



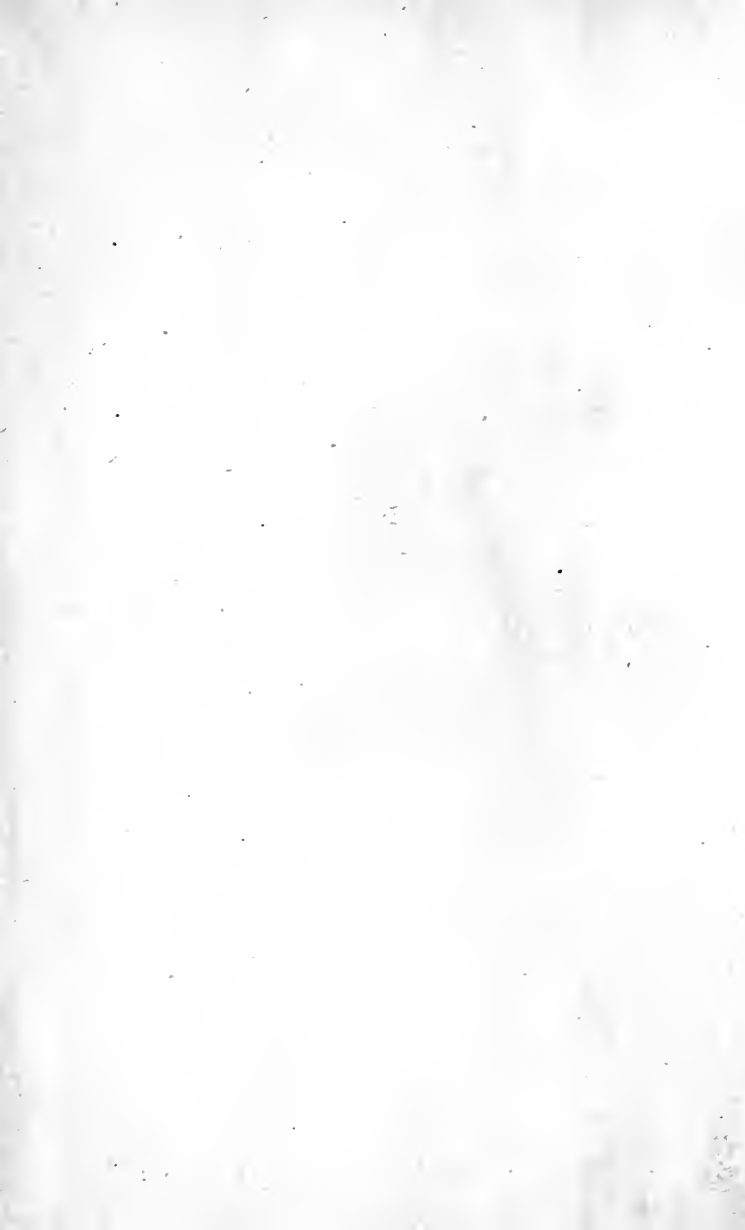
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DE INCARNATIONE VERBI DEI







CHRISTIAN CLASSICS SERIES

III
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VERBI DEI

Athanasius on the Incarnation



TRANSLATED
WITH AN INTRODUCTION ANALYSIS
SYNOPSIS AND NOTES

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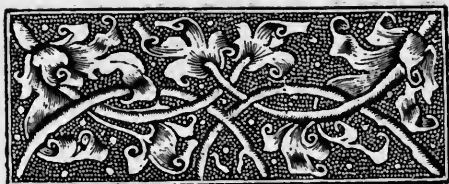


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Introduction.



THE present treatise, together with the *Contra Gentes*, to which it forms a sequel, is the earliest work of the illustrious Doctor and Father whose name is conspicuous among many prominent champions of the faith in the fourth century. It was written before the rise of the Arian heresy in A.D. 319, and is addressed to a convert from heathenism.

Athanasius was born at Alexandria in 297, and in his boyhood must have witnessed some of the cruelties of the great

persecution under Maximinus Daza—perhaps the martyrdom of Archbishop Peter himself, on November 25th, 311. He soon came under the notice of Alexander, who succeeded Achillas in the see of Alexandria in 313, and was brought up by him as a son in the faith.

The nature and subject of the work before us render it unnecessary to enter into an account of Athanasius' life,* inseparably bound up as it was with the great struggle of the Church against Arianism; but the deep spiritual earnestness and loyal devotion to the Eternal Word of God which inspire the argument of the treatise help us to understand the author's life-long unwavering faith which the storm of heretical persecution beat against, but could not shake; while his wide knowledge, even at the early age when the *De Incarnatione* was written, his intellectual acumen, and his wise sense of proportion, give us an insight into the mind of the one man who 'against the world' witnessed for 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'

* For the life of Athanasius the reader should consult the monograph of Dr. Bright, in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

The course of the argument on the Incarnation of the Word of God will be found drawn out in the Synopsis, and need not be here repeated; but some remarks may not be out of place upon its characteristic lines of thought.

The Creation of the World, the Fall of man, the Incarnation of the Word—these are the themes which occupy the first part of the essay. Athanasius first sweeps on one side the philosophical and heretical speculations of the time regarding the origin of the world, and establishes the true doctrine of creation—that God, through the instrumentality of His Word, brought the universe into being out of nothing. To man, however, He gave a special grace beyond that of mere existence—that of being made after His own image. This He further strengthened by placing him in Paradise, and giving him a law. Obedience to the law would ensure continuance in blessedness, and man would finally, by a deathless change, pass into the heavenly life: disobedience, on the other hand, would entail death and continuance in corruption. Man was disobedient, and in the first pair mankind as a whole became involved in guilt. The fact of universal sin witnesses to an original fall, for human

nature in its entirety existed in Adam and Eve, and in them fell. Death, therefore, must be the penalty, or God's word be broken: yet how monstrous for the creature's sin to frustrate God's purpose in creation. Sin, however, was not merely a debt due to God's honour which might be forgiven on man's repentance, or on worthy satisfaction (if such could be found) being made: it was a disease and corruption in the very nature of man. Death had become a context of human nature, and needed to be counteracted by the context of life. The Eternal Word of God, therefore, who had originally made man after God's image, came down, and, as Man, fulfilled the law of death, while, as God, He implanted in human nature an antidote to the corruption, and by His resurrection afforded the promise of the life eternal.

* The whole argument thus turns upon the solidarity of mankind—the oneness of the human race, and its incorporation in Christ by virtue of the Incarnation. It is refreshing, amid the many unsatisfactory theories of the Atonement which are proposed, to find how thoroughly scriptural is the line of thought adopted by Athanasius. All mankind sinned in their first parents; all

mankind in mystic union with Christ fulfilled in His death the law of death. 'If one died for all, then all died.' 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.' Christ is the Representative, Proxy, and Head of the whole race which is recapitulated in Him. The work of regeneration in man's will, which was enfeebled, and in man's intellect, which was darkened, was thus accomplished, a recreation after the image of God being wrought by the Word, and human nature gifted with a share of the Divine. This having been done, it only remains for man to personally appropriate by faith the new life won for him by Christ, and to discharge the duties of his Christian calling.

Two points call for especial notice: The essentially scriptural tone which pervades the argument; and the felicitous use of similes in illustration of its bearing.

1. A glance at the pages of the translation is enough to show how frequent is our author's use of direct quotation from the Sacred Writings; but beyond this there recur ever and anon turns of expression and phrase which witness to his deep study and intimate knowledge of God's Word; while few passages in the work are of

greater beauty than the closing words of advice to his Christian reader, Macarius, on the value of the written Word, and the necessity of approaching it with a pure mind and stainless life.

Our union with Christ through His becoming man, which is the keynote of Athanasius' reasoning on the Atonement, is the echo and reproduction of St. Paul's fifth chapter to the Romans, and of his oft-insisted on expression 'IN Christ;' *i.e.* in union with Him; firstly, by His taking our nature upon Him; secondly, and more intimately, by the communication of Himself to us personally under the dispensation of His Holy Spirit.

The corruption of sin ingrained in human nature, which needed even a 'higher gift' than the renewal of grace, even

'God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all Divine,'

for its eradication, recalls the teaching of the Old Testament respecting sin as a disease of which leprosy was made the type.

The wide views of the results of Christ's Atoning and Re-creative work, by which not mankind alone but the whole creation benefited, are essentially based on those

passages of St. Paul's writings which enter upon deeper mysteries than we can fathom, and which speak of the far-reaching and all-embracing efficacy of the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of the Son of God.

St. Paul, again, furnishes the ground for Athanasius' statement that even fallen human nature possessed the capacity of contemplating God, and learning of Him from His works in Nature.

On the question of the necessity of the Incarnation, Athanasius agrees with nearly all the Fathers in not seeking to look beyond the scriptural revelation of God's method of restoring fallen man; and in showing how the scheme of redemption was planned by God out of pure love, and how, as such, it was most consonant with God's revealed character. Anselm (*Cur Deus Homo?* ii. 6), on the other hand, contends for the necessity of redemption by means of the Incarnation only. He views sin from a forensic point of sight as a debt due to God's honour, which man alone *ought* to pay, but which God alone *could* pay, and which, therefore, entailed the Incarnation, that it might be paid by One who is both, the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Speculation on such a matter is

vain, and may be irreverent. There is no trace in Athanasius of any attempt to place the justice and the mercy of God in contraposition. The separation of these two, as of any of the attributes of God's revealed nature, is unknown to Scripture. The attributes of the Divine Nature are essentially identical with the Divine Person, and are therefore indivisible.

Athanasius does not enter into any discussion respecting the Incarnation of the Word, independently of the Fall. He deals with the great fact of the Word becoming flesh only as affecting the fallen creation. Yet it may be said that his line of argument does not preclude the possibility of the Incarnation (apart from the Passion) being intended as the Divine consummation of the creation as unfallen. But such questions belong rather to the Scholastic than to the Patristic age of the Church.*

2. The peculiar fitness and beauty of the similes employed by Athanasius will be admitted at once by the reader of the essay; and it is manifestly unfair to extract them from their context. It may be sufficient to call especial attention to that

* See Dr. Westcott's essay, *The Gospel of Creation*, in his *Epistles of St. John*.

of the emperor's care for his colony (chap. xiii.); the portrait on a panel (chap. xiv.); the careful teacher (chap. xv.); the generous wrestler (chap. xxiv.); the asbestos (chap. xlv.); and the dazzling multitude of the ocean's waves (chap. liv.).

In the second part of the treatise, Athanasius addresses himself to unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and brings forward proofs applicable to each in refutation of their unbelief. The former he refutes from their own Scriptures and from the obviously fulfilled prophecies of the Messiah's Person and Work: the latter he meets on the ground of the current cosmic philosophy.

With respect to the argument against the Jews, but one remark is called for. To us the use made by Athanasius of the words of the Old Testament may seem in one or two instances strained and merely verbal, resulting in one case in apparent grotesqueness (chap. xxxv.; Deut. xxviii. 66). This may readily be allowed; but the same objection may be brought against certain quotations in the New Testament (*e.g.* Rom. x. 18; 2 Cor. viii. 15; Gal. iii. 16; Heb. i. 5, ii. 13), which are made to serve a different purpose to that in their original context. To a Jew,

however, this objection would not occur: he was accustomed to see mystic interpretations attached to passages, words, and even letters, in the Scriptures; and the general witness of the Law and the Prophets to Christ cannot be denied. The acceptance of the literal sense by no means excludes the mystical application of texts.

The argument against the Gentiles proceeds upon the analogy of Plato's 'world-soul,' or vital principle immanent in the cosmos. This theory Athanasius seizes and turns to Christian purposes. The Word who admittedly gives life and order to, and is in, the whole, must also be in the part; and in a part He manifested Himself—namely, in a human body. He gives life and being to everything, yet is essentially distinct from creation, being one in essence with the Father only. His power and might are proved by the collapse of every form of evil at His presence, and by the world-wide spread of His faith; and this victory was achieved by His death and resurrection.

One word may be allowed as to the translation. The wonderful power of epigram and paranomasia inherent in the Greek language is made use of by

Athanasius, and defies reproduction in an English version. The point of one argument, so plain in the original (compare chap. iii. with chaps. xi., xii.), is almost lost in the translation. Man, as made by the Logos, was 'logical,' i.e. reasonable, rational (the Greek λόγος signifying reason as well as word, a *nuance* lost in the English), and thus differed from the brute creation, which was not made after the image of God, and, therefore, had no knowledge of the Logos. Man, by his moral fall, lost the grace of being like the Logos, and by his intellectual fall ceased to contemplate the Logos, and, therefore, plunged into sin and superstition. To restore his true reason, and make man again 'logical,' there was need of the presence of the Logos, who, on this account, became Incarnate; and re-created man stands forth as again a partaker of the Divine Nature. This last mystery, too, is embodied in a word (θεοποιῆσθαι) for which we have no exact equivalent (see the note on chap. liv.). The translation has been made from the text (necessarily corrected in one or two instances) of the Benedictine edition.

T. H. B.





Analysis.



Introduction Chapter I.

PART I. CHAPTERS II.-XXXII.

I. The Doctrine of Creation . . . Chapters II., III.

II. Reasons for the Incarnation . . Chapters IV.-XVI.

1. Man's moral fall Chapters IV.-X.

2. Man's intellectual fall . . Chapters XI.-XVI.

III. Aspects of the Incarnation . . Chapters XVII.-XIX.

IV. Aspects of the Death and Resurrection
of Christ Chapters XX.-XXXII.

PART II. CHAPTERS XXXIII.-LV.

I. Refutation of the Jews.

1. From Prophecy . Chapters XXXIII.-XXXIX.

2. From present facts Chapter XL.

II. Refutation of the Gentiles.

1. From philosophical arguments

Chapters XLI.-XLV.

2. From present facts . . . Chapters XLVI.-LV.

Conclusion Chapters LVI., LVII.





Synopsis of the Treatise.



INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.



DIAGNOSIS has been discussed in our former treatise (*Contra Gentes*), and the Divinity of the Word, together with His functions in respect of creation and the universe, pointed out.

As the proper sequence to this, we will now discuss the Incarnation and Divine Manifestation of the Word, in order that on account of His humiliation He may be the more revered.

To the scoffs of unbelievers He opposes proofs of His

Divinity; impossibilities through Him become possibilities; things unseemly become seemly; things human become divine. Heathen gods are overthrown by the cross, and scoffers are insensibly won over to acknowledge Him.

For a due treatment of the subject it is necessary to repeat what has been already said, in order to know—

1. The cause of the manifestation, and—

2. The nature of the Saviour's assumption of humanity.

For being naturally incorporeal, He assumed a human body.

The Incarnation pre-supposes the creation; the restoration of fallen creation by its Creator fitly follows; for the Father worked out its re-creation in Him through whom He originally created it.

PART I.

I. The Doctrine of Creation.

CHAPTER II.

Rejection of Erroneous Views of Creation.

Rejection of the theory of the—

1. Epicuræans; spontaneous generation.

For this would entail mere existence without diversity of forms; whereas the difference of existing forms and bodies in the world argues a creative intellect.

2. Platonists; formation of the world out of pre-existent matter.

This subjects God to human limitations, making Him not Creator, but craftsman.

3. Gnostics : dual agency in creation—matter essentially an evil, and God making the best out of it He could.

Holy Scripture refutes this (Matt. xix. 4 ; John i. 3), showing that God created all things without any exception through His Word.

CHAPTER III.

The True Doctrine of Creation.

Such vain babblings the Christian faith condemns as godless.

The true doctrine is that God brought the universe into being out of nothing (Gen. i. 1 ; Sheph. Herm. Mand. 1 ; Hebrews xi. 3).

God is the fount of goodness, and out of His own goodness He brought man into being, and, because he was by his nature incapable of continuance, He endowed him with the exceptional gift of being in God's image. To aid man's free-will towards right, He further strengthened the grace given—

1. By a law ;
2. By a place.

For He placed him in paradise, and promised him celestial bliss conditionally on his perseverance in grace (Gen. ii. 17) ; on the other hand, death was made the penalty of transgression ; and not death simply, but death and the continuance in the corruption of death,

II. Reasons for the Incarnation : 1. Man's Moral Fall.

CHAPTER IV.

The Doctrine of the Fall.

Our creation and God's Incarnation are closely allied, for man's fall necessitated the Incarnation.

God made man for incorruption, but man fell away and death reigned supreme. The Word called them into being, but by turning away from their Creator, the only source of their being, they declined into a state verging on non-existence and corruption.

Man is mortal, but through his likeness to the self-existent One, he would have been immortal, had he not fallen.

CHAPTER V.

The Sad State of Man after the Fall.

God not merely created man, but also gave him the grace of a Divine life. Through envy of the devil, sin and death entered the world; and from that one fault sprang illimitable sin and wickedness, as St. Paul shows (Rom. i. 18 foll.).

CHAPTER VI.

Some Remedy for the Fall was necessary.

The human race was wasting; God's image was being effaced, and His work ruined. Death reigned supreme, and this it was impossible to escape, for God had added that law because of transgression.

What, then, was to be done? Either God must be false to His word, that for sin man must die, and let man live—which would be monstrous; Or, that which had once shared in the being of the Word must sink again into non-existence through corruption—which would be unfitting. For thus God's design in creating man would be defeated—which would be most unfitting.

All things were becoming corrupt: what was God's goodness to do? Suffer corruption to reign over them? Why then was man created? For weakness would be attributed to God if His work failed under His very eyes. This would be most monstrous.

Therefore man could not be left in corruption.

CHAPTER VII.

Repentance alone was insufficient.

On the other hand, the consistency of God's essential attributes could not be sacrificed for man's profit.

What then was God to do? Demand repentance for the transgression? But repentance would not satisfy the law which demanded death; nor would it amend a fallen nature. It would only cause cessation from sin.

Had corruption not followed from sin, repentance might have availed; but death and corruption once incurred, men lost the grace of God's image, and stood in need of the Word Himself, their Creator, to re-create them. No one else could re-create but the Creator. He alone could worthily guard the consistency of God, re-create everything, suffer for all, and represent all.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Incarnation of the Word.

The Word, therefore, in His loving-kindness, visits the earth, from which He was never really absent. He sees the evil and pities mankind, and takes a body similar to ours. This He prepares for Himself in the womb of a pure and spotless virgin, and personally appropriates it.

This body He offered to the Father as a sacrifice on behalf of all, to do away with death; and by this offering He restored us to incorruption, and by His Resurrection He abolished death for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

By the Incarnation we are freed from Death.

The Word, perceiving that death could not be abolished except by the death of all; and since He Himself, the Immortal Word, could not die, took a body capable of death, and in it made a sufficient death for all: He by the resurrection abolished corruption, and by the self-sacrifice obliterated death. For He by His death satisfied all that was required, since all are united with Him; and by our solidarity with Him and one another we all are clothed with His immortality, and death no longer has any power over us. The presence of an emperor in a city preserves it from attack, and similarly the presence of the Word in human nature has put an end to the plots of our enemies and the corruption of death.

CHAPTER X.

