

# ***LITERATURE OF THE MEDIEVAL ERA***

**STUDENT TEXTBOOK**

***Compiled and edited by J. Parnell McCarter***

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**6408 Wrenwood**

**Jenison, MI 49428**

**(616) 457-8095**

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## INTRODUCTION

This textbook, *Literature of the Medieval Era*, is part of a series of literature textbooks exploring the history of extra-Biblical literature, published by *The Puritans' Home School Curriculum* ( [www.puritans.net](http://www.puritans.net) ). The series consists of anthologies of extra-Biblical literature, divided into four eras: ancient, medieval, reformation, and modern. By 'ancient' is meant that period when paganism reigned in most of the cultures of the world. By 'medieval' is meant that era when Christianity, at least in the nominal sense, became a dominant religion of the nations, especially those of Europe, yet the Bible upon which Christianity is based became increasingly shrouded to the people. By 'reformation' is meant that era when nominal Christianity re-discovered the Bible as the foundation of knowledge, and sought to implement it as such in the world. And, finally, by 'modern' is meant that era when secular humanism became the ascendant cultural force, in place of Biblical Christianity, yet the attainments of the Protestant Reformation were not lost in the awareness of the people.

So in this textbook we focus upon the literature of that era when paganism was on the retreat in the world, and at least nominal Christianity was in the ascendancy. It was a period when what we know as Roman Catholicism grew, while Christianity increasingly became corrupted and distorted. The medieval era roughly begins during the lifetime of Constantine, who declared the Roman Empire to be Christian. And it climaxes during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when Roman religious power was at its height, even though the ancient Roman Empire had long ago fallen. Its death knell was announced by the simple proclamation of the word of God by the Morningstar of the Reformation, even as the death knell of pagan thralldom had been sounded by the proclamation of that word by Jesus Christ.

Of course, the ancient pagan era did not end for all nations at the same time. While Christianity had come to dominate the nations within the Roman Empire by the fourth century, it would not be until centuries later that it would come with similar force into Scandinavia. And it was not until later still for other nations of the world. But in this course on medieval literature we concentrate upon the literature once Christianity had come and when the old paganism was on the retreat or even utterly vanquished.

During our study of ancient literature we read the writings of various medieval authors (like Nennius, Bede, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Snorri Sturlson, etc.), because only by reading them could we gain access to the earlier literature. They had access to many ancient manuscripts which are lost in the modern era. Since we read these authors as part of our earlier course, we shall not generally be reading their writings in this course's textbook. Instead we shall concentrate upon the writings of those authors not previously covered.

Each chapter in this textbook's anthology of medieval literature will include prefatory background information along with excerpts from the work itself.

Virtually all of the contents of *Literature of the Medieval Era* are available on the internet. *Literature of the Medieval Era* gives the website addresses of the literature so students wanting to study certain works more in depth may do so. There is now a plethora of such resources available on the internet. And we hope a course using *Literature of the Medieval Era* as the textbook will encourage further study by students, using these resources.

## CHAPTER 1 : NICENE CREED

### Background Information

During the early centuries of the Christian church, Christians poured their literary energies into composing creeds and canons (like the Nicene Creed, *Apostolic Constitutions*, and canons of the Council of Elvira), histories (such as Eusebius' *History of the Church*), doctrinal treatises (like Augustine's "Treatise on the Predestination of the Saints" and Basil's "On the Holy Ghost"), homilies (like Chrysostom's homily on Matthew 5:17), biographies and autobiographies especially concerning spiritual journeys (like Augustine's *Confessions*), polemical treatises (like Jerome's *Against Jovianus*), poetic prayers (like Patrick's "Morning Prayer") and epistles (such as Ambrose's Epistle XVII). Unlike the pagan era, when drama played such an important role, its prevalency waned in the early Christian era, because stage-plays were generally forbidden in the early Christian community. (Drama started to re-appear among Christians in the later Middle Ages though.) Novels too were a dis-favored and generally rare genre among Christians in the early centuries. So as Christian influence waxed in the world, these Christian literary norms had a significant effect on the literary climate of society as a whole.

The Christian Church in its first centuries had been persecuted by the Roman Empire; but eventually, during the reign of the Emperor Constantine, the Roman Empire became professedly Christian, and the relation of Church and State in the empire as a whole changed. (Even before this, however, certain nations and territories like Armenia had already become professedly Christian.) Now, during the Middle Ages, the State took on the role of protector of the Church, instead of being hostile towards it. In this new role, the State would call a council of Church leaders to resolve theological disputes. The most significant of the early councils were Nicaea (325 AD) and Chalcedon (451 AD). The former settled the issue of the nature of Christ as God, while the latter dealt with the issues of the twofold natures of Christ and their unity.

In the case of Nicaea, a presbyter (also sometimes referred as a priest or elder or even bishop, in the early church) of Alexandria, Arius, maintained that Christ was not the eternal Son of God. In other words, the heresy of Arianism denied that Jesus was fully God. Arius taught that the Father, in the beginning, created the Son, and that the Son, in conjunction with the Father, then proceeded to create the world. The result of this was to make the Son a created being, and hence not God. (It was also suspiciously like the theories of those Gnostics and pagans who held that God was too perfect to create something like a material world, and so introduced one or more intermediate beings between God and the world. God created A, who created B, who created C..., who created the world.)

Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, vigorously opposed the Arian idea, declaring Christ to be of the same substance (*homoousios*) with God. But Arius stuck to his position, and was finally excommunicated by a council of Egyptian bishops. He went to Nicomedia in



Asia, where he wrote letters defending his position to various bishops. Finally, the Emperor Constantine summoned a council of bishops in Nicea (across the straits from modern Istanbul), and there in 325 AD the bishops of the Church, by a decided majority, repudiated Arius and produced the first draft of what is now called the Nicene Creed.

If Medieval society was anything, it was religious, and not secularistic. And the Nicene Creed is a representative product of that professing Christian society.

## **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

### **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.reformed.org/documents/>

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/history/creed.nicene.txt>

<http://mb-soft.com/believe/txs/councils.htm>

## CHAPTER 2 : *THE APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS*

### Background Information

Although entitled *Apostolic Constitutions*, evidence indicates they were not written by the infallibly inspired Apostles of the Apostolic era. Rather, like the Apostle's Creed, they were an effort by leaders of the early church after the Apostolic era to summarize rules of life in conformity to Apostolic doctrine. It is difficult to know when precisely they were composed, but it may have been around the beginning of the fourth century. They seek to summarize the Apostolic teaching of scripture on various matters practical to the Church.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Book I. Concerning the Laity. Sec. I.-General Commandments.

The apostles and elders to all those who from among the Gentiles have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; grace and peace from Almighty God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied unto you in the acknowledgment of Him.

The Catholic Church is the plantation of God and His beloved vineyard;<sup>1</sup> containing those who have believed in His unerring divine religion; who are the heirs by faith of His everlasting kingdom; who are partakers of His divine influence, and of the communication of the Holy Spirit; who are armed through Jesus, and have received His fear into their hearts; who enjoy the benefit of the sprinkling of the precious and innocent blood of Christ; who have free liberty to call Almighty God, Father; being fellow-heirs and joint-partakers of His beloved Son: hearken to this holy doctrine, you who enjoy His promises, as being delivered by the command of your Saviour, and agreeable to His glorious words. Take care, ye children of God, to do all things in obedience to God; and in all things please Christ our Lord.<sup>2</sup> For if any man follows unrighteousness, and does those things that are contrary to the will of God, such a one will be esteemed by God as the disobedient heathen.

Concerning Covetousness.

I. Abstain, therefore, from all unlawful desires and injustice. For it is written in the law, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his field, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's;"<sup>3</sup> for all coveting of these things is from the evil one. For he that covets his neighbour's wife, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, is already in his mind an adulterer and a thief; and if he does not repent, is condemned by our Lord Jesus Christ: through whom<sup>4</sup> glory be to God for ever, Amen. For He says in the Gospel, recapitulating, and confirming, and fulfilling the ten commandments of the law: "It is written in the law, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that is, I said in the law, by Moses. But now I say unto you myself, Whosoever shall look on his neighbour's wife to lust after her, hath

committed adultery with her already in his heart."<sup>5</sup> Such a one is condemned of adultery, who covets his neighbour's wife in his mind. But does not he that covets an ox or an ass design to steal them to apply them to his own use, and to lead them away? Or, again, does not he that covets a field, and continues in such a disposition, wickedly contrive how to remove the landmarks, and to compel the possessor to part with somewhat for nothing? For as the prophet somewhere speaks: "Woe to those who join house to house, and lay field to field, that they may deprive their neighbour of somewhat which was his."<sup>6</sup> Wherefore he says: "Must you alone inhabit the earth? For these things have been heard in the ears of the Lord of hosts." And elsewhere: "Cursed be he who removeth his neighbour's landmarks: and all the people shall say, Amen."<sup>7</sup> Wherefore Moses says: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmarks<sup>8</sup> *which thy fathers have set.*"<sup>9</sup> Upon this account, therefore, terrors, death, tribunals, and condemnations follow such as these from God. But as to those who are obedient to God, there is one law of God, *simple*,<sup>10</sup> true, living, which is this: "Do not that to another which thou hatest another should do to thee."<sup>11</sup> Thou wouldst not that any one should look upon thy wife with an evil design to corrupt her; do not thou, therefore, look upon thy neighbour's wife with a wicked intention. Thou wouldst not that thy garment should be taken away; do not thou therefore, take away another's. Thou wouldst not be beaten, reproached, affronted; do not thou, therefore, serve any other in the like manner.

That We Ought Not to Return Injuries, Nor Revenge Ourselves on Him that Does Us Wrong....

Sec. II.-Commandments to Men. Concerning the Adornment of Ourselves, and the Sin Which Arises from Thence.

Let the husband not be insolent nor arrogant towards his wife; but compassionate, bountiful, willing to please his own wife *alone*,<sup>16</sup> and treat her honourably and obligingly, endeavouring to be agreeable to her; (III.) not adorning thyself in such a manner as may entice another woman to thee. For if thou art overcome by her, and sinnest with her, eternal death will overtake thee from God; and thou wilt be punished with sensible and bitter torments. Or if thou dost not perpetrate such a wicked act, but shakest her off, and refusest her, in this case thou art not wholly innocent, even though thou art not guilty of the crime itself, but only in so far as through thy adorning thou didst entice the woman to desire thee. For thou art the cause that the woman was so affected, and by her lusting after thee was guilty of adultery with thee: yet art thou not so guilty, because thou didst not send to her, who was ensnared by thee; nor didst thou desire her. Since, therefore, thou didst not deliver up thyself to her, thou shalt find mercy with the Lord thy God, who hath said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and, "Thou shalt not covet."<sup>17</sup> For if such a woman, upon sight of thee, or unseasonable meeting with thee, was smitten in her mind, and sent to thee, but thou as a religious person didst refuse her,<sup>18</sup> if she was wounded in her heart by thy beauty, and youth, and adorning, and fell in love with thee, thou wilt be found guilty of her transgressions, as having been the occasion of scandal to her,<sup>19</sup> *and shalt inherit a woe.*<sup>20</sup> Wherefore pray thou to the Lord God that no mischief may befall thee upon this account: for thou art not to please men, so as to commit sin; but God, so as to attain holiness of life, and be partaker of everlasting rest. That beauty which God and

nature has bestowed on thee, do not further beautify; but modestly diminish it before men. Thus, do not thou permit the hair of thy head to grow too long, but rather cut it short; lest by a nice combing thy hair, and wearing it long, and anointing thyself, thou draw upon thyself such ensnared or ensnaring women. Neither do thou wear over-fine garments to seduce any; neither do thou, with an evil subtilty, affect over-fine stockings or shoes for thy feet, but only such as suit the measures of decency and usefulness. Neither do thou put a gold ring upon thy fingers; for all these ornaments are the signs of lasciviousness, which if thou be solicitous about in an indecent manner, thou wilt not act as becomes a good man: for it is not lawful for thee, a believer and a man of God, to permit the hair of thy head to grow long, and to brush it up together, nor to suffer it to spread abroad, nor to puff it up, nor by nice combing and platting to make it curl and shine; since that is contrary to the law, which says thus, in its additional precepts: "You shall not make to yourselves curls and round rasures."<sup>21</sup> Nor may men destroy the hair of their beards, and unnaturally change the form of a man. For the law says: "Ye shall not mar your beards."<sup>22</sup> For God the Creator has made this decent for women, but has determined that it is unsuitable for men. But if thou do these things to please men, in contradiction to the law, thou wilt be abominable with God, who created thee after His own image. If, therefore, thou wilt be acceptable to God, abstain from all those things which He hates, and do none of those things that are displeasing to Him.

That We Ought Not to Be Over-Curious About Those Who Live Wickedly, But to Be Intent Upon Our Own Proper Employment.

IV. Thou shalt not be as a wanderer and gadder abroad, rambling about the streets, without just cause, to spy out such as live wickedly. But by minding thy own trade and employment, endeavour to do what is acceptable to God. And keeping in mind the oracles of Christ, meditate in the same continually. For so the Scripture says to thee: "Thou shalt meditate in His law day and night; when thou walkest in the field, and when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, that thou mayest have understanding in all things."<sup>23</sup> Nay, although thou beest rich, and so dost not want a trade for thy maintenance, be not one that gads about, and walks abroad at random; but either go to some that are believers, and of the same religion, and confer and discourse with them about the lively oracles of God:-

What Books of Scripture We Ought to Read.

V. Or if thou stayest at home, read the books of the Law, of the Kings, with the Prophets; sing the hymns of David; and peruse diligently the Gospel, which is the completion of the other.

That We Ought to Abstain from All the Books of Those that are Out of the Church.

VI. Abstain from all the heathen books. For what hast thou to do with such foreign discourses, or laws, or false prophets, which subvert the faith of the unstable? For what defect dost thou find in the law of God, that thou shouldest have recourse to those

heathenish fables? For if thou hast a mind to read history, thou hast the books of the Kings; if books of wisdom or poetry, thou hast those of the Prophets, of Job, and the Proverbs, in which thou wilt find greater depth of sagacity than in all the heathen poets and sophisters, because these are the words of the Lord, the only wise God. If thou desirest something to sing, thou hast the Psalms; if the origin of things, thou hast Genesis; if laws and statutes, thou hast the glorious law of the Lord God. Do thou therefore utterly abstain from all strange and diabolical books. Nay, when thou readest the law, think not thyself bound to observe the additional precepts; though not all of them, yet some of them. Read those barely for the sake of history, in order to the knowledge of them, and to glorify God that He has delivered thee from such great and so many bonds. Propose to thyself to distinguish what rules were from the law of nature, and what were added afterwards, or were such additional rules as were introduced and given in the wilderness to the Israelites after the making of the calf; for the law contains those precepts which were spoken by the Lord God before the people fell into idolatry, and made a calf like the Egyptian Apis-that is, the ten commandments. But as to those bonds which were further laid upon them after they had sinned, do not thou draw them upon thyself: for our Saviour came for no other reason but that *He might deliver those that were obnoxious thereto from the wrath which was reserved for them, that*<sup>24</sup> He might fulfil the Law and the Prophets, and that He might abrogate or change those secondary bonds which were superadded to the rest of the law. For therefore did He call to us and say, "Come unto me",<sup>25</sup> all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."<sup>26</sup> When, therefore, thou hast read the Law, which is agreeable to the Gospel and to the Prophets, read also the books of the Kings, that thou mayest thereby learn which of the kings were righteous, and how they were prospered by God, and how the promise of eternal life continued with them from Him; but those kings which went a-whoring from God did soon perish in their apostasy by the righteous judgment of God, and were deprived of His life, inheriting, instead of rest, eternal punishment. Wherefore by reading these books thou wilt be mightily strengthened in the faith, and edified in Christ, whose body and member thou art. Moreover, when thou walkest abroad in public, and hast a mind to bathe, make use of that bath which is appropriated to men, lest, by discovering thy body in an unseemly manner to women, or by seeing a sight not seemly for men, either thou beest ensnared, or thou ensnarest and enticest to thyself *those women who easily yield to such temptations.*<sup>27</sup> Take care, therefore, and avoid such things, lest thou admit a snare upon thy own soul...

### Sec. III.-Commandments to Women. Concerning the Subjection of a Wife to Her Husband, and that She Must Be Loving and Modest.

VIII. Let the wife be obedient to her own proper husband, because "the husband is the head of the wife."<sup>32</sup> But Christ is the head of that husband who walks in the way of righteousness; and "the head of Christ is God," even His Father. Therefore, O wife, next after the Almighty, our God and Father, the Lord of the present world and of the world to come, the Maker of everything that breathes, and of every power; and after His beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom<sup>33</sup> glory be to God, do thou fear thy husband, and reverence him, pleasing him alone, rendering thyself acceptable to him in the several affairs of life, that so on thy account thy husband may be called blessed, according to the Wisdom of Solomon, which thus speaks: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for such a

one is more precious than costly stones. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that she shall have no need of spoil: for she does good to her husband all the days of her life. She buyeth wool and flax, and worketh profitable things-with her hands. She is like the merchants ships, she bringeth her food from far. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and food to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She tasteth that it is good to labour; her lamp goeth not out all the whole night. She stretcheth out her arms for useful work, and layeth her hands to the spindle. She openeth her hands to the needy; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the poor. Her husband takes no care of the affairs of his house; for all that are with her are clothed with double garments. She maketh coats for her husband, clothings of silk and purple. Her husband is eminent in the gates, when he sitteth with the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it to the Phoenicians, and girdles to the Canaanites. She is clothed with glory and beauty, and she rejoices in the last days. She openeth her mouth with wisdom and discretion, and puts her words in order. The ways of her household are strict; she eateth not the bread of idleness. She will open her mouth with wisdom and caution, and upon her tongue are the laws of mercy. Her children arise up and praise her for her riches, and her husband joins in her praises. Many daughters have obtained wealth and done worthily, but thou surpassest and excellest them all. May lying flatteries and the vain beauty of a wife be far from thee. For a religious wife is blessed. Let her praise the fear of the Lord:<sup>34</sup> give her of the fruits of her lips, and let her husband be praised in the gates."<sup>35</sup> And again: "A virtuous wife is a crown to her husband."<sup>36</sup> And again: "Many wives have built an house."<sup>37</sup> You have learned what great commendations a prudent and loving wife receives from the Lord God. If thou desirest to be one of the faithful, and to please the Lord, O wife, do not superadd ornaments to thy beauty, in order to please other men; neither affect to wear fine broidering, garments, or shoes, to entice those who are allured by such things. For although thou dost not these wicked things with design of sinning thyself, but only for the sake of ornament and beauty, yet wilt thou not so escape future punishment, as having compelled another to look so hard at thee as to lust after thee, and as not having taken care both to avoid sin thyself, and the affording scandal to others. But if thou yield thyself up, and commit the crime, thou art both guilty of thy own sin, and the cause of the ruin of the other's soul also. Besides, when thou hast committed lewdness with one man, and beginnest to despair, thou wilt again turn away from thy duty, and follow others, and grow past feeling; as says the divine word: "When a wicked man comes into the depth of evil, he becomes a scorner, and then disgrace and reproach come upon him."<sup>38</sup> For such a woman afterward being wounded, ensnares without restraint the souls of the foolish. Let us learn, therefore, how the divine word, triumphs over such women, saying: "I hated a woman who is a snare and net to the heart of men worse than death; her hands are fetters."<sup>39</sup> And in another passage: "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is beauty in a wicked woman."<sup>40</sup> And again: "As a worm in wood, so does a wicked woman destroy her husband."<sup>41</sup> And again: "It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top, than with a contentious and an angry woman."<sup>42</sup> You, therefore, who are Christian women, do not imitate such as these. But thou who designest to be faithful to thine own husband, take care to please him alone. And when thou art in the streets, cover thy head; for by such a covering thou wilt avoid being viewed of idle persons. Do not paint thy face, which is



God's workmanship; for there is no part of thee which wants ornament, inasmuch as all things which God has made are very good. But the lascivious additional adorning of what is already good is an affront to the bounty of the Creator. Look downward when thou walkest abroad, veiling thyself as becomes women.

#### That a Woman Must Not Bathe with Men.

IX. Avoid also that disorderly practice of bathing in the same place with men; for many are the nets of the evil one. And let not a Christian woman bathe with an hermaphrodite; for if she is to veil her face, and conceal it with modesty from strange men, how can she bear to enter naked into the bath together with men? But if the bath be appropriated to women, let her bathe orderly, modestly, and moderately. But let her not bathe without occasion, nor much, nor often, nor in the middle of the day, nor, if possible, every day; and let the tenth hour of the day be the set time for such seasonable bathing. For it is convenient that thou, who art a Christian woman, shouldst ever constantly avoid a curiosity which has many eyes.

#### Concerning a Contentious and Brawling Woman.

X. But as to a spirit of contention, be sure to curb it as to all men, but principally as to thine husband; lest, if he be an unbeliever or an heathen, he may have an occasion of scandal or of blaspheming God, and thou be partaker of a woe from God. For, says He, "Woe to him by whom My name is blasphemed among the Gentiles;"<sup>43</sup> and lest, if thy husband be a Christian, he be forced, from his knowledge of the Scriptures, to say that which is written in the book of Wisdom: "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman."<sup>44</sup> You wives, therefore, demonstrate your piety by your modesty and meekness to all without the Church, whether they be women or men, in order to their conversion and improvement in the faith...

#### Book II. Of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Sec. I.-On Examining Candidates for the Episcopal Office. That a Bishop Must Be Well Instructed and Experienced in the Word.

I. But concerning bishops, we have heard from our Lord, that a pastor who is to be ordained a bishop for the churches in every parish, must be unblameable, unreprouable, free from all kinds of wickedness common among men, not under fifty years of age; for such a one is in good part past youthful disorders, and the slanders of the heathen, as well as the reproaches which are sometimes cast upon many persons by some false brethren, who do not consider the word of God in the Gospel: "Whosoever speaketh an idle word shall give an account thereof to the Lord in the day of judgment."<sup>1</sup> And again: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."<sup>2</sup> Let him therefore, *if it is possible*, be well educated; *but if he be unlettered, let him at any rate be*<sup>3</sup> skilful in the word, and of competent age. But if in a small parish one advanced in years is not to be found,<sup>4</sup> let some younger person, who has a good report among his neighbours, and is esteemed by them worthy of the office of a bishop, -who has carried himself from his youth with meekness and regularity, like a much elder person, -after examination, and a general good report, be ordained in peace. For Solomon at twelve

years of age was king of Israel,<sup>5</sup> and Josiah at eight years of age reigned righteously,<sup>6</sup> and in like manner Joash governed the people at seven years of age.<sup>7</sup> Wherefore, although the person be young, let him be meek, gentle, and quiet. For the Lord God says by Esaias: "Upon whom will I look, but upon him who is humble and quiet, and always trembles at my words?"<sup>8</sup> In like manner it is in the Gospel also: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."<sup>9</sup> Let him also be merciful; for again it is said: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."<sup>10</sup> *Let him also be a peacemaker; for again it is said: "Blessed sons of God."*<sup>11</sup> Let him also be one of a good conscience, purified from all evil, and wickedness, and unrighteousness; for it is said again: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."<sup>12</sup>

#### What Ought to Be the Characters of a Bishop and of the Rest of the Clergy.

II. Let him therefore be sober, prudent, decent, firm, stable, not given to wine; no striker, but gentle; not a brawler, not covetous; "not a novice, test, being puffed up with pride, be fall into condemnation, and the snare of the devil: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abused."<sup>13</sup> Such a one a bishop ought to be, who has been the "husband of one wife,"<sup>14</sup> who also has herself had no other husband, "ruling well his own house."<sup>15</sup> In this manner let examination be made when he is to receive ordination, and to be placed in his bishopric, whether he be grave, faithful, decent; whether he hath a grave and faithful-wife, or has formerly had such a one; whether he hath educated his children piously, and has "brought them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;"<sup>16</sup> whether his domestics do fear and reverence him, and are all obedient to him: for if those who are immediately about him for worldly concerns are seditious and disobedient, how will others not of his family, when they are under his management, become obedient to him?...

#### According to What Patterns and Dignity Every Order of the Clergy is Appointed by God.

XXVI. The bishop, he is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in the several parts of your divine worship. He is the teacher of piety; and, next after God, he is your father, who has begotten you again to the adoption of sons by water and the Spirit. He is your ruler and governor; he is your king and potentate; he is, next after God, your earthly god, who has a right to be honoured by you. For concerning him, and such as he, it is that God pronounces, "I have said, Ye are gods; and ye are all children of the Most High."<sup>143</sup> And, "Ye shall not speak evil of the gods."<sup>144</sup> For let the bishop preside over you as one honoured with the authority of God, which he is to exercise over the clergy, and by which he is to govern all the people. But let the deacon minister to him, as Christ does to His Father;<sup>145</sup> and let him serve him unblameably in all things, as Christ does nothing of Himself, but does always those things that please His Father. Let also the deaconess be honoured by you in the place of the Holy Ghost, and not do or say anything without the deacon; as neither does the Comforter say or do anything of Himself, but gives glory to Christ by waiting for His pleasure. And as we cannot believe on Christ without the teaching of the Spirit, so let not any woman address herself to the deacon or bishop without the deaconess. Let the



presbyters be esteemed by you to represent us the apostles, and let them be the teachers of divine knowledge; since our Lord, when He sent us, said, "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."<sup>146</sup> Let the widows and orphans be esteemed as representing the altar of burnt-offering; and let the virgins be honoured as representing the altar of incense, and the incense itself...

XXVIII. If any determine to invite eider women to an entertainment of love, or a feast, as our Saviour calls it,<sup>153</sup> let them most frequently send to such a one whom the deacons know to be in distress. But let what is the pastor's due, I mean the first-fruits,<sup>154</sup> be set apart in the feast for him, even though he be not at the entertainment, as being your priest, and in honour of that God who has entrusted him with the priesthood. But as much as is given to every one of the eider women, let double so much be given to the deacons, in honour of Christ. Let also a double portion be set apart for the presbyters, as for such who labour continually about the word and doctrine, upon the account of the apostles of our Lord, whose place they sustain, as the counsellors of the bishop and the crown of the Church. For they are the Sanhedrim and senate of the Church. If there be a reader there, let him receive a single portion, in honour of the prophets, and let the singer and the porter have as much. Let the laity, therefore, pay proper honours in their presents, and utmost marks of respect to each distinct order. But let them not on all occasions trouble their governor, but let them signify their desires by those who minister to him, that is, by the deacons, with whom they may be more free. For neither may we address ourselves to Almighty God, but only by Christ. In the same manner, therefore, let the laity make known all their desires to the bishop by the deacon, and accordingly let them act as he shall direct them. For there was no holy thing offered or done in the temple formerly without the priest. "For the priest's lips shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth," as the prophet somewhere says, "for he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty."<sup>155</sup> For if the worshippers of demons, in their hateful, abominable, and impure performances, imitate the sacred rules till this very day (it is a wide comparison indeed. and there is a vast distance between their abominations and God's sacred worship), in their mockeries of worship they neither offer nor do anything without their pretended priest, but esteem him as the very mouth of their idols of stone, waiting to see what commands he will lay upon them. And whatsoever he commands them, that they do, and without him they do nothing; and they honour him, their pretended priest, and esteem his name as venerable in honour of lifeless statues, and in order to the worship of wicked spirits. If these heathens, therefore, who give glory to lying vanities, and place their hope upon nothing that is firm, endeavour to imitate the sacred rules, how much more reasonable is it that you, who have a most certain faith and undoubted hope, and who expect glorious, and eternal, and never-failing promises, should honour the Lord God in those set over you, and esteem your bishop to be the mouth of God!

What is the Dignity of a Bishop and of a Deacon.

XXIX. For if Aaron, because he declared to Pharaoh the words of God from Moses, is called a prophet; and Moses himself is called a god to Pharaoh, on account of his being at once a king and a high priest, as God says to him, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh,

and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet; "<sup>156</sup> why do not ye also esteem the mediators of the word to be prophets, and reverence them as gods?

After What Manner the Laity are to Be Obedient to the Deacon.

XXX. For now the deacon is to you Aaron, and the bishop Moses. If, therefore, Moses was called a god by the Lord, let the bishop be honoured among you as a god, and the deacon as his prophet...

Of Commendatory Letters in Favour of Strangers, Lay Persons, Clergymen, and Bishops; And that Those Who Come into the Church Assemblies are to Be Received Without Regard to Their Quality.

LVIII. If any brother, man or woman, come in from another parish, bringing commendatory letters, let the deacon be the judge of that affair, inquiring whether they be of the faithful, and of the Church? whether they be not defiled by heresy? and besides, whether the party be a married woman or a widow? And when he is satisfied in these questions, that they are really of the faithful, and of the same sentiments in the things of the Lord, let him conduct every one to the place proper for him. And if a presbyter comes from another parish, let him be received to communion by the presbyters; if a deacon, by the deacons; if a bishop, let him sit with the bishop, and be allowed the same honour with himself; and thou, O bishop, shalt desire him to speak to the people words of instruction: for the exhortation and admonition of strangers is very acceptable, and exceeding profitable...

That Every Christian Ought to Frequent the Church Diligently Both Morning and Evening.

LIX. When thou instructest the people, O bishop, command and exhort them to come constantly to church morning and evening every day, and by no means to forsake it on any account, but to assemble together continually; neither to diminish the Church by withdrawing themselves, and causing the body of Christ to be without its member. For it is not only spoken concerning the priests, but let every one of the laity hearken to it as concerning himself, considering that it is said by the Lord: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."<sup>258</sup> Do not you therefore scatter yourselves abroad, who are the members of Christ, by not assembling together, since you have Christ your head, according to His promise, present, and communicating to you.<sup>259</sup> Be not careless of yourselves, neither deprive your Saviour of His own members, neither divide His body nor disperse His members, neither prefer the occasions of this life to the word of God; but assemble yourselves together every day, morning and evening, singing psalms and praying in the Lord's house: in the morning saying the sixty-second Psalm, and in the evening the hundred and fortieth, but principally on the Sabbath-day. And on the day of our Lord's resurrection, which is the Lord's day, meet more diligently, sending praise to God that made the universe by Jesus, and sent Him to us, and condescended to let Him suffer, and raised Him from the dead. Otherwise what apology will he make to God who does not assemble on that day to hear the saving word

concerning the resurrection, on which we pray thrice standing in memory of Him who arose in three days, in which is performed the reading of the prophets, the preaching of the Gospel, the oblation of the sacrifice, the gift of the holy food?...

#### That Christians Must Abstain from All the Impious Practices of the Heathens.

LXII. Take heed, therefore, not to join yourselves in your worship with those that perish, which is the assembly of the Gentiles, to your deceit and destruction. For there is no fellowship between God and the devil; for he that assembles himself with those that favour the things of the devil, will be esteemed one of them, and will inherit a woe. Avoid also indecent spectacles: I mean the theatres and the pomps of the heathens; their enchantments, observations of omens, soothsayings, purgations, divinations, observations of birds; their necromancies and invocations. For it is written: "There is no divination in Jacob, nor soothsaying in Israel."<sup>273</sup> And again: "Divination is iniquity."<sup>274</sup> And elsewhere: "Ye shall not be soothsayers, and follow observers of omens, nor diviners, nor dealers with familiar spirits. Ye shall not preserve alive wizards."<sup>275</sup> Wherefore Jeremiah exhorts, saying: "Walk ye not according to the ways of the heathen, and be not afraid of the signs of heaven."<sup>276</sup> So that it is the duty of a believer to avoid the assemblies of the ungodly, of the heathen, and of the Jews, and of the rest of the heretics, lest by uniting ourselves to them we bring snares upon our own souls; that we may not by joining in their feasts, which are celebrated in honour of demons, be partakers with them in their impiety. You are also to avoid their public meetings, and those sports which are celebrated in them. For a believer ought not to go to any of those public meetings, unless to purchase a slave, and save a soul,<sup>277</sup> and at the same time to buy such other things as suit their necessities. Abstain, therefore, from all idolatrous pomp and state, all their public meetings, banquets, duels, and all shows belonging to demons...

#### That a Bishop Ought to Be Ordained by Three or by Two Bishops, But Not by One; For that Would Be Invalid.

XX. We command that a bishop be ordained by three bishops, or at least by two; but it is not lawful that he be set over you by one; for the testimony of two or three witnesses is more firm and secure. But a presbyter and a deacon are to be ordained by one bishop and the rest of the clergy. Nor must either a presbyter or a deacon ordain from the laity into the clergy; but the presbyter is only to teach, to offer, to baptize, to bless the people, and the deacon is to minister to the bishop, and to the presbyters, that is, to do the office of a ministering deacon, but not to meddle with the other offices...

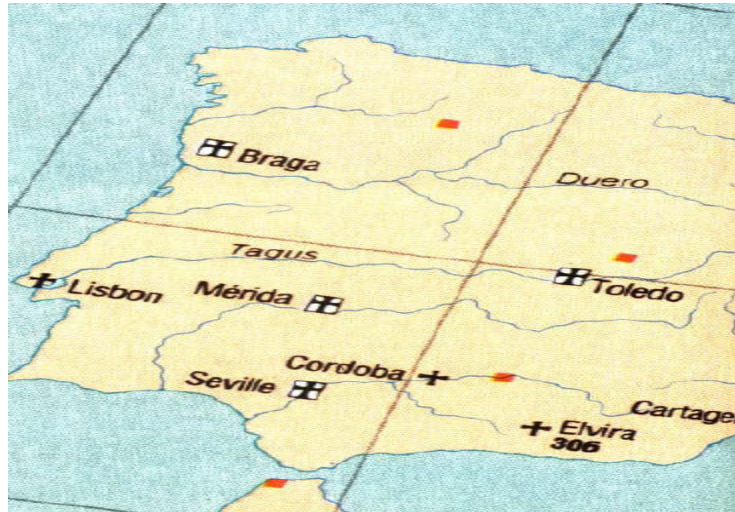
#### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-07/anf07-39.htm#TopOfPage>

## CHAPTER 3 : *CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF ELVIRA*

### Background Information

The Council of Elvira is the first known council of the Christian church in Spain, held early in the 4th century at Elvira, near modern Granada.



The exact date of the council is disputed, but some scholars believe it was held either about 300–303 or in 309 AD. Nineteen bishops and twenty-four presbyters, from all parts of Spain, but chiefly from the south, assembled, with a view to restoring order and discipline in the church.

Canon law is the body of laws and regulations made by or adopted by ecclesiastical authority, for the government of the Christian organization and its members. The eighty-one canons which were adopted by the Council of Elvira reflect with considerable fulness the internal life and external relations of the Spanish Church of the 4th century.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Canon 1 - It is decided that anyone of mature age, who, after the faith of saving baptism, approaches a temple as an idolater and commits this major crime, because it is an enormity of the highest order, is not to receive communion—even at the end [of his life].

...

Canon 16 - Heretics, if they are unwilling to change over to the Catholic Church, are not to have Catholic girls given to them in marriage, nor shall they be given to Jews or heretics, since there can be no community for the faithful with the unfaithful. If parents act against this prohibition, they shall be kept out for five years.

...

Canon 21 - If anyone who lives in the city does not attend church services for three Sundays, let that person be expelled for a brief time in order to make the reproach public.

...

Canon 33 - Bishops, presbyters, deacons, and others with a position in the ministry are to abstain completely from sexual intercourse with their wives and from the procreation of children. If anyone disobeys, he shall be removed from the clerical office.

Canon 34 - Candles are not to be burned in a cemetery during the day. This practice is related to paganism and is harmful to Christians. Those who do this are to be denied the communion of the church.

...

Canon 36 - Pictures are not to be placed in churches, so that they do not become objects of worship and adoration.

...

Canon 41 - Christians are to prohibit their slaves from keeping idols in their houses. If this is impossible to enforce, they must at least avoid the idols and remain pure. If this does not happen, they are alienated from the church.

...

Canon 42 - Those with a good reputation who seek to become Christians shall remain as catechumens for two years before being baptized. Should they become seriously ill, they may request and receive baptism earlier.

...

Canon 53 - A person who has been excluded from communion for an offense can be readmitted only by the bishop who ordered the excommunication. Another bishop who readmits him or her without obtaining the consent of the first bishop is liable to bring tension among his brothers and may be removed from office.

...

Canon 57 - Women and men who willingly allow their clothing to be used in secular spectacles and processions shall be denied communion for three years.

...

Canon 58 - In all places, and especially where the bishop resides, those who bring letters indicating their right to commune shall be examined to affirm the testimony.

Canon 59 - A Christian may not go to the capitol and watch the pagans offer their sacrifices. If a Christian does, he or she is guilty of the same sin and may not commune before completing ten years of penance.

...

Canon 62 - Chariot racers or pantomimes must first renounce their profession and promise not to resume it before they may become Christians. If they fail to keep this promise, they shall be expelled from the church.

...

Canon 75 - If someone falsely accuses a bishop, presbyter, or deacon of a crime and cannot offer evidence, he or she is excluded from communion even at the time of death.

...

Canon 79 - Christians who play dice for money are to be excluded from receiving communion. If they amend their ways and cease, they may receive communion after one year.

...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/Canon%20Law/ElviraCanons.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council\\_of\\_Elvira](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Elvira)

## CHAPTER 4 : *HISTORY OF THE CHURCH BY EUSEBIUS*

### Background Information

Eusebius of Caesarea (~275 – May 30, 339) (often called *Eusebius Pamphili*, "Eusebius [the friend] of Pamphilus") was a bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, and is often referred to as the father of church history, because of his work in recording the history of the early Christian church. Pamphilus (c. 240-309), who he had studied under, was a Christian scholar and presbyter in the church at Caesarea. Pamphilus in turn had been an ardent disciple of the theologian Origen, and Eusebius thus became deeply influenced by Origenist scholarship indirectly.

Eusebius' *History of the Church* is a massive piece of research that preserves quotations from many older writers that would otherwise have been lost. The composition of a history of the Church was Eusebius' own idea. The reasons which led him to undertake its composition seem to have been both scientific and apologetic. He lived, and he must have realized the fact, at the opening of a new age in the history of the Church. He believed, as he frequently tells us, that the period of struggle had come to an end, and that the Church was now about entering upon a new era of prosperity. He must have seen that it was a peculiarly fitting time to put on record for the benefit of posterity the great events which had taken place within the Church during the generations that were past, to sum up in one narrative all the trials and triumphs which had now emerged in this triumph, which he was witnessing. He wrote for the information and instruction of his contemporaries and of those who should come after, but as well with an apologetic purpose, the desire to exhibit to the world the history of Christianity as a proof of its divine origin and efficacy. Eusebius had a very comprehensive idea of what a history of the Church should comprise, and he was fully alive to its importance.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### CHAPTER I.—*The Plan of the Work.*

1. It is my purpose to write an account of the successions of the holy apostles, as well as of the times which have elapsed from the days of our Saviour to our own; and to relate the many important events which are said to have occurred in the history of the Church; and to mention those who have governed and presided over the Church in the most prominent parishes, and those who in each generation have proclaimed the divine word either orally or in writing.

2. It is my purpose also to give the names and number and times of those who through love of innovation have run into the greatest errors, and, proclaiming themselves discoverers of knowledge falsely so-called<sup>12</sup> have like fierce wolves unmercifully devastated the flock of Christ.



3. It is my intention, moreover, to recount the misfortunes which immediately came upon the whole Jewish nation in consequence of their plots against our Saviour, and to record the ways and the times in which the divine word has been attacked by the Gentiles, and to describe the character of those who at various periods have contended for it in the face of blood and of tortures, as well as the confessions which have been made in our own days, and finally the gracious and kindly succor which our Saviour has afforded them all. Since I propose to write of all these things I shall commence my work with the beginning of the dispensation<sup>13</sup> of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>14</sup>

4. But at the outset I must crave for my work the indulgence of the wise,<sup>15</sup> for I confess that it is beyond my power to produce a perfect and complete history, and since I am the first to enter upon the subject, I am attempting to traverse as it were a lonely and untrodden path.<sup>16</sup> I pray that I may have God as my guide and the power of the Lord as my aid, since I am unable to find even the bare footsteps of those who have traveled the way before me, except in brief fragments, in which some in one way, others in another, have transmitted to us particular accounts of the times in which they lived. From afar they raise their voices like torches, and they cry out, as from some lofty and conspicuous watch-tower, admonishing us where to walk and how to direct the course of our work steadily and safely.

5. Having gathered therefore from the matters mentioned here and there by them whatever we consider important for the present work, and having plucked like flowers from a meadow the appropriate passages from ancient writers,<sup>17</sup> we shall endeavor to embody the whole in an historical narrative, content if we preserve the memory of the successions of the apostles of our Saviour; if not indeed of all, yet of the most renowned of them in those churches which are the most noted, and which even to the present time are held in honor.

6. This work seems to me of especial importance because I know of no ecclesiastical writer who has devoted himself to this subject; and I hope that it will appear most useful to those who are fond of historical research.

7. I have already given an epitome of these things in the Chronological Canons<sup>18</sup> which I have composed, but notwithstanding that, I have undertaken in the present work to write as full an account of them as I am able.

8. My work will begin, as I have said, with the dispensation<sup>19</sup> of the Saviour Christ,—which is loftier and greater than human conception,—and with a discussion of his divinity<sup>20</sup>;

9. for it is necessary, inasmuch as we derive even our name from Christ, for one who proposes to write a history of the Church to begin with the very origin of Christ's dispensation, a dispensation more divine than many think....

But it is a great and convincing proof of his incorporeal and divine unction that he alone of all those who have ever existed is even to the present day called Christ by all men throughout the world, and is confessed and witnessed to under this name, and is commemorated both by Greeks and Barbarians and even to this day is honored as a King by his followers throughout the world, and is admired as more than a prophet, and is glorified as the true and only high priest of God.<sup>65</sup> And besides all this, as the pre-existent Word of God, called into being before all ages, he has received august honor from the Father, and is worshiped as God....



