Lord, and there is no injustice in

2054 Is. i. 16.

2055 τὸ κατὰ τὸν θυμὸν αἴσχος. Quite wrongly the Latin translators, “*animi turpitude*,” *i.e.* baseness of *mind*, which is mentioned just below.

2056 S. Luke xix. 8

2057 Gal. vi. 3.

2058 S. John i. 12

Him²⁰⁵⁹,” and all other sayings of the like kind which are scattered for our instruction throughout the Scripture;—if you live amidst such things as these, you are a child of God indeed; but if you continue with the characteristic marks of vice in you, it is in vain that you babble to yourself of your birth from above. Prophecy will speak against you and say, “You are a ‘son of man,’ not a son of the Most High. You ‘love vanity, and seek after leasing.’ Know you not in what way man is ‘made admirable²⁰⁶⁰’? In no other way than by becoming holy.”

It will be necessary to add to what has been said this remaining statement also; viz. that those good things which are held out in the Gospels to those who have led a godly life, are not such as can be precisely described. For how is that possible with things which “eye hath not seen, neither ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man²⁰⁶¹”? Indeed, the sinner’s life of torment presents no equivalent to anything that pains the sense here. Even if some one of the punishments in that other world be named in terms that are well known here, the distinction is still not small. When you hear the word fire, you have been taught to think of a fire other than the fire we see, owing to something being added to that fire which in this there is not; for that fire is never quenched, whereas experience has discovered many ways of quenching this; and there is a great difference between a fire which can be extinguished, and one that does not admit of extinction. That fire, therefore, is something other than this. If, again, a person hears the word “worm,” let not his thoughts, from the similarity of the term, be carried to the creature here that crawls upon the ground; for the addition that it “dieth not” suggests the thought of another reptile than that known here. Since, then, these things are set before us as to be expected in the life that follows this, being the natural outgrowth according to the righteous judgment of God, in the life of each, of his particular disposition, it must be the part of the wise not to regard the present, but that which follows after, and to lay down the foundations for that unspeakable blessedness during this short and fleeting life, and by a good choice to wean themselves from all experience of evil, now in their lifetime here, hereafter in their eternal recompense²⁰⁶².



²⁰⁵⁹ These quotations are from the LXX. of Ps. cxlv. 16; ciii. 12 (Is. xliii. 25); Joel ii. 13; Ps. vii. 11 (Heb. “God is angry every day”); xcii. 15.

²⁰⁶⁰ Ps. iv. 2, 3. In the last verse the LXX. has ἐθαυμάστωσε; which the Vulgate follows, *i.e.* “He hath made his Saint wonderful” (the Hebrew implies, “hath wonderfully separated”). That θαυμαστοῦται (three of Krabinger’s Codd., and Morell’s) is the reading here (omitted in Editt.), is clear from the whole quotation from the LXX. of this Psalm.

²⁰⁶¹ Is. lxiv. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 9.

²⁰⁶² The section beginning here, which one Cod. (Vulcobius’), used by Hervetus, exhibits, is “evidently the addition of some blundering copyist.” P. Morell considers it the portion of a preface to a treatise against Severus, head of the heretics called Acephali. But Severus was condemned under Justinian, A.D. 536: and the Acephali themselves were no recognized party till after the Council of Ephesus (those who would follow neither S. Cyril, nor John of Damascus, in one meaning of the term, *i.e.* “headless”), or after the Council of Chalcedon (those who rejected the Henoticon of the Emperor Zeno, addressed to the orthodox and the Monophysites, in the other meaning). It is quoted by Krabinger, none of whose Codd. recognize it.