The Fitness of the Incarnation.

An emperor who has founded a city preserves it, even though it has been attacked through the carelessness of its own inhabitants, not regarding their want of care, but what is due to himself. So the Word who made mankind does not overlook its ruin, but by the offering of His own body removes death and corrects their carelessness by His own teaching, thus restoring man's whole nature.

This is proved by St. Paul (2 Cor. v. 14): 'One died for all, then all died'; and (Heb. ii. 8, 9), 'Christ tasted death for every man.'

None other than God the Word must become incarnate, as St. Paul says (Heb. ii. 10), signifying that the Creator of man was the only One who should re-create him.

He assumed a body to offer it for bodies like His own, and to destroy death and the devil (Heb. ii. 14). As through man death obtained the mastery, so through the Word becoming man, death was abolished and the resurrection assured (1 Cor. xv. 21).

2. *Man's Intellectual Fall.*

CHAPTER XI.

God's Care for Man: Man's Wickedness.

God, knowing that man in himself was incapable of knowing Him, took pity on him, and gave him a knowledge of Himself, lest his existence should be profitless.

Without a knowledge of Him they would not differ from irrational creatures. And why should He make man if He did not wish him to know Him?

He made man, therefore, in the likeness of the Word, that they might know Him, and through Him, the Father. Yet man, despising this gift, fell away and forgot his knowledge of God, 'worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.' They sacrificed to idols and worshipped dæmons, gave heed to magic and astrology; in fact, they utterly lost their conception of God, although He was revealing Himself by manifold means.

CHAPTER XII.

For God in His mercy had foreseen man's forgetfulness of the direct knowledge of Himself, and had provided also the works of creation to witness to Him. He went even further, and gave man a law and prophets, through whom men could gain more immediate knowledge about higher things.

Thus they might have preserved their knowledge of God by contemplating the Creation, or by conversing with the holy men, or by studying God's law. For the law and the prophets, though sent to the Jews, were not for Jews only, but they were for the whole world, as a sacred means of instruction in the knowledge of God and right ordering of the soul.

Nevertheless men became as brutes.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Fitness of the Renewal.

Man having become de-rationalized, what was God to do? To keep silence and permit the deception of dæmons to succeed? If so, why had man been made in His own

image ; and rational, when he might just as well have been made irrational? If he were not worthy of receiving a conception of God, why had it been given him originally? And if man did not worship his real Creator, God would be dishonoured in His creation.

A human emperor who has colonized a country which afterwards rebels, sends messages, messengers, and if necessary, goes himself in person to reclaim his subjects, and save his own work. Much more will God save His creatures from becoming slaves to sin and destruction.

This could only be done by a renewal of the original grace by which they had been made in His own image.

But man could not renew it, for he was only a copy ; nor could angels, for not even they were likenesses of God ; the Word alone, the image of the Father, could renew the image in man. Death and corruption, too, must be abolished, and He alone could do this.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Fitness of the Incarnation of the Word.

A portrait once effaced must be restored from the original. So the Son of God came to save and renew the lost likeness in man (Luke xix. 10 ; John iii. 5). Man could not do this, for he had lost the knowledge he once had, and even the witness of Creation had not profited him. It was necessary for the Word alone to renew the instruction—and this, not through creation, for that had already failed, but by revealing Himself in a body.

CHAPTER XV.

The Condescension of the Word.

Like a careful teacher, the Word condescended to man's foolishness (1 Cor. i. 21), and since men were finding gods for themselves in nature, in man, and in dæmons, the Word Himself becomes man, and through His works assists them to gain higher knowledge. Creation, men, dæmons, and heroes, in different ways now pointed to Christ, whose deeds outshone every man's, and taught men of the Father.

CHAPTER XVI.

First drawing man's attention to Himself as Man, He then led them on to know Him as God (Eph. iii. 18, 19). By the self-revelation of the Word, all things have been filled with the knowledge of God.

The Incarnation effected two things: The destruction of death; and the re-creation of mankind.

III. Aspects of the Incarnation.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Incarnation did not circumscribe the Word.

The Word was not so circumscribed in the body as to be there only and nowhere else. He was still the energizing principle of all things as before. He was in everything, but not essentially identified with everything; being only entirely in the Father alone,

The soul by acts of thought can comprehend distant objects, but cannot influence them; not so the Word, for He controlled both His own body and the whole universe, being in all things and yet essentially distinct from them.

As man, He fulfilled human duties; as Word, He quickened all things; as Son, He was with the Father.

There was nothing defiling to Him in being born of the Virgin; rather He sanctified the body.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Works of the Incarnation.

The human actions attributed to Him are those of the body of God the Word; they prove the hypostatic union, and the reality of His body.

His works proved Him to be Son of God (John x. 37). Just as Nature witnessed to its invisible Creator, so His works witnessed to the Word in the body. His miracles prove Him to be God even to the casual observer. His miraculous birth proves Him to be the Maker of all bodies. His other miracles prove Him to be Lord of Nature,

CHAPTER XIX.

The witness of Nature having been overlooked by men, the works of Christ would give them new sight; for they compel His recognition as the Power of God.

Nature herself bore testimony at the crucifixion that the sufferer was Son of God. This leads to a consideration of His death, the main point of our faith.

IV. Aspects of the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

CHAPTER XX.

Summary of Previous Argument.

To briefly sum up the causes of the Incarnation :—

1. No other could change corruption into incorruption but the Creator ;
2. No other could restore to man the lost image but the express image of the Father ;
3. No other could make mortality immortal but the very Life Itself ;
4. No other could teach us about the Father but the Son Himself.

But He came also especially that the debt of death due from all might be cancelled. By the indwelling of the Word His body became incorruptible ; and thus in Christ's body the death of all was fulfilled, and death and corruption extinguished for ever (Heb. ii. 14).

CHAPTER XXI.

Why Christ died.

Now, we die only to rise again like seeds (1 Cor. xv. 53).

(*First Objection.*) Why did not Christ choose to die privately and in a more honourable way ?

Because He could not die from sickness or weakness, being the Life and Strength, who healed the sicknesses of others.

(*Second Objection.*) Why did He die at all ?

Because it was for that very reason that He came, and by His death comes our resurrection.

CHAPTER XXII.

Why Christ died at the Hands of Others.

(*Third Objection.*) Why did He not preserve Himself from the plots of the Jews?

Because it did not become Him either to inflict death on Himself, or to shun it altogether. He waited for death to destroy it. He came to die for mankind, and therefore His death ought to come from others, and not from Himself.

His great care was about the resurrection, which was a trophy exhibited as a proof both of the obliteration of corruption, and of the immortality of all bodies.

Had He died from infirmity, His healing of others would be derided.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Why Christ died a Public Death.

A public death before witnesses was absolutely necessary for the assurance of the doctrine of the resurrection.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Why Christ did not choose His own Death.

(*Fourth Objection.*) Why did He not at any rate choose an honourable death?

Because it might have been said that He only had power

over the particular form of death which He might have chosen. He did not choose the manner of His death, that He might prove the conqueror of death in all, or any, of its forms ; just as a generous wrestler behaves, who leaves the choice of his antagonists to the spectators, especially if hostile to him, that he may prove himself superior to all.

The death chosen to disgrace Him has proved the very trophy over death—the cross.

CHAPTER XXV.

Why Christ died on the Cross.

There was a special appropriateness in the cross.

To remove our curse He must die the death to which the curse was attached (Deut. xxi. 23).

On the cross alone could He stretch forth His hands to summon and unite together Jew and Gentile (John xii. 32).

On the cross alone could He die a death in mid-air, and thus overcome the devil, the prince of the air, in his own region. He thus purified the air, and made a new way for us up into heaven.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Why Christ rose the Third Day.

He showed His body openly to be dead, and then raised it on the third day.

He did not raise it on the same day, lest His real death should be denied ; nor on the second day, lest His incorruption should not be clearly manifest ; nor later than the

third day, lest the identity of His body should be questioned : also, lest He should keep His disciples too long in suspense, and lest the witnesses of His death should be dispersed, and the memory of it faded.

CHAPTER XXVII.

By the Death of Christ, Death was overcome.

That death is destroyed, the fearlessness of men in attacking it is a proof. Formerly it was a terror even to the saints, but now it is despised. The 'pains are loosed,' so that now children, women, and men gladly suffer it because they know its powerlessness. A conquered and bound tyrant is mocked and derided unhesitatingly by those who formerly trembled at him ; so death, overcome by the Saviour, is laughed at and derided by those in Christ.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Victory over Death.

Man naturally fears death, but because of Christ it is despised.

Just as fire is harmless to asbestos, so death to the Christian. And any one by coming to Christ and learning in His school may test the powerlessness of death.

CHAPTER XXIX.

If the sign of the cross and faith in Christ destroys all fear of death, it is plain that Christ Himself conquered death.

If death, before the advent of the Saviour, was strong and terrible, but now is weak and derided, it is clear that the Saviour's advent destroyed it.

If men, formerly weak, now are strong against death, it is clear that the Saviour gives them a share in His victory over death.

It is possible to verify this by actual sight, therefore let no one doubt the abolition of death by the Saviour.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Resurrection proved by Christ's Power and Works.

Death being slain, there only remained to raise His body as a proof of it.

The miracles of grace, the withdrawal of the heathen from idolatry, and the moral reformation of men, are the work of One who lives; for activity belongs only to the living.

To say that the idols and dæmons are living, but that He who is driving them away is dead, is preposterous.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Those who disbelieve in the resurrection convict themselves, for their gods ought to persecute Christ, whereas Christ is persecuting them and proving them to be dead.

Death and the dæmons are daily being proved to have lost their sovereignty. Disbelief implies ignorance of the power of the Word. For if Christ took a body it must die for all; but being the Temple of Life it could not remain

dead, but arose from the dead, and its works are the proof of its resurrection.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Is it because He is not seen that His resurrection is disbelieved? But God is invisible even in creation: He is known by His works only, and they cry aloud that He is alive, and therefore risen.

A blind man learns that the sun has risen because he feels its heat, so the unbelievers must recognize that Christ is living by seeing the power of believers.

If He were dead, the dæmons would not obey Him, but they cry out that He is alive, and obey His behests.

The Word, then, took a body, and taught men of the Father: by His death He abolished death, and graced all with incorruption by the promise of the resurrection, raising His own body as its firstfruits.

PART II.

I. Refutation of the Jews—I. From Prophecies.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Argument from Prophecies respecting Christ.

The proof of the resurrection and of the victory over death being clear, let us now refute the unbelief of Jews and the derision of Greeks, who attack the unseemliness of the cross and of the Incarnation of God the Word.

The refutation of the Jews lies in their own Scriptures, which clearly predict the coming of a Man (Isaiah vii. 14 ; Num. xxiv. 5-7, 17 ; Isaiah viii. 4), who was also Lord of all (Isaiah xix. 1 ; Hos. xi. 1).

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Prophecies of Christ's Passion.

Nor were His death for all, and the plots and insults of the Jews, left unpredicted (Isaiah liii. 3-10), but were exactly foretold.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Prophecies of the Cross and of the Conversion of the Gentiles.

The Cross, too, is conspicuously mentioned by Moses (Deut. xxviii. 66), and the Prophets (Jer. xi. 19 ; Psa. xxii. 16-18) ; and likewise is the turning of the nations to the knowledge of God foretold (Isaiah xi. 10).

The facts of Christ's life alone—His virgin-birth, with the witness of the star—satisfy the prophecies.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Unique Eminence of Christ's Birth and Kingship.

Christ alone reigned as King from His birth, spoiling His enemies. He alone is it upon whom the nations place their hope. His death alone took place for the salvation of all upon a cross.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The unparalleled Death of Christ.

Christ alone of recorded holy men suffered crucifixion for the salvation of all. He alone is the Life of all, whose generation is untraceable, and whose descent from heaven was signified by a star in the heavens, whose Birth in Judæa attracted the worship of men from Persia, at whose arrival in Egypt the idols quaked, at whose crucifixion creation shuddered, and by whose death creation was ransomed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The further Witness of Prophecy.

Can the Jews explain who it is of whom Isaiah (lxv. 1, 2) says that He was made manifest out of obscurity and stretched forth His hands upon the cross? Or how can they face his other prophecy (xxxv. 3-6), which declares His sojourn here, and the signs and time of His Advent, when alone the unparalleled miracles of healing spoken of by the prophet took place? Even the Jews of Christ's time confessed that One who did such works must be from God (John ix. 32, 33).

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Prophecy of Daniel.

Daniel (ix. 24, 25) foretold the exact time of Christ's advent, and that after it prophecy should fail and Jerusalem fall. This was not referable to the Babylonish captivity, for prophecy flourished during it and after it.

2. From present facts.

CHAPTER XL.

The Testimony of Facts that Christ has come.

Jerusalem stood, and prophecy and vision existed, until the time of Christ's advent ; since then they have ceased to exist.

The Gentiles are being converted to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

What more could the expected Christ do than the Saviour has accomplished? The nations are called ; prophecy and vision have ceased ; the godlessness of idolatry is refuted ; death is destroyed.

There is, therefore, no excuse left for the JEWS.

II. Refutation of the Gentiles—I. From Philosophical Arguments.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Bodily Manifestation of the Word involves no Absurdity.

The Gentiles scoff ; but let us silence them on reasonable grounds.

Do they admit the existence of the Word? If not, they need not scoff at what they are ignorant of. If they do (as they do) admit that He manifests Himself in the organic whole of the universe, why should He not also in a single body? For a human body is a part of the same whole.

CHAPTER XLII.

Just as the power which is in the whole body is also in the toe ; so the Power which energizes the whole universe is also in the part of it.

If it is not monstrous for the Word to be in creation, neither is it for Him to be in a created body. If He is (as He is) in the whole, He is also in the part ; and why should He not manifest Himself in that wherein He is ?

The mind is present throughout the whole body, but is made known by a part—the tongue, without the essence of mind suffering detraction ; so there is nothing unfitting in the Word, present in all things, using a bodily instrument.

CHAPTER XLIII. ✕

Reasons for the assumption of Human Nature by the Word.

‘ Why did Christ not use a nobler instrument than a human body ? ’

Because He came, not to dazzle men and parade Himself, but to heal and to teach.

Besides, man alone of His creatures had strayed ; and if man could not recognize Him in the whole working of the universe, at least they should not be ignorant of Him as working in a part of it ; namely, a human body. And as by being in creation He did not share its essential nature, so neither by being in the body did He partake of the things of the body, but rather sanctified the body.

If Plato can say (Polit. 273) without absurdity that ‘ God rescued the world when He saw it in danger of

collapsing,' surely we may say with equal propriety that 'the Word appeared as man to save mankind.'

CHAPTER XLIV.

'God created man by a word, and He ought to have restored him by a word.'

But creation out of nothing is a different thing altogether from the restoration of what is already in existence.

It was man, as already made, that was in corruption and needing salvation, and therefore the Word very fitly used a human instrument. The corruption had become a context of the body; death was woven in with man's nature; and it was necessary for life to be woven in to counteract the corruption of death. Therefore the Word became Incarnate that He might win back mortal man to immortality.

Stubble enwrapped with asbestos does not fear fire; so the body endued with Christ does not fear death.

CHAPTER XLV.

God works in man as in creation, so that everything may be 'filled with the knowledge of the Lord.'

The order of the heavens, the weakness of man, the defeat of the dæmons, and the obedience of the natural elements, alike bear their testimony to the Word their Creator and Master. Every part of creation has been touched by Him, and man may recognize His Divinity on every side. If these arguments seem inadequate, let the Gentiles look at facts,

2. From present facts.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Decline of Idolatry. *

From the date of the Incarnation discredit is thrown upon idols, soothsaying, hero-worship, dæmoniacal agencies, magic, and Greek philosophy. And whereas the ancient cults were strictly local and various, the worship of Christ is universal and uniform.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The Decline of the Oracles, Magic, and Philosophy. →

Since the advent of Christ the oracles are forsaken and dumb, and the soothsayer has no place. Dæmoniacal apparitions, likewise, are driven away by the sign of the cross. The supposed gods prove to be but mortal men, and magic is utterly confuted. And philosophy, which could not persuade even a very few people about immortality, has been eclipsed by the simple teaching of Christ, who has persuaded vast numbers of people to despise death and look for eternal happiness.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The Witness of Christ's Works to His Godhead.

Christian continence may be learnt from the virgins and celibates; Christian faith in immortality from the army of martyrs.

Any one who wills may test the power of the cross and of Christ's name in the midst of dæmoniacal deceits.

If He is a mere man, He transcends the power of all other men ; if He is a magician, He brings to naught all magic ; if He is a dæmon, He expels all dæmons. Christ by His power shows Himself more than man, magician, or dæmon, for all these are subject to Him. He is truly and indeed Son of God.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Christ's Works are unparalleled.

His birth and miracles far exceed any previous wonders among men. Asclepius, Heracles, and Dionysius were deified because they did wondrous deeds ; but contrast their works with those of Christ—with the wonders at His death, with the prevalence of His worship, and its power.

CHAPTER L.

Who of all wise men, emperors and tyrants, even in his lifetime prevailed universally, as Christ has done after His death, over the whole world ?

What little the sophists did was counteracted by their controversies and rivalries, and by their inability to convince more than a very few even during their life-time ; whereas Christ draws all men to Himself everywhere, and at His name dæmons flee.

The resurrection of the body is unparalleled even in legend, showing the impotence of philosophy, and leaving it open for Christ to display His power.

CHAPTER LI. ✱

The Moral Power of Christ.

Christ's teaching worked apparent impossibilities in morals all over the world.

He persuaded the intellect, and made men cease from idolatry and sin ; and instead of chronic warfare amongst idolatrous nations, there is now peace amongst followers of Christ's teaching.

CHAPTER LII. ✱

Christ's Divine Teaching brings Peace.

Peace is brought in by Christ, in accordance with scriptural prophecy (Isaiah ii. 4).

Wars were kindled by dæmons in fear for themselves, but are put an end to by Christ.

Christ's disciples, no longer warring amongst themselves, are ranged in united opposition to the powers of evil.

CHAPTER LIII.

Christ's Divinity revealed through His Mighty Works.

How marvellous is the power of Christ which at the first blow shattered every stronghold of heathendom at once ! Works such as these are not those of man, but of God. Had this been really recognized, 'They would not have crucified the Lord of Glory' (1 Cor. ii. 8).

CHAPTER LIV.

The Glorious Nature and Magnitude of Christ's Works.

The Incarnate Word is known to us from His works, as God is. By them we recognize His Divine Manifestation, by which He makes us partakers of the being of God.

It is as impossible to enumerate all the Saviour's beneficent works as it is to count the ocean waves ; it is better to mention one, and leave the whole to be marvelled at by him who will behold them.

CHAPTER LV.

Summary of Foregoing Proofs.

By the advent of the Saviour, then, paganism decreases, philosophy declines, all dæmoniacal deceits perish. The faith of Christ, on the other hand, spreads, and opposition to it decays.

As the darkness vanishes before the sun, so heathen darkness prevails no longer, and the whole earth is illuminated by Christ's teaching.