CHAPTER III.—*The Doctrine of Christ soon spread throughout All the World.*

1. THUS, under the influence of heavenly power, and with the divine co-operation, the doctrine of the Saviour, like the rays of the sun, quickly illumined the whole world;<sup>283</sup> and straightway, in accordance with the divine Scriptures,<sup>284</sup> the voice of the inspired evangelists and apostles went forth through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world....

1. AND thus when the divine word had made its home among them,<sup>387</sup> the power of Simon was quenched and immediately destroyed, together with the man himself.<sup>388</sup> And so greatly did the splendor of piety illumine the minds of Peter's hearers that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine Gospel, but with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark,<sup>389</sup> a follower of Peter, and the one whose Gospel is extant, that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark.<sup>390</sup>

2. And they say that Peter when he had learned, through a revelation of the Spirit, of that which had been done, was pleased with the zeal of the men, and that the work obtained the sanction of his authority for the purpose of being used in the churches.<sup>391</sup> Clement in the eighth book of his Hypotyposes gives this account, and with him agrees the bishop of Hierapolis named Papias.<sup>392</sup> And Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle which they say that he wrote in Rome itself, as is indicated by him, when he calls the city, by a figure, Babylon, as he does in the following words: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son."

...

CHAPTER I.—*The Parts of the World in which the Apostles preached Christ.*

1. SUCH was the condition of the Jews. Meanwhile the holy apostles and disciples of our Saviour were dispersed throughout the world.<sup>563</sup> Parthia,<sup>564</sup> according to tradition, was allotted to Thomas as his field of labor, Scythia<sup>565</sup> to Andrew,<sup>566</sup> and Asia<sup>567</sup> to John,<sup>568</sup> who, after he had lived some time there,<sup>569</sup> died at Ephesus.

2. Peter appears to have preached<sup>570</sup> in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia<sup>571</sup> to the Jews of the dispersion. And at last, having come to Rome, he was crucified head-downwards;<sup>572</sup> for he had requested that he might suffer in this way. What do we need to say concerning Paul, who preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum,<sup>573</sup> and afterwards suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero?<sup>574</sup> These facts are related by Origen in the third volume of his Commentary on Genesis...

CHAPTER XXII.—*Ignatius, the Second Bishop of Antioch.*

AT this time Ignatius<sup>737</sup> was known as the second bishop of Antioch, Evodius having been the first.<sup>738</sup> Symeon<sup>739</sup> likewise was at that time the second ruler of the church of Jerusalem, the brother of our Saviour having been the first....

CHAPTER XXX.—*The Apostles that were Married.*

1. CLEMENT, indeed, whose words we have just quoted, after the above-mentioned facts gives a statement, on account of those who rejected marriage, of the apostles that had wives.<sup>847</sup> “Or will they,” says he,<sup>848</sup> “reject even the apostles? For Peter<sup>849</sup> and Philip<sup>850</sup> begat children; and Philip also gave his daughters in marriage. And Paul does not hesitate, in one of his epistles, to greet his wife,<sup>851</sup> whom he did not take about with him, that he might not be inconvenienced in his ministry.”

2. And since we have mentioned this subject it is not improper to subjoin another account which is given by the same author and which is worth reading. In the seventh book of his Stromata he writes as follows.<sup>852</sup> “They say, accordingly, that when the blessed Peter saw his own wife led out to die, he rejoiced because of her summons and her return home, and called to her very encouragingly and comfortingly, addressing her by name, and saying, ‘Oh thou, remember the Lord.’ Such was the marriage of the blessed, and their perfect disposition toward those dearest to them.” This account being in keeping with the subject in hand, I have related here in its proper place.

...

CHAPTER IV.—*The Bishops of Rome and of Alexandria under the Same Emperor.*<sup>989</sup>

IN the third year of the same reign, Alexander, bishop of Rome, died after holding office ten years. His successor was Xystus.<sup>991</sup> About the same time Primus, bishop of Alexandria, died in the twelfth year of his episcopate,<sup>992</sup> and was succeeded by Justus...

**Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.earlychurch.org.uk/eusebius.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eusebius\\_of\\_Caesarea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eusebius_of_Caesarea)

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.vi.i.html>

## CHAPTER 5 : ON THE HOLY GHOST BY BASIL

### Background Information

Eusebius' successor as bishop in Caesarea was Basil of Caesarea (c.330–379). Basil defended Nicene orthodoxy over Arianism in the Byzantine East. His works *On the Holy Ghost* and *Against Eunomius* are defenses of what was called the "Catholic faith".

The fourth century witnessed not only the rise of treatises and creeds to defend against Arianism, but the fourth century also witnessed the rise of monasticism, and Basil played an important role in that trend. Institutional Christian monasticism seems to have begun in the deserts in 4th century Egypt. The first efforts to create a proto-monastery were by Marcarius, who established individual cells, known as "larvae", the purpose of which was to bring together individual ascetics who did not have the physical ability or skills to live a solitary existence in the desert like that of Anthony. These cells were put together as a large single monastic community by Pachomius around 323 AD in upper Egypt. Guidelines for daily life were created, and separate monasteries created for men and women. He was hailed as Abba ("father", from which we get the word Abbot). This one community was so successful, he was called in to help organize others. By the time he died in 346 AD, there were thought to be 3,000 such communities dotting Egypt. Within the span of the next generation this number increased to 7,000. From there it quickly spread out first to Palestine and the Judean Desert, Syria, North Africa and eventually the rest of the Roman Empire, where it became a central aspect of life during the Middle Ages. The first non-Roman area to adopt the system was Ireland, which developed a unique form closely linked to traditional clan relations, a system that later spread to other parts of Europe, especially France. The ascetic monasteries required rules to live by. In the eastern half of the Roman Empire the rules were created by Basil of Caesarea, called the ascetic rule, or *Ascetica*. It is the rule still used today in the Orthodox Church. In the West the rules were set a few generations later by Benedict of Nursia, who created the "Rule of Saint Benedict" at his monastery in Monte Cassino. The latter would become the most common rule throughout the Middle Ages.

Let's now read an excerpt from Basil's work *On the Holy Ghost*.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Chapter X.: Against those who say that it is not right to rank the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son.

24. BUT we must proceed to attack our opponents, in the endeavour to confute those "oppositions" advanced against us which are derived from "knowledge falsely so-called." It is not permissible, they assert, for the Holy Spirit to be ranked with the Father and Son, on account of the difference of His nature and the inferiority of His dignity. Against them it is right to reply in the words of the apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than

men.” For if our Lord, when enjoining the baptism of salvation, charged His disciples to baptize all nations in the name “of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,”<sup>926</sup> not disdaining fellowship with Him, and these men allege that we must not rank Him with the Father and the Son, is it not clear that they openly withstand the commandment of God? If they deny that coordination of this kind is declaratory of any fellowship and conjunction, let them tell us why it behoves us to hold this opinion, and what more intimate mode of conjunction they have. If the Lord did not indeed conjoin the Spirit with the Father and Himself in baptism, do not let them lay the blame of conjunction upon us, for we neither hold nor say anything different. If on the contrary the Spirit is there conjoined with the Father and the Son, and no one is so shameless as to say anything else, then let them not lay blame on us for following the words of Scripture.

25. But all the apparatus of war has been got ready against us; every intellectual missile is aimed at us; and now blasphemers’ tongues shoot and hit and hit again, yet harder than Stephen of old was smitten by the killers of the Christ. And do not let them succeed in concealing the fact that, while an attack on us serves for a pretext for the war, the real aim of these proceedings is higher. It is against us, they say, that they are preparing their engines and their snares; against us that they are shouting to one another, according to each one’s strength or cunning, to come on. But the object of attack is faith. The one aim of the whole band of opponents and enemies of “sound doctrine”<sup>930</sup> is to shake down the foundation of the faith of Christ by levelling apostolic tradition with the ground, and utterly destroying it. So like the debtors,—of course *bona fide* debtors—they clamour for written proof, and reject as worthless the unwritten tradition of the Fathers. But we will not slacken in our defence of the truth. We will not cowardly abandon the cause. The Lord has delivered to us as a necessary and saving doctrine that the Holy Spirit is to be ranked with the Father. Our opponents think differently, and see fit to divide and rend<sup>932</sup> asunder, and relegate Him to the nature of a ministering spirit. Is it not then indisputable that they make their own blasphemy more authoritative than the law prescribed by the Lord? Come, then, set aside mere contention. Let us consider the points before us, as follows:

26. Whence is it that we are Christians? Through our faith, would be the universal answer. And in what way are we saved? Plainly because we were regenerate through the grace given in our baptism. How else could we be? And after recognising that this salvation is established through the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, shall we fling away “that form of doctrine”<sup>933</sup> which we received? Would it not rather be ground for great groaning if we are found now further off from our salvation “than when we first believed,”<sup>934</sup> and deny now what we then received? ...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf208.vii.xi.html>

## CHAPTER 6 : *INSTRUCTIONS TO CATECHUMENS* BY JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

### Background Information

John Chrysostom (347 – 407 AD) was a notable Christian bishop and preacher from the 4th and 5th centuries in Syria and Constantinople. He is famous for eloquence in public speaking and his denunciation of abuse of authority in the Church and in the Roman Empire of the time. After his death he was named Chrysostom, which comes from the Greek *chrysostomos*, "golden mouthed".

John Chrysostom, like other early church leaders, saw catechetical instruction in the Christian faith as preeminently important. The term 'catechumen' applied to those receiving such instruction in the principles of the Christian religion. For those coming out of a paganism, catechesis preceded baptism into Christianity and church membership; for children growing up in the Christian community, having already been baptized, catechesis generally preceded participation in the sacrament of communion. Various statements with regard to the duration of the catechumenical training are found in the literature of the early centuries of the Christian era. The Apostolical Constitutions, for instance, fix it at three years; the Council of Elvira set it at two (see Canon 42). Below is an example of instructions John Chrysostom rendered to catechumens coming out of paganism and being instructed in the Christian faith.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

first instruction.

To those about to be illuminated; and for what reason the laver is said to be of regeneration and not of remission of sins; and that it is a dangerous thing not only to forswear oneself, but also to take an oath, even though we swear truly.

1. How delightful and lovable is our band of young brethren! For brethren I call you, even now before you have been brought forth, and before your birth I welcome this relationship with you: For I know, I know clearly, to how great an honour you are about to be led, and to how great a dignity; and those who are about to receive dignity, all are wont to honor, even before the dignity is conferred, laying up for themselves beforehand by their attention good will for the future. And this also I myself now do. For ye are not about to be led to an empty dignity, but to an actual kingdom: and not simply to a kingdom, but to the kingdom of the Heavens itself. Wherefore I beseech and entreat you that you remember me when you come into that kingdom, and as Joseph said to the chief butler "Remember me when it shall be well with thee," this also I say now to you, do ye remember me when it is well with you. I do not ask this in return for interpreting your dreams, as he; for I have not come to interpret dreams for you, but to discourse of matters celestial, and to convey to you glad tidings of such good things as "eye hath not seen, and ear

hath not heard and which have entered not into the heart of man, such are the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” ...Remember me, therefore, when you come into that kingdom, when you receive the royal robe, when you are girt with the purple dipped in the master’s blood, when you will be crowned with the diadem, which has lustre leaping forth from it on all sides, more brilliant than the rays of the sun. Such are the gifts of the Bridegroom, greater indeed than your worth, but worthy of his lovingkindness.

Wherefore, I count you blessed already before those sacred nuptials, and I do not only count you blessed, but I praise your prudence in that you have not come to your illumination as the most slothful among men, at your last breath, but already, like prudent servants, prepared with much goodwill to obey your master, have brought the neck of your soul with much meekness and readiness beneath the bands of Christ, and have received His easy yoke, and have taken His light burden. For if the grace bestowed be the same both for you and for those who are initiated at their last hour, yet the matter of the intention is not the same, nor yet the matter of the preparation for the rite. For they indeed receive it on their bed, but you in the bosom of the Church, which is the common mother of us all; they indeed with lamentation and weeping, but you rejoicing, and exceeding glad: they sighing, you giving thanks; they indeed lethargic with much fever, you filled with much spiritual pleasure; wherefore in your case all things are in harmony with the gift, but in theirs all are adverse to it. For there is wailing and much lamentation on the part of the initiated, and children stand around crying, wife tearing her cheeks, and dejected friends and tearful servants; the whole aspect of the house resembles some wintry and gloomy day. And if thou shalt open the heart of him who is lying there, thou wilt find it more downcast than are these. For as winds meeting one another with many a contrary blast, break up the sea into many parts, so too the thought of the terrors preying upon him assail the soul of the sick man, and distract his mind with many anxieties. Whenever he sees his children, he thinks of their fatherless condition; whenever he looks from them to his wife, he considers her widowhood; when he sees the servants, he beholds the desolation of the whole house; when he comes back to himself, he calls to mind his own present life, and being about to be torn from it, experiences a great cloud of despondency. Of such a kind is the soul of him who is about to be initiated. Then in the midst of its tumult and confusion, the Priest enters, more formidable than the fever itself, and more distressing than death to the relatives of the sick man. For the entrance of the Presbyter is thought to be a greater reason for despair than the voice of the physician despairing of his life, and that which suggests eternal life seems to be a symbol of death. But I have not yet put the finishing stroke to these ills. For in the midst of relatives raising a tumult and making preparations, the soul has often taken its flight, leaving the body desolate; and in many cases, while it was present it was useless, for when it neither recognizes those who are present, nor hears their voice, nor is able to answer those words by which it will make that blessed covenant with the common master of us all, but is as a useless log, or a stone, and he who is about to be illuminated lies there differing nothing from a corpse, what is the profit of initiation in a case of such insensibility?

2. For he who is about to approach these holy and dread mysteries must be awake and alert, must be clean from all cares of this life, full of much self-restraint, much readiness; he must banish from his mind every thought foreign to the mysteries, and on all sides cleanse and prepare his home, as if about to receive the king himself. Such is the preparation of your mind: such are your thoughts; such the purpose of your soul. ...

But, if you will, let us discourse about the name which this mystic cleansing bears: for its name is not one, but very many and various. For this purification is called the laver of regeneration. "He saved us," he saith, "through the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." It is called also illumination, and this St. Paul again has called it, "For call to remembrance the former days in which after ye were illuminated ye endured a great conflict of sufferings;" and again, "For it is impossible for those who were once illuminated, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and then fell away, to renew them again unto repentance." It is called also, baptism: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." It is called also burial: "For we were buried" saith he, "with him, through baptism, into death." It is called circumcision: "In whom ye were also circumcised, with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh." It is called a cross: "Our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away." ...

3. Such is the defilement from which the laver of the Jews cleansed. But the laver of grace, not such, but the real uncleanness which has introduced defilement into the soul as well as into the body. For it does not make those who have touched dead bodies clean, but those who have set their hand to dead works: and if any man be effeminate, or a fornicator, or an idolator, or a doer of whatever ill you please, or if he be full of all the wickedness there is among men: should he fall into this pool of waters, he comes up again from the divine fountain purer than the sun's rays. And in order that thou mayest not think that what is said is mere vain boasting, hear Paul speaking of the power of the laver, "Be not deceived: neither idolators, nor fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor covetous, not drunkards, not revilers, not extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." And what has this to do with what has been spoken? says one, "for prove the question whether the power of the laver thoroughly cleanses all these things." Hear therefore what follows: "And such were some of you, but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God." We promise to show you that they who approach the laver become clean from all fornication: but the word has shown more, that they have become not only clean, but both holy and just, for it does not say only "ye were washed," but also "ye were sanctified and were justified." What could be more strange than this, when without toil, and exertion, and good works, righteousness is produced? For such is the lovingkindness of the Divine gift that it makes men just without this exertion. For if a letter of the Emperor, a few words being added, sets free those who are liable to countless accusations, and brings others to the highest honors; much rather will the Holy Spirit of God, who is able to do all things, free us from all evil and grant us much righteousness, and fill us with much assurance, and as a spark falling into the wide sea would straightway be quenched, or would

become invisible, being overwhelmed by the multitude of the waters, so also all human wickedness, when it falls into the pool of the divine fountain, is more swiftly and easily overwhelmed, and made invisible, than that spark. And for what reason, says one, if the laver take away all our sins, is it called, not a laver of remission of sins, nor a laver of cleansing, but a laver of regeneration? Because it does not simply take away our sins, nor simply cleanse us from our faults, but so as if we were born again. For it creates and fashions us anew not forming us again out of earth, but creating us out of another element, namely, of the nature of water. For it does not simply wipe the vessel clean, but entirely remoulds it again. For that which is wiped clean, even if it be cleaned with care, has traces of its former condition, and bears the remains of its defilement, but that which falls into the new mould, and is renewed by means of the flames, laying aside all uncleanness, comes forth from the furnace, and sends forth the same brilliancy with things newly formed. As therefore any one who takes and recasts a golden statue which has been tarnished by time, smoke, dust, rust, restores it to us thoroughly cleansed and glistening: so too this nature of ours, rusted with the rust of sin, and having gathered much smoke from our faults, and having lost its beauty, which He had from the beginning bestowed upon it from himself, God has taken and cast anew, and throwing it into the waters as into a mould, and instead of fire sending forth the grace of the Spirit, then brings us forth with much brightness, renewed, and made afresh, to rival the beams of the sun, having crushed the old man, and having fashioned a new man, more brilliant than the former...

#### second instruction.

To those about to be illuminated; and concerning women who adorn themselves with plaiting of hair, and gold, and concerning those who have used omens, and amulets, and incantations, all which are foreign to Christianity.

1. I HAVE come to ask first of all for some fruit in return for the words lately said out of brotherly love to you. For we do not speak in order that ye should hear simply, but in order that ye should remember what has been said, and may afford us evidence of this, by your works. Yea, rather, not us, but, God, who knows the secrets of the heart. On this account indeed instruction is so called, in order that even when we are absent, our discourse may instruct your hearts...this name "Man," we do not define according as they who are without define it, but as the Divine Scripture has bidden us. For a man is not merely whosoever has hands and feet of a man, nor whosoever is rational only, but whosoever practices piety and virtue with boldness. Hear, at least, what he says concerning Job. For in saying that "there was a man in the land of Ausis," he does not describe him in those terms in which they who are without describe him, nor does he say this because he had two feet and broad nails, but he added the evidences of his piety and said, "just, true, fearing God, eschewing every evil deed," showing that this is a man; even as therefore another says, "Fear God, and keep his commandments, because this is the whole man." But if the name man affords such a great incentive to virtue, much rather the term faithful. For thou art called faithful on this account, because thou hast faith in God, and thyself art entrusted from Him with righteousness, sanctification, cleansing of soul, adoption, the kingdom of heaven. He entrusted



thee with these, and handed them over to thee. Thou in turn hast entrusted, and handed over other things to him, almsgiving, prayers, self-control and every other virtue. And why do I say almsgiving? If thou givest him even a cup of cold water, thou shalt not indeed lose this, but even this he keeps with care against that day, and will restore it with overflowing abundance. For this truly is wonderful, that he does not keep only that which has been entrusted to him, but in recompensing it increases it.

This too he has bidden thee do according to thy power, with what has been entrusted to thee, to extend the holiness which thou hast received, and to make the righteousness which comes from the laver brighter, and the gift of grace more radiant; even as therefore Paul did, increasing all the good things which he received by his subsequent labors, and his zeal, and his diligence. ...

2. Let us not therefore remain craving after the things of this life, neither after the luxury of the table, or costliness of raiment. For thou hast the most excellent of raiment, thou hast a spiritual table thou hast the glory from on high, and Christ is become to thee all things, thy table, thy raiment, thy home, thy head, thy stem. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ."<sup>525</sup> See how he has become raiment for thee. Dost thou wish to learn how he becomes a table for thee? "He who eateth me," says He, "as I live because of the Father, he also shall live because of me;"<sup>526</sup> and that he becometh a home for thee, "he that eateth my flesh abideth in me, and I in him;"<sup>527</sup> and that He is stem He says again, "I am the vine, ye the branches,"<sup>528</sup> and that he is brother, and friend, and bride-groom, "I no longer call you servants: for ye are my friends;"<sup>529</sup> and Paul again, "I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ;"<sup>530</sup> and again, "That he might be the first-born among many brethren;"<sup>531</sup> and we become not his brethren only, but also his children, "For behold," he says, "I and the children which God has given me"<sup>532</sup> and not this only, but His members, and His body. For as if what has been said were not enough to show forth the love and the good will which He has shown forth towards us, He has added another thing greater and nearer still, calling himself besides, our head. Knowing all these matters, beloved, requite thy benefactor by the best conversation, and considering the greatness of the sacrifice, adorn the members of thy body; consider what thou receivest in thine hand, and never suffer it to strike any one, nor shame what has been honored with so great a gift by the sin of a blow. Consider what thou receivest in thine hand, and keep it clean from all covetousness and extortion; think that thou dost not receive this in thy hand, but also puttest it to thy mouth, and guard thy tongue in purity from base and insolent words, blasphemy, perjury, and all other such things. For it is disastrous that what is ministered to by such most dread mysteries, and has been dyed red with such blood, and has become a golden sword, should be perverted to purposes of raillery, and insult, and buffoonery. Reverence the honor with which God has honoured it, and bring it not down to the vileness of sin, but having reflected again that after the hand and the tongue, the heart receives this dread mystery, do not ever weave a plot against thy neighbor, but keep thy thoughts pure from all evil. Thus thou shalt be able to keep thine eyes too, and thy hearing safe. For is it not monstrous, after this mystic voice is borne from heaven—I mean the voice of the Cherubim—to defile thy hearing with lewd songs, and dissolute

melodies? and does it not deserve the utmost punishment if, with the same eyes with which thou lookest upon the unspeakable and dread mysteries, thou lookest upon harlots, and dost commit adultery in thy heart. Thou art called to a marriage, beloved: enter not in clad in sordid raiment, but take a robe suitable to the marriage. For if when men are called to a material marriage, though they be poorer than all others, they often possess themselves of or buy clean raiment, and so go to meet those who called them. Do thou too who hast been called to a spiritual marriage, and to a royal banquet, consider what kind of raiment it would be right for thee to buy, but rather there is not even need to purchase, yea he himself who calls thee gives it thee gratis, in order that thou mayest not be able to plead poverty in excuse. Keep, therefore, the raiment which thou receivedst. For if thou lovest it, thou wilt not be able to use it henceforth, or to buy it. For this kind of raiment is nowhere sold. Hast thou heard how those who were initiated, in old time, groaned, and beat their breasts, their conscience thereupon exciting them? Beware then, beloved, that thou do not at any time suffer like this. But how wilt thou not suffer, if thou dost not cast off the wicked habit of evil men? For this reason I said before, and speak now and will not cease speaking, if any has not rectified the defects in his morals, nor furnished himself with easily acquired virtue, let him not be baptized. For the laver is able to remit former sins, but there is no little fear, and no ordinary danger lest we return to them, and our remedy become a wound. For by how much greater the grace is, by so much is the punishment more for those who sin after these things.

3. In order, therefore, that we return not to our former vomit, let us henceforward discipline ourselves. For that we must repent beforehand, and desist from our former evil, and so come forward for grace, hear what John says, and what the leader of the apostles says to those who are about to be baptized. For the one says, "Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father;"<sup>533</sup> and the other says again to those who question him, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>534</sup> Now he who repents, no longer touches the same matters of which he repented. On this account, also, we are bidden to say, "I renounce thee, Satan," in order that we may never more return to him.<sup>535</sup> As therefore happens in the case of painters from life, so let it happen in your case. For they, arranging their boards, and tracing white lines upon them, and sketching the royal likeness in outline, before they apply the actual colors, rub out some lines, and change some for others, rectifying mistakes, and altering what is amiss with all freedom. But when they put on the coloring for good, it is no longer in their power to rub out again, and to change one thing for another, since they injure the beauty of the portrait, and the result becomes an eyesore. Consider that thy soul is the portrait; before therefore the true coloring of the spirit comes, wipe out habits which have wrongly been implanted in thee, whether swearing, or falsehood, or insolence, or base talking, or jesting, or whatever else thou hast a habit of doing of things unlawful. Away with the habit, in order that thou mayest not return to it, after baptism. The laver causes the sins to disappear. Correct thy habits, so that when the colors are applied, and the royal likeness is brought out, thou mayest no more wipe them out in the future; and add damage and scars to the beauty which has been

given thee by God. Restrain therefore anger, extinguish passion. Be not thou vexed, be sympathizing, be not exasperated, nor say, "I have been injured in regard to my soul." No one is injured in regard to the soul if we do not injure ourselves in regard to the soul...

4. And not only is this the wonderful thing that he remits our sins, but that he not even reveals them nor makes them manifest and patent, nor compels us to come forward into the midst, and to tell out our errors, but bids us make our defense to him alone, and to confess ourselves to him. And yet among secular judges, if any tell any of the robbers or grave-riflers, when they are arrested, to tell their errors and be quit of their punishment, they would accede to this with all readiness, despising the shame through desire of safety. But in this case there is nothing of this kind, but he both remits the sins, nor compels us to marshal them in array before any spectators. But one thing alone he seeks, that he who enjoys this remission should learn the greatness of the gift. How is it not, therefore, absurd that in case where he does us service, he should be content with our testimony only, but in those where we serve him we seek for others as witnesses, and do a thing for ostentation's sake? While we wonder then at his kindness, let us show forth our doings, and before all others let us curb the vehemence of our tongue, and not always be giving utterance. "For in the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression." If indeed then thou hast anything useful to say, open thy lips. But if there be nothing necessary for thee to say, be silent, for it is better. Art thou a handicraftsman? as thou sittest at work, sing psalms. Dost thou not wish to sing with thy mouth? do this in thine heart; a psalm is a great companion. In this case thou shalt undergo nothing serious, but shalt be able to sit in thy workshop as in a monastery. For not suitableness of place, but strictness of morals will afford us quiet. Paul, at least, pursuing his trade in a workshop suffered no injury to his own virtue. Do not thou therefore say, How can I, being a handicraftsman and a poor man, be a philosopher? This is indeed the very reason why thou mayest be a philosopher. For poverty is far more conducive to piety for us than wealth, and work than idleness; since wealth is even a hinderance to those who do not take heed. For when it is needful to dismiss anger, to extinguish envy, to curb passion, to offer prayer, to exhibit forbearance and meekness, kindness and charity, when would poverty be a bar? For it is not possible by spending money to accomplish these things, but by exhibiting a right disposition; almsgiving especially needs money, but even it shines forth in greater degree through poverty. For she who spent the two mites was poorer than all men, and yet surpassed all. Let us not then consider wealth to be anything great, nor gold to be better than clay. For the value of material things is not owing to their nature, but to our estimate of them. For if any one would inquire carefully, iron is much more necessary than gold. For the one contributes to no need of our life, but the other has furnished us with the greater part of our needs, ministering to countless arts; and why do I speak of a comparison between gold and iron? For these stones are more necessary than precious stones. For of those nothing serviceable could be made, but out of these, houses and walls and cities are erected. But do thou show me what gain could be derived from these pearls, rather what harm would not happen? For in order that

thou mayest wear one pearl drop, countless poor people are pinched with hunger. What excuse wilt thou hit upon? what pardon?

Dost thou wish to adorn thy face? Do so not with pearls, but with modesty, and dignity. So thy countenance will be more full of grace in the eyes of thy husband. For the other kind of adorning is wont to plunge him into a suspicion of jealousy, and into enmity, quarrelsomeness and strife, for nothing is more annoying than a face which is suspected. But the ornament of compassion and modesty casts out all evil suspicion, and will draw thy partner to thee more strongly than any bond. For natural beauty does not impart such comeliness to the face as does the disposition of him who beholds it, and nothing is so wont to produce that disposition as modesty and dignity; so that if any woman be comely, and her husband be ill affected towards her, she appears to him the most worthless of all women; and if she do not happen to be fair of face, but her husband be well affected towards her, she appears more comely than all. For sentence is given not according to the nature of what is beheld, but according to the disposition of the beholders. Adorn thy face then with modesty, dignity, pity, lovingkindness, charity, affection for thy husband, forbearance, meekness, endurance of ill. These are the tints of virtue. By means of these thou wilt attract angels not human beings to be thy lovers. By means of these thou hast God to commend thee, and when God receives thee, he will certainly win over thy husband for thee. For if the wisdom of a man illuminates his countenance, much more does the virtue of a woman illuminate her face; and if thou considerest this to be a great ornament, tell me what will be the advantage of the pearls in that day? But why is it necessary to speak of that day, since it is possible to show all this from what happens now. When, then, they who thought fit to revile the emperor were dragged to the judgment hall, and were in danger of extreme measures being taken, then the mothers, and the wives, laying aside their necklaces, and their golden ornaments, and pearls, and all adornment, and golden raiment, wearing a simple and mean dress, and besprinkled with ashes, prostrated themselves before the doors of the judgment hall and thus won over the judges; and if in the case of these earthly courts of justice, the golden ornaments, and the pearls, and the variegated dress would have been a snare and a betrayal, but forbearance, and meekness, and ashes, and tears, and mean garments persuaded the judge, much more would this take place in the case of that impartial and dread tribunal. For what reason wilt thou be able to state, what defense, when the Master lays these pearls to thy charge, and brings the poor who have perished with hunger into the midst? On this account Paul said, "not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly raiment." For therein would be a snare. And if we were to enjoy them continually, yet we shall lay them aside with death. But arising out of virtue there is all security, and no vicissitude and changeableness, but here it makes us more secure, and also accompanies us there. Dost thou wish to possess pearls, and never to lay aside this wealth? Take off all ornament and place it in the hands of Christ through the poor. He will keep all thy wealth for thee, when He shall raise up thy body with much radiancy. Then He shall invest thee with better wealth and greater ornament, since this present is mean and absurd. Consider then whom thou wishest to please, and for whose sake thou puttest on this ornament, not in order that the ropemaker and the coppersmith and the huckster may admire. Then art thou not ashamed, nor

blushest thou when thou showest thyself to them? doing all on their account whom thou dost not consider worthy of accosting.

How then wilt thou laugh this fancy to scorn? If thou wilt remember that word, which thou sentest forth when thou wert initiated, I renounce thee, Satan, and thy pomp, and thy service. For the frenzy about pearls is a pomp of Satan. For thou didst receive gold not in order that thou mightest bind it on to thy body, but in order that thou mightest release and nourish the poor. Say therefore constantly, I renounce thee, Satan. Nothing is more safe than this word if we shall prove it by our deeds.

5. This I think it right that you who are about to be initiated should learn. For this word is a covenant with the Master. And just as we, when we buy slaves, first ask those who are being sold if they are willing to be our servants: So also does Christ. When He is about to receive thee into service, He first asks if thou wishest to leave that cruel and relentless tyrant, and He receives covenants from thee. For his service is not forced upon thee. And see the lovingkindness of God. For we, before we put down the price, ask those who are being sold, and when we have learned that they are willing, then we put down the price. But Christ not so, but He even put down the price for us all; his precious blood. For, He says, ye were bought with a price. Notwithstanding, not even then does He compel those who are unwilling, to serve him; but except thou hast grace, He says, and of thine own accord and will determinest to enroll thyself under my rule, I do not compel, nor force thee. And *we* should not have chosen to buy wicked slaves. But if we should at any time have so chosen, we buy them with a perverted choice, and put down a corresponding price for them. But Christ, buying ungrateful and lawless slaves, put down the price of a servant of first quality, nay rather much more, and so much greater that neither speech nor thought can set forth its greatness. For neither giving heaven, nor earth, nor sea, but giving up that which is more valuable than all these, his own blood, thus He bought us. And after all these things, he does not require of us witnesses, or registration, but is content with the single word, if thou sayest it from thy heart. "I renounce thee, Satan, and thy pomp," has included all. Let us then say this, "I renounce thee, Satan," as men who are about in that world at that day to have that word demanded of them, and let us keep it in order that we may then return this deposit safe. But Satan's pomps are theatres, and the circus, and all sin, and observance of days, and incantations and omens.

"And what are omens?" says one. Often when going forth from his own house he has seen a one-eyed or lame man, and has shunned him as an omen. This is a pomp of Satan. For meeting the man does not make the day turn out ill, but to live in sin. When thou goest forth, then, beware of one thing—that sin does not meet thee. For this it is which trips us up. And without this the devil will be able to do us no harm. ...

And what is one to say about them who use charms and amulets, and encircle their heads and feet with golden coins of Alexander of Macedon. Are these our hopes, tell me, that after the cross and death of our Master, we should place our hopes of salvation on an image of a Greek king? Dost thou not know what great result the cross has achieved? It has abolished death, has extinguished sin, has made Hades useless, has undone the power of the devil, and is it not worth trusting

for the health of the body? It has raised up the whole world, and dost thou not take courage in it? And what wouldst thou be worthy to suffer, tell me? Thou dost not only have amulets always with thee, but incantations bringing drunken and half-witted old women into thine house, and art thou not ashamed, and dost thou not blush, after so great philosophy, to be terrified at such things? and there is a graver thing than this error. For when we deliver these exhortations, and lead them away, thinking that they defend themselves, they say, that the woman is a Christian who makes these incantations, and utters nothing else than the name of God. On this account I especially hate and turn away from her, because she makes use of the name of God, with a view to ribaldry. For even the demons uttered the name of God, but still they were demons, and thus they used to say to Christ, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," and notwithstanding, he rebuked them, and drove them away. On this account, then, I beseech you to cleanse yourselves from this error, and to keep hold of this word as a staff; and just as without sandals, and cloak, no one of you would choose to go down to the market-place, so without this word never enter the market-place, but when thou art about to pass over the threshold of the gateway, say this word first: I leave thy ranks, Satan, and thy pomp, and thy service, and I join the ranks of Christ. And never go forth without this word. This shall be a staff to thee, this thine armor, this an impregnable fortress, and accompany this word with the sign of the cross on thy forehead. For thus not only a man who meets you, but even the devil himself, will be unable to hurt you at all, when he sees thee everywhere appearing with these weapons; and discipline thyself by these means henceforth, in order that when thou receivest the seal thou mayest be a well-equipped soldier, and planting thy trophy against the devil, may receive the crown of righteousness, which may it be the lot of us all to obtain, through the grace and lovingkindnes

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109.ix.ii.html>

## CHAPTER 7 : HOMILY ON MATTHEW 5:17 OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

### Background Information

Expositional preaching from the scripture was a central feature of Christian church life, and John Chrysostom was noted as a preacher in the early church. Below are excerpts from a homily he gave and was recorded for edification of Christians.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

HOMILY XVI. “Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets.”  
[Matt. V. 17.](#)

WHY, who suspected this? or who accused Him, that He should make a defense against this charge? Since surely from what had gone before no such suspicion was generated. For to command men to be meek, and gentle, and merciful, and pure in heart, and to strive for righteousness, indicated no such design, but rather altogether the contrary.

Wherefore then can He have said this? Not at random, nor vainly: but inasmuch as He was proceeding to ordain commandments greater than those of old, saying, “It was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you, Be not even angry;” and to mark out a way for a kind of divine and heavenly conversation; in order that the strangeness thereof might not disturb the souls of the hearers, nor dispose them quite to mutiny against what He said He used this means of setting them right beforehand.

For although they fulfilled not the law, yet nevertheless they were possessed with much conscientious regard to it; and whilst they were annulling it every day by their deeds, the letters thereof they would have remain unmoved, and that no one should add anything more to them. Or rather, they bore with their rulers adding thereto, not however for the better, but for the worse. For so they used to set aside the honor due to our parents by additions of their own, and very many others also of the matters enjoined them, they would free themselves of by these unseasonable additions.

Therefore, since Christ in the first place was not of the sacerdotal tribe, and next, the things which He was about to introduce were a sort of addition, not however lessening, but enhancing virtue; He knowing beforehand that both these circumstances would trouble them, before He wrote in their mind those wondrous laws, casts out that which was sure to be harboring there. And what was it that was harboring there, and making an obstacle?

2. They thought that He, thus speaking, did so with a view to the abrogation of the ancient institutions. This suspicion therefore He heals; nor here only doth He so,

but elsewhere also again. Thus, since they accounted Him no less than an adversary of God, from this sort of reason, namely, His not keeping the sabbath; He, to heal such their suspicion, there also again sets forth His pleas, of which some indeed were proper to Himself; as when He saith, “My Father worketh, and I work;”<sup>665</sup> but some had in them much condescension, as when He brings forward the sheep lost on the sabbath day, and points out that the law is disturbed for its preservation, and makes mention again of circumcision, as having this same effect.

Wherefore we see also that He often speaks words somewhat beneath Him, to remove the semblance of His being an adversary of God. For this cause He who had raised thousands of the dead with a word only, when He was calling Lazarus, added also a prayer; and then, lest this should make Him appear less than Him that begat Him, He, to correct this suspicion, added, “I said these things, because of the people which standeth by, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.” And neither doth He work all things as one who acted by His own power, that He might thoroughly correct their weakness; nor doth He all things with prayer, lest He should leave matter of evil suspicion to them that should follow, as though He were without strength or power: but He mingles the latter with the former, and those again with these... For this same cause, neither do we find Him teaching everywhere clearly concerning His own Godhead. For if His adding to the law was sure to perplex them so greatly, much more His declaring Himself God.

3. Wherefore many things are uttered by Him, far below His proper dignity, and here when He is about to proceed upon His addition to the law, He hath used abundance for correction beforehand. For neither was it once only that He said, “I do not abrogate the law,” but He both repeated it again, and added another and a greater thing; in that, to the words, “Think not that I am come to destroy,” He subjoined, “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Now this not only obstructs the obstinacy of the Jews, but stops also the mouths of those heretics,<sup>674</sup> who say that the old covenant is of the devil. For if Christ came to destroy his tyranny, how is this covenant not only not destroyed, but even fulfilled by Him? For He said not only, “I do not destroy it;” though this had been enough; but “I even fulfill it:” which are the words of one so far from opposing himself, as to be even establishing it. And how, one may ask, did He not destroy it? in what way did He rather fulfill either the law or the prophets? The prophets He fulfilled, inasmuch as He confirmed by His actions all that had been said concerning Him; wherefore also the evangelist used to say in each case, “That it might be **102** fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.” Both when He was born,<sup>675</sup> and when the children sung that wondrous hymn to Him, and when He sat on the ass,<sup>676</sup> and in very many more instances He worked this same fulfillment: all which things must have been unfulfilled, if He had not come. But the law He fulfilled, not in one way only, but in a second and third also. In one way, by transgressing none of the precepts of the law. For that He did fulfill it all, hear what He saith to John, “For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.”<sup>677</sup> And to the Jews also He said, “Which of you convinceth me of sin.”<sup>678</sup> And to His disciples again, “The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me.”<sup>679</sup> And the prophet too from the first had said that “He did no sin.” This then was one sense in which He fulfilled it. Another, that He did the same through us also; for this is the marvel, that He not only



Himself fulfilled it, but He granted this to us likewise. Which thing Paul also declaring said, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."<sup>681</sup> And he said also, that "He judged sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh."<sup>682</sup> And again, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law."<sup>683</sup> For since the law was laboring at this, to make man righteous, but had not power, He came and brought in the way of righteousness by faith, and so established that which the law desired: and what the law could not by letters, this He accomplished by faith. On this account He saith, "I am not come to destroy the law."

4. But if any one will inquire accurately, he will find also another, a third sense, in which this hath been done. Of what sort is it then? In the sense of that future code of laws, which He was about to deliver to them.

For His sayings were no repeal of the former, but a drawing out, and filling up of them. Thus, "not to kill," is not annulled by the saying, Be not angry, but rather is filled up and put in greater security: and so of all the others.

Wherefore, you see, as He had before unsuspectedly cast the seeds of this teaching; so at the time when from His comparison of the old and new commandments, He would be more distinctly suspected of placing them in opposition, He used His corrective beforehand. For in a covert way He had indeed already scattered those seeds, by what He had said. Thus, "Blessed are the poor," is the same as that we are not to be angry; and, "Blessed are the pure in heart," as not to "look upon a woman for lust;" and the "not laying up treasures on earth," harmonizes with, "Blessed are the merciful;" and "to mourn" also, "to be persecuted" and "reviled," coincide with "entering in at the strait gate;" and, "to hunger and thirst after righteousness," is nothing else than that which He saith afterwards, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." And having declared "the peace-maker blessed," He again almost said the same, when He gave command "to leave the gift," and hasten to reconciliation with him that was grieved, and about "agreeing with our adversary."

But there He set down the rewards of them that do right, here rather the punishments of them who neglect practice.<sup>684</sup> Wherefore as in that place He said, "The meek shall inherit earth;" so here, "He who calleth his brother fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire;" and there, "The pure in heart shall see God;" here, he is a complete adulterer who looks unchastely. And having there called "the peace-makers, sons of God;" here He alarms us from another quarter, saying, "Lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge." Thus also, whereas in the former part He blesses them that mourn, and them that are persecuted; in the following, establishing the very same point, He threatens destruction to them that go not that way; for, "They that walk 'in the broad way,' saith He, 'make their end there.'" And, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," seems to me the same with, "Blessed are the merciful," and, "those that hunger after righteousness."

But as I said, since He is going to say these things more clearly, and not only more clearly, but also to add again more than had been already said (for He no longer merely seeks a merciful man, but bids us give up even our coat; not simply a meek

person, but to turn also the other cheek to him that would smite us): therefore He first takes away the apparent contradiction.

On this account, then, as I have already stated, He said this not once only, but once and again; in that to the words, "Think not that I am come to destroy," He added, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

"For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all come to pass."

Now what He saith is like this: it cannot be that it should remain unaccomplished, but the very least thing therein must needs be fulfilled. Which thing He Himself performed, in that He completed it with all exactness.

And here He signifies to us obscurely that the fashion of the whole world is also being changed. Nor did He set it down without purpose, but in order to arouse the hearer, and indicate, that He was with just cause introducing another discipline; if at least the very works of the creation are all to be transformed, and mankind is to be called to another country, and to a higher way of practising how to live.

5. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven."

Thus, having rid Himself of the evil suspicion, and having stopped the mouths of them who would fain gainsay, then at length He proceeds to alarm, and sets down a heavy, denunciation in support of the enactments He was entering on.

For as to His having said this in behalf not of the ancient laws, but of those which He was proceeding to enact, listen to what follows, "For I say unto you," saith He, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

For if He were threatening with regard to the ancient laws, how said He, "except it shall exceed?" since they who did just the same as those ancients, could not exceed them on the score of righteousness. But of what kind was the required excess? Not to be angry, not even to look upon a woman unchastely. For what cause then doth He call these commandments "least," though they were so great and high? Because He Himself was about to introduce the enactment of them; for as He humbled Himself, and speaks of Himself frequently with measure, so likewise of His own enactments, hereby again teaching us to be modest in everything. And besides, since there seemed to be some suspicion of novelty, He ordered His discourse for a while with reserve.

But when thou hearest, "least in the kingdom of Heaven," surmise thou nothing but hell and torments. For He was used to mean by "the kingdom," not merely the enjoyment thereof, but also the time of the resurrection, and that awful coming. And how could it be reasonable, that while he who called his brother fool, and transgressed but one commandment, falls into hell; the breaker of them all, and instigator of others to the same, should be within the kingdom. This therefore is not what He means, but that such a one will be at that time least, that is, cast out, last. And he that is last will surely then fall into hell. For, being God, He foreknew the

laxity of the many, He foreknew that some would think these sayings were merely hyperbolical, and would argue about the laws, and say, What, if any one call another a fool, is he punished? If one merely look on a woman, doth he become an adulterer? For this very cause He, destroying such insolence beforehand, hath set down the strongest denunciation against either sort, as well them who transgress, as them who lead on others so to do.

Knowing then His threat as we do, let us neither ourselves transgress, nor discourage such as are disposed to keep these things.

“But whosoever shall do and teach,” saith He, “shall be called great.”

For not to ourselves alone, should we be profitable, but to others also; since neither is the reward as great for him who guides himself aright, as for one who with himself adds also another. For as teaching without doing condemns the teacher (for “thou which teachest another,” it is said, “teachest thou not thyself”<sup>691</sup>?) so doing but not guiding others, lessens our reward. One ought therefore to be chief in either work, and having first set one’s self right, thus to proceed also to the care of the rest. For on this account He Himself hath set the doing before the teaching; to intimate that so most of all may one be able to teach, but in no other way. For one will be told, “Physician, heal thyself.”<sup>692</sup> Since he who cannot teach himself, yet attempts to set others right, will have many to ridicule him. Or rather such a one will have no power to teach at all, his actions uttering their voice against him. But if he be complete in both respects, “he shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven.”

6. “For I say unto you, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”

Here by righteousness He means the whole of virtue; even as also discoursing of Job, He said, “He was a blameless man, righteous.”<sup>694</sup> According to the same signification of the word, Paul also called that man “righteous” for whom, as he said, no law is even set. “For,” saith he, “a law is not made for a righteous man.”<sup>695</sup> And in many other places too one might find this name standing for virtue in general.

But observe, I pray thee, the increase of grace; in that He will have His newly-come disciples better than the teachers in the old covenant. For by “Scribes and Pharisees” here, He meant not merely the lawless, but the well-doers. For, were they not doing well, He would not have said they have a righteousness; neither would He have compared the unreal to the real.

And observe also here, how He commends the old law, by making a comparison between it and the other; which kind of thing implies it to be of the same tribe and kindred. For *more* and *less*, is in the same kind. He doth not, you see, find fault with the old law, but will have it made stricter. Whereas, had it been evil, He would not have required more of it; He would not have made it more perfect, but would have cast it out...

So that from all considerations it is clear, that not from any badness in itself doth it fail to bring us in, but because it is now the season of higher precepts.

And if it be more imperfect than the new, neither doth this imply it to be evil: since upon this principle the new law itself will be in the very same case. Because in truth our knowledge of this, when compared with that which is to come, is a sort of partial and imperfect thing, and is done away on the coming of that other. “For when,” saith He, “that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away:” even as it befell the old law through the new. Yet we are not to blame the new law for this, though that also gives place on our attaining unto the Kingdom: for “then,” saith He, “that which is in part shall be done away:” but for all this we call it great.

Since then both the rewards thereof are greater, and the power given by the Spirit more abundant, in reason it requires our graces to be greater also. For it is no longer “a land that floweth with milk and honey,” nor a comfortable old age, nor many children, nor corn and wine, and flocks and herds: but Heaven, and the good things in the Heavens, and adoption and brotherhood with the Only-Begotten, and to partake of the inheritance and to be glorified and to reign with Him, and those unnumbered rewards...

7. And now after threatening the transgressors, and setting great rewards for them that do right, and signifying that He justly requires of us something beyond the former measures; He from this point begins to legislate, not simply, but by way of comparison with the ancient ordinances, desiring to intimate these two things: first, that not as contending with the former, but rather in great harmony with them, He is making these enactments; next, that it was meet and very seasonable for Him to add thereto these second precepts.

And that this may be made yet clearer, let us hearken to the words of the Legislator. What then doth He Himself say?

“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill.” And yet it was Himself who gave those laws also, but so far He states them impersonally. For if on the one hand He had said, “Ye have heard that I said to them of old,” the saying would have been hard to receive, and would have stood in the way of all the hearers. If again, on the other hand, after having said, “Ye have heard that it was said to them of old by my Father,” He had added, “But I say,” He would have seemed to be taking yet more on Himself.

Wherefore He hath simply stated it, making out thereby one point only; the proof that in fitting season He had come saying these things. For by the words, “It was said to them of old,” He pointed out the length of the time, since they received this commandment. And this He did to shame the hearer, shrinking from the advance to the higher class of His commandments; as though a teacher should say to a child that was indolent, “Knowest thou not how long a time thou hast consumed in learning syllables?” This then He also covertly intimates by the expression, “them of old time,” and thus for the future summons them on to the higher order of His instructions: as if He had said, “Ye are learning these lessons long enough, and you must henceforth press on to such as are higher than these.”...

Seest thou authority in perfection? Seest thou a bearing suited to a legislator? Why, which among prophets ever spake on this wise? which among righteous men?

which among patriarchs? None; but, "Thus saith the Lord." But the Son not so. Because they were publishing their Master's commands, He His Father's. And when I say, "His Father's," I mean His own. "For mine," saith He, "are thine, and thine are mine." And they had their fellow-servants to legislate for, He His own servants.

Let us now ask those who reject the law, "is, 'Be not angry' contrary to 'Do no murder'?" or is not the one commandment the completion and the development of the other?" Clearly the one is the fulfilling of the other, and that is greater on this very account. Since he who is not stirred up to anger, will much more refrain from murder; and he who bridles wrath will much more keep his hands to himself. For wrath is the root of murder. And you see that He who cuts up the root will much more remove the branches; or rather, will not permit them so much as to shoot out at all. Not therefore to abolish the law did He make these enactments, but for the more complete observation of it....

8. But that we may convict them in another way also, let us bring forward all their allegations. What then do they affirm? They assert that the God who made the world, who "makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, who sends the rain on the just and on the unjust," is in some sense an evil being. But the more moderate (forsooth) among them, though declining this, yet while they affirm Him to be just, they deprive Him of being good. And some other one, who is not, nor made any of the things that are, they assign for a Father to Christ. And they say that he, who is not good, abides in his own, and preserves what are his own; but that He, that is good, seeks what are another's, and desires of a sudden to become a Saviour to them whose Creator He was not. Seest thou the children of the devil, how they speak out of the fountain of their father, alienating the work of creation from God: while John cries out, "He came unto His own," and, "The world was made by Him?"

In the next place, they criticise the law in the old covenant, which bids put out "an eye for an eye," and "a tooth for a tooth;" and straightway they insult and say, "Why, how can He be good who speaks so?"

What then do we say in answer to this? That it is the highest kind of philanthropy. For He made this law, not that we might strike out one another's eyes, but that fear of suffering by others might restrain us from doing any such thing to them. As therefore He threatened the Ninevites with overthrow, not that He might destroy them, (for had that been His will, He ought to have been silent), but that He might by fear make them better, and so quiet His wrath: so also hath He appointed a punishment for those who wantonly assail the eyes of others, that if good principle dispose them not to refrain from such cruelty, fear may restrain them from injuring their neighbors' sight.

And if this be cruelty, it is cruelty also for the murderer to be restrained, and the adulterer checked. But these are the sayings of senseless men, and of those that are mad to the extreme of madness. For I, so far from saying that this comes of cruelty, should say, that the contrary to this would be unlawful, according to men's reckoning. And whereas, thou sayest, "Because He commanded to pluck out "an

eye for an eye,” therefore He is cruel;” I say, that if He had not given this commandment, then He would have seemed, in the judgment of most men, to be that which thou sayest He is.

For let us suppose that this law had been altogether done away, and that no one feared the punishment ensuing thereupon, but that license had been given to all the wicked to follow their own disposition in all security, to adulterers, and to murderers,<sup>709</sup> to perjured persons, and to parricides; would not all things have been turned upside down? would not cities, market-places, and houses, sea and land, and the whole world, have been filled with unnumbered pollutions and murders? Every one sees it. For if, when there are laws, and fear, and threatening, our evil dispositions are hardly checked; were even this security taken away, what is there to prevent men’s choosing vice? and what degree of mischief would not then come revelling upon the whole of human life?

The rather, since cruelty lies not only in allowing the bad to do what they will, but in another thing too quite as much; to overlook, and leave uncared for, him who hath done no wrong, but who is without cause or reason suffering ill. For tell me; were any one to gather together wicked men from all quarters, and arm them with swords, and bid them go about the whole city, and massacre all that came in their way, could there be anything more like a wild beast than he? And what if some other should bind, and confine with the utmost strictness those whom that man had armed, and should snatch from those lawless hands them, who were on the point of being butchered; could anything be greater humanity than this?

Now then, I bid thee transfer these examples to the law likewise; for He that commands to pluck out “an eye for an eye,” hath laid the fear as a kind of strong chain upon the souls of the bad, and so resembles him, who detains those assassins in prison; whereas he who appoints no punishment for them, doth all but arm them by such security, and acts the part of that other, who was putting the swords in their hands, and letting them loose over the whole city.

Seest thou not, how the commandments, so far from coming of cruelty, come rather of abounding mercy? And if on account of these thou callest the Lawgiver grievous, and hard to bear with; tell me which sort of command is the more toilsome and grievous, “Do no murder,” or, “Be not even angry”? Which is more in extreme, he who exacts a penalty for murder, or for mere anger? He who subjects the adulterer to vengeance after the fact, or he who enjoins a penalty even for the very desire, and that penalty everlasting? See ye not how their reasoning comes round to the very contrary? how the God of the old covenant, whom they call cruel, will be found mild and meek: and He of the new, whom they acknowledged to be good, will be hard and grievous, according to their madness? Whereas we say, that there is but one and the same Legislator of either covenant, who dispensed all meetly, and adapted to the difference of the times the difference between the two systems of law. Therefore neither are the first commandments cruel, nor the second hard and grievous, but all of one and the same providential care...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf110.iii.XVI.html>

## **CHAPTER 8 : *THE DEFINITION OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON***

### **Background Information**

The Council of Chalcedon was called in 451 AD by the emperor Marcion for the purpose of settling disputes and clarifying the issue of the unity of the two natures of Christ. The resultant Chalcedonian Creed, or Definition, afforded the entire Christian Church a standard of Christological orthodoxy in declaring that Christ's two natures exist "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation."

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.reformed.org/documents/>

## CHAPTER 9 : AGAINST JOVIANUS BY JEROME

### Background Information

Jerome (c. 340-420 AD) is best known as the translator of the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Latin. Jerome's edition, the Vulgate, is still the official biblical text of the Roman Catholic Church. Jerome's patron in the project was Damasus I, papal Bishop of Rome. It takes its name from the phrase *versio vulgata*, "the common (i.e., popular) version" (cf. Vulgar Latin). The Vulgate translated the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew original rather than indirectly from the Greek Septuagint, and it translated the New Testament directly from the Greek. From 390-405, Jerome used the Hebrew Masoretic text, with the aid of several rabbis, for the basis of his translation. The Hebrew Masoretic text did not contain the Apocrypha, and Jerome described the extra 7 Old Testament books as the "Apocrypha". The Apocrypha consists of 15 books of Jewish literature written during the intertestamental period. Some of them have historic value, but are without claim of inspiration or authority. (All extant copies of the Apocrypha are written in Greek.) So Jerome's Vulgate distinguished between the *libri ecclesiastici* and the *libri canonici* with the result that the Apocrypha was accorded secondary status. (The Roman Catholic Church did not officially canonize some of the Apocrypha until 1546 AD at the Council of Trent.) The Vulgate became and still is the official biblical text of the Roman Catholic Church.

Besides translating the Bible from its original languages, Jerome composed various commentaries upon books of the Bible, and he wrote various polemical treatises. For example, in Rome (c. 383 AD) he wrote a passionate counterblast against the teaching of Helvidius, in defense of the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary, and of the superiority of the single over the married state. An opponent of a somewhat similar nature was Jovinianus, with whom he came into conflict in 392 (*Against Jovianus*), excerpted below. In another polemic, Jerome defended the increasingly common practises of piety and asceticism against the Spanish presbyter Vigilantius, who opposed the cultus of martyrs and relics, the vow of poverty, and clerical celibacy. In all of this we see how Romish practices were not without their critics in the early church. But Jerome showed a marked tendency to submit to and defend the beliefs of his Roman papal patron, Damasus. This Damasus was the power hungry Bishop of Rome who took over the title of Pontifex Maximus from the Roman emperors. And Jerome was an ardent defender of the proposition that Damasus, along with the successive Bishops of Rome, sat in the seat of the Apostle Peter, though this view was opposed by many at the time.

Let's now consider some excerpts from Jerome's *Against Jovianus*.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Very few days have elapsed since the holy brethren of Rome sent to me the treatises of a certain Jovinian with the request that I would reply to the follies contained in them, and would crush with evangelical and apostolic vigour the Epicurus of Christianity. ...For



ourselves, we do not follow the views of<sup>4</sup> Marcion and Manichæus, and disparage marriage; nor, deceived by the error of<sup>4</sup> Tatian, the leader of the Encratites, do we think all intercourse impure; he condemns and rejects not only marriage but also food which God created for the use of man. We know that in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware. And that upon the foundation, Christ, which Paul the master-builder laid, some build gold, silver, precious stones: others, on the contrary, hay, wood, straw. We are not ignorant of the words, “Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled.” We have read God’s first command, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”; but while we honour marriage we prefer virginity which is the offspring of marriage. Will silver cease to be silver, if gold is more precious than silver? Or is despite done to tree and corn, if we prefer the fruit to root and foliage, or the grain to stalk and ear? Virginity is to marriage what fruit is to the tree, or grain to the straw. Although the hundred-fold, the sixty-fold, and the thirty-fold spring from one earth and from one sowing, yet there is a great difference in respect of number. The thirty-fold has reference to marriage. The very way the fingers are combined—see how they seem to embrace, tenderly kiss, and pledge their troth either to other—is a picture of husband and wife. The sixty-fold applies to widows, because they are placed in a position of difficulty and distress. Hence the upper finger signifies their depression, and the greater the difficulty in resisting the allurements of pleasure once experienced, the greater the reward. Moreover (give good heed, my reader), to denote a hundred, the right hand is used instead of the left: a circle is made with the same fingers which on the left hand represented widowhood, and thus the crown of virginity is expressed ...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.vi.vi.I.html>

[http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=2703](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=2703)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerome>

## CHAPTER 10 : *EPISTLE XVII OF AMBROSE*

### Background Information

Ambrose became bishop of Milan in 374 AD, when, as governor of the Italian province Aemilia et Liguria, he intervened in the civic disturbances which on this occasion accompanied the election of a new bishop at Milan. Born c. 334 or c. 340, when his father was praetorian prefect in Gaul, Ambrose had had a traditional education and was following a normal career path, serving as an advocate, then an assessor in the civil bureaucracy before becoming governor. He belonged to the Roman aristocracy and seems, in fact, to have been a relative of Symmachus, his great opponent. He was bishop of Milan from 374 until his death in 397. Such was the force of his character and prestige that as bishop of Milan he stood independently against the will of emperor on some occasions. Nor did he regard his role as bishop of Milan under that of the bishop of Rome.

When Symmachus was prefect of the city of Rome in A.D. 384, he addressed a number of letters to the emperors; these are usually identified as his *Relationes*, to distinguish them from his other correspondence. The best known of this official correspondence is *Relation 3*, a request of the emperors Valentinian, Theodosius and Arcadius that the Altar of Victory be restored to the Senate House in compliance with ancient custom. Ambrose responded to this request with two letters to Valentinian, at that point emperor in the West. Below is a letter by Ambrose addressing this matter.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Ambrose, Bishop, to the most blessed Prince and most Christian Emperor Valentinian.

I. As all men who live under the Roman sway engage in military service under you, the Emperors and Princes of the world, so too do you yourselves owe service to Almighty God and our holy faith. For salvation is not sure unless everyone worship in truth the true God, that is the God of the Christians, under Whose sway are all things; for He alone is the true God, Who is to be worshipped from the bottom of the heart; for "the gods of the heathen," as Scripture says, "are devils."

2. Now everyone is a soldier of this true God, and he who receives and worships Him in his inmost spirit, does not bring to His service dissimulation, or pretence, but earnest faith and devotion. And if, in fine, he does not attain to this, at least he ought not to give any countenance to the worship of idols and to profane ceremonies. For no one deceives God, to whom all things, even the hidden things of the heart, are manifest.

3. Since, then, most Christian Emperor, there is due from you to the true God both faith and zeal, care and devotion for the faith, I wonder how the hope has risen up to some, that you would feel it a duty to restore by your command altars to the gods of the heathen, and furnish the funds requisite for profane sacrifices; for whatsoever has long

been claimed by either the imperial or the city treasury you will seem to give rather from your own funds, than to be restoring what is theirs.

4. And they are complaining of their losses, who never spared our blood, who destroyed the very buildings of the churches. And they petition you to grant them privileges, who by the last Julian law denied us the common right of speaking and teaching, and those privileges whereby Christians also have often been deceived; for by those privileges they endeavoured to ensnare some, partly through inadvertence, partly in order to escape the burden of public requirements; and, because all are not found to be brave, even under Christian princes, many have lapsed.

5. Had these things not been abolished I could prove that they ought to be done away by your authority; but since they have been forbidden and prohibited by many princes throughout nearly the whole world, and were abolished at Rome by Gratian of august memory, the brother of your Clemency, in consideration of the true faith, and rendered void by a rescript; do not, I pray you, either pluck up what has been established in accordance with the faith, nor rescind your brother's precepts. In civil matters if he established anything, no one thinks that it ought to be treated lightly, while a precept about religion is trodden under foot.

6. Let no one take advantage of your youth; if he be a heathen who demands this, it is not right that he should bind your mind with the bonds of his own superstition; but by his zeal he ought to teach and admonish you how to be zealous for the true faith, since he defends vain things with all the passion of truth. I myself advise you to defer to the merits of illustrious men, but undoubtedly God must be preferred to all.

7. If we have to consult concerning military affairs, the opinion of a man experienced in warfare should be waited for, and his counsel be followed; when the question concerns religion, think upon God. No one is injured because God is set before him. He keeps his own opinion. You do not compel a man against his will to worship what he dislikes. Let the same liberty be given to you, O Emperor, and let every one bear it with patience, if he cannot extort from the Emperor what he would take it ill if the Emperor desired to extort from him. A shuffling spirit is displeasing to the heathen themselves, for everyone ought freely to defend and maintain the faith and purpose of his own mind.

8. But if any, Christians in name, think that any such decree should be made, let not bare words mislead your mind, let not empty words deceive you...

9. If to-day any heathen Emperor should build an altar, which God forbid, to idols, and should compel Christians to come together thither, in order to be amongst those who were sacrificing, so that the smoke and ashes from the altar, the sparks from the sacrilege, the smoke from the burning might choke the breath and throats of the faithful; and should give judgment in that court where members were compelled to vote after swearing at the altar of an idol(for they explain that an altar is so placed for this purpose, that every assembly should deliberate under its sanction, as they suppose, though the Senate is now made up with a majority of Christians), a Christian who was compelled with a choice

such as this to come to the Senate, would consider it to be persecution, which often happens, for they are compelled to come together even by violence. Are these Christians, when you are Emperor, compelled to swear at a heathen altar? What is an oath, but a confession of the divine power of Him Whom you invoke as watcher over your good faith? When you are Emperor, this is sought and demanded. that you should command an altar to be built, and the cost of profane sacrifices to be granted.

10. But this cannot be decreed without sacrilege, wherefore I implore you not to decree or order it, nor to subscribe to any decrees of that sort. I, as a priest of Christ, call upon your faith, all of us bishops would have joined in calling upon you, were not the report so sudden and incredible, that any such thing had been either suggested in your council, or petitioned for by the Senate. But far be it from the Senate to have petitioned this, a few heathen are making use of the common name. For, nearly two years ago, when the same attempt was being made, holy Damasus, Bishop of the Roman Church, elected by the judgment of God, sent to me a memorial, which the Christian senators in great numbers put forth, protesting that they had given no such authority, that they did not agree with such requests of the heathen, nor give consent to them, and they declared publicly and privately that they would not come to the Senate, if any such thing were decreed. Is it agreeable to the dignity of your, that is Christian, times, that Christian senators should be deprived of their dignity, in order that effect should be given to the profane will of the heathen? This memorial I sent to your Clemency's brother, and from it it was plain that the Senate had made no order about the expenses of superstition.

11. But perhaps it may be said, why were they not before present in the Senate when those petitions were made? By not being present they sufficiently say what they wish, they said enough in what they said to the Emperor. And do we wonder if those persons deprive private persons at Rome of the liberty of resisting, who are unwilling that you should be free not to command what you do not approve, or to maintain your own opinion?

12. And so, remembering the legation lately entrusted to me, I call again upon your faith. I call upon your own feelings not to determine to answer according to this petition of the heathen, nor to attach to an answer of such a sort the sacrilege of your subscription. Refer to the father of your Piety, the Emperor Theodosius, whom you have been wont to consult in almost all matters of greater importance. Nothing is greater than religion, nothing more exalted than faith.

13. If it were a civil cause the right of reply would be reserved for the opposing party; it is a religious cause, and I the bishop make a claim. Let a copy of the memorial which has been sent be given me, that I may answer more fully, and then let your Clemency's father be consulted on the whole subject, and vouchsafe an answer. Certainly if anything else is decreed, we bishops cannot contentedly suffer it and take no notice; you indeed may come to the church, but will find either no priest there, or one who will resist you.

14. What will you answer a priest who says to you, "The church does not seek your gifts, because you have adorned the heathen temples with gifts. The Altar of Christ rejects your

gifts, because you have made an altar for idols, for the voice is yours, the hand is yours, the subscription is yours, the deed is yours. The Lord Jesus refuses and rejects your service, because you have served idols, for He said to you: 'Ye cannot serve two masters.' The Virgins consecrated to God have no privileges from you, and do the Vestal Virgins claim them? Why do you ask for the priests of God, to whom you have preferred the profane petitions of the heathen? We cannot take up a share of the errors of others."

15. What will you answer to these words? That you who have fallen are but a boy? Every age is perfect in Christ, every age is full of God. No childhood is allowed in faith, for even children have confessed Christ against their persecutors with fearless mouth.

16. What will you answer your brother? Will he not say to you, "I did not feel that I was overcome, because I left you as Emperor; I did not grieve at dying, because I had you as my heir; I did not mourn at leaving my imperial command, because I believed that my commands, especially those concerning divine religion, would endure through all ages. I had set up these memorials of piety and virtue, I offered up these spoils gained from the world, these trophies of victory over the devil, these I offered up as gained from the enemy of all, and in them is eternal victory. What more could my enemy take away from me? You have abrogated my decrees, which so far he who took up arms against me did not do. Now do I receive a more terrible wound in that my decrees are condemned by my brother ...

16. What will you answer your father also? who with greater grief will address you, saying, "You judged very ill of me, my son, when you supposed that I could have connived at the heathen. No one ever told me that there was an altar in the Roman Senate House, I never believed such wickedness as that the heathen sacrificed in the common assembly of Christians and heathen, that is to say that the Gentiles should insult the Christians who were present, and that Christians should be compelled against their will to be present at the sacrifices. Many and various crimes were committed whilst I was Emperor. I punished such as were detected; if any one then escaped notice, ought one to say that I approved of that of which no one informed me? You have judged very ill of me, if a foreign superstition and not my own faith preserved the empire."

17. Wherefore, O Emperor, since you see that if you decree anything of that kind, injury will be done, first to God, and then to your father and brother, I implore you to do that which you know will be profitable to your salvation before God...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.acs.ualgary.ca/~vandersp/Courses/texts/sym-amb/ambrseep.html>

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1b.html#Early%20Dogmatic%20Disputes>

## CHAPTER 11 : *CONFESSIONS* OF AUGUSTINE

### Background Information

Augustine (354-430 AD) was born to a pagan father and a Christian mother in the North African city of Tagaste. Augustine struggled with his ambitions, his sexuality, and with competing philosophies and mystical religions, not even accepting baptism until he was thirty-three. He began his career as a profoundly successful orator, but soon fell into Manicheism, a mystical religion that combined Christianity and Mithraism, a Zoroastrian religion. He soon tired of the contradictions within that religion and began to explore Platonic philosophy; it was in the midst of that project that he was converted to Christianity, especially through the teaching of Ambrose of Milan. Around 385 AD, Augustine came to hear Ambrose preach in order to study his technique, and in the process, was attracted to the Catholic faith. In 386 Augustine was baptized by Ambrose and went on to become bishop of Hippo in North Africa.

As bishop in Hippo, Augustine soon took on the role of fighting erroneous ideas. He took on Greek and Roman philosophy, Manicheism, and Christian heretical viewpoints as his primary project and generated thousands of pages of writings. His views contained in his works—sociological, ethical, political, and theological—set the stage for the Christianity and Christian society in the Middle Ages as well as the Reformation. Augustine is generally regarded as the most important of the Latin Church Fathers, and his work formed the foundation for much of what would become Western Christendom. His book *Confessions*, excerpted below, is an autobiography of the spiritual journey of this extraordinary man.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### BOOK I

Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom infinite. And Thee would man praise; man, but a particle of Thy creation; man, that bears about him his mortality, the witness of his sin, the witness that Thou resistest the proud: yet would man praise Thee; he, but a particle of Thy creation. Thou awakest us to delight in Thy praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee...

#### BOOK II

I will now call to mind my past foulness, and the carnal corruptions of my soul; not because I love them, but that I may love Thee, O my God. For love of Thy love I do it; reviewing my most wicked ways in the very bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayest grow sweet unto me (Thou sweetness never failing, Thou blissful and assured sweetness); and gathering me again out of that my dissipation, wherein I was torn

piecemeal, while turned from Thee, the One Good, I lost myself among a multiplicity of things. For I even burnt in my youth heretofore, to be satiated in things below; and I dared to grow wild again, with these various and shadowy loves: my beauty consumed away, and I stank in Thine eyes; pleasing myself, and desirous to please in the eyes of men.

And what was it that I delighted in, but to love, and be loved? but I kept not the measure of love, of mind to mind, friendship's bright boundary: but out of the muddy concupiscence of the flesh, and the bubblings of youth, mists fumed up which beclouded and overcast my heart, that I could not discern the clear brightness of love from the fog of lustfulness. Both did confusedly boil in me, and hurried my unstayed youth over the precipice of unholy desires, and sunk me in a gulf of flagitiousnesses...

### BOOK III

To Carthage I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves. I loved not yet, yet I loved to love, and out of a deep-seated want, I hated myself for wanting not. I sought what I might love, in love with loving, and safety I hated, and a way without snares. For within me was a famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God; yet, through that famine I was not hungered; but was without all longing for incorruptible sustenance, not because filled therewith, but the more empty, the more I loathed it. For this cause my soul was sickly and full of sores, it miserably cast itself forth, desiring to be scraped by the touch of objects of sense. Yet if these had not a soul, they would not be objects of love. To love then, and to be beloved, was sweet to me; but more, when I obtained to enjoy the person I loved, I defiled, therefore, the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence, and I beclouded its brightness with the hell of lustfulness; and thus foul and unseemly, I would fain, through exceeding vanity, be fine and courtly. I fell headlong then into the love wherein I longed to be ensnared. ...

Stage-plays also carried me away, full of images of my miseries, and of fuel to my fire. Why is it, that man desires to be made sad, beholding doleful and tragical things, which yet himself would no means suffer? yet he desires as a spectator to feel sorrow at them, this very sorrow is his pleasure. What is this but a miserable madness? for a man is the more affected with these actions, the less free he is from such affections. Howsoever, when he suffers in his own person, it uses to be styled misery: when he compassionates others, then it is mercy. But what sort of compassion is this for feigned and scenical passions? for the auditor is not called on to relieve, but only to grieve: and he applauds the actor of these fictions the more, the more he grieves. And if the calamities of those persons (whether of old times, or mere fiction) be so acted, that the spectator is not moved to tears, he goes away disgusted and criticising; but if he be moved to passion, he stays intent, and weeps for joy.

Are griefs then too loved? Verily all desire joy. Or whereas no man likes to be miserable, is he yet pleased to be merciful? which because it cannot be without passion, for this reason alone are passions loved? This also springs from that vein of friendship. But whither goes that vein? whither flows it? wherefore runs it into that torrent of pitch

bubbling forth those monstrous tides of foul lustfulness, into which it is wilfully changed and transformed, being of its own will precipitated and corrupted from its heavenly clearness? Shall compassion then be put away? by no means. Be griefs then sometimes loved. But beware of uncleanness, O my soul, under the guardianship of my God, the God of our fathers, who is to be praised and exalted above all for ever, beware of uncleanness. For I have not now ceased to pity; but then in the theatres I rejoiced with lovers when they wickedly enjoyed one another, although this was imaginary only in the play. And when they lost one another, as if very compassionate, I sorrowed with them, yet had my delight in both. But now I much more pity him that rejoiceth in his wickedness, than him who is thought to suffer hardship, by missing some pernicious pleasure, and the loss of some miserable felicity. This certainly is the truer mercy, but in it grief delights not. ...

But I, miserable, then loved to grieve, and sought out what to grieve at, when in another's and that feigned and personated misery, that acting best pleased me, and attracted me the most vehemently, which drew tears from me. What marvel that an unhappy sheep, straying from Thy flock, and impatient of Thy keeping, I became infected with a foul disease? And hence the love of griefs; not such as should sink deep into me; for I loved not to suffer, what I loved to look on; but such as upon hearing their fictions should lightly scratch the surface; upon which, as on envenomed nails, followed inflamed swelling, impostumes, and a putrefied sore. My life being such, was it life, O my God?...

Among such as these, in that unsettled age of mine, learned I books of eloquence, wherein I desired to be eminent, out of a damnable and vainglorious end, a joy in human vanity. In the ordinary course of study, I fell upon a certain book of Cicero, whose speech almost all admire, not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy, and is called "Hortensius." But this book altered my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself O Lord; and made me have other purposes and desires. Every vain hope at once became worthless to me; and I longed with an incredibly burning desire for an immortality of wisdom, and began now to arise, that I might return to Thee. For not to sharpen my tongue (which thing I seemed to be purchasing with my mother's allowances, in that my nineteenth year, my father being dead two years before), not to sharpen my tongue did I employ that book; nor did it infuse into me its style, but its matter.

How did I burn then, my God, how did I burn to re-mount from earthly things to Thee, nor knew I what Thou wouldest do with me? For with Thee is wisdom. But the love of wisdom is in Greek called "philosophy," with which that book inflamed me. Some there be that seduce through philosophy, under a great, and smooth, and honourable name colouring and disguising their own errors: and almost all who in that and former ages were such, are in that book censured and set forth: there also is made plain that wholesome advice of Thy Spirit, by Thy good and devout servant: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And since at that time (Thou, O light of my heart, knowest) Apostolic Scripture was not known to me, I was delighted with that exhortation, so far only, that I was thereby strongly roused, and kindled, and inflamed to love, and seek, and obtain, and



hold, and embrace not this or that sect, but wisdom itself whatever it were; and this alone checked me thus unkindled, that the name of Christ was not in it. For this name, according to Thy mercy, O Lord, this name of my Saviour Thy Son, had my tender heart, even with my mother's milk, devoutly drunk in and deeply treasured; and whatsoever was without that name, though never so learned, polished, or true, took not entire hold of me.

I resolved then to bend my mind to the holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. But behold, I see a thing not understood by the proud, nor laid open to children, lowly in access, in its recesses lofty, and veiled with mysteries; and I was not such as could enter into it, or stoop my neck to follow its steps. For not as I now speak, did I feel when I turned to those Scriptures; but they seemed to me unworthy to be compared to the stateliness of Tully: for my swelling pride shrunk from their lowliness, nor could my sharp wit pierce the interior thereof. Yet were they such as would grow up in a little one. But I disdained to be a little one; and, swollen with pride, took myself to be a great one.

Therefore I fell among men proudly doting, exceeding carnal and prating, in whose mouths were the snares of the Devil, limed with the mixture of the syllables of Thy name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, our Comforter...

#### BOOK IV

For this space of nine years (from my nineteenth year to my eight-and-twentieth) we lived seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in divers lusts; openly, by sciences which they call liberal; secretly, with a false-named religion; here proud, there superstitious, every where vain. Here, hunting after the emptiness of popular praise, down even to theatrical applauses, and poetic prizes, and strifes for grassy garlands, and the follies of shows, and the intemperance of desires. There, desiring to be cleansed from these defilements, by carrying food to those who were called "elect" and "holy," out of which, in the workhouse of their stomachs, they should forge for us Angels and Gods, by whom we might be cleansed. These things did I follow, and practise with my friends, deceived by me, and with me. Let the arrogant mock me, and such as have not been, to their soul's health, stricken and cast down by Thee, O my God; but I would still confess to Thee mine own shame in Thy praise. Suffer me, I beseech Thee, and give me grace to go over in my present remembrance the wanderings of my forepassed time, and to offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving...

In those years I taught rhetoric, and, overcome by cupidity, made sale of a loquacity to overcome by. Yet I preferred (Lord, Thou knowest) honest scholars (as they are accounted), and these I, without artifice, taught artifices, not to be practised against the life of the guiltless, though sometimes for the life of the guilty. And Thou, O God, from afar perceivedst me stumbling in that slippery course, and amid much smoke sending out some sparks of faithfulness, which I showed in that my guidance of such as loved vanity, and sought after leasing, myself their companion. In those years I had one, -not in that which is called lawful marriage, but whom I had found out in a wayward passion, void of understanding; yet but one, remaining faithful even to her; in whom I in my own case experienced what difference there is betwixt the self-restraint of the marriage-covenant,

for the sake of issue, and the bargain of a lustful love, where children are born against their parents' will, although, once born, they constrain love.

I remember also, that when I had settled to enter the lists for a theatrical prize, some wizard asked me what I would give him to win; but I, detesting and abhorring such foul mysteries, answered, "Though the garland were of imperishable gold, I would not suffer a fly to be killed to gain me it. " For he was to kill some living creatures in his sacrifices, and by those honours to invite the devils to favour me. But this ill also I rejected, not out of a pure love for Thee, O God of my heart; for I knew not how to love Thee, who knew not how to conceive aught beyond a material brightness. And doth not a soul, sighing after such fictions, commit fornication against Thee, trust in things unreal, and feed the wind? Still I would not forsooth have sacrifices offered to devils for me, to whom I was sacrificing myself by that superstition. For what else is it to feed the wind, but to feed them, that is by going astray to become their pleasure and derision?

Those impostors then, whom they style Mathematicians, I consulted without scruple; because they seemed to use no sacrifice, nor to pray to any spirit for their divinations: which art, however, Christian and true piety consistently rejects and condemns. For, it is a good thing to confess unto Thee, and to say, Have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee; and not to abuse Thy mercy for a licence to sin, but to remember the Lord's words, Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. All which wholesome advice they labour to destroy, saying, "The cause of thy sin is inevitably determined in heaven"; and "This did Venus, or Saturn, or Mars": that man, forsooth, flesh and blood, and proud corruption, might be blameless; while the Creator and Ordainer of heaven and the stars is to bear the blame. And who is He but our God? the very sweetness and well-spring of righteousness, who renderest to every man according to his works: and a broken and contrite heart wilt Thou not despise...

And what did it profit me, that scarce twenty years old, a book of Aristotle, which they call the often Predicaments, falling into my hands (on whose very name I hung, as on something great and divine, so often as my rhetoric master of Carthage, and others, accounted learned, mouthed it with cheeks bursting with pride), I read and understood it unaided? And on my conferring with others, who said that they scarcely understood it with very able tutors, not only orally explaining it, but drawing many things in sand, they could tell me no more of it than I had learned, reading it by myself. And the book appeared to me to speak very clearly of substances, such as "man," and of their qualities, as the figure of a man, of what sort it is; and stature, how many feet high; and his relationship, whose brother he is; or where placed; or when born; or whether he stands or sits; or be shod or armed; or does, or suffers anything; and all the innumerable things which might be ranged under these nine Predicaments, of which I have given some specimens, or under that chief Predicament of Substance.

What did all this further me, seeing it even hindered me? when, imagining whatever was, was comprehended under those often Predicaments, I essayed in such wise to understand, O my God, Thy wonderful and unchangeable Unity also, as if Thou also hadst been subjected to Thine own greatness or beauty; so that (as in bodies) they should exist in

Thee, as their subject: whereas Thou Thyself art Thy greatness and beauty; but a body is not great or fair in that it is a body, seeing that, though it were less great or fair, it should notwithstanding be a body. But it was falsehood which of Thee I conceived, not truth, fictions of my misery, not the realities of Thy blessedness. For Thou hadst commanded, and it was done in me, that the earth should bring forth briars and thorns to me, and that in the sweat of my brows I should eat my bread.

And what did it profit me, that all the books I could procure of the so-called liberal arts, I, the vile slave of vile affections, read by myself, and understood? And I delighted in them, but knew not whence came all, that therein was true or certain. For I had my back to the light, and my face to the things enlightened; whence my face, with which I discerned the things enlightened, itself was not enlightened....

## BOOK V

Accept the sacrifice of my confessions from the ministry of my tongue, which Thou hast formed and stirred up to confess unto Thy name. Heal Thou all my bones, and let them say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? For he who confesses to Thee doth not teach Thee what takes place within him; seeing a closed heart closes not out Thy eye, nor can man's hard-heartedness thrust back Thy hand: for Thou dissolvest it at Thy will in pity or in vengeance, and nothing can hide itself from Thy heat. But let my soul praise Thee, that it may love Thee...

I would lay open before my God that nine-and-twentieth year of mine age. There had then come to Carthage a certain Bishop of the Manichees, Faustus by name, a great snare of the Devil, and many were entangled by him through that lure of his smooth language: which though I did commend, yet could I separate from the truth of the things which I was earnest to learn: nor did I so much regard the service of oratory as the science which this Faustus, so praised among them, set before me to feed upon. Fame had before bespoken him most knowing in all valuable learning, and exquisitely skilled in the liberal sciences. And since I had read and well remembered much of the philosophers, I compared some things of theirs with those long fables of the Manichees, and found the former the more probable; even although they could only prevail so far as to make judgment of this lower world, the Lord of it they could by no means find out...

And for almost all those nine years, wherein with unsettled mind I had been their disciple, I had longed but too intensely for the coming of this Faustus. For the rest of the sect, whom by chance I had lighted upon, when unable to solve my objections about these things, still held out to me the coming of this Faustus, by conference with whom these and greater difficulties, if I had them, were to be most readily and abundantly cleared. When then he came, I found him a man of pleasing discourse, and who could speak fluently and in better terms, yet still but the self-same things which they were wont to say. But what availed the utmost neatness of the cup-bearer to my thirst for a more precious draught?...

Thou didst deal with me, that I should be persuaded to go to Rome, and to teach there rather, what I was teaching at Carthage...

Furthermore, what the Manichees had criticised in Thy Scriptures, I thought could not be defended; yet at times verily I had a wish to confer upon these several points with some one very well skilled in those books, and to make trial what he thought thereon; for the words of one Helpidius, as he spoke and disputed face to face against the said Manichees, had begun to stir me even at Carthage: in that he had produced things out of the Scriptures, not easily withstood, the Manichees' answer whereto seemed to me weak. And this answer they liked not to give publicly, but only to us in private. It was, that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been corrupted by I know not whom, who wished to engraft the law of the Jews upon the Christian faith: yet themselves produced not any uncorrupted copies...

I began then diligently to practise that for which I came to Rome, to teach rhetoric; and first, to gather some to my house, to whom, and through whom, I had begun to be known; when to, I found other offences committed in Rome, to which I was not exposed in Africa...

When therefore they of Milan had sent to Rome to the prefect of the city, to furnish them with a rhetoric reader for their city, and sent him at the public expense, I made application (through those very persons, intoxicated with Manichaeian vanities, to be freed wherefrom I was to go, neither of us however knowing it) that Symmachus, then prefect of the city, would try me by setting me some subject, and so send me. To Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop, known to the whole world as among the best of men, Thy devout servant; whose eloquent discourse did then plentifully dispense unto Thy people the flour of Thy wheat, the gladness of Thy oil, and the sober inebriation of Thy wine. To him was I unknowing led by Thee, that by him I might knowingly be led to Thee. That man of God received me as a father, and showed me an Episcopal kindness on my coming. Thenceforth I began to love him, at first indeed not as a teacher of the truth (which I utterly despaired of in Thy Church), but as a person kind towards myself. And I listened diligently to him preaching to the people, not with that intent I ought, but, as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it answered the fame thereof, or flowed fuller or lower than was reported; and I hung on his words attentively; but of the matter I was as a careless and scornful looker-on; and I was delighted with the sweetness of his discourse, more recondite, yet in manner less winning and harmonious, than that of Faustus. Of the matter, however, there was no comparison; for the one was wandering amid Manichaeian delusions, the other teaching salvation most soundly. But salvation is far from sinners, such as I then stood before him; and yet was I drawing nearer by little and little, and unconsciously...