The appearance of the true emperor exposes the usurpers ; so the Advent of Christ has exposed and silenced the usurpation of dæmons and idols.

The Son of God, the Only-Begotten Word, alone remains, while temporal things are vanishing away.

CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER LVI.

Search the Scriptures, O Macarius, and follow out the ideas suggested in this outline. Learn to look and be prepared for His second and glorious advent.

CHAPTER LVII.

Above all, imitate the lives of the saints, for so only can you understand their writings, and know what God has imparted to them. Then the reward of the saints will be yours.



ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΕΝΑΝΘΡΩΠΗΣΕΩΣ
ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ.



SINCE in our for- I.
mer treatise we *Introduction.*
have sufficiently discussed a few
points out of many respecting
the error of the Gentiles con-
cerning idols, and their super-
stition, and how the invention of
idols originally came about—namely, how out
of wickedness men devised for themselves the
worship of idols ; and since, by the grace of
God, we have also briefly indicated the
Divinity of the Word of the Father, and His
universal providence and power, and how the
good Father by Him gives order to all things,

and how all things are moved by Him, and in Him are quickened: come now, Macarius and true lover of Christ, let us as a further step in the faith of our religion proceed to set forth somewhat concerning the Incarnation of the Word and His Divine Manifestation amongst us, which Jews calumniate and Greeks deride, but we venerate; in order that, in consequence of the seeming humiliation of the Word, your devotion to Him may be yet greater and more profound.

For the more He is derided by the unbelieving the greater witness does He furnish of His Godhead: for things which men misunderstand as impossible, these He clearly shows to be possible; and things which men deride as unseemly, these by His own goodness He makes seemly; and things which men in their wisdom laugh at as human, these by His own power He clearly shows to be Divine; overturning through the cross the vain pretence of idols, and secretly bringing over the mockers and unbelievers to the recognition of His Divinity and power.

Now it is necessary in treating of this subject to bear in mind what has been previously said, in order that you may neither be ignorant of the cause of the bodily appearance of the Word of the Father, so great and so high, nor think that the Saviour by condition of His own nature has worn a body; but that, being in His own nature incorporeal

and the Word, He has yet been manifested to us in a human body for our salvation out of the loving-kindness and goodness of His own Father.

It is well, then, in treating of this subject, to speak first of the creation of the universe and of God its Artificer, in order that one may duly recognize that its re-creation has been wrought by the Word who originally made it. For it will not appear inconsistent for the Father to have wrought its salvation in Him through whom He made it.

Concerning the making of the universe and the creation of all things many have held different opinions, and as each one wished, so he decided it.

II.

*Rejection of
erroneous views
of Creation.*

For some say that all things came into existence of themselves and by chance; as the Epicuræans, who against themselves idly say that there is no Providence over the universe—speaking contrary to clear and evident fact. For if, as they hold, all things came into existence spontaneously without Providence, then all things would merely have existence, and would be similar and without differences. For as in the case of the universe all must have been sun or moon, so with men the whole must have been hand, or eye, or foot. But as it is, this is not the case,

For we see one thing, sun ; another, moon ; and another, earth : and similarly in human bodies, one thing, foot ; another, hand ; and another, head. And such a distinct arrangement as this argues not a spontaneous generation, but shows that a cause preceded them ; from which it is possible to apprehend God the Arranger and Maker of all.

Others again, amongst whom is Plato, the great one among the Greeks, explain that God has made the universe out of pre-existent and uncreated matter, since God could not have made anything unless the material previously existed ; just as the wood must previously exist for the carpenter to enable him to work. But they do not know that in saying this they impute weakness to God ; for if He Himself is not the cause of matter, but only makes things, as we see them, out of already existing matter, He is proved to be weak, being unable without material to make anything that exists ; just as it is certainly a weakness on the part of the carpenter not to be able without wood to make anything required. For, on this supposition, if there had been no matter, God would not have made anything. And how could He yet be called Maker and Artificer if He owes the power to make to some other source, namely, matter ? And if this be so, God will, according to them, be only a craftsman, and not a Creator who brings into being ;

if, at least, He works up existing matter, and is not Himself the cause of matter. For He could not be termed a Creator at all, if He did not create the matter out of which also the things created have been made.

The heretics,* again, fashion for themselves an Artificer of all things other than the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, evincing great blindness even with respect to the words they use. For when the Lord says to the Jews: ‘Did ye not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?”’ and then, referring to the Creator, says: ‘What, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder’ †—how can these men bring in the creation as something independent of the Father? And if John says, including everything, ‘All things were made through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing was made,’ ‡ how could the Artificer be another, different from the Father of Christ?

So do these men babble. But III.
the godly teaching and the faith *The true doctrine*
according to Christ condemn as *of Creation.*
godlessness their idle talk. For it knows that,

* Gnostics. † Matt. xix. 4 ff. ‡ John i. 3.

not spontaneously, since Providence is not wanting; nor out of pre-existent matter, since God is not weak; but out of nothing and absolute non-existence God brought the universe into being through the Word, as He says through Moses: 'In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth;'^{*} and through the most profitable book of The Shepherd: 'First of all believe that God is one, who created and disposed all things, and brought them into being out of nothing.'[†] Paul too, indicates the same, saying: 'By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear.'[‡]

For God is good, or rather is Himself the fount of goodness. But in one who is good a grudging spirit is impossible with respect to anything; whence, grudging existence to none, He made all things out of nothing through His own Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. And among these, pitying the race of men above all things on earth, and seeing that from the condition of its own nature it could not continue permanently, He graced them with something yet more, and did not merely create men as He did the irrational living creatures upon earth, but made them after His own image, imparting to them a share even of the power of His

^{*} Gen. i. 1. [†] Hermas, Mand. 1. [‡] Heb. xi. 3.

own Word; in order that, possessing as it were certain reflections of the Word (*Λόγος*), and being made rational (*λογικοί*), they might be able to continue in happiness, living the true and only real life of the saints in paradise.

But knowing, again, that man's will could turn both ways, in His foresight He made secure the grace given to them by a law and a place. For He brought them into His own paradise, and gave them a law, to the end that if they preserved the grace given, and remained good, they might have the life in paradise without sorrow or pain or anxiety, in addition to the promise of incorruption in heaven; but that, if they transgressed and turned aside and became evil, they might know that they would undergo the corruption in death which was natural to them, and no longer live in paradise, but, thenceforth dying outside it, abide in death and in corruption.

For this the Divine Scripture proclaims, saying, in the Person of God: 'Of every tree that is in the garden, eating thou shalt eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, ye shall not eat of it, but, in the day that ye eat, dying ye shall die.*' Now what else could these words, 'dying ye shall die,' mean, but that they should not die simply, but also remain in the corruption of death?

* Gen. ii. 16 f.

IV. You are probably wondering *The doctrine of the Fall.* why ever we, having proposed to speak of the Incarnation of the Word, are now discussing the origin of mankind. But this, indeed, is not foreign to the subject before us. For it is necessary for us, in speaking of the manifestation of the Saviour to us, to speak also of the origin of mankind, that you may know that our case was the reason of His coming down, and our transgression called out the loving-kindness of the Word, so that He both hastened to us, and the Lord appeared among men.

For we were the occasion of His becoming flesh, and for our salvation He showed such loving-kindness as to both be born and appear in a human body. In this way, therefore, God made man, and willed that he should remain in incorruption; but men, having utterly neglected and disregarded the contemplation of God, and having formulated and devised wickedness for themselves (as was said in the former treatise *), fell under the threatened condemnation of death; and thenceforward no longer remained as they had been made, but were being utterly corrupted according to their devices, and death ruled as king over them. † For the transgression of the commandment was making them return to their

* *Contra Gentes* iii.-v.

† Cf. Rom. i. 21 f., v. 14, 21.

natural state ; so that, having come into being out of non-existence, they also naturally suffer corruption back again into non-existence in course of time. For if, having once no existence, they were called into being by the presence and loving-kindness of the Word, it was a natural consequence that, when men were destitute of the knowledge of God, and were turned back again to non-existence (for evil is not-being, and good is being), they should, inasmuch as they were called into being from God who is, be for ever left destitute even of being—that is, that they should be destroyed, and remain in death and corruption.

For indeed by nature man is mortal, since he was made out of what is not ; but through his likeness to Him that is, and if he preserve it through constant contemplation of Him, he would deprive of its power the corruption which is his by nature, and would remain incorrupt ; as Wisdom says : ‘The observation of His laws is the confirmation of incorruption.’* And being incorrupt, he would be henceforth as God, as the Divine Scripture somewhere signifies, saying : ‘I said, Ye are gods, and all sons of the Most High ; but ye die as men, and fall as one of the princes.’ †

* Wisd. vi. 18.

† Psa. lxxxii. 6 f.

V. For God has not only made
The sad state of us out of nothing, but also graced
man after the us with a life in accordance with
Fall. God's by the grace of the Word.

But men, having turned away from eternal things, and having, by counsel of the devil, turned towards things of corruption, themselves became the cause of their own corruption in death; being, as I said before, by nature corruptible, but by grace of the communion of the Word capable of escaping from their natural state if they remained good.

For on account of the Word being with them, even their natural corruption did not come near them; as also Wisdom says: 'God created man for incorruption, and as an image of His own eternity; but by envy of the devil death entered into the world.'* And when this happened men began to die, and corruption thenceforth was rife amongst them, and prevailed more than was natural over the whole race, since it had the advantage over them also in the Divine threat on account of the transgression of the commandment.

For indeed in their trespasses men had not kept within any defined bounds, but gradually going further, transcended all limits; having in the beginning been inventors of wickedness, and provoked against themselves death

* Wisd. ii. 23 f.

and corruption; while afterwards, having turned aside to unrighteousness and exceeding all lawlessness, and stopping at no one evil, but continually devising all kinds of new sins, they have become insatiable in sinning. For there were adulteries and thefts everywhere, and the whole earth was full of murders and rapine. And of law there was no heed in corruption and injustice, but all wickednesses were being perpetrated by all both singly and in common. Cities were warring with cities, and nations rising against nations, and the whole earth was torn with factions and battles, while each strove to rival the others in lawlessness.

Nor were deeds even contrary to nature unknown to them; but as the martyr-apostle of Christ says: 'For their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was due.'*

For this reason, then, death
gaining more and more the mas-
tery over men, and corruption
remaining with them, the human race was

VI.

*Some remedy for
the Fall was
necessary.*

* Rom. i. 26 f.

perishing : man, rational (λογικός), and made after God's image, was disappearing, and the work wrought by God was being destroyed. For death, as I said before, by law thenceforth prevailed against us ; nor was it possible to escape the law, since it had been enacted by God because of the transgression ; and what was taking place was in truth at once monstrous and unfitting.*

For it were monstrous that God, having spoken, should lie—so that, when He had imposed the law that man if he transgressed the commandment should die, after the transgression man should not die, but His word be broken. For God would not be true if, having said he should die, man did not die.

And again, it were unfitting that beings once made rational (λογικά), and partakers of His Word (Λόγος) should perish, and turn back again to non-existence through corruption. For it were unworthy the goodness of God that creatures made by Him should utterly waste away through the deceit wrought upon man by the devil.

But especially were it most unfitting that the work of God in mankind should disappear either through their own carelessness, or through the deceit of dæmons.

As, then, the rational creatures were wasting away and such noble works perishing, what

* Cf. Gal. iii. 19.

was God who is good to do? Permit the corruption to prevail against them, and death to hold the mastery over them? In that case, where were the use of their being made in the beginning? For it had been better not to have been made than, having been made, to be neglected and perish.

For from neglect weakness, and not goodness, would be detected in God, if He were to overlook the ruin of His own work when He once had made it, more so than if He had not made man from the beginning. For if He had not made them it would be impossible to impute weakness; but, once made and created into being, it were most monstrous for His works to perish, and especially under the eye of Him who had made them.

It was impossible, therefore, to leave man to be carried off by corruption, because it would be unfitting and unworthy of God's goodness.

But yet, though this is necessarily so, there lies against it on the other side the consistency of God's character; so that God may appear true in His legislation concerning the death. For it would be monstrous that God, the Father of truth, should appear a liar for our benefit and preservation. What then must God needs do

VII.

*Repentance alone
was not
sufficient.*

Why repentance is not enough.

60 De Incarnatione Verbi Dei.

in this case? Demand repentance from men for their transgression? For this, some one might say, was worthy of God; that, just as from the transgression they became subject to corruption, so from the repentance they might again return to incorruption.

But repentance would not guard the consistency of God's character; for He would still remain untrue, if death did not hold the mastery over men. Nor does repentance recall men from what is according to their nature, but only makes them cease from their sins. If, indeed, it had only been a trespass, and not a consequent corruption, repentance would be well enough. But when once transgression gained a start, men came under the power of the corruption which was their nature, and were bereft of the grace which was theirs in virtue of their being made after God's image. What else were necessary to be done, or what was needed for such grace and recall, but the Word of God, who also in the beginning had made everything out of nothing?

For it was His part both to bring again the corruptible to incorruption, and to maintain for the Father His consistency of character with all. For being Word of the Father and above all, He therefore naturally was alone both able to re-create everything, and worthy to suffer on behalf of all, and to be ambassador for all with the Father.

For this purpose, then, the incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial Word of God came into our region, not, however, being far from it before. For no part of creation has been left without Him, but He has filled all things everywhere, while present with His own Father. But He comes condescending in His loving-kindness and manifestation to us. And seeing the rational (λογικόν) race perishing, and death reigning over all in corruption; beholding, too, the threat against the transgression confirming the corruption upon us, and how monstrous it would be for the law to become a dead letter before it was fulfilled; beholding also the unseemliness of what had happened—namely, that the very things of which He was Artificer were disappearing; beholding, again, the exceeding wickedness of men, how gradually and overwhelmingly they had increased it against themselves; seeing, besides, the liability of all men to death;—He pitied our race and compassionated our weakness and condescended to our corruption, and, unable to bear the mastery of death—lest His creature should perish and the work of His Father in man come to naught—He takes to Himself a body, and that one like our own.

For He did not will simply to become embodied, or merely to appear; for He might, if He willed simply to appear, as well

VIII.

*The Incarnation
of the Word.*

have made His Divine Manifestation through some other and more excellent method : but He took our body, and not simply so, but from a spotless and stainless virgin, knowing not a man—a body pure and truly untarnished by intercourse with men. For being Himself mighty, and Artificer of the universe, He prepares in the Virgin the body as a temple for Himself, and personally appropriates this as an instrument, being made known in it and dwelling in it.

And thus, taking from our bodies one similar, because all were liable to the corruption of death, He surrendered it to death instead of all, and offered it to the Father ; and this He did of His loving-kindness, in order that, by all dying in Him, the law with respect to the corruption of mankind might be abolished (inasmuch as its power was exhausted in the Lord's body, and no longer had place against like men), and that He might turn again to incorruption men who had turned back to corruption, and quicken them from death by the personal appropriation of His body, and by the grace of the resurrection, making death to completely vanish from them, as straw from fire.

IX.

*By the
Incarnation we
are freed from
death.*

For the Word, being conscious that no otherwise could the corruption of man be abolished save through death at any rate, while yet it was impossible for the Word to

die, being immortal and Son of the Father, for this reason takes to Himself a body capable of death, in order that it, by being made a partaker of the Word who is above all, might be worthy to die instead of all, and, through the indwelling Word, might remain incorruptible, and that for the future corruption should cease from all by the grace of the resurrection. Whence, by offering to death the body He Himself took as an offering and sacrifice free from every stain, He forthwith obliterated death from all His peers by the offering of the equivalent.

For it was only reasonable that the Word of God, being above all, by offering His own temple and bodily instrument as a substitute for the life of all, satisfied all that was required in His death : and thus the incorruptible Son of God, being united with all in virtue of a like nature, naturally clothed all with incorruption in the promise of the resurrection. For the corruption itself in death no longer has force against men by virtue of the Word dwelling in them through His one body.

Just as when a great emperor has entered into some large city and dwelt in one of its houses, such city is naturally deemed worthy of much honour, and no enemy or bandit any longer descends upon it to overthrow it, but rather it is deemed worthy of all respect because of the emperor dwelling in one house there ; so, too, is it with the Monarch of all. For

having come into our region, and dwelt in one body amongst His peers, for the future all the design on the part of the enemy against mankind has collapsed, and the corruption of death which of old prevailed against them has vanished away. For the human race had utterly perished, had not the Master and Saviour of all, the Son of God, come among us to put an end to death.

X. In fact this great work was *The fitness of the Incarnation.* especially befitting God's goodness. For if an emperor, who has founded a house or a city, when from the carelessness of its inhabitants it is besieged by bandits, does not by any means neglect it, but avenges and preserves it as his own work; regarding not the carelessness of the inhabitants, but what is befitting his own person: much more did God, the Word of the all-good Father, not overlook the human race called into being by Him, which was utterly going to corruption; but He abolished the death they had incurred by the offering of His own body, and corrected their carelessness by His own teaching, completely restoring the whole nature of man by His power.

Now of this one may be assured by the Saviour's own inspired disciples, if one reads their writings, when they say: 'For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died on behalf of all, then

all died ; and He died for all, that we should no longer live unto ourselves, but unto Him who for our sakes died and rose from the dead,* our Lord Jesus Christ ; and again : ‘ But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man.’ †

Next it signifies also why it was necessary that none other than God the Word should become man, saying : ‘ For it became Him for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, having brought many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering ;’ ‡ meaning by this that it was the part of none other to bring back mankind from the corruption they were in but God the Word, who also had made them in the beginning. But that it was for the sacrifice of bodies similar to His own that the Word Himself assumed a body, they signify, saying : ‘ Since then the children have been made sharers in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same ; that through death He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and might deliver all those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.’ §

* 2 Cor. v. 14.

† Heb. ii. 10.

‡ Heb. ii. 9.

§ Heb. ii. 14 f.

For by the sacrifice of His own body He both put an end to the law which was against us, and renewed to us a beginning of life, having given a hope of the resurrection. For since it was from man that death obtained the mastery over man, for this reason, through the Word of God becoming man, the abolition of death took place, and the resurrection of life; as the Christ-bearing man * says: 'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be quickened;' † and so forth.

For we no longer as condemned, but as men who rise, await the common resurrection of all, 'which in its own times' God, Who hath wrought it and freely given it to us, 'shall show.' †

This indeed is the first cause of the Saviour's becoming man.

But one might perceive also from the following considerations that His beneficent appearance among us fitly took place.

XI. When God, who has the power over all, was making the race of mankind through His own Word, perceiving the weakness of their nature, that it was unable of itself to know

* Cf. Gal. vi. 17. † 1 Cor. xv. 21 f.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 15.

its Artificer and to receive any conception at all of God ;—because while He was uncreate men had been made out of nothing, and while He was incorporeal they had been formed in a lower sphere in a body ; and because altogether there is much that is wanting in the creatures for the apprehension and knowledge of their Maker ;—He took pity on the human race, and, being in truth good, He did not leave them destitute of the knowledge of Himself, lest their very existence should prove profitless. For what advantage would existence be to the creatures made if they did not know their Maker ?* Or how would they be rational (λογικοί) if they had no knowledge of the Word (λόγος) of the Father in whom indeed they had come into being ? For they would not differ at all from irrational creatures (ἄλογοι) if they had a clear knowledge of nothing more than earthly matters.† Why indeed did God make them at all if, as according to this showing, He did not wish to be known by them ?