For though I took no pains to learn what he spake, but only to hear how he spake (for that empty care alone was left me, despairing of a way, open for man, to Thee), yet together with the words which I would choose, came also into my mind the things which I would refuse; for I could not separate them. And while I opened my heart to admit "how eloquently he spake," there also entered "how truly he spake"; but this by degrees. For

first, these things also had now begun to appear to me capable of defence; and the Catholic faith, for which I had thought nothing could be said against the Manichees' objections, I now thought might be maintained without shamelessness; especially after I had heard one or two places of the Old Testament resolved, and oftentimes "in a figure," which when I understood literally, I was slain spiritually. Very many places then of those books having been explained, I now blamed my despair, in believing that no answer could be given to such as hated and scoffed at the Law and the Prophets. Yet did I not therefore then see that the Catholic way was to be held, because it also could find learned maintainers, who could at large and with some show of reason answer objections; nor that what I held was therefore to be condemned, because both sides could be maintained. For the Catholic cause seemed to me in such sort not vanquished, as still not as yet to be victorious.

Hereupon I earnestly bent my mind, to see if in any way I could by any certain proof convict the Manichees of falsehood. Could I once have conceived a spiritual substance, all their strongholds had been beaten down, and cast utterly out of my mind; but I could not. Notwithstanding, concerning the frame of this world, and the whole of nature, which the senses of the flesh can reach to, as I more and more considered and compared things, I judged the tenets of most of the philosophers to have been much more probable. So then after the manner of the Academics (as they are supposed) doubting of every thing, and wavering between all, I settled so far, that the Manichees were to be abandoned; judging that, even while doubting, I might not continue in that sect, to which I already preferred some of the philosophers; to which philosophers notwithstanding, for that they were without the saving Name of Christ, I utterly refused to commit the cure of my sick soul. I determined therefore so long to be a Catechumen in the Catholic Church, to which I had been commended by my parents, till something certain should dawn upon me, whither I might steer my course.

## BOOK VI

O Thou, my hope from my youth, where wert Thou to me, and whither wert Thou gone? Hadst not Thou created me, and separated me from the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air? Thou hadst made me wiser, yet did I walk in darkness, and in slippery places, and sought Thee abroad out of myself, and found not the God of my heart; and had come into the depths of the sea, and distrusted and despaired of ever finding truth. My mother had now come to me, resolute through piety, following me over sea and land, in all perils confiding in Thee. For in perils of the sea, she comforted the very mariners (by whom passengers unacquainted with the deep, use rather to be comforted when troubled), assuring them of a safe arrival, because Thou hadst by a vision assured her thereof. She found me in grievous peril, through despair of ever finding truth. But when I had discovered to her that I was now no longer a Manichee, though not yet a Catholic Christian, she was not overjoyed, as at something unexpected; although she was now assured concerning that part of my misery, for which she bewailed me as one dead, though to be reawakened by Thee, carrying me forth upon the bier of her thoughts, that Thou mightest say to the son of the widow, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; and he should revive, and begin to speak, and Thou shouldest deliver him to his mother. Her

heart then was shaken with no tumultuous exultation, when she heard that what she daily with tears desired of Thee was already in so great part realised; in that, though I had not yet attained the truth, I was rescued from falsehood; but, as being assured, that Thou, Who hadst promised the whole, wouldest one day give the rest, most calmly, and with a heart full of confidence, she replied to me, "She believed in Christ, that before she departed this life, she should see me a Catholic believer." Thus much to me. But to Thee, Fountain of mercies, poured she forth more copious prayers and tears, that Thou wouldest hasten Thy help, and enlighten my darkness; and she hastened the more eagerly to the Church, and hung upon the lips of Ambrose, praying for the fountain of that water, which springeth up unto life everlasting. But that man she loved as an angel of God, because she knew that by him I had been brought for the present to that doubtful state of faith I now was in, through which she anticipated most confidently that I should pass from sickness unto health, after the access, as it were, of a sharper fit, which physicians call "the crisis."

When then my mother had once, as she was wont in Afric, brought to the Churches built in memory of the Saints, certain cakes, and bread and wine, and was forbidden by the door-keeper; so soon as she knew that the Bishop had forbidden this, she so piously and obediently embraced his wishes, that I myself wondered how readily she censured her own practice, rather than discuss his prohibition. For wine-bibbing did not lay siege to her spirit, nor did love of wine provoke her to hatred of the truth, as it doth too many (both men and women), who revolt at a lesson of sobriety, as men well-drunk at a draught mingled with water. But she, when she had brought her basket with the accustomed festival-food, to be but tasted by herself, and then given away, never joined therewith more than one small cup of wine, diluted according to her own abstemious habits, which for courtesy she would taste. And if there were many churches of the departed saints that were to be honoured in that manner, she still carried round that same one cup, to be used every where; and this, though not only made very watery, but unpleasantly heated with carrying about, she would distribute to those about her by small sips; for she sought there devotion, not pleasure. So soon, then, as she found this custom to be forbidden by that famous preacher and most pious prelate, even to those that would use it soberly, lest so an occasion of excess might be given to the drunken; and for these, as it were, anniversary funeral solemnities did much resemble the superstition of the Gentiles, she most willingly forbore it: and for a basket filled with fruits of the earth, she had learned to bring to the Churches of the martyrs a breast filled with more purified petitions, and to give what she could to the poor; that so the communication of the Lord's Body might be there rightly celebrated, where, after the example of His Passion, the martyrs had been sacrificed and crowned. But yet it seems to me, O Lord my God, and thus thinks my heart of it in Thy sight, that perhaps she would not so readily have yielded to the cutting off of this custom, had it been forbidden by another, whom she loved not as Ambrose, whom, for my salvation, she loved most entirely; and he her again, for her most religious conversation, whereby in good works, so fervent in spirit, she was constant at church; so that, when he saw me, he often burst forth into her praises; congratulating me that I had such a mother; not knowing what a son she had in me, who doubted of all these things, and imagined the way to life could not be found out...

joyed also that the old Scriptures of the law and the Prophets were laid before me, not now to be perused with that eye to which before they seemed absurd, when I reviled Thy holy ones for so thinking, whereas indeed they thought not so: and with joy I heard Ambrose in his sermons to the people, oftentimes most diligently recommend this text for a rule, The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life; whilst he drew aside the mystic veil, laying open spiritually what, according to the letter, seemed to teach something unsound; teaching herein nothing that offended me, though he taught what I knew not as yet, whether it were true. For I kept my heart from assenting to any thing, fearing to fall headlong; but by hanging in suspense I was the worse killed. For I wished to be as assured of the things I saw not, as I was that seven and three are ten. For I was not so mad as to think that even this could not be comprehended; but I desired to have other things as clear as this, whether things corporeal, which were not present to my senses, or spiritual, whereof I knew not how to conceive, except corporeally. And by believing might I have been cured, that so the eyesight of my soul being cleared, might in some way be directed to Thy truth, which abideth always, and in no part faileth. But as it happens that one who has tried a bad physician, fears to trust himself with a good one, so was it with the health of my soul, which could not be healed but by believing, and lest it should believe falsehoods, refused to be cured; resisting Thy hands, Who hast prepared the medicines of faith, and hast applied them to the diseases of the whole world, and given unto them so great authority.

Being led, however, from this to prefer the Catholic doctrine, I felt that her proceeding was more unassuming and honest, in that she required to be believed things not demonstrated (whether it was that they could in themselves be demonstrated but not to certain persons, or could not at all be), whereas among the Manichees our credulity was mocked by a promise of certain knowledge, and then so many most fabulous and absurd things were imposed to be believed, because they could not be demonstrated. Then Thou, O Lord, little by little with most tender and most merciful hand, touching and composing my heart, didst persuade me- considering what innumerable things I believed, which I saw not, nor was present while they were done, as so many things in secular history, so many reports of places and of cities, which I had not seen; so many of friends, so many of physicians, so many continually of other men, which unless we should believe, we should do nothing at all in this life; lastly, with how unshaken an assurance I believed of what parents I was born, which I could not know, had I not believed upon hearsay -considering all this, Thou didst persuade me, that not they who believed Thy Books (which Thou hast established in so great authority among almost all nations), but they who believed them not, were to be blamed; and that they were not to be heard, who should say to me, "How knowest thou those Scriptures to have been imparted unto mankind by the Spirit of the one true and most true God?" For this very thing was of all most to be believed, since no contentiousness of blasphemous questionings, of all that multitude which I had read in the self-contradicting philosophers, could wring this belief from me, "That Thou art" whatsoever Thou wert (what I knew not), and "That the government of human things belongs to Thee."...

Alypius was born in the same town with me, of persons of chief rank there, but younger than I. For he had studied under me, both when I first lectured in our town, and

afterwards at Carthage, and he loved me much, because I seemed to him kind, and learned; and I him, for his great towardliness to virtue, which was eminent enough in one of no greater years. Yet the whirlpool of Carthaginian habits (amongst whom those idle spectacles are hotly followed) had drawn him into the madness of the Circus. But while he was miserably tossed therein, and I, professing rhetoric there, had a public school, as yet he used not my teaching, by reason of some unkindness risen betwixt his father and me. I had found then how deadly he doted upon the Circus, and was deeply grieved that he seemed likely, nay, or had thrown away so great promise: yet had I no means of advising or with a sort of constraint reclaiming him, either by the kindness of a friend, or the authority of a master. For I supposed that he thought of me as did his father; but he was not such; laying aside then his father's mind in that matter, he began to greet me, come sometimes into my lecture room, hear a little, and be gone. I however had forgotten to deal with him, that he should not, through a blind and headlong desire of vain pastimes, undo so good a wit... Him then I had found at Rome, and he clave to me by a most strong tie, and went with me to Milan, both that he might not leave me, and might practise something of the law he had studied, more to please his parents than himself...

Nebrius also, who having left his native country near Carthage, yea and Carthage itself, where he had much lived, leaving his excellent family-estate and house, and a mother behind, who was not to follow him, had come to Milan, for no other reason but that with me he might live in a most ardent search after truth and wisdom. Like me he sighed, like me he wavered, an ardent searcher after true life, and a most acute examiner of the most difficult questions...

And I, viewing and reviewing things, most wondered at the length of time from that my nineteenth year, wherein I had begun to kindle with the desire of wisdom, settling when I had found her, to abandon all the empty hopes and lying frenzies of vain desires. And lo, I was now in my thirtieth year, sticking in the same mire, greedy of enjoying things present, which passed away and wasted my soul; while I said to myself, "Tomorrow I shall find it; it will appear manifestly and I shall grasp it; to, Faustus the Manichee will come, and clear every thing! O you great men, ye Academicians, it is true then, that no certainty can be attained for the ordering of life! Nay, let us search the more diligently, and despair not. Lo, things in the ecclesiastical books are not absurd to us now, which sometimes seemed absurd, and may be otherwise taken, and in a good sense. I will take my stand, where, as a child, my parents placed me, until the clear truth be found out. But where shall it be sought or when? Ambrose has no leisure; we have no leisure to read; where shall we find even the books? Whence, or when procure them? from whom borrow them? Let set times be appointed, and certain hours be ordered for the health of our soul. Great hope has dawned; the Catholic Faith teaches not what we thought, and vainly accused it of; her instructed members hold it profane to believe God to be bounded by the figure of a human body: and do we doubt to 'knock,' that the rest 'may be opened'? The forenoons our scholars take up; what do we during the rest? Why not this? But when then pay we court to our great friends, whose favour we need? When compose what we may sell to scholars? When refresh ourselves, unbending our minds from this intenseness of care?...



While I went over these things, and these winds shifted and drove my heart this way and that, time passed on, but I delayed to turn to the Lord; and from day to day deferred to live in Thee, and deferred not daily to die in myself... Continual effort was made to have me married. I wooed, I was promised, chiefly through my mother's pains, that so once married, the health-giving baptism might cleanse me, towards which she rejoiced that I was being daily fitted, and observed that her prayers, and Thy promises, were being fulfilled in my faith... Meanwhile my sins were being multiplied, and my concubine being torn from my side as a hindrance to my marriage, my heart which clave unto her was torn and wounded and bleeding. And she returned to Afric, vowing unto Thee never to know any other man, leaving with me my son by her. But unhappy I, who could not imitate a very woman, impatient of delay, inasmuch as not till after two years was I to obtain her I sought not being so much a lover of marriage as a slave to lust, procured another, though no wife, that so by the servitude of an enduring custom, the disease of my soul might be kept up and carried on in its vigour, or even augmented, into the dominion of marriage. Nor was that my wound cured, which had been made by the cutting away of the former, but after inflammation and most acute pain, it mortified, and my pains became less acute, but more desperate.

To Thee be praise, glory to Thee, Fountain of mercies. I was becoming more miserable, and Thou nearer. Thy right hand was continually ready to pluck me out of the mire, and to wash me thoroughly, and I knew it not...

## BOOK VII

Deceased was now that my evil and abominable youth, and I was passing into early manhood; the more defiled by vain things as I grew in years, who could not imagine any substance, but such as is wont to be seen with these eyes...

I sought a way of obtaining strength sufficient to enjoy Thee; and found it not, until I embraced that Mediator betwixt God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who is over all, God blessed for evermore, calling unto me, and saying, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and mingling that food which I was unable to receive, with our flesh. For, the Word was made flesh, that Thy wisdom, whereby Thou createdst all things, might provide milk for our infant state... Most eagerly then did I seize that venerable writing of Thy Spirit; and chiefly the Apostle Paul. Whereupon those difficulties vanished away, wherein he once seemed to me to contradict himself, and the text of his discourse not to agree with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets. And the face of that pure word appeared to me one and the same; and I learned to rejoice with trembling. So I began; and whatsoever truth I had read in those other books, I found here amid the praise of Thy Grace; that whoso sees, may not so glory as if he had not received, not only what he sees, but also that he sees (for what hath he, which he hath not received?), and that he may be not only admonished to behold Thee, who art ever the same, but also healed, to hold Thee; and that he who cannot see afar off, may yet walk on the way, whereby he may arrive, and behold, and hold Thee...

## BOOK IX

O Lord, I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid: Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder... Thence, when the time was come wherein I was to give in my name, we left the country and returned to Milan. It pleased Alypius also to be with me born again in Thee, being already clothed with the humility befitting Thy Sacraments... Him we joined with us, our contemporary in grace, to be brought up in Thy discipline: and we were baptised, and anxiety for our past life vanished from us. Nor was I sated in those days with the wondrous sweetness of considering the depth of Thy counsels concerning the salvation of mankind. How did I weep, in Thy Hymns and Canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of Thy sweet-attuned Church! The voices flowed into mine ears, and the Truth distilled into my heart, whence the affections of my devotion overflowed, and tears ran down, and happy was I therein. Not long had the Church of Milan begun to use this kind of consolation and exhortation, the brethren zealously joining with harmony of voice and hearts. For it was a year, or not much more, that Justina, mother to the Emperor Valentinian, a child, persecuted Thy servant Ambrose, in favour of her heresy, to which she was seduced by the Arians. The devout people kept watch in the Church, ready to die with their Bishop Thy servant... Then it was first instituted that after the manner of the Eastern Churches, Hymns and Psalms should be sung, lest the people should wax faint through the tediousness of sorrow: and from that day to this the custom is retained, divers (yea, almost all) Thy congregations, throughout other parts of the world following herein...

## BOOK X

Let me know Thee, O Lord, who knowest me: let me know Thee, as I am known... the confessions of my past sins, which Thou hast forgiven and covered, that Thou mightest bless me in Thee, changing my soul by Faith and Thy Sacrament, when read and heard, stir up the heart, that it sleep not in despair and say "I cannot," but awake in the love of Thy mercy and the sweetness of Thy grace, whereby whoso is weak, is strong, when by it he became conscious of his own weakness. And the good delight to hear of the past evils of such as are now freed from them, not because they are evils, but because they have been and are not. With what fruit then, O Lord my God, to Whom my conscience daily confesseth, trusting more in the hope of Thy mercy than in her own innocence, with what fruit, I pray, do I by this book confess to men also in Thy presence what I now am, not what I have been?...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/augconf.htm>

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/CHRIST/AUG.HTM>

## **CHAPTER 12 : A TREATISE ON THE MERITS AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS, AND ON THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS BY AUGUSTINE**

### **Background Information**

In the doctrinal treatise of Augustine excerpted below, he refutes those who maintain, that Adam must have died even if he had never sinned; and that nothing of his sin has been transmitted to his posterity by natural descent. He also shows, that death has not accrued to man by any necessity of his nature, but as the penalty of sin. Augustine then proceeds to prove that in Adam's sin his entire offspring is implicated, seeking to prove that infants are baptized for the express purpose of receiving the remission of original sin. It serves as a good example of other doctrinal treatises Augustine wrote.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

...

Chapter 9 [IX.]—Sin Passes on to All Men by Natural Descent, and Not Merely by Imitation.

You tell me in your letter, that they endeavour to twist into some new sense the passage of the apostle, in which he says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;" yet you have not informed me what they suppose to be the meaning of these words. But so far as I have discovered from others, they think that the death which is here mentioned is not the death of the body, which they will not allow Adam to have deserved by his sin, but that of the soul, which takes place in actual sin; and that this actual sin has not been transmitted from the first man to other persons by natural descent, but by imitation. Hence, likewise, they refuse to believe that in infants original sin is remitted through baptism, for they contend that no such original sin exists at all in people by their birth. But if the apostle had wished to assert that sin entered into the world, not by natural descent, but by imitation, he would have mentioned as the first offender, not Adam indeed, but the devil, of whom it is written, that "he sinneth from the beginning;" of whom also we read in the Book of Wisdom: "Nevertheless through the devil's envy death entered into the world." Now, forasmuch as this death came upon men from the devil, not because they were propagated by him, but because they imitated his example, it is immediately added: "And they that do hold of his side do imitate him." Accordingly, the apostle, when mentioning sin and death together, which had passed by natural descent from one upon all men, set him down as the introducer thereof from whom the propagation of the human race took its beginning...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf105.x.iii.html>

## CHAPTER 13 : *ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE* BY AUGUSTINE

### Background Information

Augustine wrote on many varied topics. In the sample treatise below he addresses the subject of marriage. It should be noted that Augustine had a high view of marriage and condemned divorce, except in the case of fornication by a spouse. It was a later innovation of Rome that fornication was not regarded as legitimate grounds for divorce, and that the practice of marriage annulment by the Church came in.

Augustine, like Jerome, believed marriage was a holy institution; but also like Jerome he tended to view celibacy as more spiritual than marriage. This view often gave way during the Middle Ages to the unhealthy and unscriptural practice of monasticism.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### Chapter 1.—Concerning the Argument of This Treatise.

OUR new heretics, my dearest son Valerius, who maintain that infants born in the flesh have no need of that medicine of Christ whereby sins are healed, are constantly affirming, in their excessive hatred of us, that we condemn marriage and that divine procedure by which God creates human beings by means of men and women, inasmuch as we assert that they who are born of such a union contract that original sin of which the apostle says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned;”<sup>2060</sup> and because we do not deny, that of whatever kind of parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion, unless they be born again in Christ, and by His grace be removed from the power of darkness and translated into His kingdom,<sup>2061</sup> who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes. Because, then, we affirm this doctrine, which is contained in the oldest and unvarying rule of the catholic faith, these propounders of the novel and perverse dogma, who assert that there is no sin in infants to be washed away in the laver of regeneration,<sup>2062</sup> in their unbelief or ignorance calumniate us, as if we condemned marriage, and as if we asserted to be the devil’s work what is God’s own work—the human being which is born of marriage. Nor do they reflect that the good of marriage is no more impeachable on account of the original evil which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication is excusable on account of the natural good which is born of them. For as sin is the work of the devil, from whencesoever contracted by infants; so man is the work of God, from whencesoever born. Our purpose, therefore, in this book, so far as the Lord vouchsafes us in His help, is to distinguish between the evil of carnal concupiscence from which man who is born therefrom contracts original sin, and the good of marriage. For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed even if no man had sinned, since the procreation of children in the body that belonged to that life would have been effected

without that malady which in “the body of this death”<sup>2063</sup> cannot be separated from the process of procreation.

...

## Chapter 11 [X.]—The Sacrament of Marriage; Marriage Indissoluble; The World’s Law About Divorce Different from the Gospel’s.

It is certainly not fecundity only, the fruit of which consists of offspring, nor chastity only, whose bond is fidelity, but also a certain sacramental bond in marriage which is recommended to believers in wedlock. Accordingly it is enjoined by the apostle: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.” Of this bond the substance undoubtedly is this, that the man and the woman who are joined together in matrimony should remain inseparable as long as they live; and that it should be unlawful for one consort to be parted from the other, except for the cause of fornication. For this is preserved in the case of Christ and the Church; so that, as a living one with a living one, there is no divorce, no separation for ever. And so complete is the observance of this bond in the city of our God, in His holy mountain—that is to say, in the Church of Christ—by all married believers, who are undoubtedly members of Christ, that, although women marry, and men take wives, for the purpose of procreating children, it is never permitted one to put away even an unfruitful wife for the sake of having another to bear children. And whosoever does this is held to be guilty of adultery by the law of the gospel; though not by this world’s rule, which allows a divorce between the parties, without even the allegation of guilt, and the contraction of other nuptial engagements,—a concession which, the Lord tells us, even the holy Moses extended to the people of Israel, because of the hardness of their hearts. The same condemnation applies to the woman, if she is married to another man. So enduring, indeed, are the rights of marriage between those who have contracted them, as long as they both live, that even they are looked on as man and wife still, who have separated from one another, rather than they between whom a new connection has been formed. For by this new connection they would not be guilty of adultery, if the previous matrimonial relation did not still continue. If the husband die, with whom a true marriage was made, a true marriage is now possible by a connection which would before have been adultery. Thus between the conjugal pair, as long as they live, the nuptial bond has a permanent obligation, and can be cancelled neither by separation nor by union with another. But this permanence avails, in such cases, only for injury from the sin, not for a bond of the covenant. In like manner the soul of an apostate, which renounces as it were its marriage union with Christ, does not, even though it has cast its faith away, lose the sacrament of its faith, which it received in the laver of regeneration. It would undoubtedly be given back to him if he were to return, although he lost it on his departure from Christ. He retains, however, the sacrament after his apostasy, to the aggravation of his punishment, not for meriting the reward...

### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf105.xvi.v.xi.html>

## CHAPTER 14 : A TREATISE ON THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS BY AUGUSTINE

### Background Information

Augustine is so well known for his defense of predestination and sovereign free grace in salvation that in time his name, like later that of John Calvin, became identified with these doctrines. In the treatise excerpted below we read his defense of ‘Augustinianism’ (aka ‘Calvinism’). Augustine was defending the ‘doctrines of grace’ against the attacks of a British monk named Pelagius. Pelagius denied the doctrine of original sin, which taught that all mankind after Adam’s Fall are slaves of sin and totally depraved. Pelagius argued instead that all men stand in the same place as Adam did before the Fall. Pelagius reasoned that if a man were not himself responsible for his good or evil deeds, there was nothing to restrain him from indulgence in sin. Pelagius held that the human will is free to do good or evil, and that divine grace only facilitates what the will can do itself. Augustine countered that mankind after the Fall is in bondage to sin, and only the free sovereign grace of God towards those He chooses to save can rescue them from their wretched condition.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

...

#### Chapter 13 [VIII.]—The Effect of Divine Grace.

Accordingly, our only Master and Lord Himself, when He had said what I have above mentioned,—“This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent,”—says a little afterwards in that same discourse of His, “I said unto you that ye also have seen me and have not believed. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.”<sup>3466</sup> What is the meaning of “shall come to me,” but, “shall believe in me”? But it is the Father’s gift that this may be the case. Moreover, a little after He says, “Murmur not among yourselves. No one can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all teachable<sup>3467</sup> of God. Every man that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.”<sup>3468</sup> What is the meaning of, “Every man that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me,” except that there is none who hears from the Father, and learns, who cometh not to me? For if every one who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes, certainly every one who does not come has not heard from the Father; for if he had heard and learned, he would come. For no one has heard and learned, and has not come; but every one, as the Truth declares, who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes. Far removed from the senses of the flesh is this teaching in which the Father is heard, and teaches to come to the Son. Engaged herein is also the Son Himself, because He is His Word by which He thus teaches; and He does not do this through the ear of the flesh, but of the heart. Herein engaged, also, at the same time, is the Spirit of

the Father and of the Son; and He, too, teaches, and does not teach separately, since we have learned that the workings of the Trinity are inseparable. And that is certainly the same Holy Spirit of whom the apostle says, “We, however, having the same Spirit of faith.”<sup>3469</sup> But this is especially attributed to the Father, for the reason that of Him is begotten the Only Begotten, and from Him proceeds the Holy Spirit, of which it would be tedious to argue more elaborately; and I think that my work in fifteen books on the Trinity which God is, has already reached you. Very far removed, I say, from the senses of the flesh is this instruction wherein God is heard and teaches. We see that many come to the Son because we see that many believe on Christ, but when and how they have heard this from the Father, and have learned, we see not. It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a man comes to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as in the declaration of the prophet He has promised. Because He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory...

#### Chapter 16.—Why the Gift of Faith is Not Given to All.

Faith, then, as well in its beginning as in its completion, is God’s gift; and let no one have any doubt whatever, unless he desires to resist the plainest sacred writings, that this gift is given to some, while to some it is not given. But why it is not given to all ought not to disturb the believer, who believes that from one all have gone into a condemnation, which undoubtedly is most righteous; so that even if none were delivered therefrom, there would be no just cause for finding fault with God. Whence it is plain that it is a great grace for many to be delivered, and to acknowledge in those that are not delivered what would be due to themselves; so that he that glorieth may glory not in his own merits, which he sees to be equalled in those that are condemned, but in the Lord. But why He delivers one rather than another,—“His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out.” For it is better in this case for us to hear or to say, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” than to dare to speak as if we could know what He has chosen to be kept secret. Since, moreover, He could not will anything unrighteous...

#### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine/>

## **CHAPTER 15 : A TREATISE CONCERNING THE CORRECTION OF THE DONATIST; OR EPISTLE CLXXXV OF AUGUSTINE**

### **Background Information**

Augustine is also well known for his defense of the magistrate's use of the sword for purposes of upholding both tables of the Ten Commandments. Not only was secularism virtually unheard of before the modern era, the view of Augustine expressed in the treatise below was commonly accepted among Christians during the Middle Ages and the Reformation after it. It is another representative example of a doctrinal and polemical treatise.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

...CHAP. 5.--19. But as to the argument of those men who are unwilling that their impious deeds should be checked by the enactment of righteous laws, when they say that the apostles never sought such measures from the kings of the earth, they do not consider the different character of that age, and that everything comes in its own season. For what emperor had as yet believed in Christ, so as to serve Him in the cause of piety by enacting laws against impiety, when as yet the declaration of the prophet was only in the course of its fulfillment, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and their rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed;" and there was as yet no sign of that which is spoken a little later in the same psalm: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

(1) How then are kings to serve the Lord with fear, except by preventing and chastising with religious severity all those acts which are done in opposition to the commandments of the Lord? For a man serves God in one way in that he is man, in another way in that he is also king. In that he is man, he serves Him by living faithfully; but in that he is also king, he serves Him by enforcing with suitable rigor such laws as ordain what is righteous, and punish what is the reverse. Even as Hezekiah served Him, by destroying the groves and the temples of the idols, and the high places which had been built in violation of the commandments of God;(2) or even as Josiah served Him, by doing the same things in his turn;(3) or as the king of the Ninevites served Him, by compelling all the men of his city to make satisfaction to the Lord;(4) or as Darius served Him, by giving the idol into the power of Daniel to be broken, and by casting his enemies into the den of lions;(5) or as Nebuchadnezzar served Him, of whom I have spoken before, by issuing a terrible law to prevent any of his subjects from blaspheming God.(6) In this way, therefore, kings can serve the Lord, even in so far as they are kings, when they do in His service what they could not do were they not kings. 20. Seeing, then, that the kings of the earth were not yet serving the Lord in the time of the apostles, but were still imagining vain things against the Lord and against His Anointed, that all might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, it must be granted that at that time acts of



impiety could not possibly be prevented by the laws, but were rather performed under their sanction. For the order of events was then so rolling on, that even the Jews were killing those who preached Christ, thinking that they did God service in so doing, just as Christ had foretold,(7) and the heathen were raging against the Christians, and the patience of the martyrs was overcoming them all. But so soon as the fulfillment began of what is written in a later psalm, "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him,"(8) what sober-minded man could say to the kings, "Let not any thought trouble you within your kingdom as to who restrains or attacks the Church of your Lord; deem it not a matter in which you should be concerned, which of your subjects may choose to be religious or sacrilegious," seeing that you cannot say to them, "Deem it no concern of yours which of your subjects may choose to be chaste, or which unchaste?" For why, when free-will is given by God to man, should adulteries be punished by the laws, and sacrilege allowed? Is it a lighter matter that a soul should not keep faith with God, than that a woman should be faithless to her husband? Or if those faults which are committed not in contempt but in ignorance of religious truth are to be visited with lighter punishment, are they therefore to be neglected altogether? ...

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF1-04/npnf1-04-02.htm>

## CHAPTER 16 : *CITY OF GOD* BY AUGUSTINE

### Background Information

We come now to what is generally regarded as Augustine's masterpiece: his *City of God*. It embodies the results of thirteen years of intellectual labor and study (from A.D. 413–426). It is a vindication of Christianity against the attacks of the heathen in view of the sacking of the city of Rome by the barbarians, at a time when the old Græco-Roman civilization was approaching its downfall, and a new Christian civilization was beginning to rise on its ruins.

*City of God* is a philosophy of history, under the aspect of two rival cities or communities—the eternal city of God and the perishing city of the world. The eternal city of God contains those who have been transformed by God's grace, and who are therefore able to escape vanity, to love God as they should, and to inherit salvation. The City of God is not situated physically in heaven. It is not even a single physical city, like Rome or Milan. Instead it refers to the Christian community on earth, and the wholesome society they can form.

Here are summaries of the books contained in *City of God*:

Book I. Augustine censures the pagans, who attributed the calamities of the world, and especially the sack of Rome by the Goths, to the Christian religion and its prohibition of the worship of the gods.

Book II. A review of the calamities suffered by the Romans before the time of Christ, showing that their gods had plunged them into corruption and vice.

Book III. The external calamities of Rome.

Book IV. That empire was given to Rome not by the gods, but by the One True God.

Book V. Of fate, freewill, and God's prescience, and of the source of the virtues of the ancient Romans.

Book VI. Of Varro's threefold division of theology, and of the inability of the gods to contribute anything to the happiness of the future life.

Book VII. Of the "select gods" of the civil theology, and that eternal life is not obtained by worshipping them.

Book VIII. Some account of the Socratic and Platonic philosophy, and a refutation of the doctrine of Apuleius that the demons should be worshipped as mediators between gods and men.

Book IX. Of those who allege a distinction among demons, some being good and others evil.

Book X. Porphyry's doctrine of redemption.

Book XI. Augustine passes to the second part of the work, in which the origin, progress, and destinies of the earthly and heavenly cities are discussed. — Speculations regarding the creation of the world.

Book XII. Of the creation of angels and men, and of the origin of evil.

Book XIII. That death is penal, and had its origin in Adam's sin.

Book XIV. Of the punishment and results of man's first sin, and of the propagation of man without lust.

Book XV. The progress of the earthly and heavenly cities traced by the sacred history.

Book XVI. The history of the city of God from Noah to the time of the kings of Israel.

Book XVII. The history of the city of God from the times of the prophets to Christ.

Book XVIII. A parallel history of the earthly and heavenly cities from the time of Abraham to the end of the world.

Book XIX. A review of the philosophical opinions regarding the Supreme Good, and a comparison of these opinions with the Christian belief regarding happiness.

Book XX. Of the last judgement, and the declarations regarding it in the Old and New Testaments.

Book XXI. Of the eternal punishment of the wicked in hell, and of the various objections urged against it.

Book XXII. Of the eternal happiness of the saints, the resurrection of the body, and the miracles of the early Church.

## **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

### *PREFACE. EXPLAINING HIS DESIGN IN UNDERTAKING THIS WORK.*

THE glorious city of God is my theme in this work, which you, my dearest son Marcellinus, suggested, and which is due to you by my promise. I have undertaken its defense against those who prefer their own gods to the Founder of this city, — a city surpassingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for, expecting until "righteousness shall return unto judgment," and it obtain, by virtue of its excellence, final victory and perfect peace. A great work this, and an arduous; but God is my helper. For I am aware what ability is requisite to persuade the proud how great is the virtue of humility, which raises us, not by a quite human arrogance, but by a divine grace, above all earthly dignities that totter on this shifting scene. For the King and Founder of this city of which we speak, has in Scripture uttered to His people a dictum of the divine law in these words: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." But this, which is God's prerogative, the inflated ambition of a proud spirit also affects, and dearly loves that this be numbered among its attributes, to

"Show pity to the humbled soul, And crush the sons of pride."

And therefore, as the plan of this work we have undertaken requires, and as occasion offers, we must speak also of the earthly city, which, though it be mistress of the nations, is itself ruled by its lust of rule...

Book XIV Chap. 28- *Of The Nature Of The Two Cities, The Earthly And The Heavenly.*

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, "Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the former take thought for all. The one delights in its own strength, represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength." And therefore the wise men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit to their own bodies or souls, or both, and those who have known God "glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise,"--that is, glorying in their own wisdom, and being possessed by pride,--"they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." For they were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images, "and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." But in the other city there is no human wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God, and looks for its reward in the society of the saints, of holy angels as well as holy men, "that God may be all in all."

Book XV. CHAP. 4- *Of The Conflict And Peace Of The Earthly City.*

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty), has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with pride, its victory is life-destroying; but if it turns its thoughts upon the common casualties of our mortal condition, and is rather anxious concerning the disasters that may befall it than elated with the successes already achieved, this victory, though of a higher kind, is still only shot-lived; for it cannot abidingly rule over those whom it has victoriously subjugated. But the things which this city desires cannot justly be said to be evil, for it is itself, in its own kind, better than all other human good. For it desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the

juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are good things, and without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them better than those things which are believed to be better,--if this be so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase.

Book 19. CHAP. 17- *What Produces Peace, And What Discord, Between The Heavenly And Earthly Cities.*

But the families which do not live by faith seek their peace in the earthly advantages of this life; while the families which live by faith look for those eternal blessings which are promised, and use as pilgrims such advantages of time and of earth as do not fascinate and divert them from God, but rather aid them to endure with greater ease, and to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible body which weigh upon the soul. Thus the things necessary for this mortal life are used by both kinds of men and families alike, but each has its own peculiar and widely different aim in using them. The earthly city, which does not live by faith, seeks an earthly peace, and the end it proposes, in the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and rule, is the combination of men's wills to attain the things which are helpful to this life. The heavenly city, or rather the part of it which sojourns on earth and lives by faith, makes use of this peace only because it must, until this mortal condition which necessitates it shall pass away. Consequently, so long as it lives like a captive and a stranger in the earthly city, though it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as the earnest of it, it makes no scruple to obey the laws of the earthly city, whereby the things necessary for the maintenance of this mortal life are administered; and thus, as this life is common to both cities, so there is a harmony between them in regard to what belongs to it. But, as the earthly city has had some philosophers whose doctrine is condemned by the divine teaching, and who, being deceived either by their own conjectures or by demons, supposed that many gods must be invited to take an interest in human affairs, and assigned to each a separate function and a separate department,--to one the body, to another the soul; and in the body itself, to one the head, to another the neck, and each of the other members to one of the gods; and in like manner, in the soul, to one god the natural capacity was assigned, to another education, to another anger, to another lust; and so the various affairs of life were assigned,--cattle to one, corn to another, wine to another, oil to another, the woods to another, money to another, navigation to another, wars and victories to another, marriages to another, births and fecundity to another, and other things to other gods: and as the celestial city, on the other hand, knew that one God only was to be worshipped, and that to Him alone was due that service which the Greeks call *latreia*, and which can be given only to a god, it has come to pass that the two cities could not have common laws of religion, and that the heavenly city has been compelled in this matter to dissent, and to become obnoxious to those who think differently, and to stand the brunt of their anger and hatred and persecutions, except in so far as the minds of their enemies have been alarmed by the multitude of the Christians and quelled by the manifest protection of God accorded to them. This heavenly city, then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the

same end of earthly peace. It therefore is so far from rescinding and abolishing these diversities, that it even preserves and adopts them, so long only as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme and true God is thus introduced. Even the heavenly city, therefore, while in its state of pilgrimage, avails itself of the peace of earth, and, so far as it can without injuring faith and godliness, desires and maintains a common agreement among men regarding the acquisition of the necessities of life, and makes this earthly peace bear upon the peace of heaven; for this alone can be truly called and esteemed the peace of the reasonable creatures, consisting as it does in the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God. When we shall have reached that peace, this mortal life shall give place to one that is eternal, and our body shall be no more this animal body which by its corruption weighs down the soul, but a spiritual body feeling no want, and in all its members subjected to the will. In its pilgrim state the heavenly city possesses this peace by faith; and by this faith it lives righteously when it refers to the attainment of that peace every good action towards God and man; for the life of the city is a social life.

...

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.wischik.com/lu/senses/city-of-god.html>

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120118.htm>

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aug-city2.html>

## CHAPTER 17 : THE “CONFESSIO” OF PATRICK

### Background Information

Patrick was born around 373 A.D. in the British Isles near the modern city of Dumbarton in Scotland. His real name was Maewyn Succat, and he was a Briton. He took the name of Patrick, or Patricius, meaning "well-born" in Latin, later in life (circa 450 AD). During Patrick's boyhood, the Roman empire was near collapse and too weak to defend its holdings in distant lands. Britain became easy prey for raiders, including those who crossed the Irish sea from the land known as Hibernia or Ireland. When Patrick was sixteen, he was seized by raiders and carried off to Ireland. Most of what is known about Patrick comes from his own *Confessio*, written in his old age, excerpted below.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

1. I, Patrick, a sinner, a most simple countryman, the least of all the faithful and most contemptible to many, had for father the deacon Calpurnius, son of the late Potitus, a priest [presbyter], of the settlement [vicus] of Bannavem Taburniae; he had a small villa nearby where I was taken captive. I was at that time about sixteen years of age. I did not, indeed, know the true God; and I was taken into captivity in Ireland with many thousands of people, according to our deserts, for quite drawn away from God, we did not keep his precepts, nor were we obedient to our priests who used to remind us of our salvation. And the Lord brought down on us the fury of his being and scattered us among many nations, even to the ends of the earth, where I, in my smallness, am now to be found among foreigners.

2. And there the Lord opened my mind to an awareness of my unbelief, in order that, even so late, I might remember my transgressions and turn with all my heart to the Lord my God, who had regard for my insignificance and pitied my youth and ignorance. And he watched over me before I knew him, and before I learned sense or even distinguished between good and evil, and he protected me, and consoled me as a father would his son.

3. Therefore, indeed, I cannot keep silent, nor would it be proper, so many favours and graces has the Lord deigned to bestow on me in the land of my captivity. For after chastisement from God, and recognizing him, our way to repay him is to exalt him and confess his wonders before every nation under heaven.

4. For there is no other God, nor ever was before, nor shall be hereafter, but God the Father, unbegotten and without beginning, in whom all things began, whose are all things, as we have been taught; and his son Jesus Christ, who manifestly always existed with the Father, before the beginning of time in the spirit with the Father, indescribably begotten before all things, and all things visible and invisible were made by him. He was made man, conquered death and was received into Heaven, to the Father who gave him all power over every name in Heaven and on Earth and in Hell, so that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, in whom we believe. And we look to his imminent coming again, the judge of the living and the dead, who will render to each

according to his deeds. And he poured out his Holy Spirit on us in abundance, the gift and pledge of immortality, which makes the believers and the obedient into sons of God and co-heirs of Christ who is revealed, and we worship one God in the Trinity of holy name.

...

**8.** So it is that I should mightily fear, with terror and trembling, this judgment on the day when no one shall be able to steal away or hide, but each and all shall render account for even our smallest sins before the judgment seat of Christ the Lord.

**9.** And therefore for some time I have thought of writing, but I have hesitated until now, for truly, I feared to expose myself to the criticism of men, because I have not studied like others, who have assimilated both Law and the Holy Scriptures equally and have never changed their idiom since their infancy, but instead were always learning it increasingly, to perfection, while my idiom and language have been translated into a foreign tongue. So it is easy to prove from a sample of my writing, my ability in rhetoric and the extent of my preparation and knowledge, for as it is said, 'wisdom shall be recognized in speech, and in understanding, and in knowledge and in the learning of truth.'

**10.** But why make excuses close to the truth, especially when now I am presuming to try to grasp in my old age what I did not gain in my youth because my sins prevented me from making what I had read my own? But who will believe me, even though I should say it again? A young man, almost a beardless boy, I was taken captive before I knew what I should desire and what I should shun. So, consequently, today I feel ashamed and I am mightily afraid to expose my ignorance, because, [not] eloquent, with a small vocabulary, I am unable to explain as the spirit is eager to do and as the soul and the mind indicate.