Whence, lest this should be the case, being good, He imparts to them a share of His own image, our Lord Jesus Christ, and makes them after His own image and likeness ; in order that through such a gift of grace per-

* Cf. infra Cap. cxiii. where the same argument recurs.

† Here, as elsewhere, chaps. vi., viii., &c., it is impossible to do justice to the paranomasia in the original.

ceiving the image, namely, the Word of the Father, they may be able to receive through Him a conception of the Father, and thus, coming to know their Maker, live the happy and truly blessed life.

But men, again, having wandered from truth, in spite of this treated lightly the grace given, and so turned away from God and defiled their own soul as not only to quite forget their conception of God, but even to re-fashion for themselves different gods of various kinds. For they imaged idols for themselves in place of the truth, and revered things that are not in preference to God who is, 'worshipping the creature rather than the Creator;'^{*} and, what was far the worst, they transferred the honour of God to wood and to stones and to all kinds of material, and to men; and even went further in what they perpetrated, as we have said in the former treatise.† Indeed, so impious were they, that they used both to worship dæmons and even proclaim them as gods, fulfilling their lusts. For they performed sacrifices of living animals and slaughters of men, as has been said before, as being their due worship, binding themselves all the more completely to their frenzies. Wherefore, also, enchantments were taught amongst them, and soothsaying in various places caused men to err, and all

^{*} Rom. i. 25.

† *Contra Gentes* ix.-xiv., xxiv.-xxvi.

men ascribed the causes of their birth and being to the stars and to all the heavenly bodies, taking heed of nothing beyond the visible.

And, to sum up, everything was full of impiety and lawlessness, and neither God alone nor His Word were clearly known, although He had by no means hidden Himself out of the sight of men, nor given the knowledge of Himself simply in one way, but had unfolded it to them in various ways and through many channels.

For although the grace of XII. being made after God's image was sufficient to make known God the Word, and through Him the Father; yet God, knowing the weakness of mankind, provided even for their carelessness, so that, if they did not care to have a clear knowledge of God through themselves, they might not be without knowledge of the Maker through the works of creation.

But since man's carelessness extends gradually down to worse and worse, God again provided even for this their weakness, sending them a law and prophets, such men as they knew; so that, even if they hesitated to look up into the heaven and know their Maker, they might from those close at hand have their teaching. For men can from men learn more directly about higher things.

It was possible for them, therefore, looking up into the immensity of heaven and considering the harmony of creation, to know its Ruler, the Word of the Father, Who by His own providence over all things points out to all men the Father, and for this reason moves the universe, that all may come to know God through Him.

Or, if this were troublesome for them, it was even possible for them to converse with the holy men, and through them to learn of God, the Artificer of all things, the Father of Christ, and that the worship of idols is godlessness and full of all impiety.

Or it was possible for them also by knowing the law to cease from all lawlessness and to live a virtuous life. For it was not because of the Jews only that the law was given, nor for them alone that the prophets were sent, although they were sent to the Jews and by the Jews persecuted; but they were for the whole world a sacred school of the knowledge of God and the right ordering of the soul.

The goodness and loving-kindness of God, therefore, being so great, men nevertheless, conquered by fleeting pleasures and by pretences and deceits of dæmons, did not lift up their heads to the truth; but burdened themselves with more wickednesses and sins, so as no longer to seem rational (*λογικούς*), but in consequence of their ways deemed to be irrational (*ἀλόγους*).

Thus, then, men having become XIII.
 de-rationalized, and dæmoniacal *The fitness of the*
 deceit thus completely darkening *renewal.*
 creation everywhere and concealing the
 knowledge of the true God, what was God
 to do? To keep silence in the face of so
 great a wrong, and permit men to be deceived
 by dæmons, and not to know God?

If so, where were the advantages of man
 being made originally after God's image? for
 it had been better for him to be made simply
 an irrational creature (*ἄλογον*), than having
 once been rational (*λογικόν*), to live the life of
 irrational creatures (*ἄλόγων*).

Or what advantage was it at all for him
 to receive any conception concerning God
 originally? For if he is not worthy to receive it,
 it were better not to have given it him at the first.

Or what profit could it be to God Who
 had made him, or what glory, if men made
 by Him do not worship Him, but regard
 others as their makers? For on this show-
 ing, God is detected as having made them for
 others and not for Himself.

Moreover, an emperor, although only a
 man, does not permit regions settled by him-
 self to come under the sway and service of
 others, nor to desert to them; but he reminds
 them by letters, and frequently also sends to
 them through friends, and even, if there is
 need, he himself comes, making them further
 ashamed by his presence, merely that they

may not serve others, and his work be useless. And shall not God much more spare His own creatures, that they be not made to wander away from Him and serve things that are not? —all the more that such wandering is the cause of their ruin and destruction; and because it was not right for those creatures to perish who once had been partakers of the image of God.

What, then, must God do? or what else was it right to do but to, renew again the grace by which they had been made after His image, so that through it men might be able once more to know Him? But how could this have been done except by the coming of the very image Himself of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ?

For it could not be through men, seeing that they are only made after the image: nor through angels, for not even they are (God's) images. Therefore the Word of God came in His own Person, in order that, as He was the image of the Father, He might be able to re-create the man made after the image. Besides, it could not have taken place unless death and corruption had been entirely abolished. Whence He naturally took a mortal body, in order that in it death might be finally abolished, and that men might be again renewed after the image. To satisfy this need was the part of no other than the image of the Father.

For as, when a portrait painted on a panel has disappeared in consequence of external stains, there is need again for him to come whose the portrait is, that the likeness may be renewed on the same material; because for the sake of his picture the material itself on which it has been painted is not thrown away, but the likeness is retraced upon it: so, similarly, the All-holy Son of the Father, being the image of the Father,* came into our sphere to renew man made after Himself, and to find him as one lost, through the remission of sins; the which He Himself says in the Gospels: 'I came to seek and to save that which was lost.'† Wherefore also He said to the Jews: 'Except a man be born anew;‡ not signifying, as they understood Him, the birth from women, but meaning the soul regenerated and recreated in the image of God.

XIV.

*The fitness of
the Incarnation of
the Word.*

But when the madness of idolatry and godlessness held the world, and the knowledge of God had been hidden, whose part was it to teach the world concerning the Father? Man's, should one say? But it was not in the power of men to go everywhere under the sun, for they neither have the natural strength to run so far, nor sufficient authority

* Cf. Heb. i. 3.

† Luke xix. 10.

‡ John iii. 3.

to be deemed worthy of credence in such a matter ; nor were they able to oppose by themselves the deceit and pretence of dæmons.

For when all men were stricken and perturbed in soul by the dæmoniacal deceit and the vanity of idols, how was it possible for them to persuade the soul of men and the understanding of men when they cannot even see them ? For how can one influence by instruction what one does not see ?

But perhaps one might say that creation might suffice. But if creation were sufficient such great evils would not have happened. For there was the creation already, and none the less men were wallowing in the same error concerning God.

Of whom then was there need but of the Word of God, who sees both soul and understanding, and moves all things in creation, and through them makes known the Father ? For it was His part, who through His own providence and disposition of all things teaches concerning the Father, to renew the same teaching.

How then was this to be done ? Perhaps some one would say that it was possible to do so by the same means as before, so as to again set forth the things concerning Him through the works of creation. But this was no longer a certain method. Assuredly not : for men neglected this before, and no longer held their eyes upward, but downward.

Wherefore, naturally, wishing to benefit

men, as man He comes to dwell, taking to Himself a body like the others; and from things below (He teaches them), I mean through the works of His body, so that they who were not willing to know Him from His providence over the universe, and from His guidance of it, may, through the works done through His body, know the Word of God in the body, and through Him the Father.

For as a good teacher who is concerned for his pupils, when they are unable to be benefited by the more difficult subjects, condescends to them, and teaches at least by easier methods; so also did the Word of God. As Paul, also, says: 'For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the tidings proclaimed to save them that believe.'* XV. *The condescension of the Word.*

For when men, having rejected the contemplation of God, and keeping their eyes sunk downward in the deep, were searching for God in nature and the things of sense, and were fashioning gods for themselves out of mortal men and dæmons; then the common Saviour of all, the Word of God, in His loving-kindness takes to Himself a body, and as

* 1 Cor. i. 21.

man moves amongst men, and draws towards Himself the senses of all men ; in order that those who conceive God to exist in corporeal things may, from those things which the Lord does through the works of His body, perceive the truth, and through Him may draw inferences concerning the Father ; so, being men, and taken up entirely with human things, to whatsoever things they directed their senses, there they beheld themselves assisted, and from all sides taught the truth.

Were they awestricken by creation ? there they beheld it confessing Christ the Lord. Was their intellect warped towards men so as to regard them as gods ? the Saviour's works, if they compared them, manifested Him alone among men as Son of God, since there were no such works done by them as by the Word of God. Were they attracted towards dæmons ? they saw them put to flight by the Lord, and they came to know that the Word of God was alone God, and that the dæmons were not gods. Was their intellect down-turned towards the dead, so as to worship heroes and those called gods by the poets ? they saw the resurrection of the Saviour, and came to confess them to be false, and the only true Lord to be the Word of the Father, the Lord even of death.

For this reason He both was born and appeared as man, and died, and rose ; obscuring and putting into shade the works of all men

who have ever lived through His own deeds, in order that wherever men may be attracted He may recall them thence, and teach them His own true Father ; as also He Himself says : ‘I came to seek and to save that which was lost.’ *

For when once men’s intellect XVI.
fell to things of sense, the Word submitted to appear through a body, that He as man might transfer men to Himself and direct their senses towards Himself ; and, for the future, through the works which He wrought, persuade men, beholding Him as man, that He Himself is not only man but also God, and the Word, and wisdom of the True God.

This also Paul wishes to point out, saying : ‘That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend, with all the saints, what is the length and breadth and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasseth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.’ † For by the Word unfolding Himself everywhere, both above and beneath, and in the depth and in the breadth—above, in creation ; below, in the Incarnation ; in the depth, in Hades ; and in the breadth, in the universe—all things have been filled with the knowledge of God. ‡

* Luke xix. 10. † Eph. iii. 18 f. ‡ Cf. Isa. xi. 9.

Wherefore He did not offer the sacrifice on behalf of all as soon as He came, surrendering His body to death and raising—for thus He would have rendered Himself invisible to us. But He made Himself fully visible through it, remaining in it, and performing such works, and giving such signs, as declared Him no longer as man, but as God the Word.

For the Saviour, through His Incarnation, in His loving-kindness effected both these things : He made death to vanish from us, and renewed us ; and, being invisible and unseen, He appeared through His works and made Himself known to be the Word of the Father, the Ruler and King of the whole creation.

XVII. For He was not circumscribed
The Word was not circumscribed by the Incarnation. in the body ; nor was so in the body as not to be elsewhere too. Nor, while He moved that, had He emptied the universe of His effectual working and providence ; but, what is most marvellous, being the Word, He was not contained by anything, but rather contained all things Himself. And as, when present in the whole creation He is essentially distinct from it all, but in it all by His power, ordering all things, and unfolding His providence over all things in all, and quickening each and every-

thing at once, containing the universe, and not being contained, but existing wholly in His Father alone in every respect ;—so also, existing in a human body and Himself quickening it, He was naturally quickening also the universe, and was present in every part, yet outside the whole. And being known from the body through His works, He was manifest too from His working of the universe.

It is indeed the property of soul to contemplate even what is outside its own body by its thoughts, but not to work outside its own body, nor to move by its presence things at a distance from it. A man, at least, never moves or transports things at a distance by merely thinking of them ; nor, were one to sit in one's own house and reason about the heavenly bodies, would one by so doing move the sun or turn about the heavens : but one sees them move and exist without being able to affect them.

Now not such was the Word of God in His human nature : for He was not restrained by the body, but rather Himself controlled it ; so that He not only was in it and in all things, but was at once outside the things that are, and was resting in the Father alone. And this is the marvel, that He was at once living the daily life of a man, and as the Word was quickening all things, and as Son was present with the Father. Whence, not even when born of the Virgin did He undergo change,

80 De Incarnatione Verbi Dei.

nor was He defiled by being in a body, but rather He sanctified the body.*

For although He is in everything, yet He does not partake of the nature of everything, but rather all things are brought into life and nourished by Him. For if even the sun, made by Him and beheld by us, as it revolves in heaven, is not contaminated by its contact with earthly bodies, nor is vanquished by darkness, but rather itself enlightens and purifies them; much more the All-Holy Word of God, the Maker and Lord of the sun, is not defiled by being made known in a body; but rather, being incorruptible, He quickened and purified the mortal body itself. † 'Who did no sin,' for so (the Scripture) says, 'neither was guile found in His mouth.' ‡

XVIII. When, therefore, the holy *The works of the Incarnation.* writers speak of Him eating and being born, understand that the body, as body, was born and nourished with suitable food, while God the Word Himself, present in the body, was ordering the universe; and through the works done in the body made Himself known to be not man, but God the Word. These acts are attributed to Him because the body which eats, is born,

* Cf. infra Cap. xliii.

† Cf. Rufinus, *Com. in Symb. Ap.* § 12.

‡ 1 Peter ii. 22; cf. Isa. liii. 9.

and suffers, was that of none other than the Lord ;* and because, having become man, it was fitting that these acts should be attributed to Him as man, that He might be manifested as having a body in reality, and not in phantasy.†

Now as from these things He was recognized as bodily present, so from works done through the body He proved Himself to be Son of God. Whence also He cried to the unbelieving Jews, 'If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not ; but if I do, even if ye believe not Me, believe My works ; that ye may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.' ‡

For as He is, although invisible, known from the works of creation ; so, having become man, and not seen in the body, it may be known from His works that He who does these things is not man, but the Power and

* The Person of Christ is one and the self-same with the Person of God the Word, and the acts and properties of either nature, the human and the Divine, are properly referred to the same one Divine Person. So St. Paul speaks of the blood of God (Acts xx. 28), and of the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory (1 Cor. xi. 8) ; and conversely of the second MAN being the Lord from heaven (1 Cor. xv. 47), and St. John of the Son of Man being in heaven (John iii. 13). In technical theological language this is called the 'communicatio idiomatum,' or 'antidotis.'

† The heresy of the Docetæ or Phantasiastæ asserted that our Lord's body was a phantasm only, denying that Christ has really "come in the flesh" (1 John iv. 3).

‡ John x. 37 f.

Word of God. For to command dæmons, and for them to be driven away, is not a human but a Divine work. Or who, seeing Him curing the diseases to which the human race is liable, deems Him still to be man and not God? For He cleansed lepers, made lame men to walk, opened the hearing of deaf men, made blind men to see again, and lastly, drove away from men every disease and infirmity; from which deeds even the casual observer can behold His Godhead. For who, seeing Him restore that which was lacking to those whom birth defrauded, and open the eyes of the man blind from his birth, would not perceive that the nature of man lay under His control, and that He was its Artificer and Maker? For He who restored that which the man had not from his birth must sûrely be Himself the Lord also of man's birth. For this reason at the very beginning when He was coming down to us He forms the body for Himself from the Virgin, that He might afford to all no slight proof of His Godhead, since He who formed this is also the Maker of all other things. For who, seeing a body coming forth from a virgin alone, apart from man, would not infer that He who appears in it is also the Maker and Lord of all other things? Or who, seeing Him change the essence of water, and transform it into wine, would not understand that He who did this is Lord and Creator of the essence of all water?

For it was for this reason that He, as its Maker, went also upon the sea and walked about as on land,—namely, to give a proof to those who beheld Him of His mastery over everything. And by feeding so great a number from so little, and Himself bringing abundance out of scarcity, so that from five loaves five thousand were satisfied, and left so much besides, did He not prove Himself to be none other than the Lord of universal providence ?

Now all these things it seemed XIX.

good to the Saviour to do ; that since men had become ignorant of His providence in the universe, and did not perceive His Godhead through the creation, they might from His works through the body recover sight, and receive an idea through Him of the knowledge of the Father, reasoning upward, as I said before, from particular cases to His universal providence. For who, seeing His authority over dæmons, or seeing the dæmons owning Him as their Lord, would still be of doubtful mind as to whether this were the Son and the Wisdom and the Power of God ?

For neither did He permit creation itself to keep silence, but, what was at least marvellous, at His death, or rather at the trophy itself over death—I mean the cross—all creation was confessing that He who was

manifested in the body and was suffering, was not simply man but Son of God and Saviour of all. For the sun turned away, and the earth and the mountains were cleft asunder : all men were awestricken. Now these things showed that Christ on the cross was God, and that all creation was His slave, and was bearing witness to the presence of its Master by fear.

Thus, then, God the Word manifested Himself to men through His works. Our next point is to set forth and speak of the end of His bodily course and life, and the nature of the death of His body ; more especially as this is the main point of our faith, and all men everywhere speak much of it ; that you may know that from this, too, none the less Christ is known to be God and Son of God.

XX. We have now treated in part, *Summary of previous argument.* as far as it was possible and as we ourselves have been able to understand, the cause of His bodily manifestation : that it was the part of none other to change the corruptible into incorruption than the Saviour Himself who in the beginning made all things out of nothing ; and that it belonged to none other to re-create for men the likeness of God's image than the image of the Father ; and that it was the part of none other to make the mortal im-

mortal than our Lord Jesus Christ who is Life Itself ; and that it was the part of none other to teach men concerning the Father, and to abolish the worship of idols, than of the Word who orders all things and is alone the true only-begotten Son of the Father.

But since what was due from all must needs be paid—for it was due that all should die, as I said before—for this reason specially He dwelt among us : to this end, after the proofs of His Godhead from His works, He then offered up the sacrifice also on behalf of all, surrendering His own temple to death in place of all, to make all men no more liable to the account, and free from the old transgression ; and to show Himself also mightier than death, showing forth His own body incorruptible as firstfruits of the resurrection of all.

And be not at all surprised if we frequently say the same thing concerning this subject. For since we are talking of the good pleasure of God, we interpret the same idea in many forms, lest perchance we should seem to omit anything, and be liable to the charge of insufficiently dealing with it. For it is better to incur the blame of redundancy than to omit anything which ought to be written. The body, therefore, having the same essence as is common to all (for it was a human body, although by a novel miracle it was formed from a virgin only), was mortal, and would, according to the natural course of similar

bodies, have died ; but by the descent into it of the Word it became no longer liable to corruption in accordance with its own nature, but through the indwelling Word of God it passed out of reach of corruption. And there happened marvellously two things at once : the death of all was fulfilled in the Lord's body, and both death and corruption through the presence of the Word were utterly abolished. For there was need of death, and there must needs be death for all, that what was due from all might be paid. Whence the Word, as I said, since He could not die, being immortal, took to Himself a body capable of death, that He might offer it as His own in place of all, and might Himself, suffering on behalf of all through His descent in it, 'bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'*

XXI. Certainly we, the faithful in
Why Christ Christ, after that the common
died. Saviour of all died on our behalf, now no longer abide in death as of old in accordance with the threat of the law ; for this condemnation has ceased : but henceforth, corruption ceasing and made to vanish

* Heb. ii. 14 f.

by the grace of the resurrection, we are only dissolved according to the mortal nature of the body at the time which God has appointed for each, so that we may obtain a better resurrection. For, like the seeds sown in the earth, we perish not in our dissolution, but as seeds sown we shall rise again, death having been brought to naught by the grace of the Saviour. Wherefore the blessed Paul, who was made a sponsor for all of the resurrection, says : * ‘ This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality : but when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “ Death is swallowed up in victory.” † “ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? ” ‡ ’

But why, some one may say, if it was necessary for Him to surrender His body to death in place of all, did He not lay it down privately as man instead of coming forth to the extent of being crucified ? for it were more seemly to have laid aside His body with honour than to endure such a death with ignominy.

But see if such an objection is not a purely human one ; but what was done by the Saviour was truly Divine and worthy of His Godhead for many reasons.

Firstly, because the death which happens

* 1 Cor. xv. 53 f. † Isa. xxv. 8. ‡ Hos. xiii. 14.

to men comes upon them in accordance with the weakness of their nature ; for they are unable to remain for long, but in time are dissolved : to this end sicknesses befall them, and when utterly weakened they die. But the Lord is not weak, but the Power of God and the Word of God and Life Itself. If, then, He had laid aside His body somewhere in private and upon a bed, after the ordinary custom of men, it would have been thought that He suffered this in accordance with the weakness of nature, and that He was no more than other men. But since He was Life and Word of God, and the death on behalf of all was necessary, for this reason, because He was Life and Power, the body became strong in Him ; while, as the death was due, He took the opportunity of offering His sacrifice not from Himself but from others. For it was not right for the Word to fall sick who had healed the sicknesses of others ; nor for that body to become weak in which He makes strong the weaknesses of others.*

But why then did He not prevent death, as He did sickness ? Because it was for this very reason that He had the body, and it was not fitting to prevent it, lest also the resurrection

* Christ, being Perfect Man, could not suffer from sickness, which is a consequence of the Fall. His body, being a real human body, was mortal ; but by its union with the Word it was rendered incapable of ordinary natural death.

should be impeded. Moreover, it was unfitting, again, that sickness should precede death, lest it should be thought a weakness of His in the body. Did He not then hunger? Yes, He hungered because it was the property of His body; but He did not perish of hunger because of the Lord who wore it. Wherefore, although He died as a ransom for all, He did not see corruption. For it rose again completely sound in all its parts, since it was the body of none other than the Life Itself.

But it were better, some one might say again, to have avoided the plot of the Jews, that He might completely guard His body from death. But let such an one hear how that this too was unbecoming the Lord.

For just as it did not become the Word of God, being Life, to inflict death on His own body by His own hand, so also it was not proper for Him to avoid that inflicted by others, but rather to follow it out to destruction; whence naturally He neither laid aside His body of His own accord, nor avoided the Jews plotting against Him. Now each action did not show weakness on the part of the Word, but rather proved Him to be Saviour and Life; because He both waited for death to destroy it, and hastened to fulfil the death offered for the salvation of all.

XXII.

*Why Christ died
at the hands of
others.*

Moreover, the Saviour came not to accomplish His own death, but that of mankind; whence He laid not aside His body by a private death (for being Life He had none), but received it at the hands of men; in order to completely abolish it coming upon Him in His own body.

Next, also, from the following considerations one might reasonably see why the Lord's body had such an end.

The resurrection of the body, which He was about to fulfil, was a special care to the Lord. For this was to set it forth to all as a trophy over death, and to make sure to all that the obliteration of corruption was accomplished by Him, and to certify the incorruption of their bodies in future; as a token of which, and proof to all of the future resurrection for all, He has preserved His own body incorrupt.

If therefore, once again, His body had fallen sick, and in the sight of all the Word had thus departed from it, it would have been unfitting that He who had healed the sicknesses of others should neglect His own instrument wasted in sickness; for how would He be believed to have driven away the infirmities of others if His own temple became weak in Him? For either He would be laughed at as unable to drive away disease; or, if able, and not doing so, He would be deemed lacking in loving-kindness towards others also.

But if, again, without any dis- XXIII.
 ease or any pain, privately some- *Why Christ died*
 where and by Himself 'in a *a public death.*
 corner,'* or in a desert place, or at home, or
 indeed anywhere, He had concealed His body,
 and afterwards suddenly appeared again, and
 said He had been raised from the dead, He
 would have seemed to all to be speaking fables,
 and would be disbelieved so much the more
 when He spoke of His resurrection, inasmuch
 as there were no witnesses of His death.

But it was necessary for death to precede
 His resurrection; for there could be no resur-
 rection without preceding death. Whence, if
 the death of His body had taken place some-
 where in secret, the death not being manifest
 nor taking place before witnesses, His resur-
 rection also had been obscured and without
 evidence.

Or why should He, when having risen He
 proclaimed the resurrection, cause His death
 to take place secretly? Or why should He
 drive away the dæmons in the sight of all, and
 cause the man blind from his birth to receive
 sight, and change the water into wine, that He
 might be believed through these actions to be
 the Word of God; but not show His mortal
 body to be incorruptible in the sight of all,
 that He might Himself be believed to be the
 Life? Or how, again, could His disciples

* Acts xxvi. 26.

have boldness in speaking of the doctrine of the Resurrection unless they could assert that He first died? Or how could they be believed when asserting that His death had first taken place, and then His resurrection, unless they had those men as witnesses of His death before whom they were speaking with boldness? For if the Pharisees of that time, although as a matter of fact His death and resurrection had taken place in the sight of all, were not willing to believe, but compelled even those who had beheld the resurrection to deny it; surely if it had taken place secretly, how many excuses for disbelief would they have contrived? Or how then could the end of death and the victory over it be shown, unless, summoning it before the eyes of all, He had proved it to be dead and of no account thenceforth by the incorruption of His body?

XXIV.

But we must also anticipatorily answer the possible objections of others. For some one might perhaps say this: If it were better for His death to take place in the sight of all and to be fully witnessed that the doctrine of the resurrection might be believed; it were also better to have contrived an honourable death for Himself, if only that He might avoid the dishonour of the cross. But if He had even done this He would give

rise to suspicion against Himself, as though He were not mighty against every death, but only against that form of it contrived for Him : and none the less again in this case there would be an excuse for disbelief in the resurrection. Wherefore, His death in the body took place, not from Himself, but from a plot, in order that the Saviour might utterly abolish death, whatever form of it they inflicted on Him.

And just as a generous wrestler, strong in skill and courage, does not himself pick out his antagonists, lest he should be suspected of cowardice in respect of some of them, but gives the choice to the spectators, especially if they happen to be hostile to him, in order that by throwing whomsoever they may make him encounter he may be believed to be stronger than all : so also Christ, the Life of all, our Lord and Saviour, did not contrive for Himself a death in the body, lest He should appear fearful of another kind of death ; but Himself receiving it on the cross, He bore that death inflicted by others, and those His especial enemies, which they deemed terrible and dishonourable, and to be avoided ; so that by the destruction of this both He Himself might be believed to be the Life, and the power of death might be finally brought to naught.

A marvellous and wonderful thing has indeed happened ; for the death which they

thought to inflict on Him as a dishonour, this became an honourable trophy over death itself. Wherefore, He neither endured the death of John, whose head was cut off, nor was He sawn asunder, as Esaias; in order that even in death He might preserve His body undivided and whole, and no excuse be found for those who wish to divide the Church.

XXV. These things we have said for

Why Christ died on the Cross. those outside the Church who accumulate arguments for themselves; but if any one from amongst us, not being contentious, but anxious to learn, should inquire why He suffered death on the cross and not in any other way, let him hear that in no other way than this was it expedient for us; but the Lord nobly suffered this death for our sakes.

For if He came Himself to bear the curse which was upon us, how could He 'become a curse'* in any other way than by enduring the death appointed for the curse? And that is the cross. For so it is written: 'Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.' †

Next, if the death of the Lord is the ransom of all, and by His death 'the middle-wall of partition' ‡ is broken down, and the call of

* Gal. iii. 13.

† Deut. xxi. 23.

‡ Eph. ii. 14.

the Gentiles comes about; how could He have called us if He had not been crucified? For it is on a cross alone that a man dies with outstretched hands. And for this reason, again, it was fitting that the Lord should endure this, and stretch forth His hands, that with the one He might draw His ancient people, and with the other those from the Gentiles, and join both together in Himself. For this He Himself also said, signifying by what death He was about to ransom all: 'I, when I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself.'*

And again, if the devil, the enemy of our race, having fallen from heaven, wanders through the air here below, and there having authority over the dæmons with him who are like him in disobedience, on the one hand through them works illusions in them that are being deceived, and on the other endeavours to hinder those who are struggling upwards (and concerning this the Apostle says: 'According to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience' †); while the Lord came to cast down the devil, and to purify the air, and to make a way for us up into heaven, as said the Apostle: 'through the vail, that is to say, His flesh'; ‡ and this must be through death

* John xii. 32.

† Eph. ii. 2.

‡ Heb. x. 20.

—by what other kind of death could this be done except by a death in the air, I mean, on the cross? For he alone dies in the air who finishes his life on a cross. Wherefore, again, it was reasonable for the Lord to endure this.

For being thus ‘lifted up’ He purified the air from all devilish and dæmoniacal designs, saying: ‘I beheld Satan as lightning falling,’* and reopened the way which He made up into heaven, saying again: ‘Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lift up, ye eternal doors.’† For it was not the Word Himself who needed an opening of the gates, being Lord of all; nor was any one of the things made closed to the Maker: but we were those who needed it, whom He Himself upbore through His own body. For as He offered it to death on behalf of all, so He again made through it a way up into heaven.

XXVI. Fitting indeed, then, and suitable was the death on the cross *Why Christ rose the third day.* for us; and the cause of it is manifestly reasonable in every respect; and there are just reasons why the salvation of all must have been accomplished in no other way but through the cross. For not even

* S. Luke x. 18.

† Psa. xxiv. 7, LXX.

thus did He let Himself be unseen—not even on the cross ; but, on the contrary, He made creation witness to the presence of its Maker ;—and did not suffer His own temple, the body, to remain long, but, having shown it to be dead from its contact with death, He forthwith on the third day raised it up, bearing away as a trophy and victory over death the incorruptibility and impassibility which belonged to His body.

He could, of course, immediately upon death have raised His body and shown it again alive ; but this in His excellent foresight the Saviour did not do. For some one might have said that it had not died at all, or that death had not completely affected it, if He had immediately displayed its resurrection.

It is likely, too, that if the interval between His death and resurrection had lasted only two days, that the glory of His incorruption would not have been manifest. Whence, to show that His body was really dead, the Word waited one intervening day, and then on the third day showed it incorruptible to all. To the end, then, that His death in the body might be shown, He raised it up the third day. But lest, by raising it after it had remained for a long interval and had become wholly corrupted, He should be disbelieved, as wearing, not it, but some other body—for one would after a lapse of time disbelieve the

appearance and forget previous events—for this reason He did not wait longer than three days, nor did He keep waiting for long those who had heard Him speak of His resurrection ; but, while the word was still ringing in their ears, and their eyes were still straining, and their minds in suspense, and while those who put Him to death were still living on earth, and were close at hand and bearing witness of the death of the Lord's body, the Son of God Himself on the third day showed His body, which had been dead, immortal and incorruptible : and it was made clear to all that it was not from weakness of nature that the body died, for the Word was dwelling in it, but that death in it might be extinguished by the might of the Saviour.

XXVII. For of the destruction of death, and of the cross having become the victory over it, and of its no longer having any power but being truly dead, this is no slight proof but a very certain index ; namely, that by all the disciples of Christ it is contemned, and they all make an attack against it, and no longer fear it, but by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ trample upon it as a dead thing.

For formerly, before the Divine sojourn of

the Saviour, even to saints themselves death was terrible, and all mourned those who died as perishing.* But now that the Saviour has raised His body, no longer is death terrible, but all who believe in Christ trample on it as naught, and choose rather to die than to deny their faith in Christ. For they know full well that when they die they do not perish, but indeed live, and become incorruptible through the resurrection. But that devil, who of old wickedly exulted in death, 'its pains having been loosed,' † he alone now remains truly dead. And here is a sure proof of this : that whereas men, before they believe Christ, regard death as horrible, and are cowardly at it, when they have come over to His faith and teaching, they so greatly despise it as even to rush zealously upon it, and become witnesses of the resurrection accomplished against it by the Saviour.

For even while still infants they hasten to die, and not only men, but women too, exercise themselves against it by discipline. So weak has it become that even women, who formerly were deceived by it, now mock at it as a thing dead and shorn of its strength.

For as, when a tyrant has been utterly vanquished by a true emperor, and is bound hand

* Cf. Job xviii. 14 ; Psa. lv. 4, lxxxviii. 10 ff., lxxxix. 47 f. ; Isa. xxxviii. 18.

† Acts ii. 24.

and foot, all who pass by jeer at him, smiting and abusing him, no longer fearing his rage and cruelty, because of the victorious emperor ; so also death having been conquered and branded as infamous by the Saviour on the cross, and bound hand and foot, all in Christ who pass through trample on it, and as witnesses to Christ deride death, scoffing at it, and saying the words written against it above : ‘ Where, Death, is thy victory ? where, Hades, thy sting ? ’ *

XXVIII. Is this, then, a slight proof of *Christ's victory over death.* the weakness of death ? or is it a small index of the victory achieved over it by the Saviour, when youths and young maidens in Christ look beyond the present life and discipline themselves to die ?

For it is natural to man to feel cowardice at death and the dissolution of the body ; but, and it is a most marvellous fact, he who is enwrapped with the faith of the cross despises even what is according to nature, and is not cowardly at death because of Christ.

And as, since fire naturally burns, if some one were to assert the existence of something that did not shrink from its burning, but proved on the contrary its weakness, as the

* Hos. xiii. 14 ; v. supr. Cap. xxi.

asbestos among the Indians is said to be capable of doing ; then one who disbelieved what was asserted, if he wished to test its truth, is for the future assured, at any rate after enwrapping himself with the unflammable material and touching the fire, of the weakness ascribed to fire ; or, if any one wished to see the tyrant bound, he may, at any rate, by going into the region and realm of his vanquisher, see him who was a terror to others become weak : just so, if any one is disbelieving even yet after so many proofs, and after there being so many martyrs in Christ, and after the daily derision at death by those who are eminent in Christ ; if even yet he hesitates in mind about the bringing to naught of death and the accomplishment of its end, he does well to marvel at so great a thing : but let him not become stiff-necked in unbelief nor reckless towards facts so clear.

But as he who has taken the asbestos knows the powerlessness of fire to touch it, and he who wishes to see the tyrant bound goes into the country of his vanquisher ; so also let the disbeliever in the conquest of death embrace the faith of Christ, and let him come to His teaching, and he shall see the weakness of death and the victory over it. For many who formerly disbelieved and derided afterwards became believers, and so despised death as even to become martyrs for Christ Himself.

XXIX. Now if by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ death is trampled upon, it would be clear, truth itself being judge, that it is none other than Christ Himself who has exhibited trophies and victories over death, and who has exhausted its strength.

And if death was formerly strong, and on that account an object of terror, but now after the sojourn of the Saviour, and the death and resurrection of His body is contemned, it is evident that it is by the very Christ who ascended the cross that death has been brought to naught and vanquished.

For as, when the sun rises after the night has passed, and the whole globe is illuminated by it, it is not at all doubtful that it is the sun which has shed its light everywhere, and has driven away the darkness and enlightened all things; so death being utterly despised and trampled down from the time when the Saviour's saving appearance in the body and end upon the cross took place, it is perfectly clear that it is the Saviour Himself who appeared in the body, who brought death to naught, and daily exhibits trophies against it in His own disciples.

For when one sees men who are by nature weak leaping forth to death and not cowering before its corruption, nor displaying fear at the descent into Hades, but with zealous soul provoking it, and not shrinking from tortures, but for Christ's sake preferring rather than

this present life to rush upon death : or, too, if one be a beholder of men and women and young children rushing upon and leaping forth to death for the religion of Christ ; who is so simple, or who is so unbelieving, or who is so incapacitated in mind, as not to perceive and draw the conclusion that Christ to whom the men bear witness Himself bestows and gives to each the victory over death, rendering it utterly weak in each of those who hold His faith and bear the sign of the cross ?

For he who looks upon the serpent trampled down, especially when he knows its former savageness, no longer doubts that it is dead and utterly weakened, unless he is demented and has not even his bodily senses whole. Or who, seeing a lion mocked at by boys, knows not that it is either dead or deprived of all its strength ?

As, then, it is possible to see with the eyes that these things are true, so when death is mocked and despised by the believers in Christ, let him no longer doubt, let no one be wanting in faith, that by Christ death was brought to naught, and its corruption destroyed and put an end to.

Of the extinction, then, of death, and of the Lord's cross being the trophy over it, no slight proof lies in what has

XXX.

*The Resurrection
proved by
Christ's power
and works.*

been said. But of the immortal resurrection of the body henceforth brought about by Christ the common Saviour of all and true Life, the proof through evident facts is more effective than words to those whose intellectual sight is unimpaired.

For if death was brought to naught (as the argument showed), and all trample upon it because of Christ, much more did He Himself first trample upon it in His own body and bring it to naught. Now, death having been slain by Him, what remained but for His body to be raised, and for it to be exhibited as a trophy against it? Or how could death be manifested as having been brought to naught unless the Lord's body was raised? But if this proof of His resurrection be insufficient for any one, let him be assured of what is said from events happening before his eyes.

For if, as a matter of fact, one who is dead can effect nothing, but his influence lasts to the tomb and there ceases—deeds and actions affecting men belonging only to the living; then let who wills see and be judge, acknowledging the truth from what is seen. For since the Saviour is effecting such great things amongst men, and is daily invisibly persuading so great a number on all sides, both from the dwellers in Greece and foreign lands, to embrace His faith, and all to be obedient to His teaching; has any one still any doubt

that the resurrection has been accomplished by the Saviour, and that Christ lives, or rather is Himself the Life? Is it, indeed, the part of a dead man to be piercing through the minds of men, so that they deny their ancestral laws and reverence the teaching of Christ? Or how, if at least He is no longer working (for this is the property of one dead), does He stop the working of those who are working and living, so that the adulterer no longer commits adultery, and the manslayer no longer commits murder, and the unrighteous no longer is avaricious, and the impious for the future becomes pious? Or how, if He did not rise again, but is still dead, does He drive away and persecute and cast down the false gods deemed by unbelievers to be alive, and the dæmons they worship? For where Christ is named, and His faith, there all idolatry is destroyed, and every deceit of dæmons is refuted, and no dæmon even endures the name, but on merely hearing it flees and departs. Now this is not the work of a dead man but of a living—and especially of God.