**11.** But had it been given to me as to others, in gratitude I should not have kept silent, and if it should appear that I put myself before others, with my ignorance and my slower speech, in truth, it is written: 'The tongue of the stammerers shall speak rapidly and distinctly.' How much harder must we try to attain it, we of whom it is said: 'You are an epistle of Christ in greeting to the ends of the earth ... written on your hearts, not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God.' And again, the Spirit witnessed that the rustic life was created by the Most High.

**12.** I am, then, first of all, countryfied, an exile, evidently unlearned, one who is not able to see into the future, but I know for certain, that before I was humbled I was like a stone lying in deep mire, and he that is mighty came and in his mercy raised me up and, indeed, lifted me high up and placed me on top of the wall. And from there I ought to shout out in gratitude to the Lord for his great favours in this world and for ever, that the mind of man cannot measure.



**13.** Therefore be amazed, you great and small who fear God, and you men of God, eloquent speakers, listen and contemplate. Who was it summoned me, a fool, from the midst of those who appear wise and learned in the law and powerful in rhetoric and in all things? Me, truly wretched in this world, he inspired before others that I could be-- if I would-- such a one who, with fear and reverence, and faithfully, without complaint, would come to the people to whom the love of Christ brought me and gave me in my lifetime, if I should be worthy, to serve them truly and with humility.

**14.** According, therefore, to the measure of one's faith in the Trinity, one should proceed without holding back from danger to make known the gift of God and everlasting consolation, to spread God's name everywhere with confidence and without fear, in order to leave behind, after my death, foundations for my brethren and sons whom I baptized in the Lord in so many thousands.

**15.** And I was not worthy, nor was I such that the Lord should grant his humble servant this, that after hardships and such great trials, after captivity, after many years, he should give me so much favour in these people, a thing which in the time of my youth I neither hoped for nor imagined.

**16.** But after I reached Ireland I used to pasture the flock each day and I used to pray many times a day. More and more did the love of God, and my fear of him and faith increase, and my spirit was moved so that in a day [I said] from one up to a hundred prayers, and in the night a like number; besides I used to stay out in the forests and on the mountain and I would wake up before daylight to pray in the snow, in icy coldness, in rain, and I used to feel neither ill nor any slothfulness, because, as I now see, the Spirit was burning in me at that time.

**17.** And it was there of course that one night in my sleep I heard a voice saying to me: 'You do well to fast: soon you will depart for your home country.' And again, a very short time later, there was a voice prophesying: 'Behold, your ship is ready.' And it was not close by, but, as it happened, two hundred miles away, where I had never been nor knew any person. And shortly thereafter I turned about and fled from the man with whom I had been for six years, and I came, by the power of God who directed my route to advantage (and I was afraid of nothing), until I reached that ship.

**18.** And on the same day that I arrived, the ship was setting out from the place, and I said that I had the wherewithal to sail with them; and the steersman was displeased and replied in anger, sharply: 'By no means attempt to go with us.' Hearing this I left them to go to the hut where I was staying, and on the way I began to pray, and before the prayer was finished I heard one of them shouting loudly after me: 'Come quickly because the men are calling you.' And immediately I went back to them and they started to say to me: 'Come, because we are admitting you out of good faith; make friendship with us in any way you wish.' (And so, on that day, I refused to suck the breasts of these men from fear of God, but nevertheless I had hopes that they would come to faith in Jesus Christ, because they were barbarians.) And for this I continued with them, and forthwith we put to sea.

**19.** And after three days we reached land, and for twenty-eight days journeyed through uninhabited country, and the food ran out and hunger overtook them; and one day the steersman began saying: 'Why is it, Christian? You say your God is great and all-powerful; then why can you not pray for us? For we may perish of hunger; it is unlikely indeed that we shall ever see another human being.' In fact, I said to them, confidently: 'Be converted by faith with all your heart to my Lord God, because nothing is impossible for him, so that today he will send food for you on your road, until you be sated, because everywhere he abounds.' And with God's help this came to pass; and behold, a herd of swine appeared on the road before our eyes, and they slew many of them, and remained there for two nights, and they were full of their meat and well restored, for many of them had fainted and would otherwise have been left half dead by the wayside. And after this they gave the utmost thanks to God, and I was esteemed in their eyes, and from that day they had food abundantly. They discovered wild honey, besides, and they offered a share to me, and one of them said: 'It is a sacrifice.' Thanks be to God, I tasted none of it.

...

**21.** And a second time, after many years, I was taken captive. On the first night I accordingly remained with my captors, but I heard a divine prophecy, saying to me: 'You shall be with them for two months. So it happened. On the sixtieth night the Lord delivered me from their hands.

**22.** On the journey he provided us with food and fire and dry weather every day, until on the tenth day we came upon people. As I mentioned above, we had journeyed through an unpopulated country for twenty-eight days, and in fact the night that we came upon people we had no food.

**23.** And after a few years I was again in Britain with my parents [kinsfolk], and they welcomed me as a son, and asked me, in faith, that after the great tribulations I had endured I should not go anywhere else away from them. And, of course, there, in a vision of the night, I saw a man whose name was Victoricus coming as it from Ireland with innumerable letters, and he gave me one of them, and I read the beginning of the letter: 'The Voice of the Irish', and as I was reading the beginning of the letter I seemed at that moment to hear the voice of those who were beside the forest of Foclut which is near the western sea, and they were crying as if with one voice: 'We beg you, holy youth, that you shall come and shall walk again among us.' And I was stung intensely in my heart so that I could read no more, and thus I awoke. Thanks be to God, because after so many ears the Lord bestowed on them according to their cry...

**25.** And on a second occasion I saw Him praying within me, and I was as it were, inside my own body, and I heard Him above me-- that is, above my inner self. He was praying powerfully with sighs. And in the course of this I was astonished and wondering, and I pondered who it could be who was praying within me. But at the end of the prayer it was revealed to me that it was the Spirit. And so I awoke and remembered the Apostle's words: 'Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we know not how to pray as we

ought. But the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for utterance.' And again: 'The Lord our advocate intercedes for us.'

**26.** And then I was attacked by a goodly number of my elders, who [brought up] my sins against my arduous episcopate. That day in particular I was mightily upset, and might have fallen here and for ever; but the Lord generously spared me, a convert, and an alien, for his name's sake, and he came powerfully to my assistance in that state of being trampled down. I pray God that it shall not be held against them as a sin that I fell truly into disgrace and scandal.

**27.** They brought up against me after thirty years an occurrence I had confessed before becoming a deacon. On account of the anxiety in my sorrowful mind, I laid before my close friend what I had perpetrated on a day-- nay, rather in one hour-- in my boyhood because I was not yet proof against sin. God knows-- I do not-- whether I was fifteen years old at the time, and I did not then believe in the living God, nor had I believed, since my infancy; but I remained in death and unbelief until I was severely rebuked, and in truth I was humbled every day by hunger and nakedness.

**28.** On the other hand, I did not proceed to Ireland of my own accord until I was almost giving up, but through this I was corrected by the Lord, and he prepared me so that today I should be what was once far from me, in order that I should have the care of-- or rather, I should be concerned for-- the salvation of others, when at that time, still, I was only concerned for myself.

**29.** Therefore, on that day when I was rebuked, as I have just mentioned, I saw in a vision of the night a document before my face, without honour, and meanwhile I heard a divine prophecy, saying to me: 'We have seen with displeasure the face of the chosen one divested of [his good] name.' And he did not say 'You have seen with displeasure', but 'We have seen with displeasure' (as if He included Himself) . He said then: 'He who touches you, touches the apple of my eye.'

**30.** For that reason, I give thanks to him who strengthened me in all things, so that I should not be hindered in my setting out and also in my work which I was taught by Christ my Lord; but more, from that state of affairs I felt, within me, no little courage, and vindicated my faith before God and man.

**31.** Hence, therefore, I say boldly that my conscience is clear now and hereafter. God is my witness that I have not lied in these words to you.

**32.** But rather, I am grieved for my very close friend, that because of him we deserved to hear such a prophecy. The one to whom I entrusted my soul! And I found out from a goodly number of brethren, before the case was made in my defence (in which I did not take part, nor was I in Britain, nor was it pleaded by me), that in my absence he would fight in my behalf. Besides, he told me himself: 'See, the rank of bishop goes to you'-- of which I was not worthy. But how did it come to him, shortly afterwards, to disgrace me

publicly, in the presence of all, good and bad, because previously, gladly and of his own free will, he pardoned me, as did the Lord, who is greater than all?

**33.** I have said enough. But all the same, I ought not to conceal God's gift which he lavished on us in the land of my captivity, for then I sought him resolutely, and I found him there, and he preserved me from all evils (as I believe) through the in-dwelling of his Spirit, which works in me to this day. Again, boldly, but God knows, if this had been made known to me by man, I might, perhaps, have kept silent for the love of Christ.

**34.** Thus I give untiring thanks to God who kept me faithful in the day of my temptation, so that today I may confidently offer my soul as a living sacrifice for Christ my Lord; who am I, Lord? or, rather, what is my calling? that you appeared to me in so great a divine quality, so that today among the barbarians I might constantly exalt and magnify your name in whatever place I should be, and not only in good fortune, but even in affliction? ...

**36.** Whence came to me this wisdom which was not my own, I who neither knew the number of days nor had knowledge of God? Whence came the so great and so healthful gift of knowing or rather loving God, though I should lose homeland and family.

**37.** And many gifts were offered to me with weeping and tears, and I offended them [the donors], and also went against the wishes of a good number of my elders; but guided by God, I neither agreed with them nor deferred to them, not by my own grace but by God who is victorious in me and withstands them all, so that I might come to the Irish people to preach the Gospel and endure insults from unbelievers; that I might hear scandal of my travels, and endure man persecutions to the extent of prison; and so that I might give up my free birthright for the advantage of others, and if I should be worthy, I am ready [to give] even my life without hesitation; and most willingly for His name. And I choose to devote it to him even unto death, if God grant it to me.

**38.** I am greatly God's debtor, because he granted me so much grace, that through me many people would be reborn in God, and soon after confirmed, and that clergy would be ordained everywhere for them, the masses lately come to belief, whom the Lord drew from the ends of the earth, just as he once promised through his prophets: 'To you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Our fathers have inherited naught but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit.' And again: 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the uttermost ends of the earth.'

**39.** And I wish to wait then for his promise which is never unfulfilled, just as it is promised in the Gospel: 'Many shall come from east and west and shall sit at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.' Just as we believe that believers will come from all the world.

**40.** So for that reason one should, in fact, fish well and diligently, just as the Lord foretells and teaches, saying, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,' and again through the prophets: 'Behold, I am sending forth many fishers and hunters, says the

Lord,' et cetera. So it behoved us to spread our nets, that a vast multitude and throng might be caught for God, and so there might be clergy everywhere who baptized and exhorted a needy and desirous people. Just as the Lord says in the Gospel, admonishing and instructing: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always to the end of time.' ...

**41.** So, how is it that in Ireland, where they never had any knowledge of God but, always, until now, cherished idols and unclean things, they are lately become a people of the Lord, and are called children of God; the sons of the Irish [Scotti] and the daughters of the chieftains are to be seen as monks and virgins of Christ.

**42.** And there was, besides, a most beautiful, blessed, native-born noble Irish [Scotta] woman of adult age whom I baptized; and a few days later she had reason to come to us to intimate that she had received a prophecy from a divine messenger [who] advised her that she should become a virgin of Christ and she would draw nearer to God. Thanks be to God, six days from then, opportunely and most eagerly, she took the course that all virgins of God take, not with their fathers' consent but enduring the persecutions and deceitful hindrances of their parents. Notwithstanding that, their number increases, (we do not know the number of them that are so reborn) besides the widows, and those who practise self-denial. Those who are kept in slavery suffer the most. They endure terrors and constant threats, but the Lord has given grace to many of his handmaidens, for even though they are forbidden to do so, still they resolutely follow his example.

**43.** So it is that even if I should wish to separate from them in order to go to Britain, and most willingly was I prepared to go to my homeland and kinsfolk-- and not only there, but as far as Gaul to visit the brethren there, so that I might see the faces of the holy ones of my Lord, God knows how strongly I desired this-- I am bound by the Spirit, who witnessed to me that if I did so he would mark me out as guilty, and I fear to waste the labour that I began, and not I, but Christ the Lord, who commanded me to come to be with them for the rest of my life, if the Lord shall will it and shield me from every evil, so that I may not sin before him.

...

**46.** Thus, I should give thanks unceasingly to God, who frequently forgave my folly and my negligence, in more than one instance so as not to be violently angry with me, who am placed as his helper, and I did not easily assent to what had been revealed to me, as the Spirit was urging; and the Lord took pity on me thousands upon thousands of times, because he saw within me that I was prepared, but that I was ignorant of what to do in view of my situation; because many were trying to prevent this mission. They were talking among themselves behind my back, and saying: 'Why is this fellow throwing himself into danger among enemies who know not God?' Not from malice, but having no liking for it; likewise, as I myself can testify, they perceived my rusticity. And I was not quick to recognize the grace that was then in me; I now know that I should have done so earlier.

...

**48.** You know, as God does, how I went about among you from my youth in the faith of truth and in sincerity of heart. As well as to the heathen among whom I live, I have shown them trust and always show them trust. God knows I did not cheat any one of them, nor consider it, for the sake of God and his Church, lest I arouse them and [bring about] persecution for them and for all of us, and lest the Lord's name be blasphemed because of me, for it is written: 'Woe to the men through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed.'

**49.** For even though I am ignorant in all things, nevertheless I attempted to safeguard some and myself also. And I gave back again to my Christian brethren and the virgins of Christ and the holy women the small unasked for gifts that they used to give me or some of their ornaments which they used to throw on the altar. And they would be offended with me because I did this. But in the hope of eternity, I safeguarded myself carefully in all things, so that they might not cheat me of my office of service on any pretext of dishonesty, and so that I should not in the smallest way provide any occasion for defamation or disparagement on the part of unbelievers.

**50.** What is more, when I baptized so many thousands of people, did I hope for even half a jot from any of them? [If so] Tell me, and I will give it back to you. And when the Lord ordained clergy everywhere by my humble means, and I freely conferred office on them, if I asked any of them anywhere even for the price of one shoe, say so to my face and I will give it back.

**51.** More, I spent for you so that they would receive me. And I went about among you, and everywhere for your sake, in danger, and as far as the outermost regions beyond which no one lived, and where no one had ever penetrated before, to baptize or to ordain clergy or to confirm people. Conscientiously and gladly I did all this work by God's gift for your salvation.

**52.** From time to time I gave rewards to the kings, as well as making payments to their sons who travel with me; notwithstanding which, they seized me with my companions, and that day most avidly desired to kill me. But my time had not yet come. They plundered everything they found on us anyway, and fettered me in irons; and on the fourteenth day the Lord freed me from their power, and whatever they had of ours was given back to us for the sake of God on account of the indispensable friends whom we had made before.

**53.** Also you know from experience how much I was paying to those who were administering justice in all the regions, which I visited often. I estimate truly that I distributed to them not less than the price of fifteen men, in order that you should enjoy my company and I enjoy yours, always, in God. I do not regret this nor do I regard it as enough. I am paying out still and I shall pay out more. The Lord has the power to grant me that I may soon spend my own self, for your souls.

**54.** Behold, I call on God as my witness upon my soul that I am not lying; nor would I write to you for it to be an occasion for flattery or selfishness, nor hoping for honour from any one of you. Sufficient is the honour which is not yet seen, but in which the heart has confidence. He who made the promise is faithful; he never lies.

**55.** But I see that even here and now, I have been exalted beyond measure by the Lord, and I was not worthy that he should grant me this...

**56.** Behold now I commend my soul to God who is most faithful and for whom I perform my mission in obscurity, but he is no respecter of persons and he chose me for this service that I might be one of the least of his ministers.

**57.** For which reason I should make return for all that he returns me. But what should I say, or what should I promise to my Lord, for I, alone, can do nothing unless he himself vouchsafe it to me. But let him search my heart and [my] nature, for I crave enough for it, even too much, and I am ready for him to grant me that I drink of his chalice, as he has granted to others who love him.

**58.** Therefore may it never befall me to be separated by my God from his people whom he has won in this most remote land. I pray God that he gives me perseverance, and that he will deign that I should be a faithful witness for his sake right up to the time of my passing.

...

**61.** Behold over and over again I would briefly set out the words of my confession. I testify in truthfulness and gladness of heart before God and his holy angels that I never had any reason, except the Gospel and his promises, ever to have returned to that nation from which I had previously escaped with difficulty.

**62.** But I entreat those who believe in and fear God, whoever deigns to examine or receive this document composed by the obviously unlearned sinner Patrick in Ireland, that nobody shall ever ascribe to my ignorance any trivial thing that I achieved or may have expounded that was pleasing to God, but accept and truly believe that it would have been the gift of God. And this is my confession before I die.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://holydays.tripod.com/shamrock.htm>

<http://www.robotwisdom.com/jaj/patrick.html>

## CHAPTER 18 : “MORNING PRAYER” OF PATRICK

### Background Information

The Britons of Britain it would seem had heard the Christian gospel as early as the first century AD, and as early as the second or third century they had accepted Christianity as a people. Many of these Christianized Britons came to reside not only in Britain, but also in a section of France called Brittany. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Briton Patrick brought the Christian gospel to the Irish (aka Scots) of Ireland. The Irish thus became a Christianized people, and in the centuries following they brought the Christian gospel to the Picts of northern Britain, through the Irish missionary efforts of Columba and others. The Christianity that developed in the Middle Ages among what are called the Celtic people (Britons, Irish, Picts, etc.) was distinct from Roman Christianity, though sharing many doctrines in common. Celtic Christianity did not look to the Bishop of Rome with the same submissiveness as many other Christians (i.e., Roman Catholics) of western Europe. For instance, the Germanic people of England and continental Europe largely received Christianity through Roman Catholic missionary efforts, so were understandably Roman Catholic in allegiance. Celtic Christianity flourished in the early Middle Ages, and was not effectively merged with Roman Catholic Christianity until the later Middle Ages. The writings of Patrick give us insight into the nature of Celtic Christianity.

The prayer before us is often called “St. Patrick’s Breastplate” (aka “St. Patrick’s Lorica”), because of those parts of it which seek God’s protection. It is also called his “Morning Prayer”, and is sometimes called “The Deer’s Cry”. The poetry of the Christians of the early Middle Ages was generally religious in nature, in the form of personal prayer or praise to God. Although in the early Church the hymnology of the public worship was limited to the inspired Psalms of scripture (even as we read in our reading of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, as well as we read in the Bible itself), as the centuries passed some personal prayer and praise was incorporated into the liturgy of the Church, and thus ‘exclusive psalmody’ over time was abandoned.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

I arise today  
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,  
Through a belief in the Threeness,  
Through confession of the Oneness  
Of the Creator of creation.

I arise today  
Through the strength of Christ's birth and His baptism,  
Through the strength of His crucifixion and His burial,  
Through the strength of His resurrection and His ascension,



Through the strength of His descent for the judgment of doom.

I arise today  
Through the strength of the love of cherubim,  
In obedience of angels,  
In service of archangels,  
In the hope of resurrection to meet with reward,  
In the prayers of patriarchs,  
In preachings of the apostles,  
In faiths of confessors,  
In innocence of virgins,  
In deeds of righteous men.

I arise today  
Through the strength of heaven;  
Light of the sun,  
Splendor of fire,  
Speed of lightning,  
Swiftness of the wind,  
Depth of the sea,  
Stability of the earth,  
Firmness of the rock.

I arise today  
Through God's strength to pilot me;  
God's might to uphold me,  
God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eye to look before me,  
God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to speak for me,  
God's hand to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me,  
God's shield to protect me,  
God's hosts to save me  
From snares of the devil,  
From temptations of vices,  
From every one who desires me ill,  
Afar and anear,  
Alone or in a multitude.

I summon today all these powers between me and evil,  
Against every cruel merciless power that opposes my body and soul,  
Against incantations of false prophets,  
Against black laws of pagandom,  
Against false laws of heretics,  
Against craft of idolatry,

Against spells of women and smiths and wizards,  
Against every knowledge that corrupts man's body and soul.  
Christ shield me today  
Against poison, against burning,  
Against drowning, against wounding,  
So that reward may come to me in abundance.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,  
Christ in the eye that sees me,  
Christ in the ear that hears me.

I arise today Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,  
Through a belief in the Threeness,  
Through a confession of the Oneness  
Of the Creator of creation

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

[http://www.poetseers.org/the\\_great\\_poets/celtic\\_poems/4/document\\_view](http://www.poetseers.org/the_great_poets/celtic_poems/4/document_view)

<http://holydays.tripod.com/prayer.htm>

## CHAPTER 19 : *THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY* BY BOETHIUS

### Background Information

Boethius (480-c. 526 AD), born in Rome, lived during the time when the old Roman Empire was collapsing. He was descended from a consular family, left an orphan at an early age, and educated by Symmachus, whose daughter, Rusticana, he married. As early as 507 he was known as a learned man, and as such was entrusted by King Theodoric with several important missions. He enjoyed the confidence of the king, and as a patrician of Rome was looked up to by the representatives of the Roman nobility. When, however, his enemies accused him of disloyalty to the Ostrogothic king, alleging that he plotted to restore "Roman liberty", and added the accusation of "sacrilege" (the practice of astrology), neither his noble birth nor his great popularity availed him. He was cast into prison, condemned unheard, and executed by order of Theodoric. During his imprisonment, he reflected on the instability of the favor of princes and the inconstancy of the devotion of his friends. These reflections suggested to him the theme of his best-known philosophical work, *The Consolation of Philosophy*.

*The Consolation of Philosophy* (published circa 520-526 AD) is apparently the fruit of Boethius's spell of imprisonment awaiting trial and execution. Its literary genre, with a regular alternation of prose and verse sections, is called Menippean Satire, after Roman models of which fragments and analogues survive. The dialogue between two characters (one of whom we may call Boethius, but only on condition that we distinguish Boethius the character from Boethius the author, who surely manipulated his self-representation for literary and philosophical effect) is carefully structured according to the best classical models. Its language is classical in intent, but some of the qualities that would characterize medieval Latin are already discernible. There are evident traces of the influence of the Neo-Platonists, especially of Proclus. The recourse to Stoicism, especially to the doctrines of Seneca, is pronounced. It does astonish the reader that Boethius, a Christian, should have failed, in his moment of trial and mental stress to refer explicitly to scriptural sources of consolation. The work takes up many problems of metaphysics as well as of ethics. It treats of the being and nature of God, of providence and fate, of the origin of the universe, and of the freedom of the will. In medieval times, it became an influential philosophical book, a favorite study of statesmen, poets, and historians, as well as of philosophers and theologians. For instance, the important part which it played in Dante's mental struggle after the death of Beatrice is described in the "Convito". Echoes of it and citations from it occur frequently in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which we shall consider later in this textbook.

Boethius' other philosophical works include:

- translations from the Greek, e.g. of Aristotle's logical treatises (with commentaries) and of Porphyry's "Isagogue" (with commentaries);

- commentaries on Porphyry's "Isagoge", translated by Marius Victorinus and on Cicero's "Topica";
- original logical treatises, "De Categoricalis Syllogismis", "Introductio ad Syllogismos Categoricalis", "De Divisione" (of doubtful authenticity), and "De Differentiis Topicis".

These exercised very great influence on the development of medieval terminology, method, and doctrine. In fact, the schoolmen of the Middle Ages depended significantly on Boethius for their knowledge of Aristotle's doctrines.

We witness in Boethius the trend that would plague the Christianity of the Middle Ages: syncretism (i.e., the mixing of pagan elements with Christianity).

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

... 'To pleasant songs my work was erstwhile given, and bright were all my labours then; but now in tears to sad refrains am I compelled to turn. Thus my maimed Muses guide my pen, and gloomy songs make no feigned tears bedew my face. Then could no fear so overcome to leave me companionless upon my way. They were the pride of my earlier bright-lived days: in my later gloomy days they are the comfort of my fate; for hastened by unhappiness has age come upon me without warning, and grief hath set within me the old age of her gloom. White hairs are scattered untimely on my head, and the skin hangs loosely from my worn-out limbs.

'Happy is that death which thrusts not itself upon men in their pleasant years, yet comes to them at the oft-repeated cry of their sorrow. Sad is it how death turns away from the unhappy with so deaf an ear, and will not close, cruel, the eyes that weep. Ill is it to trust to Fortune's fickle bounty, and while yet she smiled upon me, the hour of gloom had well-nigh overwhelmed my head. Now has the cloud put off its alluring face, wherefore without scruple my life drags out its wearying delays.

'Why, O my friends, did ye so often puff me up, telling me that I was fortunate? For he that is fallen low did never firmly stand.'

While I was pondering thus in silence, and using my pen to set down so tearful a complaint, there appeared standing over my head a woman's form, whose countenance was full of majesty, whose eyes shone as with fire and in power of insight surpassed the eyes of men, whose colour was full of life, whose strength was yet intact though she was so full of years that none would ever think that she was subject to such age as ours. One could but doubt her varying stature, for at one moment she repressed it to the common measure of a man, at another she seemed to touch with her crown the very heavens: and when she had raised higher her head, it pierced even the sky and baffled the sight of those who would look upon it. Her clothing was wrought of the finest thread by subtle workmanship brought to an indivisible piece. This had she woven with her own hands, as I afterwards did learn by her own shewing. Their beauty was somewhat dimmed by the dulness of long neglect, as is seen in the smoke-grimed masks of our ancestors. On the

border below was inwoven the symbol Π, on that above was to be read a Θ<sup>1</sup>. And between the two letters there could be marked degrees, by which, as by the rungs of a ladder, ascent might be made from the lower principle to the higher. Yet the hands of rough men had torn this garment and snatched such morsels as they could therefrom. In her right hand she carried books, in her left was a sceptre brandished.

When she saw that the Muses of poetry were present by my couch giving words to my lamenting, she was stirred a while; her eyes flashed fiercely, and said she, 'Who has suffered these seducing mummers to approach this sick man? Never do they support those in sorrow by any healing remedies, but rather do ever foster the sorrow by poisonous sweets. These are they who stifle the fruit-bearing harvest of reason with the barren briars of the passions: they free not the minds of men from disease, but accustom them thereto. I would think it less grievous if your allurements drew away from me some uninitiated man, as happens in the vulgar herd. In such an one my labours would be naught harmed, but this man has been nourished in the lore of Eleatics and Academics; and to him have ye reached? Away with you, Sirens, seductive unto destruction! leave him to my Muses to be cared for and to be healed.'

Their band thus rated cast a saddened glance

3:1 -- Π and Θ are the first letters of the Greek words denoting Practical and Theoretical, the two divisions of philosophy. upon the ground, confessing their shame in blushes, and passed forth dismally over the threshold. For my part, my eyes were dimmed with tears, and I could not discern who was this woman of such commanding power. I was amazed, and turning my eyes to the ground I began in silence to await what she should do. Then she approached nearer and sat down upon the end of my couch: she looked into my face heavy with grief and cast down by sorrow to the ground, and then she raised her complaint over the trouble of my mind in these words.

'Ah me! how blunted grows the mind when sunk below the o'erwhelming flood! Its own true light no longer burns within, and it would break forth to outer dark nesses. How often care, when fanned by earthly winds, grows to a larger and unmeasured bane. This man has been free to the open heaven: his habit has it been to wander into the paths of the sky: his to watch the light of the bright sun, his to inquire into the brightness of the chilly moon; he, like a conqueror, held fast bound in its order every star that makes its wandering circle, turning its peculiar course. Nay, more, deeply has he searched into the springs of nature, whence came the roaring blasts that ruffle the ocean's bosom calm: what is the spirit that makes the firmament revolve; wherefore does the evening star sink into the western wave but to rise from the radiant East; what is the cause which so tempers the season of Spring that it decks the earth with rose-blossoms; whence comes it to pass that Autumn is prolific in the years of plenty and overflows with teeming vines: deeply to search these causes was his wont, and to bring forth secrets deep in Nature hid.

'Now he lies there; extinct his reason's light, his neck in heavy chains thrust down, his countenance with grievous weight downcast; ah! the brute earth is all he can behold.

'But now,' said she, 'is the time for the physician's art, rather than for complaining.' Then fixing her eyes wholly on me, she said, 'Are you the man who was nourished upon the milk of my learning, brought up with my food until you had won your way to the power of a manly soul? Surely I had given you such weapons as would keep you safe,

and your strength unconquered; if you had not thrown them away. Do you know me? Why do you keep silence? Are you dumb from shame or from dull amazement? I would it were from shame, but I see that amazement has overwhelmed you.' ...

take the sun rising and a man walking; while these operations are occurring, they cannot but occur: but the one was bound to occur before it did; the other was not so bound. What God has in His present, does exist without doubt; but of such things some follow by necessity, others by their authors' wills. Wherefore I was justified in saying that if these things be regarded from the view of divine knowledge, they are necessary, but if they are viewed by themselves, they are perfectly free from all ties of necessity: just as when you refer all, that is clear to the senses, to the reason, it becomes general truth, but it remains particular if regarded by itself. " But," you will say, " if it is in my power to change a purpose of mine, I will disregard Providence, since I may change what Providence foresees." To which I answer, " You can change your purpose, but since the truth of Providence knows in its present that you can do so, and whether you do so, and in what direction you may change it, therefore you cannot escape that divine foreknowledge: just as you cannot avoid the glance of a present eye, though you may by your free will turn yourself to all kinds of different actions." "What?" you will say, " can I by my own action change divine knowledge, so that if I choose now one thing, now another, Providence too will seem to change its knowledge?" No; divine insight precedes all future things, turning them back and recalling them to the present time of its own peculiar knowledge. It does not change, as you may think, between this and that alternation of foreknowledge. It is constant in preceding and embracing by one glance all your changes. And God does not receive this ever-present grasp of all things and vision of the present at the occurrence of future events, but from His own peculiar directness. Whence also is that difficulty solved which you laid down a little while ago, that it was not worthy to say that our future events were the cause of God's knowledge. For this power of knowledge, ever in the present and embracing all things in its perception, does itself constrain all things, and owes naught to following events from which it has received naught. Thus, therefore, mortal men have their freedom of judgment intact. And since their wills are freed from all binding necessity, laws do not set rewards or punishments unjustly. God is ever the constant foreknowing overseer, and the ever-present eternity of His sight moves in harmony with the future nature of our actions, as it dispenses rewards to the good, and punishments to the bad. Hopes are not vainly put in God, nor prayers in vain offered: if these are right, they cannot but be answered. Turn therefore from vice: ensue virtue: raise your soul to upright hopes: send up on high your prayers from this earth. If you would be honest, great is the necessity enjoined upon your goodness, since all you do is done before the eyes of an all-seeing Judge.'

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/boethius/boebio.html>

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/boethius/boethius.html>

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02610b.htm>

## CHAPTER 20 : *MORALIA* OF GREGORY THE GREAT

### Background Information

The pope known as Gregory the Great was born around 540 AD in a politically influential family, in 573 he became Prefect of Rome, for awhile he lived as a monk, and in 590 he was elected Pope. Almost all the leading principles of Roman Catholicism are found, at least in germ form, in Gregory the Great. With regard to things spiritual, he impressed upon men's minds to a degree unprecedented the fact that the See of Peter was the one supreme, decisive authority in the Catholic Church. Nor is his work less noteworthy in its effect on the temporal position of the papacy. Seizing the opportunity which circumstances offered, he made himself in Italy a power stronger than emperor, and established a political influence which dominated the peninsula for centuries. From this time forth the varied populations of Italy looked to the pope for guidance, and Rome as the papal capital continued to be the center of the Christian world. Gregory the Great, along with Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome, make up what are called the four original "Doctors of the Latin Church".

Gregory claimed for the Apostolic See, and for himself as pope, a primacy of supreme authority over the Church Universal. In Epp., XIII, 1, he speaks of "the Apostolic See, which is the head of all Churches", and in Epp., V, cliv, he says: "I, albeit unworthy, have been set up in command of the Church." He claimed to be, like other Roman popes before him, successor of Peter. This view made it impossible for him to permit the use of the title 'Ecumenical Bishop' assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster, at a synod held in 588. Gregory protested, and a long controversy followed, the question still at issue when the pope died. Pope Boniface III (607 A.D.), a mere three years after the death of Gregory, petitioned Emperor Phocas to declare the Roman See the head of all Christian churches and that the title Universal Bishop would apply exclusively to the Bishop of Rome. This was done in an attempt to end the ambitions of the Patriarch of Constantinople. But, amazingly, even Gregory admitted during his lifetime that such a title was inappropriate with these words: "Whosoever calls himself, or desires to be called, Universal Priest, is in his elation the precursor of Antichrist, because he proudly puts himself above all others. Nor is it by dissimilar pride that he is led into error; for, as that perverse one wishes to appear as God above all men, so whosoever this one is who covets being called sole priest, he extols himself above all other priests."

Gregory the Great energetically promoted Roman Catholicism and Roman Catholic doctrines. For instance, Gregory sent a party of missionaries headed by Augustine of Canterbury to preach to the pagan Anglo-Saxon tribes that had invaded England and largely conquered or displaced the Celtic Christians previously living there. Gregory was the first monk to become pope, and he took monasticism as he found it established by St. Benedict, and his efforts and influence were given to strengthening and enforcing the prescriptions of that monastic legislator. Gregory, like the other Roman Catholic Popes,

also promoted the use of images in the Church. He extolled images' catechetical value in a letter he wrote to an iconoclast Bishop this way:

“Not without reason has antiquity allowed the stories of saints to be painted in holy places. And we indeed entirely praise thee for not allowing them to be adored, but we blame thee for breaking them. For it is one thing to adore an image, it is quite another thing to learn from the appearance of a picture what we must adore. What books are to those who can read, that is a picture to the ignorant who look at it; in a picture even the unlearned may see what example they should follow; in a picture they who know no letters may yet read. Hence, for Barbarians especially a picture takes the place of a book.”

Gregory also left behind a substantial literary heritage. His most ambitious work and one of the most popular works of scriptural exegesis in the Middle Ages was the *Moralia in Job*, commenting on the book of Job in 35 books running to over half a million words. Below is an excerpt from *Moralia*.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

Now that I have finished this work, I see that I must return to myself. For our mind is much fragmented and scattered beyond itself, even when it tries to speak rightly. While we think of words and how to bring them out, those very words diminish the soul's integrity by plundering it from inside. So I must return from the forum of speech to the senate house of the heart, to call together the thoughts of the mind for a kind of council to deliberate how best I may watch over myself, to see to it that in my heart I speak no heedless evil nor speak poorly any good. For the good is well spoken when the speaker seeks with his words to please only the one from whom he has received the good he has. And indeed even if I do not find for sure that have spoken any evil, still I will not claim that I have spoken no evil at all. But if I have received some good from God and spoken it, I freely admit that I have spoken it less well than I should (through my own fault, to be sure). For when I turn inward to myself, pushing aside the leafy verbiage, pushing aside the branching arguments, and examine my intentions at the very root, I know it really was my intention to please God, but some little appetite for the praise of men crept in, I know not how, and intruded on my simple desire to please God. And when later, too much later, I realize this, I find that I have in fact done other than what I know I set out to do. It is often thus, that when we begin with good intentions in the eyes of God, a secret tagalong yen for the praise of our fellow men comes along, taking hold of our intentions from the side of the road. We take food, for example, out of necessity, but while we are eating, a gluttonous spirit creeps in and we begin to take delight in the eating for its own sake; so often it happens that what began as nourishment to protect our health ends by becoming a pretext for our pleasures. We must admit therefore that our intention, which seeks to please God alone, is sometimes treacherously accompanied by a less-righteous intention that seeks to please other men by exploiting the gifts of God. But if we are



examined strictly by God in these matters, what refuge will remain in the midst of all this? For we see that our evil is always evil pure and simple, but the good that we think we have cannot be really good, pure and simple. But I think it worthwhile for me to reveal unhesitatingly here to the ears of my brothers everything I secretly revile in myself. As commentator, I have not hidden what I felt, and as confessor, I have not hidden what I suffer. In my commentary I reveal the gifts of God, and in my confession I uncover my wounds. In this vast human race there are always little ones who need to be instructed by my words, and there are always great ones who can take pity on my weakness once they know of it: thus with commentary and confession I offer my help to some of my brethren (as much as I can), and I seek the help of others. To the first I speak to explain what they should do, to the others I open my heart to admit what they should forgive. I have not withheld medicine from the ones, but I have not hidden my wounds and lacerations from the others. So I ask that whoever reads this should pour out the consolation of prayer before the strict judge for me, so that he may wash away with tears every sordid thing he finds in me. When I balance the power of my commentary and the power of prayer, I see that my reader will have more than paid me back if for what he hears from me, he offers his tears for me...

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/gregory.html>

[http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=2703](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=2703)

<http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/things/icons.htm> :

## **CHAPTER 21 : *THE KORAN OF MOHAMMED***

### **Background Information**

In what was surely God's judgment upon the mounting corruptions of Christendom, God raised up a powerful cult which borrowed various ideas from Christianity, while also perverting many scriptural doctrines. Its founder and first leader was Mohammed. Before his death in 632 AD, Muhammad had established Islam as a social and political force and had unified most of Arabia. A few decades after his death, his successors had united all of Arabia, and conquered Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Armenia, and much of North Africa. By 750, the rest of north Africa had come under Muslim rule, as had the southern part of Spain and much of central Asia (including Sind, in the Indus Valley). In the tenth century, Islam was spread to the Hindu principalities east of the Indus by conquering armies in what is now northern India. Even later, Islam expanded into much of Africa and Southeast Asia.

Mohammad evidently put forth verses and laws that he claimed to be of divine origin, his followers memorized or wrote down his revelations, numerous versions of these revelations circulated after his death, and Uthman ordered the collection and ordering of this mass of material in the time period (650-656 AD) into what we know today as the Koran.

The many similarities in historical account between the Koran and the Bible owe to the fact that Mohammad was teaching what was regarded as a universal history, accepted even by most pagan Arabs, as well as the Jews and Christians Mohammed had encountered in Arabia and on his travels. Differences between the Koran and the Bible can usually be explained by Mohammad's reliance on folk traditions rather than the actual text of the scriptures.

The Islamic religion has as a central tenet that there is one God, which Arabs call 'Allah'. It should be kept in mind that 'Allah' was the name for God among the Arabic (Trinitarian) Christians. But Mohammed denied the true Trinitarian God in favor a Unitarian myth, though agreeing with certain other tenets of Christian doctrine. His was a wicked and novel religion, albeit containing just enough truth to be believable by many people.

Below are excerpts from the Koran.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

#### **The Opening**

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

- [1.1] All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.
- [1.2] The Beneficent, the Merciful.
- [1.3] Master of the Day of Judgment.
- [1.4] Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.
- [1.5] Keep us on the right path.
- [1.6] The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors. Not (the path) of those upon whom Thy wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray...

## The Cow

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

- [2.1] Alif Lam Mim.
- [2.2] This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil)...
- [2.190] And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits.
- [2.191] And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter, and do not fight with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers.
- [2.192] But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.
- [2.193] And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors...
- [2.216] Fighting is enjoined on you, and he is an object of dislike to you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows, while you do not know.
- [2.217] They ask you concerning the sacred month about fighting in it. Say: Fighting in it is a grave matter, and hindering (men) from Allah's way and denying Him, and (hindering men from) the Sacred Mosque and turning its people out of it, are still graver with Allah, and persecution is graver than slaughter; and they will not cease fighting with you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can; and whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever-- these it is whose works shall go for nothing in this world and the hereafter, and they are the inmates of the fire; therein they shall abide.
- [2.218] Surely those who believed and those who fled (their home) and strove hard in the way of Allah these hope for the mercy of Allah and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.
- [2.219] They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit. And they ask you as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare. Thus does Allah make clear to you the communications, that you may ponder...

## The Women

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[4.1] O people! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely Allah ever watches over you...

[4.153] The followers of the Book ask you to bring down to them a book from heaven; so indeed they demanded of Musa a greater thing than that, for they said: Show us Allah manifestly; so the lightning overtook them on account of their injustice. Then they took the calf (for a god), after clear signs had come to them, but We pardoned this; and We gave to Musa clear authority.

[4.154] And We lifted the mountain (Sainai) over them at (the taking of the covenant) and We said to them: Enter the door making obeisance; and We said to them: Do not exceed the limits of the Sabbath, and We made with them a firm covenant.

[4.155] Therefore, for their breaking their covenant and their disbelief in the communications of Allah and their killing the prophets wrongfully and their saying: Our hearts are covered; nay! Allah set a seal upon them owing to their unbelief, so they shall not believe except a few.

[4.156] And for their unbelief and for their having uttered against Marium a grievous calumny.

[4.157] And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Isa son of Marium, the apostle of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure.

[4.158] Nay! Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

[4.159] And there is not one of the followers of the Book but most certainly believes in this before his death, and on the day of resurrection he (Isa) shall be a witness against them.

[4.160] Wherefore for the iniquity of those who are Jews did We disallow to them the good things which had been made lawful for them and for their hindering many (people) from Allah's way...

### The Immunity

[9.1] (This is a declaration of) immunity by Allah and His Apostle towards those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement.

[9.2] So go about in the land for four months and know that you cannot weaken Allah and that Allah will bring disgrace to the unbelievers.

[9.3] And an announcement from Allah and His Apostle to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah and His Apostle are free from liability to the idolaters; therefore if you repent, it will be better for you, and if you turn back, then know that you will not weaken Allah; and announce painful punishment to those who disbelieve.

[9.4] Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you, so fulfill their agreement to the end of their term; surely Allah loves those who are careful (of their duty).

[9.5] So when the sacred months have passed away, then slay the idolaters wherever you

find them, and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush, then if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free to them; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

[9.6] And if one of the idolaters seek protection from you, grant him protection till he hears the word of Allah, then make him attain his place of safety; this is because they are a people who do not know.

[9.7] How can there be an agreement for the idolaters with Allah and with His Apostle; except those with whom you made an agreement at the Sacred Mosque? So as long as they are true to you, be true to them; surely Allah loves those who are careful (of their duty)...