It would indeed be very laughable to say that the dæmons persecuted by Him, and the idols brought to naught, are living, but that He who drives them away and even makes them to disappear by His own power, and moreover is being acknowledged by them all to be Son of God, is dead.

XXXI. But those who disbelieve in the resurrection actually propose their own strong refutation, if all the dæmons and the gods whom they worship do not persecute Christ whom they regard as dead. Rather, indeed, does Christ convict them all of being dead. For if it be true that one dead effects nothing, while the Saviour effects such great things daily,—drawing men to piety, persuading them to virtue, teaching them concerning immortality, leading them on to thirst for heavenly things, unveiling the knowledge of the Father, inspiring the power against death, manifesting Himself to each, destroying the godlessness of idolatry; and the gods and dæmons of the unbelievers can do none of these things, but rather become dead at the presence of Christ, their ostentation being useless and vain: whereas by the sign of the cross all magic is stopped, and all sorcery brought to naught, and all the idols are deserted and abandoned, and all irrational pleasure ceases, and every one looks up from earth to heaven—whom should one call dead? Christ, who works such great things? but to work is not the property of one dead; or him that effects nothing whatever, but lies as it were lifeless, the natural state of dæmons and idols, as of dead things?

For the Son of God 'is living and active' *

* Heb iv. 12.

and is working every day and effects the salvation of all. And death itself is convicted every day of being utterly weakened, and idols and dæmons more and more of being dead, so that henceforth no one hesitates longer about the resurrection of His body.

Now it would seem that he who disbelieves concerning the resurrection of the Lord's body is ignorant of the power of the Word and Wisdom of God. For if He did take a body to Himself at all and personally appropriated it in consistent sequence, as the argument showed, what was the Lord to do concerning it? or what should be the end of the body when once the Word descended upon it? For it could not but die, inasmuch as it was mortal and offered to death on behalf of all, for which sake the Saviour prepared it for Himself: on the other hand, it could not remain dead, because it had become the very temple of Life. It therefore died as mortal, but lived again because of the Life in it, and its works are the proof of its resurrection.

But if His having risen at all XXXII.
be disbelieved because He is not seen, it is time for the disbelievers to deny the very course of nature. For it is the proper nature of God not to be seen, but to be

known from His works, as has been said above. If, then, there are no works, they rightly disbelieve what is not apparent; but if the works cry out and give manifest indications, why do they wittingly deny the so clearly proved life of the resurrection? For even if they are mentally incapacitated, yet even with the outward senses it is possible to see the undeniable power of the Godhead of Christ. And as even a blind man, if he does not see the sun, nevertheless from perceiving the warmth afforded by it, knows that the sun is above the earth; so also let our opposers, if they do not yet believe, being still blinded concerning the truth, when they come to know His power from others who believe, not deny the Godhead of Christ, and the resurrection which is brought about by Him.

For it is clear that if Christ were dead He would not be expelling dæmons and despoiling idols; for the dæmons would not be obedient to a dead man. But if they are manifestly expelled by the naming of Him, it is clear that He is not dead, especially as the dæmons, beholding things not seen by men, would be able to know whether Christ were dead, and render Him no obedience at all. But now, what the impious do not believe the dæmons behold—that He is God, and for that reason they flee and fall down before Him, saying what they uttered when He was in the

body: 'We know Thee who Thou art; Thou art the Holy One of God;'* and, 'Ah, what have I to do with Thee, Thou Son of God? I pray Thee, torment me not.' †

By the confession of the dæmons, then, and the daily witness of His works, it is manifest, and let no one impudently resist the truth, that the Saviour has raised His own body, and that He is the true Son of God, having His being from Him as from a Father, His own Word and Wisdom and Power; who in the last times for the salvation of all took a body, and taught the world concerning the Father, and brought to naught death, and freely graced all with incorruption through the promise of the resurrection, having raised His own body as its firstfruits and shown it forth as a trophy over death and its corruption by the sign of the cross.

These things being so, and XXXIII.
the proof of the resurrection of *The argument*
the body and of the victory *from Prophecies*
gained over death by the Saviour *respecting Christ.*
being clear, come and let us now confute the
unbelief of the Jews and the derision of the
Greeks.

* Luke iv. 34.

† Mark v. 7.

For upon these points equally Jews disbelieve and Greeks scoff, strongly attacking the want of fitness in the cross and in the Incarnation of God the Word. But this treatise will not hesitate to come to an issue with both, especially as we have effective proofs against them.

Disbelieving Jews, indeed, have their refutation from the Scriptures, which even they themselves read; up and down, and in fact the whole inspired Book crying out concerning these things, as even its very words proclaim. For the prophets formerly predicted the marvel of the Virgin and of the begetting which was from her, saying: 'Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God is with us.'* And Moses, the truly great, and believed as true by them, having approved as of great importance what was said, and having fully perceived its truth, placed it on record, saying: 'A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a man out of Israel, and shall break in pieces the captains of Moab.'† And again: 'How lovely are thy dwellings, Jacob; thy tabernacles, Israel; as glades overshadowing, and as parks by the rivers, and as tents which the Lord pitched, as cedars by the waters. A man shall come forth out of his seed and shall be lord over

* Isa. vii. 14.

† Numb. xxiv. 17, LXX.

many nations.’* And, again, Esaias : ‘ Before the child shall know how to call father or mother he shall take the might of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria before the kings of the Assyrians.’ †

That a man, then, shall appear is fore-announced by these words. But that He who is coming is Lord of all, they further predict, saying : ‘ Behold, the Lord sitteth upon a light cloud, and He shall come into Ægypt, and the idols of Ægypt shall be shaken.’ ‡ For even thence the Father recalls Him, saying : ‘ Out of Ægypt I called my Son.’ §

Nor has His death been passed over in silence, but is very conspicuously indicated in the Divine Writings. Moreover, they were not afraid to tell even the causes of His death (how that He suffered it, not because of Himself, but on behalf of the immortality and salvation of all), and the plot of the Jews, and the insults directed against Him by them ; to the end that no one should be ignorant and err concerning the events themselves.

Accordingly they say : ‘ A man in stripes, and knowing how to bear weakness, for His

* Numb. xxiv. 5-7, LXX. † Isa. viii. 4, LXX.

‡ Isa. xix. 1, LXX.

§ Matt. ii. 15 ; Hos. xi. 1.

face was turned away ; He was dishonoured and nothing accounted of. He beareth our sins, and is pained on our account ; and we accounted Him to be in toil and in stripes and in evil plight ; but He was wounded because of our sins, and was weak because of our lawlessness. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His weals we are healed.* O wondrous loving-kindness of the Word ! for He, for our sakes, was dishonoured that we might be brought to honour.

For 'we all,' he continues, 'like sheep wandered ; man wandered in his own way ; and the Lord delivered Him over for our sins : and He, because He had been brought into evil plight, opens not His mouth. As a sheep to the slaughter was He led, and as a lamb dumb before its shearers, so He opens not His mouth : in His humiliation His judgment was taken away.' †

Then, lest any one from His suffering should take Him to be a common man, the Scripture anticipates the conjectures of men, and explains the power on His behalf, and the dissimilarity of His nature to ours, saying : 'But His generation who shall declare ? for His life is taken away from the earth. From the lawless acts of the people was He led to death. And I will give the wicked instead of His burial, and the rich instead of His death :

* Isa. liii. 3-5, LXX.

† Isa. liii. 6-8.

De Incarnatione Verbi Dei. 113

for He did no lawlessness, nor was guile found in His mouth. And the Lord wills to cleanse Him from His stripes.*

Now having heard about the prophecies of His death you will probably ask to learn what is indicated concerning the cross. For not even has this either been passed over in silence, but has been very conspicuously shown by the holy men. For first, Moses foreannounces it with a loud voice, saying : 'Ye shall see your Life hanging before your eyes, and shall not believe.' † And the prophets after him further witness concerning this, saying : 'But I, as an innocent lamb led to the sacrifice, knew it not : they devised an evil device against Me, saying, "Come and let us cast a tree upon His bread, ‡ and let us extinguish Him from the land of the living." §

XXXV.

Prophecies of the Cross and of the Conversion of the Gentiles.

* Isa. liii. 8-10, LXX.

† Deut. xxviii. 66. Loosely quoted from LXX. S. Irenæus, *adv. Hær.* iv. 23 ; v. 23 ; and Tertullian, *contr. Judæos* xi., give the same mystic interpretation of this passage. The literal signification of the Hebrew—'And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee'—refers to the continual terror which would be the penalty of disobedience.

‡ A grotesque misrendering of the Hebrew, 'Let us destroy the tree with the bread thereof;' a proverbial expression implying complete obliteration.

§ Jer. xi. 19, LXX.

And again : ' They pierced My hands and My feet : they numbered all My bones : they part My garments among them, and upon My vesture they cast lots.' *

But a death which is in mid air and on a tree could be no other than the cross : and further, in no other death are the feet and hands pierced through, save only on the cross.

But whereas by the sojourn of the Saviour all the nations also have begun everywhere to come to the knowledge of God, they did not leave this point either unindicated ; but there is mention also of this in the Sacred Writings. For it says : ' There shall be the root of Jesse, and He that ariseth to rule the nations, upon Him shall the nations fix their hope.' † This then is no slight proof of what has come to pass.

But all Scripture is full of the refutation of the unbelief of the Jews. For which of the righteous men mentioned in the Divine Writings, or of the holy prophets or patriarchs, ever had the birth of his body from a virgin only ? Or what woman apart from man has been sufficient for the conception of men ? Had not Abel his birth from Adam, Enoch from Jared, Noe from Lamech, Abraham from Tharrha, Isaac from Abraham, and Jacob from

* Psa. xxii. 16-18.

† Quoted from Rom. xv. 12 ; see Isa. xi. 10, LXX.

Isaac? Had not Judas his birth from Jacob, Moses and Aaron from Ameram? Had not Samuel his birth from Elkana, David from Jesse, Solomon from David, Ezechias from Achaz, Josias from Amos, Esaias from Amos, Jeremias from Chelcias, Ezekiel from Buzi? Had not each a father as the author of his birth? Who then had his birth from a virgin alone? For the prophet was exceedingly careful about this sign.

Or whose birth did a star forerun in heaven, and point out to the world him that was born? For when Moses was born he was concealed by his parents; David was not even heard of by those in the neighbourhood, since not even the great Samuel knew him, but asked if Jesse had yet another son: and Abraham, again, only after his birth became known as a great man to those near him. But of Christ's birth the witness was not a man, but a star shining in heaven, whence, also, He was descending.

But who of the kings that have ever been, before he had strength 'to call father or mother,'* reigned and triumphed over his enemies?

XXXVI.

The unique eminence of Christ's birth and kingship.

* Isa. viii. 4.

Did not David reign at thirty years old, and Solomon when he had become a young man? Did not Joas enter upon his kingship at seven years of age, and, still later, Josias at the age of about seven receive the sovereignty? But nevertheless these, being at that age, had strength 'to call father or mother.' Who, then, is He that is reigning and spoiling His enemies almost before His birth? Or what king of such a kind has there been in Israel and in Juda—let the Jews who have investigated it say—upon whom all the nations placed their hopes and had peace, and were not rather hostile on every side? For while Jerusalem stood there was internecine war with them, and all fought against Israel; Assyrians afflicted them, Ægyptians persecuted them, Babylonians came against them, and, strangely enough, they had even the Syrians their neighbours fighting against them. Used not David to war with the Moabites and to cut off the Syrians; Josias to guard against the neighbouring nations; and Ezechias to quail before the arrogance of Sennacherim? Used not Amalek to take arms against Moses, and the Amorites to oppose him; and the dwellers in Jericho to range themselves in opposition to Jesus the son of Nave? Friendly truces did not exist at all between the nations of Israel! Who then it is upon whom the nations are to place their hope it is worth while to see: for there

must be some one, since the prophet cannot have lied.

But whose death, amongst the holy prophets and patriarchs of old, took place on a cross for the salvation of all? or who was wounded and cut off for the health of all? Or which of the righteous men or of the righteous kings went down into Ægypt, so that at his entrance the idols of the Ægyptians fell? Abraham did, indeed, go down, but idolatry still held sway over them all. Moses was born there, but none the less the worship of the erring people went on as before.

Or who of those recorded in **XXXVII.** Scripture was pierced in his *The unparalleled* hands and feet, or has been *death of Christ.* hanged at all on a tree and ended his life on a cross for the salvation of all? For Abraham died departing this life on a bed: Isaac and Jacob themselves, too, died, having gathered up their feet on a bed. Moses and Aaron died on the mountain, David in his house, suffering from no plot of the people; although, indeed, he was sought after by Saul, yet he was preserved unharmed. Esaias was sawn asunder, but he did not hang upon a tree; Jeremias was insulted, but was not condemned to death: Ezekiel suffered, but not on the

people's behalf, rather pointing out what should come upon the people.

Moreover, these men, even when they suffered, were men all alike in their natural similitude; but He who is pointed out by the Scriptures to suffer on behalf of all is not a mere man, but is called the Life of all, even though He was like in nature to men. For 'Ye shall see,' it says, 'your Life hanging before your eyes;'* and 'Who shall declare His generation?'† For of all the saints one can learn the generation, and trace it down from of old, and whence each was born; but of Him Who is the life, the Divine words signify that the generation is untraceable.

Who then is it of whom the Divine Writings say these things? or who is so great that the prophets foreannounce such great things concerning Him? Indeed none other is found in the Scriptures except the common Saviour of all, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. For this is He who, coming forth from the Virgin, appeared as man upon earth, having an untraceable generation according to the flesh. For there is none that can speak of His father after the flesh, His body not being from a man, but from a virgin only.

As, then, one can trace their genealogy by

* Deut. xxviii. 66; v. supr. Cap. xxxv.

† Isa. liii. 8.

their fathers of David, and of Moses, and of all the patriarchs, so no one can trace the generation from a man of the Saviour according to the flesh. For this is He who made the star to signify the birth of His body; for it was right that the Word descending from heaven should have also the signification of it from heaven; and it was right that the King of Creation at His coming should be visibly recognized by all creation.

Doubtless He was born in Judæa, yet men from Persia came to worship Him. This is He who won the victory over the opposing dæmons, and trophies against idolatry, even before His bodily manifestation. All, at least, from among the nations everywhere, abjuring their ancestral custom and the godlessness of idols, are placing their hope henceforth in Christ, and registering themselves under Him, as, indeed, one can see with one's eyes.

For at no other time has the godlessness of the Ægyptians ceased, except when the Lord of all, as it were 'riding upon a cloud,'* went down thither in the body and brought to naught the deceit of idols, and brought over all to Himself and to the Father through Him. This is He who was crucified before the witness of the sun and creation, and before those who led Him forth to death; and by His death salvation has come for all, and all crea-

* Isa. xix. 1.

tion has been ransomed. This is He who is the Life of all, and who, as a sheep, surrendered His own body to death for the salvation of all as a life-gift, although the Jews believe it not.

XXXVIII.

*The further
witness of
Prophecy.*

Yet if they consider these proofs inadequate, let them be persuaded from others also taken from the oracles they themselves have.

Concerning whom do the prophets say : ‘ I was made manifest to them that sought Me not, I was found of them that asked not for Me ; I said “ Behold, here I am ” to the nation that called not upon My name : I stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people ’ ? * Who then is he who was made manifest ? one might ask the Jews, for if it was the prophet, let them say when he was concealed that he might afterward reappear. And what kind of a prophet is this who was made manifest out of obscurity, and stretched forth his hands upon the cross ? Surely not one of the righteous men, but the Word of God alone, who, being naturally incorporeal, was manifested for our sakes in the body, and suffered on behalf of all.

Or, if not even this be sufficient for them,

* Isa. lxxv. 1 f. ; cf. Rom. x. 20.

let them be put to shame on beholding how clear is the proof. For the Scripture says: 'Be strong, ye slackened hands and enfeebled knees; take courage, ye faint-hearted: be strong, fear not: behold, your God requiteth judgment, He shall come and save us. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear: then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the stammerer shall be distinct.'* What now can they say to this, or how at all do they dare to face it? For the prophecy both signifies God's sojourn here and declares the signs and time of His advent. For they say that the blind will recover sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the tongue of the stammerers speak distinctly, at the time when the Divine advent takes place. When then did signs like these take place in Israel, or when did any such thing happen in Judæa? Let them tell us.

Naaman the leper was cleansed, but the deaf did not hear, nor did the lame walk. Elias and Eliseus raised the dead, but did not give sight to a man blind from his birth. A great thing it is, truly, to raise the dead, but not so great as the marvel wrought by the Saviour. But if the Scripture has not been silent about the leper and the dead son of the widow, surely if it had happened that the

* Isa. xxxv. 3-6, LXX.

lame walked and the blind recovered sight, the record would not have omitted to make this plain also. But since it has been passed over in silence in the Scriptures, it is plain that these things have not happened before.

When, then, did these things happen, but when the Word of God Himself came in the body? Or when did He come, but when the lame began to walk, and the stammerers to speak distinctly, and the deaf to hear, and the blind from birth to see? And this beholding, the Jews of that day, inasmuch as at no other time had they heard of such things happening, said: 'Since the world began it was not heard that any one opened the eyes of one born blind! if this man were not from God He could do nothing.'*

XXXIX. But perhaps, not even themselves being able to fight against obvious truths, they will not deny what is written, but will positively assert that they are expecting these things, and that God the Word has not yet come. For this is their common and continual talk, nor do they blush to fly in the face of obvious facts.

* John ix. 32 f.

But on this point the more especially shall they be confuted, not by us, but by the most wise Daniel, who indicates both the present time and the Divine manifestation of the Saviour, saying: 'Seventy weeks are cut short upon thy people and upon the holy city, to make a full end of sin, and for sins to be sealed up, and to expunge iniquities, and to bring eternal righteousness, and to seal vision and prophet, and to anoint the All-Holy One; and thou shalt know and understand from the going forth of the word to answer* and build Jerusalem until Christ the Chief.' † Perhaps for other prophecies they can find evasions, and postpone to a future time what is written. But what can they say to this, or can they at all face it? For here, at least, both Christ is pointed out, and the Anointed One announced to be not simply man but an All-Holy; and until this coming Jerusalem is to stand, and for the future prophet and vision cease in Israel.

David of old was anointed, and Solomon and Ezechias, but Jerusalem and the place then stood, and prophets prophesied, Gad and Asaph and Nathan, and after them Esaias and Osee and Amos and others. Besides, the men themselves who were anointed were called 'holy,' but not 'All-Holy.' But if

* LXX misrendering of the Hebrew 'restore.'

† Dan. ix. 24 f., loosely cited from LXX.

they bring forward the Captivity, and say that because of it Jerusalem was not, what can they say about the prophets? For when the people went down of old into Babylon, Daniel and Jeremias were there, and Ezechiel and Aggæus and Zecharias prophesied.

XL. So then, the Jews talk nonsense, and the time in question, which they put off to the future, is present. For when did prophet or vision cease from Israel except when Christ the All-Holy One came? And it is indeed a sign and great proof of the advent of the Word of God that neither is Jerusalem any longer standing, nor is any prophet raised up, nor is vision revealed to them—and very naturally.

For when He that was signified came, what further need was there of persons to signify Him? and in the presence of the Truth what need any more of the shadow? For on this account they used to prophesy until Righteousness' Self should come, and He that was to expiate the sins of all. On this account, too, Jerusalem was standing for so long, in order that there they might, previously to the reality, be trained in the types. At the advent of the All-Holy One, therefore, vision and prophecy were

naturally sealed, and the kingdom of Jerusalem ceased. For kings were anointed among them for such time until the All-Holy One should be anointed : and Jacob prophesies that the kingdom of the Jews should stand until Him, saying : ‘ A ruler shall not depart from Juda, and a chief from his loins, until the things laid up for him shall come ; and He Himself is the expectation of the nations.’* Whence also the Saviour Himself cried out, saying : ‘ The law and the prophets prophesied until John.’† If, then, there is now a king among the Jews, or prophet, or vision, rightly do they deny that Christ has come. But if there is neither king nor vision, but on the contrary all prophecy thenceforth is sealed, and the city and the temple taken, why this so great impiety and transgression as not to see what has come to pass, and to deny Christ who has done these things ? Why, too, when they behold those from the nations forsaking idols and having hope on the God of Israel through Christ, do they deny Christ sprung from the root of Jesse according to the flesh, and reigning henceforth ? For if the nations were worshipping another god, and not acknowledging the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, rightly again would they allege excuses that God had not come. But if the nations are serving the same God who

* Gen. xlix. 10, LXX.

† Matt. xi. 13.

gave the law by Moses, and gave the promise to Abraham, and whose Word the Jews dishonoured, why do they not perceive, or rather why do they overlook that the Lord, prophesied of in the Scriptures, has shone upon the world and there appeared bodily? as the Scripture said: 'God the Lord hath shone upon us;' * and again: 'He sent forth His Word and healed them;' † and again: 'Not an ambassador, not an angel, but the Lord Himself saved them.' ‡

But they suffer similarly to one mentally stricken who looks upon the earth illuminated by the sun, and denies that the sun illuminates it. For what more, when He is come, has He to do who is expected by them? To call the nations? but they are already called. To make prophecy, king, and vision cease? this, too, has already happened. To refute the godlessness of idolatry? it is already refuted and condemned. Or to bring to naught death? it is done already.

What, then, has not come to pass which the Christ must do? or what is left undone, or has not been fulfilled, so that the Jews now light-heartedly disbelieve? For if, as a matter of fact, as we assuredly see, neither king, nor prophet, nor Jerusalem, nor sacrifices,

* Psa. cxviii. 27, LXX. † Psa. cvii. 20, LXX.
‡ Isa. lxiii. 9, LXX.

nor vision, remains to them, but even the whole earth has been filled with the knowledge of God, and those from the nations, forsaking their godlessness, henceforth flee to the God of Abraham through the word of our Lord Jesus Christ—then it must be clear, even to the most perverse, that Christ has come, and that He has shone down upon all without exception with His own light, and has taught the true and Divine teaching concerning His Father.

Jews, then, from these points and more, one could reasonably confute from the Divine Scriptures.

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But one would even altogether wonder at the Greeks, who laugh at things which are not fit subjects for mockery, and are hardened in respect of their own shame, which they do not see they have set up in stocks and stones.

XLI.

The bodily manifestation of the Word involves no absurdity.

But since our proposition does not want for proofs, come, and let us put them also to silence from arguments of reasonableness, especially from those things which we ourselves also see.

For what is there monstrous or worthy of mockery in our position? Is it indeed because we say that the Word has been mani-

fested in a body? But this surely they themselves will join in admitting to have taken place without absurdity, if at least they are lovers of the truth.

If, then, they altogether deny that there is a Word of God, they do so superfluously, deriding that which they do not know. But if they confess that there is a Word of God, and that He is the Ruler of the universe, and that in Him the Father framed the creation, and that the universe is illuminated by His providence, and is endowed with life and being, and that He reigns over all, so that from the works of His providence He is known, and the Father through Him; look, I pray you, whether they are not ignorant that they are drawing ridicule upon themselves.

The universe, say the Greck philosophers, is a great body, and they say so with truth. For we see it and its parts coming under the cognizance of our senses. If, now, the Word of God exists in this universe which is a body, and has descended in the whole and all its parts, what is there wonderful or absurd in our saying that He descended in a man also? For if it is monstrous for Him to be in a body at all, it would also be monstrous for Him to have descended in the universe and to enlighten and move all things by His providence: for even the universe is a body. But if it is fitting for Him to descend upon

the universe and to become known in the whole, it would also be fitting for Him to be manifested in a human body, and for it to be enlightened and energized by Him. For the human race also is a part of the whole. And if it is unfitting for a part to be made His instrument for conveying the knowledge of His Godhead, it would also be most monstrous for Him to be made known by the whole universe.

For as, inasmuch as the whole XLII.
body is energized and illuminated by man, if one were to say that it was monstrous that the power of man should be also in the toe, he would be deemed senseless; because, while admitting that he influences and works in the whole, he objects to his also being in the part: just so, he who admits that the Word of God is in the universe, and that it is illuminated and moved by Him, ought not to consider it monstrous for a single human body also to be influenced and illuminated by Him.

But if, because the human race is a created thing and made out of nothing, they deem the manifestation of the Saviour in a body, which we speak of, as unfitting, it is time for them to eject Him also from creation: for it, too, has been brought out of nothing into existence by the Word. But if, creation also

being a created thing, it is not monstrous for the Word to be in it, then surely neither is it monstrous for Him to be in a man. For whatever they conceive of the whole, that of necessity must also be understood of the part. For man, as I said before, is also a part of the whole. By no means, then, is it unfitting for the Word of God to be in a man, since all things are illuminated and moved, and live by Him and in Him ; as even their own writers say : ' In Him we live and move and have our being.'*

Why, then, should what we assert seem a fit subject for derision, if the Word has used that body in which He is as an instrument for His manifestation ? For if He were not in it, He could not have used it. But if we have already admitted that He is in the whole and in each of its parts, why is it incredible that He should manifest Himself in that wherein He is ?

For just as no one could have said it was preposterous for Him (since by His own power He descends wholly upon each and all, and gives order to all things ungrudgingly), if He willed, to give a revelation, and make known Himself and His Father by means of the sun or moon or heaven or earth or water or fire, embracing as He does all things at once, and being present both with the whole and in th

* Aratus, *Phoen.* 5 : Cleanthes, *Hymn in Jov.* 5.

part itself, and invisibly manifesting Himself; so neither would it be preposterous for Him (inasmuch as He gives order to all things, and quickens the universe, and willed to be made known through men) to have used a body of a man as His instrument for the manifestation of truth and knowledge of the Father. For humanity also is really a part of the universe.

And just as the mind, which is present throughout the whole man, is made known by a part of the body—I mean the tongue, and certainly no one says that the essence of mind suffers detraction thereby: so, if the Word, who is present throughout all things, has used a human instrument, this ought not to appear unfitting. For if, as I said before, it is unfitting for Him to use a bodily instrument, it is unfitting also for Him to be in the universe.

If they say, Why did He not manifest Himself through some other and more noble parts of creation, and use a more noble instrument, such as the sun or moon or stars or fire or æther, instead of merely a man? let them know that the Lord came not to parade Himself, but to heal and teach those who were suffering. For it would be the aim of one making a parade merely to appear and

XLIII.

*Reasons for the
assumption of
Human Nature
by the Word.*

strike the beholders with astonishment ; but of one who comes to heal and to teach, not to sojourn simply, but to be for the relief of those in need, and to appear as those in want can bear it, so as not to harass those in necessity by surpassing the need of the sufferers, and render the manifestation of God useless.

Now no part of creation had wandered as to the apprehension of God, but man alone. Certainly not the sun nor moon nor heaven nor the stars nor water nor æther transgressed their course, but knowing the Word their Maker and King, they remain as they have been made. But men alone, having turned away from the good, fabricated things that are not in place of the truth, and have attributed the honour due to God and the knowledge of Him to dæmons and men sculptured in stone. Whence reasonably, since to overlook such perversity were unworthy of God's goodness, and since as yet men were unable to perceive Him swaying and ruling the whole, He takes to Himself a part of the whole as an instrument—His human body—and descends upon it ; so that, though they could not perceive Him in the whole, they should not be ignorant of Him in the part ; and since they could not look up to His invisible power, they might be able to reason from things like themselves, and so behold Him. For being men, they will be able to come to a know-

ledge of His Father more quickly and directly through a body similar to their own, and through the Divine works wrought by it, estimating that the works done by Him are not man's, but God's.

And if, as according to them, it were preposterous for the Word to be made known through the works of His body, it were also preposterous for Him to be known from the works of the universe. For as He is in the universe, yet does not essentially partake at all of creation, but rather the universe partakes of His own power; so also, while He used the body as an instrument, He partook not of the things of the body, but rather Himself sanctified the body.*

For if, as a matter of fact, even Plato, who is admired by the Greeks, says that 'He who made the universe, beholding it storm-tossed and in danger of sinking into the place of chaos, takes His seat at the helm of the vital principle of the world, and succours it, and puts straight all its mistakes;' † why is what we say held to be incredible—namely, that when humanity was gone astray the Word descended upon it, and appeared as man to save it, storm-tossed as it was, through His guidance and goodness?

* Cf. *supr.* Cap. xvii.

† Plato, *Polit.* 273.

XLIV. But probably, being put to shame, they will assent to this, but desire to maintain that God ought, if He wished to save and correct mankind, to have done so by a mere fiat, without His Word coming in contact with a body, just as He had done formerly, when He gave them consistency out of nothing. But one might reasonably answer this objection of theirs thus: that since formerly nothing had any existence at all, there wanted nothing beyond a fiat and the mere will for the creation of everything. But when man was made, and need demanded, not the creation of not-yet-existent things, but the healing of things already made, it followed that the Physician and Saviour should come amongst His already-created beings, and cure that which had existence. And He has become man for this reason, and has used His body as a human instrument. But if He ought not to have done it in this way, how ought the Word, being desirous of using an instrument, to have come? or whence ought He to take it, except from those already created, and standing in need of the manifestation of His Godhead through a body like their own? For it was not things which had no existence that stood in need of salvation, so that even a command alone would suffice; but man already made was being corrupted and destroyed. Whence it follows naturally that the Word has rightly used a human in-

strument, and has unfolded Himself in everything.

Next, too, this must be known : that the corruption present was not outside the body, but was an accretion in it ; and it was necessary in place of the corruption for life to be woven in, in order that as death had come in the body so also life might be in it. If, then, death had been from outside the body, rightly also the life would have been brought about from outside it. But if death was woven in with the body, and was overmastering it as though united to it, it was necessary also that the life should be woven in with the body, in order that the body, by being indued with life instead, might eject the corruption.

Besides, if the Word had come outside the body instead of in it, death would indeed have been worsted by Him, entirely in accordance with nature, since death was powerless against the Life ; but the corruption attaching to it would none the less remain in the body. Therefore with good reason the Saviour put on a body, in order that the body, being interwoven with the Life, should no longer as mortal remain in death, but should as indued with immortality henceforth rise again and remain immortal. For when once it had put on corruption it could not rise again unless it had put on life. And, too, death could not by itself appear unless in the

boby ; so for this reason He put on a body, that finding death there He might obliterate it. For how could the Lord be shown to be Life at all unless He quickened that which was mortal ?

And just as, although one may keep away fire from stubble, which is naturally consumed by fire, so that it is not burned, the stubble nevertheless remains stubble, liable to the threat of the fire ; but if one enwraps the stubble with a quantity of asbestos, which is said to be indestructible by fire, no longer does the stubble dread the fire, having safety from its being enwrapped in unflammable material : in just the same way one may speak of the body and of death. For if death had been merely kept away by Him by a command, none the less would the body be still mortal and corruptible according to the nature of bodies : but, lest that should be so, it put on the incorporeal Word of God ; and thus no longer fears either death or corruption, having the vesture of life, and the corruption in it disappears.

XLV. Fitly, therefore, did the Word of God assume a body, and use it as a human instrument, both to quicken the body and to work in man just as He is known in creation by His works, and to show Him-

self everywhere, no part being left destitute of His own Divine energy and of a knowledge of Him.

For again I take up and repeat what I said before—that the Saviour has done this in order that, as He fills all things everywhere, so also He might fill all things with the knowledge of Him, which the Divine Scripture also says : ‘The whole earth was filled with the knowledge of the Lord.’ * For if one wishes to look up to the heaven he sees its order ; or if he cannot lift his head to heaven, but only to men, he sees Christ’s power through His works to be incomparable with that of men, and comes to know that He alone among men is God the Word. Or, if he has turned aside among dæmons, and is awestruck at them, he sees Him expelling them, and judges Him to be their Master. Or, if he has sunk to the natural property of waters, and thinks they are God, just as the Ægyptians worship water, he sees this changed by Him, and perceives that the Lord is the Creator of these. Or, if he has descended even to Hades, and is awestruck at the heroes who have descended thither, and regards them as gods, yet he sees His resurrection, which has taken place, and His victory over death, and reasons that amongst these, too, Christ is the only true Lord and God.

* Isa. xi. 9.

For the Lord has touched every part of creation, and has freed all things from every deceit, and exposed it, as Paul says: 'Having stript off the principalities and powers (of evil), He led them in triumph on the cross; '* that no one might any longer be deceived, but everywhere might find the true Word of God.

Thus man, hemmed round on every side and beholding the Divinity of the Word unfolded everywhere—that is, in heaven, in Hades, in man, upon earth—no longer suffers deception concerning God, but worships the Word alone, and through Him rightly comes to know the Father.

By this argument, then, from considerations of reasonableness, the Greeks will naturally be put to shame by us. But if these are not deemed adequate for their rebuke, let them be satisfied of what is said from what is apparent to the sight of all.

XLVI. When did men begin to for-
The decline of sake the worship of idols except
idolatry. from the time that God, the true
 Word of God, has come among men? or
 when has soothsaying among the Greeks and
 everywhere ceased and become vain except
 when the Saviour has manifested Himself

* Col. ii. 15.

upon earth? Or when did those called gods and heroes by the poets begin to be condemned as being only mortal men, except from the time that the Lord wrought His victory over death, and preserved incorruptible the body He took, raising it from the dead? Or when were the deceit and madness of dæmons contemned, except when the Word, the Power of God, who is the Master also of all these, condescended because of men's weakness and appeared on earth? Or when did the art and the schools of magic begin to be exposed, except when the Divine Manifestation of the Word took place among men? And finally, when has the wisdom of the Greeks become foolishness, except when the true Wisdom of God manifested Itself on earth? For of old the whole world and every place went astray in the worship of idols, and men regarded as gods no other thing than the idols. But now throughout the whole world men are abandoning the superstition of idols and fleeing to Christ, and, worshipping Him as God, they through Him come to know the Father whom they knew not.

And, wonderful to relate, whereas the objects of worship were various and innumerable, and each place had its own idol, and that which was regarded as god among them had no power to pass over to a neighbouring spot and persuade those of neighbouring

peoples to worship him, but was scarcely revered even amongst his own people (for no one worshipped the god of his neighbour, but each guarded his own idol, deeming it lord of all); Christ alone is worshipped as One and the Same by all everywhere: and that which the weakness of idols could not effect—namely, to persuade those dwelling near—this Christ has done, not only persuading those near, but also absolutely all the world to honour One and the Same Lord, and through Him God, His Father.

XLVII.

And formerly every place had become full of the deceit of the oracles, and the oracles in Delphi and Dodona and Bœotia and Lycia and Libya and Ægypt and the Cabeiri and the Pythia were regarded with amazement by men's imagination. But now, since Christ is preached everywhere, their madness has ceased, and the soothsayer has henceforth no longer any place amongst them. And formerly dæmons used to cheat men with apparitions, pre-occupying founts or rivers or trees or stones, and thus struck the foolish with awe by their juggleries. But now, by the Divine Manifestation of the Word, their pretence has ceased. For by the simple use of the sign of the cross a man drives away their deceits.

And formerly men regarded as gods Zeus and Cronos and Apollo and heroes mentioned by the poets, and in their error worshipped them. But now, since the appearance of the Saviour amongst men, these have been stript bare as merely mortal men, and Christ alone is made known among men as the true God, God the Word of God.

And what might one say of their wondrous magic? Before the sojourn of the Word it prevailed and was effective among Ægyptians and Chaldæans and Indians, and struck awe in the beholders; but by the Advent of the Truth and the Manifestation of the Word it has been confuted and utterly brought to naught. And concerning the Greek wisdom and the high-sounding talk of the philosophers, I think none stand in need of any argument of ours, the marvel being before the very eyes of all: how that, whereas the wise among the Greeks wrote such great things and were unable to persuade even a few from neighbouring places concerning immortality and the life of virtue, Christ alone by simple language and by men of no eloquent speech has persuaded full assemblies of men throughout the whole world to be insensible of death, and to be sensible of immortal things; to overlook the temporal and to gaze stedfastly at the eternal; to regard earthly glory as nothing and to exert themselves only for the heavenly.

XLVIII. But these our assertions do
The witness of not rest merely upon words, but
Christ's works to they have the witness of their
His Godhead. truth in experience itself. For
 let him that wills it come up and behold the
 proof of virtue in the virgins of Christ and in
 the young men who make self-control a point
 of conscience, and the assurance of immortality
 in the so great band of His martyrs. And let
 him who wishes to have experience of what
 we have just said come, and in the midst of
 the pretence of the dæmons and of the deceit
 of the oracles and of the wonders of magic,
 let him use the sign of the cross—that cross
 which is the subject of derision amongst them
 —and merely name Christ, and he will see
 how by it dæmons flee, soothsaying ceases,
 and all magic and witchcraft is brought to
 naught.*

Who, then, and how great is this Christ,
 who by the mere naming of Himself and by
 His presence puts into the shade and brings
 to naught all things on every side, and alone
 has power against all, and has filled all the
 world with His teaching? let the altogether
 scoffing and unblushing Greeks answer. For
 if He is a man, how indeed has one man

* These frequent appeals to the collapse of dæmoniacal power at the naming of Christ are common to the early Christian Apologists, and must have had a very real controversial value at the time.

transcended the power of all those who are considered gods amongst them, and entirely convicted them by his own might of being nothing? Or if they say He is a magician, how is it possible for all magic to be brought to naught by a magician, and not rather upheld by him? For if He overcame the persons of magicians or prevailed against one singly, He might well be considered by them to have excelled the skill of the others by a superior art. But if His cross has won the victory over absolutely all magic, and over even the name of it, it must be plain that the Saviour is not a magician whom even those dæmons called upon by the other magicians flee from as their Master. Who He is, then, let the Greeks, whose only earnestness lies in mockery, tell us. Perhaps they might say that He also was a dæmon, and so prevailed. But in saying this they altogether invite ridicule, and are again liable to be put to shame by our former proofs. For how is it possible for Him to be a dæmon who drives away the dæmons? For if He merely expelled dæmons as dæmons, He might well be considered to prevail against the inferior spirits by the prince of the dæmons; as the Jews wishing to insult Him said. But if the whole madness of the dæmons is withstood by the naming of Him, and is persecuted, it must be manifest that on this point they are mistaken, and that our Lord and Saviour Christ

is not, as they think, some dæmoniacal power.