[9.29] Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.

[9.30] And the Jews say: Uzair is the son of Allah; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away!

[9.31] They have taken their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allah, and (also) the Messiah son of Marium and they were enjoined that they should serve one God only, there is no god but He; far from His glory be what they set up (with Him).

[9.32] They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and Allah will not consent save to perfect His light, though the unbelievers are averse.

[9.33] He it is Who sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse.

[9.34] O you who believe! most surely many of the doctors of law and the monks eat away the property of men falsely, and turn (them) from Allah's way; and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, announce to them a painful chastisement,

[9.35] On the day when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it; this is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded.

[9.36] Surely the number of months with Allah is twelve months in Allah's ordinance since the day when He created the heavens and the earth, of these four being sacred; that is the right reckoning; therefore be not unjust to yourselves regarding them, and fight the polytheists all together as they fight you all together; and know that Allah is with those who guard (against evil).

[9.37] Postponing (of the sacred month) is only an addition in unbelief, wherewith those who disbelieve are led astray, violating it one year and keeping it sacred another, that they may agree in the number (of months) that Allah has made sacred, and thus violate what Allah has made sacred; the evil of their doings is made fairseeming to them; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people.

[9.38] O you who believe! What (excuse) have you that when it is said to you: Go forth in Allah's way, you should incline heavily to earth; are you contented with this world's life instead of the hereafter? But the provision of this world's life compared with the hereafter is but little.

[9.39] If you do not go forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement and bring

in your place a people other than you, and you will do Him no harm; and Allah has power over all things...

[9.41] Go forth light and heavy, and strive hard in Allah's way with your property and your persons; this is better for you, if you know...

### The Dinner Table

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[5.1] O you who believe! fulfill the obligations. The cattle quadrupeds are allowed to you except that which is recited to you, not violating the prohibition against game when you are entering upon the performance of the pilgrimage; surely Allah orders what He desires.

[5.2] O you who believe! do not violate the signs appointed by Allah nor the sacred month, nor (interfere with) the offerings, nor the sacrificial animals with garlands, nor those going to the sacred house seeking the grace and pleasure of their Lord; and when you are free from the obligations of the pilgrimage, then hunt, and let not hatred of a people-- because they hindered you from the Sacred Masjid-- incite you to exceed the limits, and help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in requiting (evil).

[5.3] Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression. ...

[5.14] And with those who say, We are Christians, We made a covenant, but they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of, therefore We excited among them enmity and hatred to the day of resurrection; and Allah will inform them of what they did.

[5.15] O followers of the Book! indeed Our Apostle has come to you making clear to you much of what you concealed of the Book and passing over much; indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah;

[5.16] With it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path.

[5.17] Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely, Allah-- He is the Messiah, son of Marium. Say: Who then could control anything as against Allah when He wished to destroy the Messiah son of Marium and his mother and all those on the earth? And Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; He creates what He pleases; and Allah has power over all things,

[5.18] And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then chastise you for your faults? Nay, you are mortals from among those whom He has created, He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases; and Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between

them, and to Him is the eventual coming.

[5.19] O followers of the Book! indeed Our Apostle has come to you explaining to you after a cessation of the (mission of the) apostles, lest you say: There came not to us a giver of good news or a warner, so indeed there has come to you a giver of good news and a warner; and Allah has power over all things.

[5.20] And when Musa said to his people: O my people! remember the favor of Allah upon you when He raised prophets among you and made you kings and gave you what He had not given to any other among the nations.

[5.21] O my people! enter the holy land which Allah has prescribed for you and turn not on your backs for then you will turn back losers.

[5.22] They said: O Musa! surely there is a strong race in it, and we will on no account enter it until they go out from it, so if they go out from it, then surely we will enter.

[5.23] Two men of those who feared, upon both of whom Allah had bestowed a favor, said: Enter upon them by the gate, for when you have entered it you shall surely be victorious, and on Allah should you rely if you are believers.

[5.24] They said: O Musa! we shall never enter it so long as they are in it; go therefore you and your Lord, then fight you both surely we will here sit down.

[5.25] He said: My Lord! Surely I have no control (upon any) but my own self and my brother; therefore make a separation between us and the nation of transgressors.

[5.26] He said: So it shall surely be forbidden to them for forty years, they shall wander about in the land, therefore do not grieve for the nation of transgressors.

[5.27] And relate to them the story of the two sons of Adam with truth when they both offered an offering, but it was accepted from one of them and was not accepted from the other. He said: I will most certainly slay you. (The other) said: Allah only accepts from those who guard (against evil).

[5.28] If you will stretch forth your hand towards me to slay me, I am not one to stretch forth my hand towards you to slay you surely I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds:

[5.29] Surely I wish that you should bear the sin committed against me and your own sin, and so you would be of the inmates of the fire, and this is the recompense of the unjust.

[5.30] Then his mind facilitated to him the slaying of his brother so he slew him; then he became one of the losers

[5.31] Then Allah sent a crow digging up the earth so that he might show him how he should cover the dead body of his brother. He said: Woe me! do I lack the strength that I should be like this crow and cover the dead body of my brother? So he became of those who regret.

[5.32] For this reason did We prescribe to the children of Israel that whoever slays a soul, unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he slew all men; and whoever keeps it alive, it is as though he kept alive all men; and certainly Our apostles came to them with clear arguments, but even after that many of them certainly act extravagantly in the land.

[5.33] The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be imprisoned; this shall be as a disgrace for them in this world, and in the hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement,

[5.34] Except those who repent before you have them in your power; so know that Allah

is Forgiving, Merciful.

[5.35] O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah and seek means of nearness to Him and strive hard in His way that you may be successful.

[5.36] Surely (as for) those who disbelieve, even if they had what is in the earth, all of it, and the like of it with it, that they might ransom themselves with it from the punishment of the day of resurrection, it shall not be accepted from them, and they shall have a painful punishment.

[5.37] They would desire to go forth from the fire, and they shall not go forth from it, and they shall have a lasting punishment.

[5.38] And (as for) the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands as a punishment for what they have earned, an exemplary punishment from Allah; and Allah is Mighty, Wise...

[5.51] O you who believe! do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends; they are friends of each other; and whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people.

[5.52] But you will see those in whose hearts is a disease hastening towards them, saying: We fear lest a calamity should befall us; but it may be that Allah will bring the victory or a punishment from Himself, so that they shall be regretting on account of what they hid in their souls.

[5.53] And those who believe will say: Are these they who swore by Allah with the most forcible of their oaths that they were most surely with you? Their deeds shall go for nothing, so they shall become losers.

[5.54] O you who believe! whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people, He shall love them and they shall love Him, lowly before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, they shall strive hard in Allah's way and shall not fear the censure of any censurer; this is Allah's Face, He gives it to whom He pleases, and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.

[5.55] Only Allah is your Vali and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.

[5.56] And whoever takes Allah and His apostle and those who believe for a guardian, then surely the party of Allah are they that shall be triumphant.

[5.57] O you who believe! do not take for guardians those who take your religion for a mockery and a joke, from among those who were given the Book before you and the unbelievers; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah if you are believers.

[5.58] And when you call to prayer they make it a mockery and a joke; this is because they are a people who do not understand.

[5.59] Say: O followers of the Book! do you find fault with us (for aught) except that we believe in Allah and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed before, and that most of you are transgressors?...

[5.64] And the Jews say: The hand of Allah is tied up! Their hands shall be shackled and they shall be cursed for what they say. Nay, both His hands are spread out, He expends as He pleases; and what has been revealed to you from your Lord will certainly make many of them increase in inordinacy and unbelief; and We have put enmity and hatred among them till the day of resurrection; whenever they kindle a fire for war Allah puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land; and Allah does not love the mischief-makers.

[5.65] And if the followers of the Book had believed and guarded (against evil) We



would certainly have covered their evil deeds and We would certainly have made them enter gardens of bliss

[5.66] And if they had kept up the Taurat and the Injeel and that which was revealed to them from their Lord, they would certainly have eaten from above them and from beneath their feet there is a party of them keeping to the moderate course, and (as for) most of them, evil is that which they do

[5.67] O Apostle! deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people; surely Allah will not guide the unbelieving people.

[5.68] Say: O followers of the Book! you follow no good till you keep up the Taurat and the Injeel and that which is revealed to you from your Lord; and surely that which has been revealed to you from your Lord shall make many of them increase in inordinacy and unbelief; grieve not therefore for the unbelieving people.

[5.69] Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians and the Christians whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good-- they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

[5.70] Certainly We made a covenant with the children of Israel and We sent to them apostles; whenever there came to them an apostle with what that their souls did not desire, some (of them) did they call liars and some they slew.

[5.71] And they thought that there would be no affliction, so they became blind and deaf; then Allah turned to them mercifully, but many of them became blind and deaf; and Allah is well seeing what they do.

[5.72] Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely Allah, He is the Messiah, son of Marium; and the Messiah said: O Children of Israel! serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Surely whoever associates (others) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden to him the garden, and his abode is the fire; and there shall be no helpers for the unjust.

[5.73] Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely Allah is the third (person) of the three; and there is no god but the one God, and if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement shall befall those among them who disbelieve.

[5.74] Will they not then turn to Allah and ask His forgiveness? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

[5.75] The Messiah, son of Marium is but an apostle; apostles before him have indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food. See how We make the communications clear to them, then behold, how they are turned away.

[5.76] Say: Do you serve besides Allah that which does not control for you any harm, or any profit? And Allah-- He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

[5.77] Say: O followers of the Book! be not unduly immoderate in your religion, and do not follow the low desires of people who went astray before and led many astray and went astray from the right path.

[5.78] Those who disbelieved from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of Dawood and Isa, son of Marium; this was because they disobeyed and used to exceed the limit.

[5.79] They used not to forbid each other the hateful things (which) they did; certainly evil was that which they did.

[5.80] You will see many of them befriending those who disbelieve; certainly evil is that which their souls have sent before for them, that Allah became displeased with them and

in chastisement shall they abide.

[5.81] And had they believed in Allah and the prophet and what was revealed to him, they would not have taken them for friends but! most of them are transgressors.

[5.82] Certainly you will find the most violent of people in enmity for those who believe (to be) the Jews and those who are polytheists, and you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe (to be) those who say: We are Christians; this is because there are priests and monks among them and because they do not behave proudly.

[5.83] And when they hear what has been revealed to the apostle you will see their eyes overflowing with tears on account of the truth that they recognize; they say: Our Lord! we believe, so write us down with the witnesses (of truth).

[5.84] And what (reason) have we that we should not believe in Allah and in the truth that has come to us, while we earnestly desire that our Lord should cause us to enter with the good people?

[5.85] Therefore Allah rewarded them on account of what they said, with gardens in which rivers flow to abide in them; and this is the reward of those who do good (to others).

[5.86] And (as for) those who disbelieve and reject Our communications, these are the companions of the flame...

[5.90] O you who believe! intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the Shaitan's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful.

[5.91] The Shaitan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you then desist?

[5.92] And obey Allah and obey the apostle and be cautious; but if you turn back, then know that only a clear deliverance of the message is (incumbent) on Our apostle...

[5.116] And when Allah will say: O Isa son of Marium! did you say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah he will say: Glory be to Thee, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to (say); if I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it; Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Thy mind, surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen things.

[5.117] I did not say to them aught save what Thou didst enjoin me with: That serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord, and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the watcher over them, and Thou art witness of all things...

Abraham

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[14.1] Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book which We have revealed to you that you may bring forth men, by their Lord's permission from utter darkness into light-- to the way of the Mighty, the Praised One,

[14.2] (Of) Allah, Whose is whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth; and woe to the unbelievers on account of the severe chastisement,

[14.3] (To) those who love this world's life more than the hereafter, and turn away from

Allah's path and desire to make it crooked; these are in a great error...

[14.5] And certainly We sent Musa with Our communications, saying: Bring forth your people from utter darkness into light and remind them of the days of Allah; most surely there are signs in this for every patient, grateful one.

[14.6] And when Musa said to his people: Call to mind Allah's favor to you when He delivered you from Firon's people, who subjected you to severe torment, and slew your sons and spared your women; and in this there was a great trial from your Lord.

[14.7] And when your Lord made it known: If you are grateful, I would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe.

[14.8] And Musa said: If you are ungrateful, you and those on earth all together, most surely Allah is Self-sufficient, Praised;

[14.9] Has not the account reached you of those before you, of the people of Nuh and Ad and Samood, and those after them? None knows them but Allah. Their apostles come to them with clear arguments, but they thrust their hands into their mouths and said: Surely we deny that with which you are sent, and most surely we are in serious doubt as to that to which you invite us.

[14.10] Their apostles said: Is there doubt about Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? He invites you to forgive you your faults and to respite you till an appointed term. They said: You are nothing but mortals like us; you wish to turn us away from what our fathers used to worship; bring us therefore some clear authority.

[14.11] Their apostles said to them: We are nothing but mortals like yourselves, but Allah bestows (His) favors on whom He pleases of His servants, and it is not for us that we should bring you an authority except by Allah's permission; and on Allah should the believers rely.

[14.12] And what reason have we that we should not rely on Allah? And He has indeed guided us in our ways; and certainly we would bear with patience your persecution of us; and on Allah should the reliant rely...

[14.19] Do you not see that Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth? If He please He will take you off and bring a new creation,

[14.20] And this is not difficult for Allah.

[14.21] And they shall all come forth before Allah, then the weak shall say to those who were proud: Surely we were your followers, can you therefore avert from us any part of the chastisement of Allah? They would say: If Allah had guided us, we too would have guided you; it is the same to us whether we are impatient (now) or patient, there is no place for us to fly to.

[14.22] And the Shaitan shall say after the affair is decided: Surely Allah promised you the promise of truth, and I gave you promises, then failed to keep them to you, and I had no authority over you, except that I called you and you obeyed me, therefore do not blame me but blame yourselves: I cannot be your aider (now) nor can you be my aiders; surely I disbelieved in your associating me with Allah before; surely it is the unjust that shall have the painful punishment.

[14.23] And those who believe and do good are made to enter gardens, beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them by their Lord's permission; their greeting therein is, Peace.

[14.24] Have you not considered how Allah sets forth a parable of a good word (being) like a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are in heaven,

[14.25] Yielding its fruit in every season by the permission of its Lord? And Allah sets

forth parables for men that they may be mindful.

[14.26] And the parable of an evil word is as an evil tree pulled up from the earth's surface; it has no stability...

[14.35] And when Ibrahim said: My Lord! make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols:

[14.36] My Lord! surely they have led many men astray; then whoever follows me, he is surely of me, and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely are Forgiving, Merciful:

[14.37] O our Lord! surely I have settled a part of my offspring in a valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House, our Lord! that they may keep up prayer; therefore make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits; haply they may be grateful:

[14.38] O our Lord! Surely Thou knowest what we hide and what we make public, and nothing in the earth nor any thing in heaven is hidden from Allah:

[14.39] Praise be to Allah, Who has given me in old age Ismail and Ishaq; most surely my Lord is the Hearer of prayer:

[14.40] My Lord! make me keep up prayer and from my offspring (too), O our Lord, and accept my prayer:

[14.41] O our Lord! grant me protection and my parents and the believers on the day when the reckoning shall come to pass!...

[14.47] Therefore do not think Allah (to be one) failing in His promise to His apostles; surely Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution.

[14.48] On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well), and they shall come forth before Allah, the One, the Supreme.

[14.49] And you will see the guilty on that day linked together in chains.

[14.50] Their shirts made of pitch and the fire covering their faces

[14.51] That Allah may requite each soul (according to) what it has earned; surely Allah is swift in reckoning.

[14.52] This is a sufficient exposition for the people and that they may be warned thereby, and that they may know that He is One God and that those possessed of understanding may mind.

...

Marium

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[19.1] Kaf Ha Ya Ain Suad.

[19.2] A mention of the mercy of your Lord to His servant Zakariya.

[19.3] When he called upon his Lord in a low voice,

[19.4] He said: My Lord! surely my bones are weakened and my head flares with hoariness, and, my Lord! I have never been unsuccessful in my prayer to Thee:

[19.5] And surely I fear my cousins after me, and my wife is barren, therefore grant me from Thyself an heir,

[19.6] Who should inherit me and inherit from the children of Yaqoub, and make him, my Lord, one in whom Thou art well pleased.

[19.7] O Zakariya! surely We give you good news of a boy whose name shall be Yahya: We have not made before anyone his equal.

[19.8] He said: O my Lord! when shall I have a son, and my wife is barren, and I myself have reached indeed the extreme degree of old age?

[19.9] He said: So shall it be, your Lord says: It is easy to Me, and indeed I created you before, when you were nothing.

[19.10] He said: My Lord! give me a sign. He said: Your sign is that you will not be able to speak to the people three nights while in sound health.

[19.11] So he went forth to his people from his place of worship, then he made known to them that they should glorify (Allah) morning and evening.

[19.12] O Yahya! take hold of the Book with strength, and We granted him wisdom while yet a child

[19.13] And tenderness from Us and purity, and he was one who guarded (against evil),

[19.14] And dutiful to his parents, and he was not insolent, disobedient.

[19.15] And peace on him on the day he was born, and on the day he dies, and on the day he is raised to life

[19.16] And mention Marium in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place;

[19.17] So she took a veil (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her Our spirit, and there appeared to her a well-made man.

[19.18] She said: Surely I fly for refuge from you to the Beneficent God, if you are one guarding (against evil).

[19.19] He said: I am only a messenger of your Lord: That I will give you a pure boy.

[19.20] She said: When shall I have a boy and no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste?

[19.21] He said: Even so; your Lord says: It is easy to Me: and that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter which has been decreed.

[19.22] So she conceived him; then withdrew herself with him to a remote place.

[19.23] And the throes (of childbirth) compelled her to betake herself to the trunk of a palm tree. She said: Oh, would that I had died before this, and had been a thing quite forgotten!

[19.24] Then (the child) called out to her from beneath her: Grieve not, surely your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you;

[19.25] And shake towards you the trunk of the palmtree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates:

[19.26] So eat and drink and refresh the eye. Then if you see any mortal, say: Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God, so I shall not speak to any man today.

[19.27] And she came to her people with him, carrying him (with her). They said: O Marium! surely you have done a strange thing.

[19.28] O sister of Haroun! your father was not a bad man, nor, was your mother an unchaste woman.

[19.29] But she pointed to him. They said: How should we speak to one who was a child in the cradle?

[19.30] He said: Surely I am a servant of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet;

[19.31] And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me

prayer and poor-rate so long as I live;

[19.32] And dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed;

[19.33] And peace on me on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life.

[19.34] Such is Isa, son of Marium; (this is) the saying of truth about which they dispute.

[19.35] It beseems not Allah that He should take to Himself a son, glory to be Him; when He has decreed a matter He only says to it "Be," and it is.

[19.36] And surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him; this is the right path.

[19.37] But parties from among them disagreed with each other, so woe to those who disbelieve, because of presence on a great

[19.38] How clearly shall they hear and how clearly shall they see on the day when they come to Us; but the unjust this day are in manifest error.

[19.39] And warn them of the day of intense regret, when the matter shall have been decided; and they are (now) in negligence and they do not believe.

[19.40] Surely We inherit the earth and all those who are on it, and to Us they shall be returned.

[19.41] And mention Ibrahim in the Book; surely he was a truthful man, a prophet...

[19.44] O my father! serve not the Shaitan, surely the Shaitan is disobedient to the Beneficent God:

[19.45] O my father! surely I fear that a punishment from the Beneficent God should afflict you so that you should be a friend of the Shaitan.

[19.46] He said: Do you dislike my gods, O Ibrahim? If you do not desist I will certainly revile you, and leave me for a time.

[19.47] He said: Peace be on you, I will pray to my Lord to forgive you; surely He is ever Affectionate to me:

[19.48] And I will withdraw from you and what you call on besides Allah, and I will call upon my Lord; may be I shall not remain unblessed in calling upon my Lord.

[19.49] So when he withdrew from them and what they worshipped besides Allah, We gave to him Ishaq and Yaquub, and each one of them We made a prophet.

[19.50] And We granted to them of Our mercy, and We left (behind them) a truthful mention of eminence for them.

[19.51] And mention Musa in the Book; surely he was one purified, and he was an apostle, a prophet.

[19.52] And We called to him from the blessed side of the mountain, and We made him draw nigh, holding communion (with Us).

[19.53] And We gave to him out of Our mercy his brother Haroun a prophet.

[19.54] And mention Ismail in the Book; surely he was truthful in (his) promise, and he was an apostle, a prophet.

[19.55] And he enjoined on his family prayer and almsgiving, and was one in whom his Lord was well pleased.

[19.56] And mention Idris in the Book; surely he was a truthful man, a prophet,

[19.57] And We raised him high in Heaven.

[19.58] These are they on whom Allah bestowed favors, from among the prophets of the seed of Adam, and of those whom We carried with Nuh, and of the seed of Ibrahim and Israel, and of those whom We guided and chose; when the communications of the

Beneficent God were recited to them, they fell down making obeisance and weeping.  
[19.59] But there came after them an evil generation, who neglected prayers and followed and sensual desires, so they will meet perdition,  
[19.60] Except such as repent and believe and do good, these shall enter the garden, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly in any way:  
[19.61] The gardens of perpetuity which the Beneficent God has promised to His servants while unseen; surely His promise shall come to pass...

### The Ranks

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

[61.1] Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the glory of Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.  
[61.2] O you who believe! why do you say that which you do not do?  
[61.3] It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do.  
[61.4] Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall.  
[61.5] And when Musa said to his people: O my people! why do you give me trouble? And you know indeed that I am Allah's apostle to you; but when they turned aside, Allah made their hearts turn aside, and Allah does not guide the transgressing people.  
[61.6] And when Isa son of Marium said: O children of Israel! surely I am the apostle of Allah to you, verifying that which is before me of the Taurat and giving the good news of an Apostle who will come after me, his name being Ahmad, but when he came to them with clear arguments they said: This is clear magic.  
[61.7] And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah and he is invited to Islam, and Allah does not guide the unjust people...

### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/k/koran/browse.html>

## CHAPTER 22 : APOLOGIA OF ST JOHN DAMASCENE AGAINST THOSE WHO DECRY HOLY IMAGES

### Background Information

The Second Commandment clearly forbids the use of images of any person of the Trinitarian Godhead in worship. Though God did appear visibly even at some times during the Old Testament period, yet images of Him were never tolerated in worship, so it should be even after God the Son became visible in the incarnation. Not surprisingly then, we read in an earlier chapter how the Council of Elvira had prohibited images in the churches.

Yet, not all agreed concerning the use of images. We have read of Pope Gregory the Great's defense of images for use in worship. The Western Church under the Roman Papacy came to embrace the use of images, but their use remained controversial in the Eastern Church. There the contest raged in the Iconoclastic Controversy. One of the more ardent iconoclasts was Leo III (726 AD), emperor in the east, who insisted that all such artifacts be removed from the churches. He rightly believed their use was a violation of the Second Commandment. But their use was defended at the time by Pope Gregory II as well as by the patriarch German of Constantinople (715-729 AD), who tried unsuccessfully to distinguish between a profound religious "respect" or "veneration" (*proskunesis*) of an icon, and true "worship" (*latreia*) which is due unto God alone. Leo's son, Constantine V (741-775 AD), enforced his father's policy. John of Damascus, the last father of the Eastern Church (675-749 AD), defended the use of icons, arguing that since God had made himself visible via the incarnation, it was his purpose to reveal himself through tangible, visible images, especially for the benefit of the uneducated. He wrote: "When we venerate icons, we do not offer veneration to matter, but by means of the icon, we venerate the person depicted." Under the leadership of the Empress Irene (780-802), the Second Council of Nicea in 787 (also known as the Seventh Ecumenical Council), approved the veneration of icons, but insisted that adoration or worship (*latreia*) was reserved for God only. Eventually, with the help of Empress Theodora in A.D. 843, iconoclasm was squelched in the Eastern Church, as it had already been in the Western Church.

Below are arguments made by John of Damascus for the use of images in worship.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

...I have taken heed to the words of Truth Himself: "The Lord thy God is one." (**Deut. 6.4**) And "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve Him only, and thou shalt not have strange, gods." (**Deut. 6.13**) Again, "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath" (**Ex. 20.4**); and "Let them be all confounded that adore graven things." (**Ps. 97.7**) Again, "The gods that have not made heaven and earth, let them perish." (**Jer. 10.11**) In this way God spoke



of old to the patriarchs through the prophets, and lastly, through His only-begotten Son, on whose account He made the ages. He says, "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send." (Jn 17.3) I believe in one God, the source of all things, without beginning, uncreated, immortal, everlasting, incomprehensible, bodiless, invisible, uncircumscribed,<sup>3</sup> without form. I believe in one supersubstantial being, one divine Godhead in three entities, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and I adore Him alone with the worship of latreia. I adore one God, one Godhead but three Persons, God the Father, God the Son made flesh, and God the Holy Ghost, one God. I do not adore creation more than the Creator, but I adore the creature created as I am, adopting creation freely and spontaneously that He might elevate our nature and make us partakers of His divine nature. Together with my Lord and King I worship Him clothed in the flesh, not as if it were a garment or He constituted a fourth person of the Trinity—God forbid. That flesh is divine, and endures after its assumption. Human nature was not lost in the Godhead, but just as the Word made flesh remained the Word, so flesh became the Word remaining flesh, becoming, rather, one with the Word through union (καθ' ὑποστάσιν). Therefore I venture to draw an image of the invisible God, not as invisible, but as having become visible for our sakes through flesh and blood. I do not draw an image of the immortal Godhead. I paint the visible flesh of God, for it is impossible to represent a spirit (ψυχή), how much more God who gives breath to the spirit.

Now adversaries say: God's commands to Moses the law-giver were, "Thou shalt adore shalt worship him the Lord thy God, and thou alone, and thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath."

They err truly, not knowing the Scriptures, for the letter kills whilst the spirit quickens—not finding in the letter the hidden meaning. I could say to these people, with justice, He who taught you this would teach you the following. Listen to the law-giver's interpretation in Deuteronomy: "And the Lord spoke to you from the midst of the fire. You heard the voice of His words, but you saw not any form at all." (Deut. 4.12) And shortly afterwards: "Keep your souls carefully. You saw not any similitude in the day that the Lord God spoke to you in Horeb from the midst of the fire, lest perhaps being deceived you might make you a graven similitude, or image of male and female, the similitude of any beasts that are upon the earth, or of birds that fly under heaven." (Deut. 4.15–17) And again, "Lest, perhaps, lifting up thy eyes to heaven, thou see the sun and the moon, and all the stars of heaven, and being deceived by error thou adore and serve them." (Deut. 4.19)

You see the one thing to be aimed at is not to adore a created thing more than the Creator, nor to give the worship of latreia except to Him alone. By worship, consequently, He always understands the worship of latreia. For, again, He says: "Thou shalt not have strange gods other than Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor any similitude. Thou shalt not adore them, and thou shalt not serve them, for I am the Lord thy God." (Deut. 5.7–9) And again, "Overthrow their altars, and break down their statues; burn their groves with fire, and break their idols in pieces. For thou shalt not adore a strange god." (Deut. 12.3) And a little further on: "Thou shalt not make to thyself gods of metal." (Ex. 34.17)

You see that He forbids image-making on account of idolatry, and that it is impossible to make an image of the immeasurable, uncircumscribed, invisible God. You

have not seen the likeness of Him, the Scripture says, and this was St Paul's testimony as he stood in the midst of the Areopagus: "Being, therefore, the offspring of God, we must not suppose the divinity to be like unto gold, or silver, or stone, the graving of art, and device of man." ([Acts 17.29](#))

These injunctions were given to the Jews on account of their proneness to idolatry. Now we, on the contrary, are no longer in leading strings. Speaking theologically, it is given to us to avoid superstitious error, to be with God in the knowledge of the truth, to worship God alone, to enjoy the fulness of His knowledge. We have passed the stage of infancy, and reached the perfection of manhood. We receive our habit of mind from God, and know what may be imaged and what may not. The Scripture says, "You have not seen the likeness of Him." ([Ex. 33.20](#)) What wisdom in the law-giver. How depict the invisible? How picture the inconceivable? How give expression to the limitless, the immeasurable, the invisible? How give a form to immensity? How paint immortality? How localise mystery? It is clear that when you contemplate God, who is a pure spirit, becoming man for your sake, you will be able to clothe Him with the human form. When the Invisible One becomes visible to flesh, you may then draw a likeness of His form. When He who is a pure spirit, without form or limit, immeasurable in the boundlessness of His own nature, existing as God, takes upon Himself the form of a servant in substance and in stature, and a body of flesh, then you may draw His likeness, and show it to anyone willing to contemplate it. Depict His ineffable condescension, His virginal birth, His baptism in the Jordan, His transfiguration on Thabor, His all-powerful sufferings, His death and miracles, the proofs of His Godhead, the deeds which He worked in the flesh through divine power, His saving Cross, His Sepulchre, and resurrection, and ascent into heaven. Give to it all the endurance of engraving and colour. Have no fear or anxiety; worship is not all of the same kind. Abraham worshipped the sons of Emmor, impious men in ignorance of God, when he bought the double cave for a tomb. ([Gen. 23.7](#); [Acts 7.16](#)) Jacob worshipped his brother Esau and Pharaoh, the Egyptian, but on the point of his staff.<sup>4</sup> ([Gen 33.3](#)) He worshipped, he did not adore. Josue and Daniel worshipped an angel of God; ([Jos. 5.14](#)) they did not adore him. The worship of *latreia* is one thing, and the worship which is given to merit another. Now, as we are talking of images and worship, let us analyse the exact meaning of each. An image is a likeness of the original with a certain difference, for it is not an exact reproduction of the original. Thus, the Son is the living, substantial, unchangeable Image of the invisible God ([Col. 1.15](#)), bearing in Himself the whole Father, being in all things equal to Him, differing only in being begotten by the Father, who is the Begetter; the Son is begotten. The Father does not proceed from the Son, but the Son from the Father. It is through the Son, though not after Him, that He is what He is, the Father who generates. In God, too, there are representations and images of His future acts,—that is to say, His counsel from all eternity, which is ever unchangeable. That which is divine is immutable; there is no change in Him, nor shadow of change. ([James 1.17](#)) Blessed Denis, (the Carthusian [i.e., Pseudo-Dionysius]) who has made divine things in God's presence his study, says that these representations and images are marked out beforehand. In His counsels, God has noted and settled all that He would do, the unchanging future events before they came to pass. In the same way, a man who wished to build a house would first make and think out a plan. Again, visible things are images of invisible and intangible things, on which they throw a faint light. Holy Scripture clothes in figure God and the angels, and the same

holy man (Blessed Denis) explains why. When sensible things sufficiently render what is beyond sense, and give a form to what is intangible, a medium would be reckoned imperfect according to our standard, if it did not fully represent material vision, or if it required effort of mind. If, therefore, Holy Scripture, providing for our need, ever putting before us what is intangible, clothes it in flesh, does it not make an image of what is thus invested with our nature, and brought to the level of our desires, yet invisible? A certain conception through the senses thus takes place in the brain, which was not there before, and is transmitted to the judicial faculty, and added to the mental store. Gregory, who is so eloquent about God, says that the mind, which is set upon getting beyond corporeal things, is incapable of doing it. For the invisible things of God since the creation of the world are made visible through images. (Rom. 1.20) We see images in creation which remind us faintly of God, as when, for instance, we speak of the holy and adorable Trinity, imaged by the sun, or light, or burning rays, or by a running fountain, or a full river, or by the mind, speech, or the spirit within us, or by a rose tree, or a sprouting flower, or a sweet fragrance.

Again, an image is expressive of something in the future, mystically shadowing forth what is to happen. For instance, the ark represents the image of Our Lady, Mother of God,<sup>5</sup> so does the staff and the earthen jar. The serpent brings before us Him who vanquished on the Cross the bite of the original serpent; the sea, water, and the cloud the grace of baptism. (I Cor. 10.1)...

Worship is the symbol of veneration and of honour. Let us understand that there are different degrees of worship. First of all the worship of *latreia*, which we show to God, who alone by nature is worthy of worship. When, for the sake of God who is worshipful by nature, we honour His saints and servants, as Josue and Daniel worshipped an angel, and David His holy places, when he says, "Let us go to the place where His feet have stood." (Ps. 132.7) Again, in His tabernacles, as when all the people of Israel adored in the tent, and standing round the temple in Jerusalem, fixing their gaze upon it from all sides, and worshipping from that day to this, or in the rulers established by Him, as Jacob rendered homage to Esau, his elder brother, (Gen. 33.3) and to Pharaoh, the divinely established ruler. (Gen. 47.7) Joseph was worshipped by his brothers. (Gen. 50.18) I am aware that worship was based on honour, as in the case of Abraham and the sons of Emmor. (Gen. 23.7) Either, then, do away with worship, or receive it altogether according to its proper measure.

Answer me this question. Is there only one God? You answer, "Yes, there is only one Law-giver." Why, then, does He command contrary things? The cherubim are not outside of creation; why, then, does He allow cherubim carved by the hand of man to overshadow the mercy-seat? Is it not evident that as it is impossible to make an image of God, who is uncircumscribed and impassible, or of one like to God, creation should not be worshipped as God. He allows the image of the cherubim who are circumscribed, and prostrate in adoration before the divine throne, to be made, and thus prostrate to overshadow the mercy-seat. It was fitting that the image of the heavenly choirs should overshadow the divine mysteries. Would you say that the ark and staff and mercy-seat were not made? Are they not produced by the hand of man? Are they not due to what you call contemptible matter? What was the tabernacle itself? Was it not an image? Was it not a type and a figure? Hence the holy Apostle's words concerning the observances of the law, "Who serve unto the example and shadow, of heavenly things." As it was

answered to Moses, when he was to finish the tabernacle: "See" (He says), "that thou make all things according to the pattern which was shown thee on the Mount." (**Heb. 8.5; Ex. 25.40**) But the law was not an image. It shrouded the image. In the words of the same Apostle, "the law contains the shadow of the goods to come, not the image of those things." (**Heb. 10.1**) For if the law should forbid images, and yet be itself a forerunner of images, what should we say? If the tabernacle was a figure, and the type of a type, why does the law not prohibit image-making? But this is not in the least the case. There is a time for everything. (**Eccl. 3.1**)

Of old, God the incorporeal and uncircumscribed was never depicted. Now, however, when God is seen clothed in flesh, and conversing with men, (**Bar. 3.38**) I make an image of the God whom I see. I do not worship matter, I worship the God of matter, who became matter for my sake, and deigned to inhabit matter, who worked out my salvation through matter. I will not cease from honouring that matter which works my salvation. I venerate it, though not as God. How could God be born out of lifeless things? And if God's body is God by union (*καθ' ὑποστάσιν*), it is immutable. The nature of God remains the same as before, the flesh created in time is quickened by a logical and reasoning soul. I honour all matter besides, and venerate it. Through it, filled, as it were, with a divine power and grace, my salvation has come to me. Was not the thrice happy and thrice blessed wood of the Cross matter? Was not the sacred and holy mountain of Calvary matter? What of the life-giving rock, the Holy Sepulchre, the source of our resurrection: was it not matter? Is not the most holy book of the Gospels matter? Is not the blessed table matter which gives us the Bread of Life? Are not the gold and silver matter, out of which crosses and altar-plate and chalices are made? And before all these things, is not the body and blood of our Lord matter? Either do away with the veneration

and worship due to all these things, or submit to the tradition of the Church in the worship of images, honouring God and His friends, and following in this the grace of the Holy Spirit. Do not despise matter, for it is not despicable. Nothing is that which God has made. This is the Manichean heresy. That alone is despicable which does not come from God, but is our own invention, the spontaneous choice of will to disregard the natural law,—that is to say, sin. If, therefore, you dishonour and give up images, because they are produced by matter, consider what the Scripture says: And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Behold I have called by name Beseleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Juda. And I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom and understanding, and knowledge in all manner of work. To devise whatsoever may be artificially made of gold, and silver, and brass, of marble and precious stones, and variety of wood. And I have given him for his companion, Ooliab, the son of Achisamech, of the tribe of Dan. And I have put wisdom in the heart of every skilful man, that they may make all things which I have commanded thee." (**Ex. 31.1–6**) And again: "Moses said to all the assembly of the children of Israel: This is the word the Lord hath commanded, saying: Set aside with you first fruits to the Lord. Let every one that is willing and hath a ready heart, offer them to the Lord, gold, and silver, and brass, violet, and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine linen, goat's hair, and ram's skins died red and violet, coloured skins, selim-wood, and oil to maintain lights and to make ointment, and most sweet incense, onyx stones, and precious stones for the adorning of the ephod and the rational. Whosoever of you is wise, let him come, and make that which the Lord hath commanded." (**Ex. 35.4–10**) See you here the glorification of matter which you make

inglorious. What is more insignificant than goat's hair or colours? Are not scarlet and purple and hyacinth colours? Now, consider the handiwork of man becoming the likeness of the cherubim. How, then, can you make the law a pretence for giving up what it orders? If you invoke it against images, you should keep the Sabbath, and practise circumcision. It is certain that "if you observe the law, Christ will not profit you. You who are justified in the law, you are fallen from grace." (Gal. 5.2–4) Israel of old did not see God, but "we see the Lord's glory face to face." (II Cor. 3.18)

We proclaim Him also by our senses on all sides, and we sanctify the noblest sense, which is that of sight. The image is a memorial, just what words are to a listening ear. What a book is to the literate, that an image is to the illiterate. The image speaks to the sight as words to the ear; it brings us understanding...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.kensmen.com/catholic/images.html>

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/damascus/icons.ii.html>

## CHAPTER 23 : *LONGER CONFESSION BY GOTTSCHALK*

### Background Information

Another issue that continued to rage in the Middle Ages concerned predestination and the doctrines of grace. Gottschalk (805-868 AD) of Orbais (in northern France) took up the mantle of Augustine in his defense of predestination. His primary theological adversaries were Rabanus Maurus Magnentius and the archbishop of Reims, Hincmar.

Gottschalk was placed as a boy in the Benedictine monastery of Fulda. He did not wish to be a monk, but was forced by Rabanus Maurus Magnentius, his superior, to remain. In 829 a synod freed him of his vows, but he went to the monastery of Orbais, where he was ordained a priest. He read Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings and became the leader of a neo-Augustinian movement. He soon began to teach the doctrine of predestination, holding that God had foreordained whom He would save and whom He would not save. His views created great interest, and he preached in Italy and elsewhere. Rabanus and Hincmar worked to suppress him, for they held to what is called semi-Pelagianism. In 849, Gottschalk returned to Germany to face his critics at the Synod of Mainz, where he was condemned, deposed, beaten and sent by Rabanus to a monastery at Hautviller, run by the Archbishop of Reims. From the monastery Gottschalk continued to read and write. Hincmar replied contra Gottschalk by warning his parishioners in his tract, "To the Rural and Simple", to which Gottschalk replied with his *Longer Confession* (*Confessio prolixior*). Hincmar was supported by several theologians, most notably John Scotus Erigena (c.810-c.77). Erigena's tract itself produced a storm of controversy against Hincmar and Erigena.

The Church itself was split. One regional synod sided with Hincmar and another sided with Gottschalk. In response Hincmar wrote *Concerning the Predestination of God and Free Will* (*De praedestinatione Dei et libero arbitrio*), arguing that if God reprobates then he is the author of sin, and which was mainly a collection of Patristic quotations. Hincmar was mainly a canon lawyer and politician who was outmatched by Gottschalk.

Gottschalk is an important witness to the fact that the doctrine of double predestination was not a Calvinist invention in the 16th century. Gottschalk agreed with Augustine's strong anti-Pelagianism and anti-semi-Pelagianism, like Calvinists during the Reformation. The difference between Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism is more a difference of degree than of kind. On the surface there seems like there is a huge difference between the two, particularly with respect to original sin and to the sinner's dependence upon grace. Pelagius (who combated Augustine) categorically denied the doctrine of original sin, arguing that Adam's sin affected Adam alone and that infants at birth are in the same state as Adam was before the Fall. Pelagius also argued that though grace may facilitate the achieving of righteousness, it is not necessary to that end. Also, he insisted that the constituent nature of humanity is not convertible; it is indestructively good. Over against Pelagius, Semi-Pelagianism does have a doctrine of original sin whereby mankind is considered fallen. Consequently grace not only facilitates virtue, it is necessary for virtue to ensue. Man's nature can be changed and has been changed by the

Fall. However, in Semi-Pelagianism there remains a moral ability within man that is unaffected by the Fall. This has been termed an "island of righteousness" by which the fallen sinner still has the inherent ability to incline or move himself to cooperate with God's grace. Grace is necessary but not necessarily effective. Its effect always depends upon the sinner's cooperation with it by virtue of the exercise of the native human will.

Augustine's view of the Fall was opposed to both Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism. He said that mankind is a *massa peccati*, a "mess of sin," incapable of raising itself from spiritual death. For Augustine man can no more move or incline himself to God than an empty glass can fill itself. For Augustine the initial work of divine grace by which the soul is liberated from the bondage of sin is sovereign and operative. We cooperate with this grace, but only after the initial divine work of liberation. Augustine did not deny that fallen man still has a will and that the will is capable of making choices. He argued that fallen man still has a free will (*liberium arbitrium*) but has lost his moral liberty (*libertas*). The state of original sin leaves us in the wretched condition of being unable to refrain from sinning. We still are able to choose what we desire, but our desires remain chained by our evil impulses. He argued that the freedom that remains in the will always leads to sin. Thus in the flesh we are free only to sin. True liberty can only come from without, from the work of God on the soul. Therefore we are not only partly dependent upon grace for our conversion but totally dependent upon grace. Gottschalk aptly defended this Augustinian doctrine in his *Longer Confession*, excerpted below.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

...I believe and confess that God, omnipotently and unchangeably, has graciously foreknown and predestined holy angels and elect men to eternal life, but that He like manner (*pariter*) has, by his most just judgment, predestined head of all the demons, with all his apostate angels and also with reprobate men, who are his members, on account of their foreknown particular future evil deeds, to merited eternal death: this the Lord Himself affirms in His Gospel: "The prince of this world is already judged" (John 14:11).

Augustine, beautifully explaining these words to the people (Augustine on John, tract. 95), has spoken as follows: "That is, he has been irrevocably destined to the judgment of eternal fire." Likewise concerning the reprobate, the same is true: "Who then believeth not is already judged" (John 3:18), that is (as the aforesaid author explains), (tract. xii), already is damned: "Not that judgment now is manifest, but that judgment is already wrought." Likewise explaining these words of John the Baptist: man has received" (John 3:32), he speaks in this wise (tract. xiv): is a certain people prepared to wrath by God, damned with the Devil." "Those dead scorners, predestinated to eternal death." Again (tract. xlviii): "Why did the Lord say to the Jews: (John 10:26), "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep" (John 10:26), unless he saw that they were predestinated to everlasting destruction and not to life eternal by the price of his own blood." Also, explaining these words of the Lord (ibid): "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand: My Father who gave them to me is greater than all, and



no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29), and he says this: "What can the wolf do? What can the thief and robber do? They destroy none, except those predestined to destruction." Speaking in like manner concerning the two worlds (tract. lxxxvii) he says: "The whole world is the church, and the whole world hates the church; the world, therefore, hates the world, the hostile that which is reconciled, the damned that which is saved, the polluted that which is cleansed." Likewise (tract. cx) he says: "There is a world concerning which the Apostle says: 'that we should be condemned with this world' (1 Cor 11:32). For that world that the Lord does not pray, for he certainly cannot ignore that for which it is predestinated." Likewise (tract cvii): "Judas the betrayer of Christ is called the son of perdition as the one predestinated to be the betrayer." Likewise in *Enchiridion* (cap. 100): "To their damnation whom he has justly predestinated to punishment." Likewise in the book *On Man's Perfection in Righteousness* he says (cap. 13): "This good, which is required, there is not anyone who does it, not even one; but this refers to that class of men who have been predestinated to destruction: indeed, upon those the foreknowledge of God looks down and pronounces sentence." Likewise in the books *de Civitate Dei* (lib. xxii, c. 24): "Which is given to those who have been predestinated to death." Likewise blessed Gregory the Pope (*Moral. lib. xxxiv, c.2*): "Leviathan with all his members has been cut off for eternal torment." Likewise holy Fulgentius in the third book *Concerning the Truth of Predestination and Grace* (lib. iii, c. 5) says: "God has prepared punishment for those sinners (at least) who have been justly predestinated to the suffering of punishment." And blessed Fulgentius has composed one *whole book* for his friend Monimus concerning this tantamount question, that is: *Concerning the Predestination of the Reprobate to Destruction*, (lib. i).

Whence also holy Isidore says (*Sentent. 2. cap. 6*): "Predestination is double (*gemina*) whether of election to peace, or of reprobation to death." The same thing, therefore, (with others) I believe and confess, though whatever may happen, with those who are the elect of God and true Catholics, according as I am helped by divine inspiration, encouragement and provision. Amen.

False, indeed, is the witness, who in speaking of any aspect of those things, corrupts them either superficially or with respect to their essential sense...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://public.csusm.edu/public/guests/rsclark/brevior.htm>

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/G/Gottscha.asp>

<http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/Augustine.html>



## CHAPTER 24 : *DE CORPORE ET SANGUINE DOMINI* BY PASCHASIUS RADBERTUS

### Background Information

Another issue that raged in the Middle Ages concerned the Lord's Supper. Some church fathers believed in the physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist; others considered the elements as signs of the body and blood of Christ, and that His presence is spiritual.

Paschasius Radbertus (d. 831 AD) was the first to formulate the doctrine of transubstantiation in the ninth century. He was opposed by Ratranmus, a contemporary monk at the monastery of Corbie. Ratranmus wrote: "The bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ in a figurative sense" (*De corpore et sanguine Christi*). This controversy between two Catholic monks shows that both views were present in the Catholic church at least up to the eleventh century. The debate continued until the thirteenth century when the final decision was taken by the Lateran Council in 1215. Eventually Radbertus was canonized, while Ratranmus' work was placed on the index of forbidden books. The Doctor of the Church, Duns Scotus, admits that transubstantiation was not an article of faith before the thirteenth century. So on yet another issue we witness the trend towards doctrinal corruption during the Middle Ages.

Some speak of this issue in terms of whether there is a real presence of Christ during the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but it is misleading to speak about "real presence" as if the term is equivalent to "transubstantiation." Christians, who consider the bread and wine as strictly symbolical, also believe in the real presence of the Lord among them. Jesus said: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Surely Christ is present in the congregation of His people, as He promises, especially during the celebration of the Supper. His presence is *real* even though it is *spiritual* and not carnal (i.e., bodily).

The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation is defined in the second canon of the thirteenth session of the Council of Trent: "If any one saith, that, in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denieth that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood - the species only of the bread and wine remaining - which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most aptly calls Transubstantiation; let him be anathema." According to the Roman Catholic view, the elements not only become Christ's actual body and blood, but in their Mass Jesus Christ is actually re-sacrificed.

This Romish doctrine of transubstantiation is thoroughly un-Biblical, for scripture teaches that the body of Christ ascended into heaven at the completion of Christ's First Advent, not to return until His Second Advent. Furthermore, there is but one sacrificial atonement of Christ for sin, sufficient for all time. As we read in Hebrews 7:27, "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." And as we read

in Hebrews 9: , “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

But it is important that we understand the Roman Catholic view, and how it evolved. So now let’s consider a quote from Paschasius Radbertus in his work defending the doctrine of transubstantiation.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

...It is the same Christ who by the Holy Spirit produces His flesh. Who else could create in the womb, so that the Word became flesh? In the same manner it is done (in the Eucharist), so we have to believe: that by the same power of the Holy Spirit .through the word of Christ is effected His flesh and blood by an invisible action...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.justforcatholics.org/a181.htm>

<http://homepage.mac.com/shanerosenthal/reformationink/srratramnus.htm>

<http://www.cfpeople.org/Apologetics/page51a048.html>

## CHAPTER 25 : MEDIEVAL STUDENTS' SONGS

### Background Information

The increasing doctrinal corruption could not help but have an effect on the lives of Medieval Christians. We get a glimpse into the lives of some Medieval Christians in the lyrics of the songs of some students, contained in this chapter.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### I. *Come therefore now, my gentle fere.*

"Come therefore now, my gentle fere,  
Whom as my heart I hold full dear;  
Enter my little room, which is  
Adorned with quaintest rarities:  
There are the seats with cushions spread,  
The roof with curtains overhead:  
The house with flowers of sweetest scent  
And scattered herbs is redolent:  
A table there is deftly dight  
With meats and drinks of rare delight;  
There too the wine flows, sparkling, free;  
And all, my love, to pleasure thee.  
There sound enchanting symphonies;  
The clear high notes of flutes arise;  
A singing girl and artful boy  
Are chanting for thee strains of joy;  
He touches with his quill the wire,  
She tunes her note unto the lyre:  
The servants carry to and fro  
Dishes and cups of ruddy glow;  
But these delights, I will confess,  
Than pleasant converse charm me less;  
Nor is the feast so sweet to me  
As dear familiarity.  
Then come now, sister of my heart,  
That dearer than all others art,  
Unto mine eyes thou shining sun,  
Soul of my soul, thou only one!  
I dwelt alone in the wild woods,  
And loved all secret solitudes;  
Oft would I fly from tumults far,  
And shunned where crowds of people are.

O dearest, do not longer stay!  
Seek we to live and love to-day!  
I cannot live without thee, sweet!  
Time bids us now our love complete."

*II. I, A Wandering Scholar Lad.*

I, a wandering scholar lad,  
Born for toil and sadness,  
Oftentimes am driven by  
Poverty to madness.

Literature and knowledge I  
Fain would still be earning,  
Were it not that want of pelf  
Makes me cease from learning.

These torn clothes that cover me  
Are too thin and rotten;  
Oft I have to suffer cold,  
By the warmth forgotten.

Scarce I can attend at church,  
Sing God's praises duly;  
Mass and vespers both I miss,  
Though I love them truly.

Oh, thou pride of N-----,  
By thy worth I pray thee  
Give the suppliant help in need,  
Heaven will sure repay thee.

Take a mind unto thee now  
Like unto St. Martin;  
Clothe the pilgrim's nakedness  
Wish him well at parting.  
So may God translate your soul  
Into peace eternal,  
And the bliss of saints be yours  
In His realm supernal.

*III. We In Our Wandering.*

We in our wandering,  
Blithesome and squandering,  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Eat to satiety,  
Drink to propriety;  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Laugh till our sides we split,  
Rags on our hides we fit;  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Jesting eternally,  
Quaffing infernally.  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Craft's in the bone of us,  
Fear 'tis unknown of us;  
Tara, tantara, teino!

When we're in neediness,  
Thieve we with greediness:  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Brother catholical,  
Man apostolical,  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Say what you will have done,  
What you ask 'twill be done!  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Folk, fear the toss of the  
Horns of philosophy!  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Here comes a quadruple  
Spoiler and prodigal!  
Tara, tantara, teino!

License and vanity  
Pamper insanity:  
Tara, tantara, teino!

As the Pope bade us do,  
Brother to brother's true:  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Brother, best friend, adieu!  
Now, I must part from you!  
Tara, tantara, teino!

When will our meeting be?  
Glad shall our greeting be!  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Vows valedictory  
Now have the victory:  
Tara, tantara, teino!

Clasped on each other's breast,  
Brother to brother pressed,  
Tara, tantara, teino!

#### *IV. The Vow to Cupid.*

Winter, now thy spite is spent,  
Frost and ice and branches bent!  
Fogs and furious storms are o'er,  
Sloth and torpor, sorrow froze,  
Pallid wrath, lean discontent.

Comes the graceful band of May!  
Cloudless shines the limpid day,  
Shine by night the Pleiades;  
While a grateful summer breeze  
Makes the season soft and gay.

Golden Love! shine forth to view!  
Souls of stubborn men subdue!  
See me bend! what is thy mind?  
Make the girl thou givest kind,  
And a leaping ram's thy due!

O the jocund face of earth,  
Breathing with young grassy birth!  
Every tree with foliage clad,  
Singing birds in greenwood glad,  
Flowering fields for lovers' mirth!

#### *V. The Love-Letter in Spring.*

Now the sun is streaming,  
Clear and pure his ray;

April's glad face beaming  
On our earth to-day.  
Unto love returneth  
Every gentle mind;  
And the boy-god burneth  
Jocund hearts to bind.

All this budding beauty,  
Festival array,  
Lays on us the duty  
To be blithe and gay.  
Trodden ways are known, love!  
And in this thy youth,  
To retain thy own love  
Were but faith and truth.

In faith love me solely,  
Mark the faith of me,  
From thy whole heart wholly,  
From the soul of thee.  
At this time of bliss, dear,  
I am far away;  
Those who love like this, dear,  
Suffer every day!

VI. *Some Are Gaming.*

Some are gaming, some are drinking,  
Some are living without thinking;  
And of those who make the racket,  
Some are stripped of coat and jacket;  
Some get clothes of finer feather,  
Some are cleaned out altogether;  
No one there dreads death's invasion,  
But all drink in emulation.

**Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/medievalstudentsongs.html>

## CHAPTER 26 : “ON MEDICINE” BY AVICENNA

### Background Information

We have previously read how Islam spread and prospered during the centuries following its founding in the seventh century. One of its most famous scholars was Avicenna (980 – 1037 AD). His Latinized name is a corruption of *Ibn Sina*, the short name by which he was known in Persia. He was a Persian physician, philosopher, and scientist. He authored 450 books on a wide range of subjects. Many of these concentrated on medicine. His most famous works are *The Book of Healing* and *The Canon of Medicine*, also known as the *Qanun*. Some even consider him to be "the father of modern medicine". But to his works on medicine he afterward added religious tracts, poems, works on philosophy, on logic, on physics, on mathematics, and on astronomy. It should be pointed out that he is said to have died of debauchery.

The excerpt below is from his work “On Medicine”. We witness in it the influence of Aristotle upon Avicenna.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Medicine considers the human body as to the means by which it is cured and by which it is driven away from health. The knowledge of anything, since all things have causes, is not acquired or complete unless it is known by its causes. Therefore in medicine we ought to know the causes of sickness and health. And because health and sickness and their causes are sometimes manifest, and sometimes hidden and not to be comprehended except by the study of symptoms, we must also study the symptoms of health and disease. Now it is established in the sciences that no knowledge is acquired save through the study of its causes and beginnings, if it has had causes and beginnings; nor completed except by knowledge of its accidents and accompanying essentials. Of these causes there are four kinds: material, efficient, formal, and final.

Material causes, on which health and sickness depend, are--- the affected member, which is the immediate subject, and the humors; and in these are the elements. And these two



are subjects that, according to their mixing together, alter. In the composition and alteration of the substance which is thus composed, a certain unity is attained.

Efficient causes are the causes changing and preserving the conditions of the human body; as airs, and what are united with them; and evacuation and retention; and districts and cities, and habitable places, and what are united with them; and changes in age and diversities in it, and in races and arts and manners, and bodily and animate movings and restings, and sleepings and wakings on account of them; and in things which befall the human body when they touch it, and are either in accordance or at variance with nature.

Formal causes are physical constitutions, and combinations and virtues which result from them. Final causes are operations. And in the science of operations lies the science of virtues, as we have set forth. These are the subjects of the doctrine of medicine; whence one inquires concerning the disease and curing of the human body. One ought to attain perfection in this research; namely, how health may be preserved and sickness cured. And the causes of this kind are rules in eating and drinking, and the choice of air, and the measure of exercise and rest; and doctoring with medicines and doctoring with the hands. All this with physicians is according to three species: the well, the sick, and the medium of whom we have spoken.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1020Avicenna-Medicine.html>

## **CHAPTER 27 : *CUR DEUS HOMO?* (WHY DID GOD BECOME MAN?) BY ANSELM OF CANTERBURY**

### **Background Information**

Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033 – 1109), a widely influential medieval philosopher and theologian, held the office of Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 to 1109. Often called the founder of Scholasticism, he is famous for his ontological argument for the existence of God. He presented additional arguments for the existence of God as well. He is also well known for his articulation of the Satisfaction or Commercial Theory of Atonement, as articulated in his work, *Cur Deus Homo?* ("Why did God become Man?"), which is excerpted in this chapter.

Anselm was opposed in some of his views by another Scholastic philosopher, Peter Abelard (1079-1142), who we will read more of in the next chapter. As on other matters, Abelard proved even more heterodox than most of his contemporaries. On the topic of atonement, Abelard advocated the Moral Influence Theory of Atonement. This view sees the atonement of Christ merely as demonstrating God's love, which causes man's heart to soften and repent. It is contrary to Anselm's Satisfaction Theory.

Scholastic arguments often had the regrettable effect of moving Christians away from scripture and into the realm of speculative philosophy. Scholasticism comes from the Latin word *scholasticus*, which means "that [which] belongs to the school", and is the school of philosophy taught by the academics (or schoolmen) of Medieval universities circa 1100 - 1500. Scholasticism attempted to reconcile the philosophy of the ancient classical philosophers with medieval Christian theology. The primary purpose of scholasticism was to find the answer to a question or resolve a contradiction. It is most well known in its application in Medieval theology, but was applied to classical philosophy and other fields of study. It is not a philosophy or theology on its own, but a tool and method for learning which puts emphasis on dialectical reasoning. Sadly, it often gave undue credence to humanistic reasoning.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

#### **CHAPTER I. The question on which the whole work rests.**

I HAVE been often and most earnestly requested by many, both personally and by letter, that I would hand down in writing the proofs of a certain doctrine of our faith, which I am accustomed to give to inquirers; for they say that these proofs gratify them, and are considered sufficient. This they ask, not for the sake of attaining to faith by means of reason, but that they may be gladdened by understanding and meditating on those things which they believe; and that, as far as possible, they may be always ready to convince any one who demands of them a reason of that hope which is in us. And this question, both infidels are accustomed to bring up against us, ridiculing Christian simplicity as absurd; and many believers ponder it in their hearts; for what cause or necessity, in sooth,

God became man, and by his own death, as we believe and affirm, restored life to the world; when he might have done this, by means of some other being, angelic or human, or merely by his will. Not only the learned, but also many unlearned persons interest themselves in this inquiry and seek for its solution. Therefore, since many desire to consider this subject, and, though it seem very difficult in the investigation, it is yet plain to all in the solution, and attractive for the value and beauty of the reasoning; although what ought to be sufficient has been said by the holy fathers and their successors, yet I will take pains to disclose to inquirers what God has seen fit to lay open to me. And since investigations, which are carried on by question and answer, are thus made more plain to many, and especially to less quick minds, and on that account are more gratifying, I will take to argue with me one of those persons who agitate this subject; one, who among the rest impels me more earnestly to it, so that in this way Boso may question and Anselm reply.

## CHAPTER II. How those things which are to be said should be received.

**Boso.** As the right order requires us to believe the deep things of Christian faith before we undertake to discuss them by reason; so to my mind it appears a neglect if, after we are established in the faith, we do not seek to understand what we believe. Therefore, since I thus consider myself to hold the faith of our redemption, by the prevenient grace of God, so that, even were I unable in any way to understand what I believe, still nothing could shake my constancy; I desire that you I should discover to me, what, as you know, many besides myself ask, for what necessity and cause God, who is omnipotent, should have assumed the littleness and weakness of human nature for the sake of its renewal?...

## CHAPTER XI. What it is to sin, and to make satisfaction for sin.

**Anselm..** We must needs inquire, therefore, in what manner God puts away men's sins; and, in order to do this more plainly, let us first consider what it is to sin, and what it is to make satisfaction for sin.

**Boso.** It is yours to explain and mine to listen.

**Anselm..** If man or angel always rendered to God his due, he would never sin.

**Boso.** I cannot deny that.

**Anselm..** Therefore to sin is nothing else than not to render to God his due.

**Boso.** What is the debt which we owe to God?

**Anselm..** Every wish of a rational creature should be subject to the will of God.

**Boso.** Nothing is more true.

**Anselm.** This is the debt which man and angel owe to God, and no one who pays this debt commits sin; but every one who does not pay it sins. This is justice, or uprightness of will, which makes a being just or upright in heart, that is, in will; and this is the sole and complete debt of honor which we owe to God, and which God requires of us. For it is such a will only, when it can be exercised, that does works pleasing to God; and when this will cannot be exercised, it is pleasing of itself alone, since without it no work is acceptable. He who does not render this honor which is due to God, robs God of his own and dishonors him; and this is sin. Moreover, so long as he does not restore what he has taken away, he remains in fault; and it will not suffice merely to restore what has been taken away, but, considering the contempt offered, he ought to restore more than he took away. For as one who imperils another's safety does not enough by merely restoring his safety, without making some compensation for the anguish incurred; so he who violates another's honor does not enough by merely rendering honor again, but must, according to the extent of the injury done, make restoration in some way satisfactory to the person whom he has dishonored. We must also observe that when any one pays what he has unjustly taken away, he ought to give something which could not have been demanded of him, had he not stolen what belonged to another. So then, every one who sins ought to pay back the honor of which he has robbed God; and this is the satisfaction which every sinner owes to God.

**Boso.** Since we have determined to follow reason in all these things, I am unable to bring any objection against them, although you somewhat startle me.

CHAPTER XII. Whether it were proper for God to put away sins by compassion alone, without any payment of debt.

**Anselm.** Let us return and consider whether it were proper for God to put away sins by compassion alone, without any payment of the honor taken from him.

**Boso.** I do not see why it is not proper.

**Anselm.** To remit sin in this manner is nothing else than not to punish; and since it is not right to cancel sin without compensation or punishment; if it be not punished, then is it passed by undischarged.

**Boso.** What you say is reasonable.

**Anselm.** It is not fitting for God to pass over anything in his kingdom undischarged.

**Boso.** If I wish to oppose this, I fear to sin.

**Anselm.** It is, therefore, not proper for God thus to pass over sin unpunished.

**Boso.** Thus it follows.

*Anselm.* There is also another thing which follows if sin be passed by unpunished, viz., that with God there will be no difference between the guilty and the not guilty; and this is unbecoming to God.

*Boso.* I cannot deny it.

*Anselm.* Observe this also. Every one knows that justice to man is regulated by law, so that, according to the requirements of law, the measure of award is bestowed by God.

*Boso.* This is our belief.

*Anselm.* But if sin is neither paid for nor punished, it is subject to no law.

*Boso.* I cannot conceive it to be otherwise.

*Anselm.* Injustice, therefore, if it is cancelled by compassion alone, is more free than justice, which seems very inconsistent. And to these is also added a further incongruity, viz., that it makes injustice like God. For as God is subject to no law, so neither is injustice.

*Boso.* I cannot withstand your reasoning. But when God commands us in every case to forgive those who trespass against us, it seems inconsistent to enjoin a thing upon us which it is not proper for him to do himself.

*Anselm.* There is no inconsistency in God's commanding us not to take upon ourselves what belongs to Him alone. For to execute vengeance belongs to none but Him who is Lord of all; for when the powers of the world rightly accomplish this end, God himself does it who appointed them for the purpose.

*Boso.* You have obviated the difficulty which I thought to exist; but there is another to which I would like to have your answer. For since God is so free as to be subject to no law, and to the judgment of no one, and is so merciful as that nothing more merciful can be conceived; and nothing is right or fit save as he wills; it seems a strange thing for us to say that he is wholly unwilling or unable to put away an injury done to himself, when we are wont to apply to him for indulgence with regard to those offences which we commit against others.

*Anselm.* What you say of God's liberty and choice and compassion is true; but we ought so to interpret these things as that they may not seem to interfere with His dignity. For there is no liberty except as regards what is best or fitting; nor should that be called mercy which does anything improper for the Divine character. Moreover, when it is said that what God wishes is just, and that what He does not wish is unjust, we must not understand that if God wished anything improper it would be just, simply because he wished it. For if God wishes to lie, we must not conclude that it is right to lie, but rather that he is not God. For no will can ever wish to lie, unless truth in it is impaired, nay, unless the will itself be impaired by forsaking truth. When, then, it is said: "If God wishes

to lie," the meaning is simply this: "If the nature of God is such as that he wishes to lie;" and, therefore, it does not follow that falsehood is right, except it be understood in the same manner as when we speak of two impossible things: "If this be true, then that follows; because neither *this* nor *that* is true;" as if a man should say: "Supposing water to be dry, and fire to be moist;" for neither is the case. Therefore, with regard to these things, to speak the whole truth: If God desires a thing, it is right that he should desire that which involves no unfitness. For if God chooses that it should rain, it is right that it should rain; and if he desires that any man should die, then is it right that he should die. Wherefore, if it be not fitting for God to do anything unjustly, or out of course, it does not belong to his liberty or compassion or will to let the sinner go unpunished who makes no return to God of what the sinner has defrauded him....

CHAPTER VI. How no being, except the God-man, can make the atonement by which man is saved.

*Anselm.* But this cannot be effected, except the price paid to God for the sin of man be something greater than all the universe besides God.

*Boso.* So it appears.

*Anselm.* Moreover, it is necessary that he who can give God anything of his own which is more valuable than all things in the possession of God, must be greater than all else but God himself.

*Boso.* I cannot deny it.

*Anselm.* Therefore none but God can make this satisfaction.

*Boso.* So it appears.

*Anselm.* But none but a man ought to do this, other wise man does not make the satisfaction.

*Boso.* Nothing seems more just.

*Anselm.* If it be necessary, therefore, as it appears, that the heavenly kingdom be made up of men, and this cannot be effected unless the aforesaid satisfaction be made, which none but God can make and none but man ought to make, it is necessary for the God-man to make it.

*Boso.* Now blessed be God! we have made a great discovery with regard to our question. Go on, therefore, as you have begun. For I hope that God will assist you.

*Anselm.* Now must we inquire how God can become man.

## CHAPTER VII. How necessary it is for the same being to be perfect God and perfect man.

*Anselm.*.. The Divine and human natures cannot alternate, so that the Divine should become human or the human Divine; nor can they be so commingled as that a third should be produced from the two which is neither wholly Divine nor wholly human. For, granting that it were possible for either to be changed into the other, it would in that case be only God and not man, or man only and not God. Or, if they were so commingled that a third nature sprung from the combination of the two (as from two animals, a male and a female of different species, a third is produced, which does not preserve entire the species of either parent, but has a mixed nature derived from both), it would neither be God nor man. Therefore the God-man, whom we require to be of a nature both human and Divine, cannot be produced by a change from one into the other, nor by an imperfect commingling of both in a third; since these things cannot be, or, if they could be, would avail nothing to our purpose. Moreover, if these two complete natures are said to be joined somehow, in such a way that one may be Divine while the other is human, and yet that which is God not be the same with that which is man, it is impossible for both to do the work necessary to be accomplished. For God will not do it, because he has no debt to pay; and man will not do it, because he cannot. Therefore, in order that the God-man may perform this, it is necessary that the same being should perfect God and perfect man, in order to make this atonement. For he cannot and ought not to do it, unless he be very God and very man. Since, then, it is necessary that the God-man preserve the completeness of each nature, it is no less necessary that these two natures be united entire in one person, just as a body and a reasonable soul exist together in every human being; for otherwise it is impossible that the same being should be very God and very man....

### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-curdeus.html>

[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2096/is\\_2\\_51/ai\\_77674972](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2096/is_2_51/ai_77674972)

## CHAPTER 28 : *HISTORIA CALAMITATUM (THE STORY OF MY MISFORTUNES)* BY PETER ABELARD

### Background Information

The philosophy and life of Peter Abelard (1079-1142) reveals the pitfalls of Scholasticism and the increasing corruption of religion in the Middle Ages. The story of his illicit affair with Heloise has become legendary. Abélard was an enormous influence on his contemporaries and the course of Medieval thought. Many scholars flocked to study under Abelard. In his theological work *Sic et Non* ("Yes and No") (an assemblage of opposite opinions on doctrinal points, culled from the Fathers as a basis for discussion, the main interest in which lies in the fact that there is no attempt to reconcile the different opinions), includes the *Dialectica*, and commentaries on logical works of Aristotle, Porphyry and Boethius. The general importance of Abélard lies in his having fixed more decisively than anyone before him the scholastic manner of philosophizing, with its object of giving a formally humanistic "rational" expression to the received ecclesiastical doctrine. However his own particular interpretations may have been condemned, they were conceived in essentially the same spirit as the general scheme of thought afterwards elaborated in the 13th century with approval from the heads of the Romish church. Through him was prepared in the Middle Age the ascendancy of the philosophical authority of Aristotle, which became firmly established in the half-century after his death, when first the completed Organon, and gradually all the other works of the heathen Greek thinker, came to be known in the schools. Outside of his dialectic, it was in ethics that Abélard showed greatest activity of philosophical thought; laying very particular stress upon the subjective intention as determining, if not the moral character, at least the moral value, of human action. His thought in this direction anticipated something of modern speculation and modern humanistic thought in general. Abelard's *Historia Calamitatum*, excerpted below, although in the literary form of a letter, is a type of autobiography, with echoes of Augustine's Confessions from which we have already read. It is a testimony to the moral degeneracy which had come to plague Christendom as it moved into the High Middle Ages.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### ...CHAPTER III OF HOW HE CAME TO LAON TO SEEK ANSELM AS TEACHER

I SOUGHT out, therefore, this same venerable man, whose fame, in truth, was more the result of long established custom than of the potency of his own talent or intellect. If any one came to him impelled by doubt on any subject, he went away more doubtful still. He was wonderful, indeed, in the eyes of these who only listened to him, but those who asked him questions perforce held him as nought. He had a miraculous flow of words, but they were contemptible in meaning and quite void of reason. When he kindled a fire, he filled his house with smoke and illumined it not at all. He was a tree which seemed noble to those who gazed upon its leaves from afar, but to those who came nearer and examined it more closely was revealed its barrenness. When, therefore, I had come to this tree that I



might pluck the fruit thereof, I discovered that it was indeed the fig tree which Our Lord cursed (Matthew xxi. 19; Mark xi. 13), or that ancient oak to which Lucan likened Pompey, saying:

"he stands, the shade of a name once mighty,  
Like to the towering oak in the midst of the fruitful field."  
(Lucan, "Pharsalia," IV, 135-)

It was not long before I made this discovery, and stretched myself lazily in the shade of that same tree. I went to his lectures less and less often, a thing which some among his eminent followers took sorely to heart, because they interpreted it as a mark of contempt for so illustrious a teacher. Thenceforth they secretly sought to influence him against me, and by their vile insinuations made me hated of him. It chanced, moreover, that one day, after the exposition of certain texts, we scholars were jesting among ourselves, and one of them, seeking to draw me out, asked me what I thought of the lectures on the Books of Scripture. I, who had as yet studied only the sciences, replied that following such lectures seemed to me most useful in so far as the salvation of the soul was concerned, but that it appeared quite extraordinary to me that educated persons should not be able to understand the sacred books simply by studying them themselves, together with the glosses thereon, and without the aid of any teacher. Most of those who were present mocked at me, and asked whether I myself could do as I had said, or whether I would dare to undertake it. I answered that if they wished, I was ready to try it. Forthwith they cried out and jeered all the more. "Well and good," said they; "we agree to the test. Pick out and give us an exposition of some doubtful passage in the Scriptures, so that we can put this boast of yours to the proof." And they all chose that most obscure prophecy of Ezekiel.

I accepted the challenge, and invited them to attend a lecture on the very next day. Whereupon they undertook to give me good advice, saying that I should by no means make undue haste in so important a matter, but that I ought to devote a much longer space to working out my exposition and offsetting my inexperience by diligent toil. To this I replied indignantly that it was my wont to win success, not by routine, but by ability. I added that I would abandon the test altogether unless they would agree not to put off their attendance at my lecture. In truth at this first lecture of mine only a few were present, for it seemed quite absurd to all of them that I, hitherto so inexperienced in discussing the Scriptures, should attempt the thing so hastily. However, this lecture gave such satisfaction to all those who heard it that they spread its praises abroad with notable enthusiasm, and thus compelled me to continue my interpretation of the sacred text. When word of this was bruited about, those who had stayed away from the first lecture came eagerly, some to the second and more to the third, and all of them were eager to write down the glosses which I had begun on the first day, so as to have them from the very beginning.

#### CHAPTER IV OF THE PERSECUTION HE HAD FROM HIS TEACHER ANSELM

NOW this venerable man of whom I have spoken was acutely smitten with envy, and straightway incited, as I have already mentioned, by the insinuations of sundry persons, began to persecute me for my lecturing on the Scriptures no less bitterly than my former master, William, had done for my work in philosophy. At that time there were in this old man's school two who were considered far to excel all the others: Alberic of Rheims and Lotulphe the Lombard. The better opinion these two held of themselves, the more they were incensed against me. Chiefly at their suggestion, as it afterwards transpired, yonder venerable coward had the impudence to forbid me to carry on any further in his school the work of preparing glosses which I had thus begun. The pretext he alleged was that if by chance in the course of this work I should write anything containing blunders--as was likely enough in view of my lack of training--the thing might be imputed to him. When this came to the ears of his scholars, they were filled with indignation at so undisguised a manifestation of spite, the like of which had never been directed against any one before. The more obvious this rancour became, the more it redounded to my honour, and his persecution did nought save to make me more famous.

#### CHAPTER V OF HOW HE RETURNED TO PARIS AND FINISHED THE GLOSSES WHICH HE HAD BEGUN AT LAON

AND so, after a few days, I returned to Paris, and there for several years I peacefully directed the school which formerly had been destined for me, nay, even offered to me, but from which I had been driven out. At the very outset of my work there, I set about completing the glosses on Ezekiel which I had begun at Laon. These proved so satisfactory to all who read them that they came to believe me no less adept in lecturing on theology than I had proved myself to be in the field of philosophy. Thus my school was notably increased in size by reason of my lectures on subjects of both these kinds, and the amount of financial profit as well as glory which it brought me cannot be concealed from you, for the matter talked of. But prosperity always puffs up the foolish and worldly comfort enervates the soul, rendering it an easy prey to carnal temptations. Thus I who by this time had come to regard myself as the only philosopher remaining in the whole world, and had ceased to fear any further disturbance of my peace, began to loosen the rein on my desires, although hitherto I had always lived in the utmost continence. And the greater progress I made in my lecturing on philosophy or theology, the more I departed alike from the practice of the philosophers and the spirit of the divines in the uncleanness of my life. For it is well known, methinks, that philosophers, and still more those who have devoted their lives to arousing the love of sacred study, have been strong above all else in the beauty of chastity.

Thus did it come to pass that while I was utterly absorbed in pride and sensuality, divine grace, the cure for both diseases, was forced upon me, even though I, forsooth would fain have shunned it. First was I punished for my sensuality, and then for my pride. For my sensuality I lost those things whereby I practiced it; for my pride, engendered in me by my knowledge of letters and it is even as the Apostle said: "Knowledge puffeth itself up" (I Cor. viii. 1) -- I knew the humiliation of seeing burned the very book in which I most gloried. And now it is my desire that you should know the stories of these two happenings, understanding them more truly from learning the very facts than from

hearing what is spoken of them, and in the order in which they came about. Because I had ever held in abhorrence the foulness of prostitutes, because I had diligently kept myself from all excesses and from association with the women of noble birth who attended the school, because I knew so little of the common talk of ordinary people, perverse and subtly flattering chance gave birth to an occasion for casting me lightly down from the heights of my own exaltation. Nay, in such case not even divine goodness could redeem one who, having been so proud, was brought to such shame, were it not for the blessed gift of grace.

#### CHAPTER VI OF HOW, BROUGHT LOW BY HIS LOVE FOR HELOISE, HE WAS WOUNDED IN BODY AND SOUL

NOW there dwelt in that same city of Paris a certain young girl named Heloise, the niece of a canon who was called Fulbert. Her uncle's love for her was equalled only by his desire that she should have the best education which he could possibly procure for her. Of no mean beauty, she stood out above all by reason of her abundant knowledge of letters. Now this virtue is rare among women, and for that very reason it doubly graced the maiden, and made her the most worthy of renown in the entire kingdom. It was this young girl whom I, after carefully considering all those qualities which are wont to attract lovers, determined to unite with myself in the bonds of love, and indeed the thing seemed to me very easy to be done. So distinguished was my name, and I possessed such advantages of youth and comeliness, that no matter what woman I might favour with my love, I dreaded rejection of none. Then, too, I believed that I could win the maiden's consent all the more easily by reason of her knowledge of letters and her zeal therefor; so, even if we were parted, we might yet be together in thought with the aid of written messages. Perchance, too, we might be able to write more boldly than we could speak, and thus at all times could we live in joyous intimacy.

Thus, utterly aflame with my passion for this maiden, I sought to discover means whereby I might have daily and familiar speech with her, thereby the more easily to win her consent. For this purpose I persuaded the girl's uncle, with the aid of some of his friends to take me into his household--for he dwelt hard by my school--in return for the payment of a small sum. My pretext for this was that the care of my own household was a serious handicap to my studies, and likewise burdened me with an expense far greater than I could afford. Now he was a man keen in avarice and likewise he was most desirous for his niece that her study of letters should ever go forward, so, for these two reasons I easily won his consent to the fulfillment of my wish, for he was fairly agape for my money, and at the same time believed that his niece would vastly benefit by my teaching. More even than this, by his own earnest entreaties he fell in with my desires beyond anything I had dared to hope, opening the way for my love; for he entrusted her wholly to my guidance, begging me to give her instruction whensoever I might be free from the duties of my school, no matter whether by day or by night, and to punish her sternly if ever I should find her negligent of her tasks. In all this the man's simplicity was nothing short of astounding to me; I should not have been more smitten with wonder if he had entrusted a tender lamb to the care of a ravenous wolf. When he had thus given her into my charge, not alone to be taught but even to be disciplined, what had he done save to

give free scope to my desires, and to offer me every opportunity, even if I had not sought it, to bend her to my will with threats and blows if I failed to do so with caresses? There were, however, two things which particularly served to allay any foul suspicion: his own love for his niece, and my former reputation for continence.

Why should I say more? We were united first in the dwelling that sheltered our love, and then in the hearts that burned with it. Under the pretext of study we spent our hours in the happiness of love, and learning held out to us the secret opportunities that our passion craved. Our speech was more of love than of the books which lay open before us; our kisses far outnumbered our reasoned words. Our hands sought less the book than each other's bosoms -- love drew our eyes together far more than the lesson drew them to the pages of our text. In order that there might be no suspicion, there were, indeed, sometimes blows, but love gave them, not anger; they were the marks, not of wrath, but of a tenderness surpassing the most fragrant balm in sweetness. What followed? No degree in love's progress was left untried by our passion, and if love itself could imagine any wonder as yet unknown, we discovered it. And our inexperience of such delights made us all the more ardent in our pursuit of them, so that our thirst for one another was still unquenched.

In measure as this passionate rapture absorbed me more and more, I devoted ever less time to philosophy and to the work of the school. Indeed it became loathsome to me to go to the school or to linger there; the labour, moreover, was very burdensome, since my nights were vigils of love and my days of study. My lecturing became utterly careless and lukewarm; I did nothing because of inspiration, but everything merely as a matter of habit. I had become nothing more than a reciter of my former discoveries, and though I still wrote poems, they dealt with love, not with the secrets of philosophy. Of these songs you yourself well know how some have become widely known and have been sung in many lands, chiefly, methinks, by those who delighted in the things of this world. As for the sorrow, the groans, the lamentations of my students when they perceived the preoccupation, nay, rather the chaos, of my mind, it is hard even to imagine them.

A thing so manifest could deceive only a few, no one, methinks, save him whose shame it chiefly bespoke, the girl's uncle, Fulbert. The truth was often enough hinted to him, and by many persons, but he could not believe it, partly, as I have said, by reason of his boundless love for his niece, and partly because of the well-known continence of my previous life. Indeed we do not easily suspect shame in those whom we most cherish, nor can there be the blot of foul suspicion on devoted love. Of this St. Jerome in his epistle to Sabinianus (Epist. 48) says: "We are wont to be the last to know the evils of our own households, and to be ignorant of the sins of our children and our wives, though our neighbours sing them aloud." But no matter how slow a matter may be in disclosing itself, it is sure to come forth at last, nor is it easy to hide from one what is known to all. So, after the lapse of several months, did it happen with us. Oh, how great was the uncle's grief when he learned the truth, and how bitter was the sorrow of the lovers when we were forced to part! With what shame was I overwhelmed, with what contrition smitten because of the blow which had fallen on her I loved, and what a tempest of misery burst over her by reason of my disgrace! Each grieved most, not for himself, but for the other.

Each sought to allay, not his own sufferings, but those of the one he loved. The very sundering of our bodies served but to link our souls closer together; the plentitude of the love which was denied to us inflamed us more than ever. Once the first wildness of shame had passed, it left us more shameless than before, and as shame died within us the cause of it seemed to us ever more desirable. And so it chanced with us as, in the stories that the poets tell, it once happened with Mars and Venus when they were caught together.

It was not long after this that Heloise found that she was pregnant, and of this she wrote to me in the utmost exultation, at the same time asking me to consider what had best be done. Accordingly, on a night when her uncle was absent, we carried out the plan we had determined on, and I stole her secretly away from her uncle's house, sending her without delay to my own country. She remained there with my sister until she gave birth to a son, whom she named Astrolabe. Meanwhile her uncle after his return, was almost mad with grief; only one who had then seen him could rightly guess the burning agony of his sorrow and the bitterness of his shame. What steps to take against me, or what snares to set for me, he did not know. If he should kill me or do me some bodily hurt, he feared greatly lest his dear-loved niece should be made to suffer for it among my kinsfolk. He had no power to seize me and imprison me somewhere against my will, though I make no doubt he would have done so quickly enough had he been able or dared, for I had taken measures to guard against any such attempt.

At length, however, in pity for his boundless grief, and bitterly blaming myself for the suffering which my love had brought upon him through the baseness of the deception I had practiced, I went to him to entreat his forgiveness, promising to make any amends that he himself might decree. I pointed out that what had happened could not seem incredible to any one who had ever felt the power of love, or who remembered how, from the very beginning of the human race, women had cast down even the noblest men to utter ruin. And in order to make amends even beyond his extremest hope, I offered to marry her whom I had seduced, provided only the thing could be kept secret, so that I might suffer no loss of reputation thereby. To this he gladly assented, pledging his own faith and that of his kindred, and sealing with kisses the pact which I had sought of him-- and all this that he might the more easily betray me.

#### CHAPTER VII OF THE ARGUMENTS OF HELOISE AGAINST WEDLOCK OF HOW NONE THE LESS HE MADE HER HIS WIFE

FORTHWITH I repaired to my own country, and brought back thence my mistress, that I might make her my wife. She, however, most violently disapproved of this, and for two chief reasons: the danger thereof, and the disgrace which it would bring upon me. She swore that her uncle would never be appeased by such satisfaction as this, as, indeed, afterwards proved only too true. She asked how she could ever glory in me if she should make me thus inglorious, and should shame herself along with me. What penalties, she said, would the world rightly demand of her if she should rob it of so shining a light! What curses would follow such a loss to the Church, what tears among the philosophers would result from such a marriage! How unfitting, how lamentable it would be for me,

whom nature had made for the whole world, to devote myself to one woman solely, and to subject myself to such humiliation! She vehemently rejected this marriage, which she felt would be in every way ignominious and burdensome to me.