If, therefore, the Saviour is neither simply a man, nor a magician, nor some dæmon, but by His own Godhead has brought to naught and put into the shade the fictions of poets and the pretence of dæmons and the wisdom of the Greeks, it must be manifest, and owned by all, that He is truly Son of God, being Word and Wisdom and Power of the Father. Hence His works are not human, but are perceived to be superhuman and truly God's works, both from what is actually apparent, and from their comparison with those of other men.

XLIX. For who of men that have *Christ's works are unparalleled.* ever been, formed a body for himself from a virgin alone? or what man ever healed so many diseases as the common Lord of all? Or who has restored that which was lacking at birth, and caused a man blind from his birth to see?

Asclepius was deified among them because he practised the healing art, and devised herbs for the relief of bodily suffering,—not himself forming them from the earth, but discovering them by natural science. But what was this compared to what was done by the Saviour, who did not heal a wound, but

formed a new organ of sense and restored the body whole !

Heracles is worshipped as a god among the Greeks because he fought against men like himself, and destroyed wild beasts by stratagems. What was that compared with what was done by the Word, who drove away diseases and dæmons and death itself from men !

Dionysus is revered among them because he became the teacher of drunkenness to men. But the true Saviour and Lord of all who taught self-control is derided by them.

But let these things pass. What about the other marvels of His Godhead ? At what man's death was the sun darkened and the earth shaken ? Lo, men are dying even to the present day, and they died also in the past : when did any such marvel take place with respect to them ? Or, to omit the deeds done through His body, and to mention those after His rising again : did the teaching of any man that ever lived prevail universally one and the same from one end of the earth to the other, so that his worship flew throughout the whole world ? Or why, if, as according to them, Christ is a man, and not God the Word, is not His worship restrained by their gods from passing over to the same region where they are ? But rather the Word Himself sojourning here, by His teaching stops

their worship and puts to shame their pretence !

L. There have been many emperors and tyrants of the earth before this Man, many among the Chaldæans and Ægyptians and Indians are mentioned in history as being wise men and magicians : who of these ever, I do not say after his death, but still in his lifetime, was able to have such might as to fill the whole world itself with his teaching, and reform so vast a multitude from the superstition of idols as our Saviour has transferred to Himself from idols ? The philosophers of the Greeks composed many works with persuasiveness and argumentative skill ; but what result have they shown so great as the cross of Christ ? For their sophisms possessed persuasive power till their death, yet even what they appeared to achieve in their lifetime was subject to mutual controversy, and they engaged in eager rivalry and declaimed against one another. But the Word of God, most marvellous fact, teaching in humbler language, put into the shade the acute sophists and brought to naught their teachings, drawing all to Himself and filling His churches : and, strange to relate, by going down as man to death, He brought to naught the high talk of the wise concerning idols. For whose death

ever drove out dæmons? or whose death did dæmons ever fear as they did Christ's? For where the Name of the Saviour is named, there every dæmon is expelled. And who so stript men of their natural passions so that fornicators become chaste, murderers no longer grasp the sword, and those formerly held by cowardice become courageous? And, in fine, who persuaded men from among the barbarians and men belonging to the nations in various places to lay aside madness and to mind peace, except the faith of Christ and the sign of the cross? And who else so assured men of immortality as the Cross of Christ and the resurrection of His body? For although the Greeks lied about everything, yet they could not fabricate a resurrection of their idols, for it never once occurred to their minds whether the existence of the body again after death were at all possible. On which point one would especially accept them; because by their reasoning in this way they exposed the weakness of their own idolatry, and at the same time left the possibility open to Christ, that from this also He might be known by all to be Son of God.

LI. Who, again, of men, after his
The moral power death, or even during his lifetime,
of Christ. taught concerning virginity, and

that this virtue was not impossible among men? But Christ our Saviour and King of all had such power in His teaching concerning this, that children not yet arrived at legal age promise that virginity which is beyond the law. Whoever of men was able to traverse so great a distance as to come amongst Scythians and Æthiopians, or Persians, or Armenians, or Goths, or those spoken of as beyond the ocean, or those beyond Hyrcania, or Ægyptians and Chaldæans—men given over to magic, superstitious beyond nature, and wild in their manners; and to preach concerning virtue and self-control, and against the worship of idols, as the Lord of all, the power of God, our Lord Jesus Christ? Who not only preached through His own disciples, but also persuaded men in their intellect to change the wildness of their manners, and no longer to worship their ancestral gods, but to come to a clear knowledge of Him, and through Him to worship the Father. For formerly the Greeks and barbarians, while idolators, used to make war upon one another, and were cruel even to their kinsfolk. And it was quite impossible for any one to cross either sea or land without arming the hand with swords, because of their irreconcilable warfare with one another. For indeed the whole course of their life was passed under arms, and they had a sword instead of a staff, and it was their stay in every emergency; and although, as I said

before, they were serving idols and offering sacrifices to dæmons, yet, nevertheless, those who minded such things were unable, from the superstition of idols, to be educated differently. But when they have come over to the teaching of Christ, then, marvellous fact, as men really pricked to the heart, they have laid aside the cruelty of their murders, and no longer mind warfare; but all things are peaceful with them, and their desire is towards friendship.

Who, then, is He who has done this, or who is it who has united in peace those who hated one another, but the beloved Son of the Father, Jesus Christ, the common Saviour of all, who in His own love underwent all things for our salvation? For even of old time it had been prophesied concerning the peace to be obtained by Him; the Scripture saying, 'They shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into sickles; and nation shall not take sword against nation, and they shall no longer learn war.'^{*} And such a thing as this is at least not incredible, since even now the barbarians,

LII.

Christ's Divine teaching brings peace.

* Isa. ii. 4; Micah iv. 3.

who are naturally wild in their manners, so long as they sacrifice to their idols rage with madness against one another, and cannot endure to remain even one hour without their swords; but when they hear of the teaching of Christ, immediately in place of war they turn to agriculture, and instead of arming their hands with swords they stretch them out in prayer. And to sum up, in place of war amongst themselves for the future they arm against the devil and against dæmons, fighting them down by self-control and by virtue of soul. But this is a proof of the Divinity of the Saviour, because what men could not learn among idols, this they have learnt from Him; and it is also no slight exposure of the weakness and nothingness of dæmons and idols. For the dæmons, because they knew their own weakness, used formerly to engage men in warfare with one another; lest if they should cease from strife amongst themselves they should turn to fight against dæmons. Certainly, they who become disciples of Christ, no longer warring amongst themselves, are ranged in opposition to dæmons by their moral habits and virtuous deeds, and they persecute them, mocking at their prince the devil; so that in youth they have self-control, in temptations they endure, in labours they are stedfast, under insult are patient, and being despoiled despise it; and what at least is marvellous, they des-

prise even death, and become martyrs of Christ.

And, to speak of one proof, which is altogether wondrous, of the Divinity of the Saviour : what mere man or magician or tyrant or emperor was ever able by himself to engage with so many, and to fight against all idolatry, and every dæmoniacal army, and all magic, and all the wisdom of the Greeks; while yet so strong and flourishing and amazing all men, and at the first onset to withstand against all, as did our Lord, the true Word of God; who, invisibly refuting the deceit of each, is alone withdrawing all mankind from all these things; so that those who worshipped idols henceforth trample upon them, and those who were marvelled at for their magical arts burn their books, and the wise men prefer before all things the interpretation of the Gospels. For those whom they used to worship they are forsaking; and Christ, whom they used to deride as the Crucified One, they are worshipping, confessing Him to be God. And those who are considered gods amongst them are driven away by the sign of the cross, and the Crucified Saviour in all the world is proclaimed to be God and Son of God. And the gods worshipped amongst the Greeks are

L.III.

*Christ's Divinity
revealed through*

*His mighty
works.*

rejected by them as base; and they who receive the teaching of Christ live a life more chaste than they.

If then these and such like deeds are human, let him who wills exhibit similar deeds of men in former times, and let him persuade us. But if these seem to be, and are, not the works of men but of God, why are the unbelievers so impious as not to recognise the Master who wrought them? For they are similarly afflicted to one who from the works of creation could not perceive that God is their Artificer. For if from His power in the universe they knew His Godhead, they would know also that the works of Christ through His body are not human, but those of the Saviour of all, the Word of God. And having such knowledge 'They would not,' as Paul said, 'have crucified the Lord of Glory.'*

LIV.

*The glorious
nature and
magnitude of
Christ's works.*

As then, if any one wished to see God, who is invisible by nature and by no means seen, he may come to know and apprehend Him from His works; so let him who does not see Christ with his understanding, yet from His bodily works apprehend Him, and test them whether they be man's

* 1 Cor. ii. 8.

or God's. And if they are human, let him deride, while if they are not human but Divine, let him recognize it, and not laugh at matters which are not open to derision. Rather let him marvel that by so simple a method Divine things have been manifested to us, and that through death immortality has passed to all, and that by the Incarnation of the Word His universal providence has become known, and its Administrator and Artificer, the Word of God Himself.

For He became Man that we might be made God:* and He manifested Himself through the body that we might take cognizance of the invisible Father: and He underwent insult at the hands of men that we might inherit immortality. For He Himself was nothing injured, being impassible and incorruptible and very Word of God; but He was taking care of and preserving in His own impassibility the men who were suffering,

* The same strong expression recurs in Athan. *Orat. in Arianos*, § 33: 'If the works of the Word's Godhead had not taken place through the body, man had not been made God (*ἰθεοποιήθη*);' so, too, Irenæus, *adv. Hær.* v. 1, speaks of Christ 'raising again humanity into God by His Incarnation.' It is a true paraphrase of 2 Pet. i. 4, 'Ye may become partakers of the Divine nature,' and Eph. v. 30, 'We are members of His Body.' The fact of the solidarity of the human race and its vital incorporation in the Word through His Incarnation, and of the personal indwelling of Christ in the members of His Church, help us to realize this transcendent mystery.

at whose hands also He underwent these things. And to sum up, the successes of the Saviour, brought about by His Incarnation, are of such kind and magnitude, that if one wished to go through them all, it would be like those who gaze at the expanse of the sea and try to count its waves. For as it is impossible to take in all the waves with the eye, their multitudinous approach transcending the perception of him who attempts it, so also is it impossible for him who wishes to take in all the successes of Christ in the body, to grasp the whole even by counting them, those which transcend his apprehension being more than those he thinks he has taken in. Better were it, therefore, not to attempt to speak of the whole, when one cannot give worthy expression even to a part; but to mention yet one, and to leave thee to marvel at the whole. For all are equally wonderful, and wherever one turns one's eyes, there one sees the Divine working of the Word, and is beyond measure astonished.

LV. This, then, after what has
Summary of been said, it is proper for you
foregoing proofs. to understand, and to regard as
the summary of what has been already stated,
and to very much wonder at: namely, that
since the Saviour's sojourn among us idolatry

no longer has increased, but what there is of it is becoming less and gradually ceasing : and that no longer is the wisdom of the Greeks flourishing, but thenceforth what exists of it is disappearing : and that dæmons no longer deceive with impostures and oracles and magical arts, but if they only dare to attempt it, they are put to shame by the sign of the cross.

And, in brief, behold how the teaching of the Saviour is everywhere increasing ; and all idolatry and everything opposing the faith of Christ is daily becoming less and utterly weak, and falling into decay. And, beholding this, worship the Saviour, who is above all and mighty, the Word of God ; and condemn those who by Him are being defeated and extinguished.

For as when the sun is up darkness no longer prevails, but if there is any left anywhere it is driven away ; so now, when the Divine Manifestation of the Word of God is come, the darkness of the idols prevails no longer, but every part of the whole earth is everywhere illuminated by His teaching. And just as, when an emperor is reigning in some country and does not appear, but remains within in his own house, frequently some disorderly persons, abusing this withdrawal of his, proclaim themselves, and each being invested with the outward show, cheats the simple with his appearance as emperor,

and thus men are deceived by the name, hearing that there is an emperor, but not seeing him, especially as they cannot make their way within into his house; but when the true emperor comes forth and appears, then the disorderly deceivers are convicted by his presence, and men, seeing the true emperor, abandon those who formerly deceived them: so, in like manner, dæmons formerly deceived men, investing themselves with God's honour; but when the Word of God appeared in a body, and made known to us His Father, at that moment the deceit of the dæmons vanishes and ceases; and men, looking to the true God, the Word of the Father, abandon idols, and themselves come to a clear knowledge of the true God.

Now this is a proof that Christ is God, the Word and Power of God. For, human things ceasing, and the Word of Christ remaining, it is plain to all that the things which are ceasing are temporary, but that He who remains is God, and true Son of God, the Only-begotten Word.

LVI. Let this, then, be our offering
Conclusion. to thee, O Christ-loving man, as an elementary statement and sketch, briefly treated, of the faith of Christ and of His Divine Manifestation to us. But thou, taking

the idea from this, wilt, if thou readest the writings of the Scriptures and genuinely devotest thy mind to them, know from them more perfectly and distinctly the accuracy of what has been stated. For they were spoken and written by God through men who were divines. But we, having learned from inspired teachers, who have read them and who have become martyrs for the Godhead of Christ; * impart likewise to thy eagerness for learning. And thou wilt know also of His second glorious and truly Divine Manifestation to us, when He is to come no longer with lowliness, but in His own proper glory; no longer in abasement, but in His own proper grandeur; no longer to suffer, but henceforth to bestow on all the fruit of His own cross—I mean, of course, the resurrection and incorruptibility: and no longer is He to be judged, and will judge all according to what each practised in the body, whether good or evil; † then for the good is laid up the kingdom of heaven, and for those who practised evil eternal fire and outer darkness. For so also the Lord Himself says: ‘I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven in the glory of His

* Athanasius’ own teachers, who suffered martyrdom in the Great Persecution, A.D. 303–313.

† Cf. 2 Cor. v. 10.

Father.* Wherefore also there is one of the Saviour's words to prepare us for that day: 'Be ye ready and watch, because ye know not the hour in which He cometh.'† For according to the blessed Paul: 'We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive according to what he practised in the body, whether good or evil.'‡

LVII. But for the investigation and true knowledge of the Scriptures there is need of a good life and a pure soul and Christian virtue, in order that the mind, guiding its path by means of it, may be able to attain what it grasps at, and comprehend it as far as it is within the reach of human nature to learn concerning God the Word. For without a pure mind and the imitation of the life led by the saints one could not apprehend the words of the saints. For just as any one who wished to see the light of the sun would naturally wipe his eye clean and make it clear, purifying himself something like to what he desired, in order that thus, the eye being light, he may see the light of

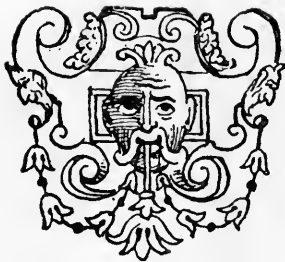
* S. Matt. xxvi. 64.

† S. Matt. xxiv. 42; cf. S. Mark xiii. 35.

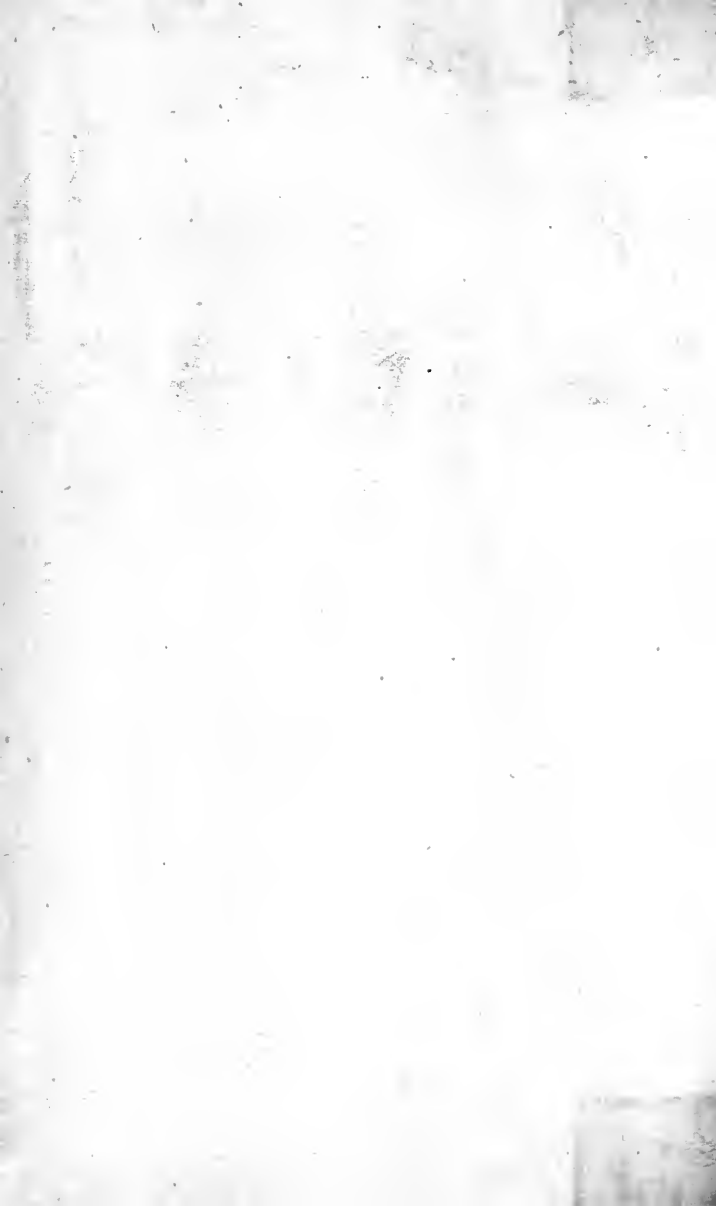
‡ 2 Cor. v. 10.

the sun ; or, just as any one who wished to see a city or a country would, of course, come to the place for the sake of seeing it—so he who wishes to understand the mind of the divines must previously wash and cleanse his soul by his life, and come to the saints themselves by imitation of their deeds ; so that, having fellowship with them in the daily course of a common life, he may both understand the things revealed to them by God, and thenceforth, as united with them, may escape the danger of the sinners and their fire in the day of judgment, and receive the things laid up for the saints in the kingdom of heaven, which ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,’* whatsoever things have been prepared for them that live a virtuous life and love the God and Father in Jesus Christ our Lord ; through whom and with whom be to the Father Himself, with the Son Himself, in the Holy Spirit, honour and might and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

* 1 Cor. ii. 9.







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