Besides dwelling thus on the disgrace to me, she reminded me of the hardships of married life, to the avoidance of which the Apostle exhorts us, saying: "Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you" (I Cor. vii. 27). And again: "But I would have you to be free from cares" (I Cor. vii. 32). But if I would heed neither the counsel of the Apostle nor the exhortations of the saints regarding this heavy yoke of matrimony, she bade me at least consider the advice of the philosophers, and weigh carefully what had been written on this subject either by them or concerning their lives. Even the saints themselves have often and earnestly spoken on this subject for the purpose of warning us. Thus St. Jerome, in his first book against Jovinianus, makes Theophrastus set forth in great detail the intolerable annoyances and the endless disturbances of married life, demonstrating with the most convincing arguments that no wise man should ever have a wife, and concluding his reasons for this philosophic exhortation with these words: "Who among Christians would not be overwhelmed by such arguments as these advanced by Theophrastus?"

Again, in the same work, St. Jerome tells how Cicero, asked by Hircius after his divorce of Terentia whether he would marry the sister of Hircius, replied that he would do no such thing, saying that he could not devote himself to a wife and to philosophy at the same time. Cicero does not, indeed, precisely speak of "devoting himself," but he does add that he did not wish to undertake anything which might rival his study of philosophy in its demands upon him.

Then, turning from the consideration of such hindrances to the study of philosophy, Heloise bade me observe what were the conditions of honourable wedlock. What possible concord could there be between scholars and domestics, between authors and cradles, between books or tablets and distaffs, between the stylus or the pen and the spindle? What man, intent on his religious or philosophical meditations, can possibly endure the whining of children, the lullabies of the nurse seeking to quiet them, or the noisy confusion of family life? Who can endure the continual untidiness of children? The rich, you may reply, can do this, because they have palaces or houses containing many rooms, and because their wealth takes no thought of expense and protects them from daily worries. But to this the answer is that the condition of philosophers is by no means that of the wealthy, nor can those whose minds are occupied with riches and worldly cares find time for religious or philosophical study. For this reason the renowned philosophers of old utterly despised the world, fleeing from its perils rather than reluctantly giving them up, and denied themselves all its delights in order that they might repose in the embraces of philosophy alone. One of them, and the greatest of all, Seneca, in his advice to Lucilius, says philosophy is not a thing to be studied only in hours of leisure; we must give up everything else to devote ourselves to it, for no amount of time is really sufficient hereto" (Epist. 73)

It matters little, she pointed out, whether one abandons the study of philosophy completely or merely interrupts it, for it can never remain at the point where it was thus interrupted. All other occupations must be resisted; it is vain to seek to adjust life to include them, and they must simply be eliminated. This view is maintained, for example, in the love of God by those among us who are truly called monastics, and in the love of wisdom by all those who have stood out among men as sincere philosophers. For in every race, gentiles or Jews or Christians, there have always been a few who excelled their fellows in faith or in the purity of their lives, and who were set apart from the multitude by their continence or by their abstinence from worldly pleasures.

Among the Jews of old there were the Nazarites, who consecrated themselves to the Lord, some of them the sons of the prophet Elias and others the followers of Eliseus, the monks of whom, on the authority of St. Jerome (Epist. 4 and 13), we read in the Old Testament. More recently there were the three philosophical sects which Josephus defines in his Book of Antiquities (xviii. 2), calling them the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes. In our times, furthermore, there are the monks who imitate either the communal life of the Apostles or the earlier and solitary life of John. Among the gentiles there are, as has been said, the philosophers. Did they not apply the name of wisdom or philosophy as much to the religion of life as to the pursuit of learning, as we find from the origin of the word itself, and likewise from the testimony of the saints?

There is a passage on this subject in the eighth book of St. Augustine's "City of God," wherein he distinguishes between the various schools of philosophy. "The Italian school," he says, "had as its founder Pythagoras of Samos, who, it is said, originated the very word 'philosophy'. Before his time those who were regarded as conspicuous for the praiseworthiness of their lives were called wise men, but he, on being asked of his profession, replied that he was a philosopher, that is to say a student or a lover of wisdom because it seemed to him unduly boastful to call himself a wise man." In this passage, therefore, when the phrase "conspicuous for the praiseworthiness of their lives" is used, it is evident that the wise, in other words the philosophers, were so called less because of their erudition than by reason of their virtuous lives. In what sobriety and continence these men lived it is not for me to prove by illustration, lest I should seem to instruct Minerva herself.

Now, she added, if laymen and gentiles, bound by no profession of religion, lived after this fashion, what ought you, a cleric and a canon, to do in order not to prefer base voluptuousness to your sacred duties, to prevent this Charybdis from sucking you down headlong, and to save yourself from being plunged shamelessly and irrevocably into such filth as this? If you care nothing for your privileges as a cleric, at least uphold your dignity as a philosopher. If you scorn the reverence due to God, let regard for your reputation temper your shamelessness. Remember that Socrates was chained to a wife, and by what a filthy accident he himself paid for this blot on philosophy, in order that others thereafter might be made more cautious by his example. Jerome thus mentions this affair, writing about Socrates in his first book against Jovinianus: "Once when he was withstanding a storm of reproaches which Xantippe was hurling at him from an upper

story, he was suddenly drenched with foul slops; wiping his head, he said only, 'I knew there would be a shower after all that thunder.'

Her final argument was that it would be dangerous for me to take her back to Paris, and that it would be far sweeter for her to be called my mistress than to be known as my wife; nay, too, that this would be more honourable for me as well. In such case, she said, love alone would hold me to her, and the strength of the marriage chain would not constrain us. Even if we should by chance be parted from time to time, the joy of our meetings would be all the sweeter by reason of its rarity. But when she found that she could not convince me or dissuade me from my folly by these and like arguments, and because she could not bear to offend me, with grievous sighs and tears she made an end of her resistance, saying: "Then there is no more left but this, that in our doom the sorrow yet to come shall be no less than the love we two have already known." Nor in this, as now the whole world knows, did she lack the spirit of prophecy.

So, after our little son was born, we left him in my sister's care, and secretly returned to Paris. A few days later, in the early morning, having kept our nocturnal vigil of prayer unknown to all in a certain church, we were united there in the benediction of wedlock her uncle and a few friends of his and mine being present. We departed forthwith stealthily and by separate ways, nor thereafter did we see each other save rarely and in private, thus striving our utmost to conceal what we had done. But her uncle and those of his household, seeking solace for their disgrace, began to divulge the story of our marriage, and thereby to violate the pledge they had given me on this point. Heloise, on the contrary, denounced her own kin and swore that they were speaking the most absolute lies. Her uncle, aroused to fury thereby, visited her repeatedly with punishments. No sooner had I learned this than I sent her to a convent of nuns at Argenteuil, not far from Paris, where she herself had been brought up and educated as a young girl. I had them make ready for her all the garments of a nun, suitable for the life of a convent, excepting only the veil, and these I bade her put on.

When her uncle and his kinsmen heard of this, they were convinced that now I had completely played them false and had rid myself forever of Heloise by forcing her to become a nun. Violently incensed, they laid a plot against me, and one night while I all unsuspecting was asleep in a secret room in my lodgings, they broke in with the help of one of my servants whom they had bribed. There they had vengeance on me with a most cruel and most shameful punishment, such as astounded the whole world; for they cut off those parts of my body with which I had done that which was the cause of their sorrow. This done, straightway they fled, but two of them were captured and suffered the loss of their eyes and their genital organs. One of these two was the aforesaid servant, who even while he was still in my service, had been led by his avarice to betray me.

CHAPTER VIII OF THE SUFFERING OF HIS BODY  
OF HOW HE BECAME A MONK IN THE MONASTERY OF ST. DENIS AND  
HELOISE A NUN AT ARGENTEUIL



WHEN morning came the whole city was assembled before my dwelling. It is difficult, nay, impossible, for words of mine to describe the amazement which bewildered them, the lamentations they uttered, the uproar with which they harassed me, or the grief with which they increased my own suffering. Chiefly the clerics, and above all my scholars, tortured me with their intolerable lamentations and outcries, so that I suffered more intensely from their compassion than from the pain of my wound. In truth I felt the disgrace more than the hurt to my body, and was more afflicted with shame than with pain. My incessant thought was of the renown in which I had so much delighted, now brought low, nay, utterly blotted out, so swiftly by an evil chance. I saw, too, how justly God had punished me in that very part of my body whereby I had sinned. I perceived that there was indeed justice in my betrayal by him whom I had myself already betrayed; and then I thought how eagerly my rivals would seize upon this manifestation of justice, how this disgrace would bring bitter and enduring grief to my kindred and my friends, and how the tale of this amazing outrage would spread to the very ends of the earth.

What path lay open to me thereafter? How could I ever again hold up my head among men, when every finger should be pointed at me in scorn, every tongue speak my blistering shame, and when I should be a monstrous spectacle to all eyes? I was overwhelmed by the remembrance that, according to the dread letter of the law, God holds eunuchs in such abomination that men thus maimed are forbidden to enter a church, even as the unclean and filthy; nay, even beasts in such plight were not acceptable as sacrifices. Thus in Leviticus (xxii. 24) is it said: "Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which hath its stones bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut." And in Deuteronomy (xxiii. 1), "He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord."

I must confess that in my misery it was the overwhelming sense of my disgrace rather than any ardour for conversion to the religious life that drove me to seek the seclusion of the monastic cloister. Heloise had already, at my bidding, taken the veil and entered a convent. Thus it was that we both put on the sacred garb, I in the abbey of St. Denis, and she in the convent of Argenteuil, of which I have already spoken. She, I remember well, when her fond friends sought vainly to deter her from submitting her fresh youth to the heavy and almost intolerable yoke of monastic life, sobbing and weeping replied in the words of Cornelia:

"O husband most noble  
Who ne'er shouldst have shared my couch! Has fortune such power  
To smite so lofty a head? Why then was I wedded  
Only to bring thee to woe? Receive now my sorrow,  
The price I so gladly pay."  
(Lucan, "Pharsalia," viii. 94.)

With these words on her lips did she go forthwith to the altar, and lifted therefrom the veil, which had been blessed by the bishop, and before them all she took the vows of the religious life. For my part, scarcely had I recovered from my wound when clerics sought me in great numbers, endlessly beseeching both my abbot and me myself that now, since

I was done with learning for the sake of pain or renown, I should turn to it for the sole love of God. They bade me care diligently for the talent which God had committed to my keeping (Matthew, xxv. 15), since surely He would demand it back from me with interest. It was their plea that, inasmuch as of old I had laboured chiefly in behalf of the rich, I should now devote myself to the teaching of the poor. Therein above all should I perceive how it was the hand of God that had touched me, when I should devote my life to the study of letters in freedom from the snares of the flesh and withdrawn from the tumultuous life of this world. ...

The abbey, however, to which I had betaken myself was utterly worldly and in its life quite scandalous. The abbot himself was as far below his fellows in his way of living and in the foulness of his reputation as he was above them in priestly rank. This intolerable state of things I often and vehemently denounced, sometimes in private talk and sometimes publicly, but the only result was that I made myself detested of them all. They gladly laid hold of the daily eagerness of my students to hear me as an excuse whereby they might be rid of me; and finally, at the insistent urging of the students themselves, and with the hearty consent of the abbot and the rest of the brotherhood, I departed thence to a certain hut, there to teach in my wonted way. To this place such a throng of students flocked that the neighbourhood could not afford shelter for them, nor the earth sufficient sustenance.

Here, as befitted my profession, I devoted myself chiefly to lectures on theology, but I did not wholly abandon the teaching of the secular arts, to which I was more accustomed, and which was particularly demanded of me. I used the latter, however, as a hook, luring my students by the bait of learning to the study of the true philosophy, even as the Ecclesiastical History tells of Origen, the greatest of all Christian philosophers. Since apparently the Lord had gifted me with no less persuasiveness in expounding the Scriptures than in lecturing on secular subjects, the number of my students in these two courses began to increase greatly, and the attendance at all the other schools was correspondingly diminished. Thus I aroused the envy and hatred of the other teachers. Those way took who sought to belittle me in every possible advantage of my absence to bring two principal charges against me: first, that it was contrary to the monastic profession to be concerned with the study of secular books; and, second, that I had presumed to teach theology without ever having been taught therein myself. This they did in order that my teaching of every kind might be prohibited, and to this end they continually stirred up bishops, archbishops, abbots and whatever other dignitaries ...

#### CHAPTER IX OF HIS BOOK ON THEOLOGY AND HIS PERSECUTION AT THE HANDS OF HIS FELLOW STUDENTS OF THE COUNCIL AGAINST HIM

IT SO happened that at the outset I devoted myself to analysing the basis of our faith through illustrations based on human understanding, and I wrote for my students a certain tract on the unity and trinity of God. This I did because they were always seeking for rational and philosophical explanations, asking rather for reasons they could understand than for mere words, saying that it was futile to utter words which the intellect could not possibly follow, that nothing could be believed unless it could first be understood, and

that it was absurd for any one to preach to others a thing which neither he himself nor those whom he sought to teach could comprehend. Our Lord Himself maintained this same thing when He said: "They are blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew, xv. 14).

Now, a great many people saw and read this tract, and it became exceedingly popular, its clearness appealing particularly to all who sought information on this subject. And since the questions involved are generally considered the most difficult of all, their complexity is taken as the measure of the subtlety of him who succeeds in answering them. As a result, my rivals became furiously angry, and summoned a council to take action against me, the chief instigators therein being my two intriguing enemies of former days, Alberic and Lotulphe. These two, now that both William and Anselm, our erstwhile teachers, were dead, were greedy to reign in their stead, and, so to speak, to succeed them as heirs. While they were directing the school at Rheims, they managed by repeated hints to stir up their archbishop, Rodolphe, against me, for the purpose of holding a meeting, or rather an ecclesiastical council, at Soissons, provided they could secure the approval of Conon, Bishop of Praeneste, at that time papal legate in France. Their plan was to summon me to be present at this council, bringing with me the famous book I had written regarding the Trinity. In all this, indeed, they were successful, and the thing happened ...

Before I reached Soissons, however, these two rivals of mine so foully slandered me with both the clergy and the public that on the day of my arrival the people came near to stoning me and the few students of mine who had accompanied me thither. The cause of their anger was that they had been led to believe that I had preached and written to prove the existence of three gods. No sooner had I reached the city, therefore, than I went forthwith to the legate; to him I submitted my book for examination and judgment, declaring that if I had written anything repugnant to the Catholic faith, I was quite ready to correct it or otherwise to make satisfactory amends. The legate directed me to refer my book to the archbishop and to those same two rivals of mine, to the end that my accusers might also be my judges...

These three, then, took my book and pawed it over and examined it minutely, but could find nothing therein which they dared to use as the basis for a public accusation against me. Accordingly they put off the condemnation of the book until the close of the council, despite their eagerness to bring it about. For my part, every day before the council convened I publicly discussed the Catholic faith in the light of what I had written, and all who heard me were enthusiastic in their approval alike of the frankness and the logic of my words. When the public and the clergy had thus learned something of the real character of my teaching, they began to say to one another: "Behold, now he speaks openly, and no one brings any charge against him. And this council, summoned, as we have heard, chiefly to take action upon his case is drawing toward its end. Did the judges realize that the error might be theirs rather than his?"

As a result of all this, my rivals grew more angry day by day. On one occasion Alberic, accompanied by some of his students, came to me for the purpose of intimidating me, and, after a few bland words, said that he was amazed at something he had found in my book, to the effect that, although God had begotten God, I denied that God had begotten

Himself, since there was only one God. I answered unhesitatingly: "I can give you an explanation of this if you wish it." "Nay," he replied, "I care nothing for human explanation or reasoning in such matters, but only for the words of authority." "Very well, I said; "turn the pages of my book and you will find the authority likewise." The book was at hand, for he had brought it with him. I turned to the passage I had in mind, which he had either not discovered or else passed over as containing nothing injurious to me. And it was God's will that I quickly found what I sought. This was the following sentence, under the heading "Augustine, On the Trinity, Book I": "Whosoever believes that it is within the power of God to beget Himself is sorely in error; this power is not in God, neither is it in any created thing, spiritual or corporeal. For there is nothing that can give birth to itself."

When those of his followers who were present heard this, they were amazed and much embarrassed. He himself, in order to keep his countenance, said: "Certainly, I understand all that." Then I added: "What I have to say further on this subject is by no means new, but apparently it has nothing to do with the case at issue, since you have asked for the word of authority only, and not for explanations. If, however, you care to consider logical explanations, I am prepared to demonstrate that, according to Augustine's statement, you have yourself fallen into a heresy in believing that a father can possibly be his own son." When Alberic heard this he was almost beside himself with rage, and straightway resorted to threats, asserting that neither my explanations nor my citations of authority would avail me aught in this case. With this he left me.

On the last day of the council, before the session convened, the legate and the archbishop deliberated with my rivals and sundry others as to what should be done about me and my book, this being the chief reason for their having come together. And since they had discovered nothing either in my speech or in what I had hitherto written which would give them a case against me, they were all reduced to silence, or at the most to maligning me in whispers. Then Geoffroi, Bishop of Chartres, who excelled the other bishops alike in the sincerity of his religion and in the importance of his see, spoke thus:

"You know, my lords, all who are gathered here, the doctrine of this man, what it is, and his ability, which has brought him many followers in every field to which he has devoted himself. You know how greatly he has lessened the renown of other teachers, both his masters and our own, and how he has spread as it were the offshoots of his vine from sea to sea. Now, if you impose a lightly considered judgment on him, as I cannot believe you will, you well know that even if mayhap you are in the right there are many who will be angered thereby and that he will have no lack of defenders. Remember above all that we have found nothing in this book of his that lies before us whereon any open accusation can be based. Indeed it is true, as Jerome says: 'Fortitude openly displayed always creates rivals, and the lightning strikes the highest peaks.' Have a care, then, lest by violent action you only increase his fame, and lest we do more hurt to ourselves through envy than to him through justice. A false report, as that same wise man reminds us, is easily crushed, and a man's later life gives testimony as to his earlier deeds. If, then, you are disposed to take canonical action against him, his doctrine or his writings must be brought forward as evidence, and he must have free opportunity to answer his questioners. In that case if he

is found guilty or if he confesses his error, his lips can be wholly sealed. Consider the words of the blessed Nicodemus, who, desiring to free Our Lord Himself, said: 'Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth? (John, vii. 51).

When my rivals heard this they cried out in protest, saying: "This is wise counsel, forsooth, that we should strive against the wordiness of this man, whose arguments, or rather, sophistries, the whole world cannot resist!" And yet, methinks, it was far more difficult to strive against Christ Himself, for Whom, nevertheless, Nicodemus demanded a hearing in accordance with the dictates of the law. When the bishop could not win their assent to his proposals, he tried in another way to curb their hatred, saying that for the discussion of such an important case the few who were present were not enough, and that this matter required a more thorough examination. His further suggestion was that my abbot, who was there present, should take me back with him to our abbey, in other words to the monastery of St. Denis, and that there a large convocation of learned men should determine, on the basis of a careful investigation, what ought to be done. To this last proposal the legate consented, as did all the others.

Then the legate arose to celebrate Mass before entering the council, and through the bishop sent me the permission which had been determined on, authorizing me to return to my monastery and there await such action as might be finally taken. But my rivals, perceiving that they would accomplish nothing if the trial were to be held outside of their own diocese, and in a place where they could have little influence on the verdict, and in truth having small wish that justice should be done, persuaded the archbishop that it would be a grave insult to him to transfer this case to another court, and that it would be dangerous for him if by chance I should thus be acquitted. They likewise went to the legate, and succeeded in so changing his opinion that finally they induced him to frame a new sentence, whereby he agreed to condemn my book without any further inquiry, to burn it forthwith in the sight of all, and to confine me for a year in another monastery. The argument they used was that it sufficed for the condemnation of my book that I had presumed to read it in public without the approval either of the Roman pontiff or of the church, and that, furthermore, I had given it to many to be transcribed. Methinks it would be a notable blessing to the Christian faith if there were more who displayed a like presumption. The legate, however, being less skilled in law than he should have been, relied chiefly on the advice of the archbishop, and he, in turn, on that of my rivals. When the Bishop of Chartres got wind of this, he reported the whole conspiracy to me, and strongly urged me to endure meekly the manifest violence of their enmity. He bade me not to doubt that this violence would in the end react upon them and prove a blessing to me, and counseled me to have no fear of the confinement in a monastery, knowing that within a few days the legate himself, who was now acting under compulsion, would after his departure set me free. And thus he consoled me as best he might...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/abelard-histcal.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter\\_Abelard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Abelard)

## CHAPTER 29 : *SENTENCES* OF PETER LOMBARD

### Background Information

Peter Lombard (1095-1159) was an Italian theologian, often called Magister Sententiarum. He studied at Bologna, Reims, and Paris, where he is said to have been a student of Abelard. He acquired some fame as a teacher and was given high offices, serving for a time as archbishop of Paris. His *Sentences*, one of the most celebrated of all theological works of Romanism, is a compilation of opinions of earlier theologians, often in conflict and not always reconciled. It was particularly important because its doctrine on sacraments (that a sacrament is both a symbol and an effectual conduit of grace and that seven fulfill the required conditions) was adopted as the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Trent. By the 13th century the *Sentences* had become the principal theological text in the universities, and many of the greatest scholastics wrote commentaries on it. One reason for their popularity was that he left many questions open, giving later scholars opportunity to suggest their own answers. Scholars who wanted to make a name for themselves wrote commentaries on Peter's *Sentences*. Among those who did were such famous names as Aquinas, Bonaventura, Scotus and Ockham.

So the historic importance of Peter Lombard rests on his *Sentences* and the position taken by them in medieval philosophy. The earlier dogmatic theologians, such as Isidore of Seville, Alcuin, and Paschasius Radbert, had attempted to establish the doctrine of the Church from Bible texts and quotations from the Fathers. In the eleventh century this method gave place to dialectical and speculative working over of the traditional dogmas. Peter Lombard came into the field at a time when the new methods and their dialectical artifices were still exposed to wide-spread objection, but when the thirst for knowledge was exceedingly keen. One text-book after another was being published, the majority of them either issuing from the school of Abelard, or in some degree inspired by him. Of these works the greatest influence was attained by that of Peter, which was, for the time, an admirable compendium of theological knowledge. It is written under the influence preeminently of Abelard, Hugo of St. Victor, and the *Decretum* of Gratian. Whether Peter had himself seen the early writers whom he cites is frequently uncertain. Peter was a man of wide reading, but the works of the Fathers had been used again and again in long catenae of "sentences" which rendered it unnecessary to go to the original treatises. As to his contemporaries, whom he knew thoroughly, he shows the influence of Abelard in his whole method and in countless details, while preserving a critical attitude toward his most pronounced peculiarities. On the other hand, he follows Hugo very closely and often textually, though here also with a tendency to avoid the purely speculative elements. For his sacramental doctrine, Gratian is very useful, especially through the quotations adduced by him and his legal attitude toward these questions.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE SENTENCES

ON THE DOCTRINE OF SIGNS  
Chapter II *What is a Sacrament.*

« A Sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing ».<sup>2</sup> However a sacrament is also said (to be) a *sacred secret*, just as there is said (to be) a sacrament of the Divinity, so that a sacrament is a *sacred thing signifying* and the *sacred thing signified* [sacrum signans et sacrum signatum]; but now one deals with the sacrament, according to which it is a *sign* [signum]. — Likewise,<sup>3</sup> « A Sacrament is the visible form of an invisible grace ».

Chapter III *What is a sign.*

« A sign, however, is the thing beside the species, which it bears upon the senses, causing something else out of itself to come into (one's) thinking ».

Chapter IV *How sign and Sacrament differ.*

« Of signs, however, some are *natural*, as smoke signifying fire; others *given* »;<sup>5</sup> and of those which are *given*, certain ones are Sacraments, certain ones not. For every Sacrament is a sign, but not conversely. A Sacrament bears the similitude of that thing, of which it is a sign. « For if the Sacraments did not have the similitude of the things, of which they are Sacraments, they would not *properly* be said (to be) Sacraments ». For Sacrament is properly said (to be) that which is so great a sign of the grace of God and the form of invisible grace, that it bears its image and exists as (its) cause. Therefore not only for the grace of signifying have the Sacraments been instituted, but also (for that) of sanctifying. For those things which have only been instituted for the grace of signifying, are solely signs, and not Sacraments; just as were the carnal sacrifices and ceremonial observances of the Old Law, which never could make the ones offering just; because, as the Apostle says,<sup>6</sup> *the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer use to sanctify the polluted [iniquitos] as regards the cleansing forth of the flesh*, not of the soul. For that pollution was contact with the dead. Whence (St.) Augustine (says):<sup>7</sup> « Nothing other do I understand the *pollution*, which the Law cleanses, but contact with a dead man, whom he who had touched *was unclean for seven days*; but he was purified according to the Law on the third and seventh day, and he was clean », to now enter the Temple. Those (sacraments) of the Law sometimes used to cleanse even leprosy from the corporal (man); but never has anyone out of *the works of the Law* been justified, as the Apostle says,<sup>8</sup> even if they were done in faith and charity. Why? because God imposed them as a liability [in servitutum], not for justification, and so that they would be a *figure of the future*, willing, that these be offered to Himself rather than to idols. Therefore they were *signs*, but nevertheless [tamen] in the Scriptures they are also often called *Sacraments*, because they were signs of a sacred thing, which they certainly did not insure [utique non praestabant]. Moreover those the Apostle says<sup>9</sup> (are) the *works of the Law*, which have been instituted only for the grace of signifying, and/or as a burden.

...Moreover for that reason circumcision has been changed through baptism, because the Sacrament of Baptism is more common and more perfect, because (it has) accumulated a fuller grace. For there only sins used to be forgiven [dimittebantur], but neither grace

helping [adiutrix] to work well nor the possession and/or augment of virtues were insured there, as (they are) in Baptism, where sins are not only abolished, but also helping grace is conferred, and virtues augmented. Whence it is said (to be) a *water of refection*, which<sup>2</sup> makes the arid fecund and grants in a more ample abundance [ubertate] to those already fruitful; because, howsoever much through faith and charity had beforehand someone just approaches to Baptism, he receives there a more abundant grace, but not thus in circumcision. Whence to Abraham, having already been justified through faith, it was only a *mark*, it conferred nothing upon him interiorly...

Chapter X *On the little ones departed before the eighth day, on which circumcision was done.*

If, however, there is asked concerning the little ones, who died before the eighth day, before circumcision was done according to the Law, whether they were saved, and/or (whether they were) not; the same can be responded, which is thought [sentitur] concerning little ones departed before Baptism, whom it is established do perish. Whence (St.) Bede (says):<sup>3</sup> « He who now shouts through the Gospel in a terrible and salubrious manner: *Unless one had been reborn from water and the Holy Spirit, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of God*; the Same not long ago shouts through His own Law: *The soul, the flesh of whose foreskin had not been circumcised shall perish from his people, because he has made void my covenant* [pactum meum irritum fecit]. However perhaps under the Law, with impending [ingruente] necessity of death, they circumcised (their) sons without sin before the eighth day, just as now in the Church is done concerning Baptism »...

**Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.franciscan-archive.org/lombardus/opera/l1-01.html>

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/l/lombard.htm>

<http://www.franciscan-archive.org/lombardus/>



## CHAPTER 30 : WALDENSES CONFESSION OF 1120 (*THE NOLLA LEYCON*)

### Background Information

We have seen the religious corruption that came to mark the Medieval era, yet we have also seen examples of how this corruption was contested. It was arguably contested most effectively by the Waldenses. The most ancient manuscripts of the Waldenses declare that they have maintained the same doctrine 'from time immemorial, in continual descent from father to son, even from the times of the Apostles.' Their confession, 'The Nolla Leycon,' dating A.D. 1120, claims that ancient origin. Ecbert, in A.D. 1160, spoke of them as 'perverters' who had existed during many ages. Reinerus, the Inquisitor, a century later, declares they are 'most dangerous,' because 'most ancient,' 'for some say that it has continued to flourish since the time of Sylvester, others from the time of the Apostles.' Rorengo, grand prior of St. Roch, commissioned to inquire, states 'that they were not a new sect in the ninth and tenth centuries.' And Campian, the Jesuit, says that they were reputed to be 'more ancient than the Roman Church.' Not one of the Dukes of Savoy ever contradicted their assertion, that they were 'the descendants of those who preserved entire the Apostolic faith in their valleys.' Their inaccessible and remote valleys in the Piedmont of northern Italy received fugitive Christians, and thus the doctrine of the cross was early received and faithfully preserved. We witness in the Waldenses during the Middle Ages God's preservation of a people of God here on earth from generation to generation.

The Waldenses were formally declared heretics by Pope Lucius III in 1184 and by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. In 1211 more than 80 were burned as heretics at Strasbourg, beginning several centuries of persecution. The Waldenses proclaimed the Bible as the sole rule of life and faith. They rejected the papacy, purgatory, indulgences, and the mass, and laid great stress on gospel simplicity. Worship services consisted of readings from the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, and sermons. Their Church then, in the simplicity of its constitution, may be held to have been a reflection of the Church of the first centuries. The entire territory included in the Waldensian limits was divided into parishes. In each parish was placed a pastor, who led his flock to the living waters of the Word of God. He preached, he dispensed the Sacraments, he visited the sick, and catechised the young. With him was associated in the government of his congregation a consistory of laymen. The synod met once a year. It was composed of all the pastors, with an equal number of laymen, and its most frequent place of meeting was the secluded mountain-engirdled valley at the head of Angrogna in the Piedmont of northern Italy. Sometimes as many as a hundred and fifty barbes, with the same number of lay members, would assemble. The youth who here sat at the feet of the more venerable and learned of their barbes used as their text-book the Holy Scriptures. And not only did they study the sacred volume; they were required to commit to memory, and be able accurately to recite, whole Gospels and Epistles. This was a necessary accomplishment on the part of public instructors in those ages when printing was unknown, and copies of the Word of God were rare. Part of their time was occupied in transcribing the Holy Scriptures, or portions of them, which they were to distribute when they went forth as missionaries. By this, and

by other agencies, the seed of the Divine Word was scattered throughout Europe more widely than is commonly supposed.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

1. We believe and firmly maintain all that is contained in the twelve articles of the symbol, commonly called the apostles' creed, and we regard as heretical whatever is inconsistent with the said twelve articles.
2. We believe that there is one God - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We acknowledge for sacred canonical scriptures the books of the Holy Bible. (Here follows the title of each, exactly conformable to our received canon, but which it is deemed, on that account, quite unnecessary to particularize.)
4. The books above-mentioned teach us: That there is one GOD, almighty, unbounded in wisdom, and infinite in goodness, and who, in His goodness, has made all things. For He created Adam after His own image and likeness. But through the enmity of the Devil, and his own disobedience, Adam fell, sin entered into the world, and we became transgressors in and by Adam.
5. That Christ had been promised to the fathers who received the law, to the end that, knowing their sin by the law, and their unrighteousness and insufficiency, they might desire the coming of Christ to make satisfaction for their sins, and to accomplish the law by Himself.
6. That at the time appointed of the Father, Christ was born - a time when iniquity everywhere abounded, to make it manifest that it was not for the sake of any good in ourselves, for all were sinners, but that He, who is true, might display His grace and mercy towards us.
7. That Christ is our life, and truth, and peace, and righteousness - our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and priest, who died for the salvation of all who should believe, and rose again for their justification.
8. And we also firmly believe, that there is no other mediator, or advocate with God the Father, but Jesus Christ. And as to the Virgin Mary, she was holy, humble, and full of grace; and this we also believe concerning all other saints, namely, that they are waiting in heaven for the resurrection of their bodies at the day of judgment.
9. We also believe, that, after this life, there are but two places - one for those that are saved, the other for the damned, which [two] we call paradise and hell, wholly denying that imaginary purgatory of Antichrist, invented in opposition to the truth.
10. Moreover, we have ever regarded all the inventions of men [in the affairs of religion]

as an unspeakable abomination before God; such as the festival days and vigils of saints, and what is called holy-water, the abstaining from flesh on certain days, and such like things, but above all, the masses.

11. We hold in abhorrence all human inventions, as proceeding from Antichrist, which produce distress (Alluding probably to the voluntary penances and mortification imposed by the Catholics on themselves), and are prejudicial to the liberty of the mind.

12 We consider the Sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that believers use these symbols or visible forms when it can be done. Notwithstanding which, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them.

13. We acknowledge no sacraments [as of divine appointment] but baptism and the Lord's supper.

14. We honour the secular powers, with subjection, obedience, promptitude, and payment.

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.freechurch.org/muir/waldenses.html>

<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~jbeggsoc/porteous3-03.html>

[http://www.pbministries.org/History/J.%20A.%20Wylie/waldenses\\_02.htm](http://www.pbministries.org/History/J.%20A.%20Wylie/waldenses_02.htm)

## CHAPTER 30 : *LANCELOT* BY CHRETIEN DE TROYES

### Background Information

Chrétien de Troyes wrote in Champagne, France, during the last half of the twelfth century. Of his life we know neither the beginning nor the end, but we know that between 1160 and 1181 he lived in Troyes at the court of his patroness Countess Marie de Champagne, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, perhaps as herald-at-arms. His work on Arthurian subjects parallels that of other authors at the time who wrote on these subjects, typically in a romanticized fashion. Chrétien's works include four major poems in rhyming eight-syllable couplets, one of which is *Lancelot*. Chrétien's romances together form the most complete expression from a single author of the ideals of French chivalry. But they also reveal the degraded nature of Christianity that characterized the era.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### Introductory paragraph

(Vv. 1-30.) Since my lady of Champagne wishes me to undertake to write a romance, (1) I shall very gladly do so, being so devoted to her service as to do anything in the world for her, without any intention of flattery. But if one were to introduce any flattery upon such an occasion, he might say, and I would subscribe to it, that this lady surpasses all others who are alive, just as the south wind which blows in May or April is more lovely than any other wind. But upon my word, I am not one to wish to flatter my lady. I will simply say: "The Countess is worth as many queens as a gem is worth of pearls and sards." Nay I shall make no comparison, and yet it is true in spite of me; I will say, however, that her command has more to do with this work than any thought or pains that I may expend upon it. Here Chretien begins his book about the Knight of the Cart. The material and the treatment of it are given and furnished to him by the Countess, and he is simply trying to carry out her concern and intention. Here he begins the story...

#### Lancelot and Guinevere [*The end of the quest of Lancelot for Guinevere.*]

(Vv. 4441-4530.) ...and the Queen yearns ardently for the arrival of her lover and her joy. She has no desire this time to bear him any grudge. But rumour, which never rests but runs always unceasingly, again reaches the Queen to the effect that Lancelot would have killed himself for her sake, if he had had the chance. She is happy at the thought that this is true, but she would not have had it happen so for anything, for her sorrow would have been too great. Thereupon Lancelot arrived in haste. (22)

----- This time the Queen did not lower her eyes to the ground, but she went to meet him cheerfully, honouring him all she could, and making him sit down by her side. Then they talked together at length of all that was upon their hearts, and love furnished them with so much to say that topics did not lack. And when Lancelot sees how well he stands, and that all he says finds favour with the Queen, he says to her in confidence: "Lady, I marvel greatly why you received me with such a countenance when you saw me the day before yesterday, and why you would not speak a word to me: I almost died of the blow

you gave me, and I had not the courage to dare to question you about it, as I now venture to do. I am ready now, lady, to make amends, when you have told me what has been the crime which has caused me such distress." Then the Queen replies: "What? Did you not hesitate for shame to mount the cart? You showed you were loath to get in, when you hesitated for two whole steps. That is the reason why I would neither address nor look at you." "May God save me from such a crime again," Lancelot replies, "and may God show me no mercy, if you were not quite right! For God's sake, lady, receive my amends at once, and tell me, for God's sake, if you can ever pardon me." "Friend, you are quite forgiven," the Queen replies; "I pardon you willingly." "Thank you for that, lady," he then says; "but I cannot tell you here all that I should like to say; I should like to talk with you more at leisure, if possible." Then the Queen indicates a window by her glance rather than with her finger, and says: "Come through the garden to-night and speak with me at yonder window, when every one inside has gone to sleep. You will not be able to get in: I shall be inside and you outside: to gain entrance will be impossible. I shall be able to touch you only with my lips or hand, but, if you please, I will stay there until morning for love of you. Our bodies cannot be joined, for close beside me in my room lies Kay the seneschal, who is still suffering from his wounds. And the door is not open, but is tightly closed and guarded well. When you come, take care to let no spy catch sight of you." "Lady," says he, "if I can help it, no spy shall see me who might think or speak evil of us." Then, having agreed upon this plan, they separate very joyfully.

(Vv. 4551-4650.) Lancelot leaves the room in such a happy frame that all his past troubles are forgotten. But he was so impatient for the night to come that his restlessness made the day seem longer than a hundred ordinary days or than an entire year. If night had only come, he would gladly have gone to the trysting place. Dark and sombre night at last won its struggle with the day, and wrapped it up in its covering, and laid it away beneath its cloak. When he saw the light of day obscured, he pretended to be tired and worn, and said that, in view of his protracted vigils, he needed rest. You, who have ever done the same, may well understand and guess that he pretends to be tired and goes to bed in order to deceive the people of the house; but he cared nothing about his bed, nor would he have sought rest there for anything, for he could not have done so and would not have dared, and furthermore he would not have cared to possess the courage or the power to do so. Soon he softly rose, and was pleased to find that no moon or star was shining, and that in the house there was no candle, lamp, or lantern burning. Thus he went out and looked about, but there was no one on the watch for him, for all thought that he would sleep in his bed all night...

[The romantic poem goes on to recount the wicked adulterous tryst between Lancelot and Guinevere, but it is addressed by Chretien de Troyes in a way that makes it seem appealing, like so many modern movies euphemize such adulterous affairs.]

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1170chretien-lancelot.html>

## CHAPTER 32 : ON THE HARMONY OF RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHY BY AVERROES

### Background Information

Islam had successfully spread during the Middle Ages, not only in Asia and Africa, but also into Europe. Many regard it as the 'golden age' of Islam, and Averroes an example of Islamic scholarship in that age. Averroes (Ibn Rushd) (1126 - 1198) was an Arab philosopher and physician, a master of philosophy and Islamic law, mathematics and medicine, residing in the Andalusian region of Moorish Spain. Averroes tried to reconcile Aristotle's system of thought with Islam. According to Averroes, there is no conflict between Islamic religion and Aristotelian philosophy. He held that one can reach the truth through two different ways: philosophy or religion. He believed in the eternity of the universe and the existence of pre-existent forms.



Averroes is most famous for his translations and commentaries of Aristotle's works, which had been mostly forgotten in the West. Before 1150 only a few translated works of Aristotle existed in Latin Europe, and they were not studied much or given much credence by monastic scholars. It was through the Latin translations of Averroes's work beginning in the 12th century that the legacy of Aristotle was recovered in the West. Averroes's work on Aristotle spans almost three decades, and he wrote commentaries on almost all of Aristotle's work except for Aristotle's *Politics*, to which he did not have access. Hebrew translations of his work also had a lasting impact on Jewish philosophy. Averroes's ideas were assimilated by Siger of Brabant and Thomas Aquinas and others (especially in the University of Paris) within the Christian scholastic tradition which valued Aristotelian logic. Famous scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas believed him to be so important they did not refer to him by name, simply calling him "The Commentator" and calling Aristotle "The Philosopher." He left no school in the Islamic world, and his death marks the eclipse of liberal culture in Moorish Spain.

Albertus Magnus (1200-1280) lived shortly after Averroes, and like various other Christian Scholastics of his day, sought to refute Averroes, while yet remaining Aristotelian in philosophy. Albert was commissioned by the Pope to refute the theory of Averroes, which Albert did in 1256 in his book *De Unitate Intellectus contra Averroem*. Christian Scholastics like Albertus Magnus wanted to show that Aristotelianism logically led to Christianity and not Islam.

## The Work or Excerpts from the Work

### *Introduction*

We maintain that the business of philosophy is nothing other than to look into creation and to ponder over it in order to be guided to the Creator -- in other words, to look into the meaning of existence. For the knowledge of creation leads to the cognizance of the Creator, through the knowledge of the created. The more perfect becomes the knowledge of creation, the more perfect becomes the knowledge of the Creator. The Law encourages and exhorts us to observe creation. Thus, it is clear that this is to be taken either as a religious injunction or as something approved by the Law. But the Law urges us to observe creation by means of reason and demands the knowledge thereof through reason. This is evident from different verses of the Qur'an. For example, the Qur'an says: "Wherefore take example from them, you who have eyes" [Qur'an 49.2]. That is a clear indication of the necessity of using the reasoning faculty, or rather both reason and religion, in the interpretation of things. Again it says: "Or do they not contemplate the kingdom of heaven and earth and the things which God has created" [Qur'an 7.184]. This is in plain exhortation to encourage the use of observation of creation. And remember that one whom God especially distinguishes in this respect, Abraham, the prophet. For He says: "And this did we show unto Abraham: the kingdom of heaven and earth" [Qur'an 6.75]. Further, He says: "Do they not consider the camels, how they are created; and the heaven, how it is raised" [Qur'an 88.17]. Or, still again: "And (who) meditate on the creation of heaven and earth, saying, O Lord you have not created this in vain" [Qur'an 3.176]. There are many other verses on this subject: too numerous to be enumerated.

Now, it being established that the Law makes the observation and consideration of creation by reason obligatory -- and consideration is nothing but to make explicit the implicit -- this can only be done through reason. Thus we must look into creation with the reason. Moreover, it is obvious that the observation which the Law approves and encourages must be of the most perfect type, performed with the most perfect kind of reasoning. As the Law emphasizes the knowledge of God and His creation by inference, it is incumbent on any who wish to know God and His whole creation by inference, to learn the kinds of inference, their conditions and that which distinguishes philosophy from dialectic and exhortation from syllogism. This is impossible unless one possesses knowledge beforehand of the various kinds of reasoning and learns to distinguish between reasoning and what is not reasoning. This cannot be done except one knows its different parts, that is, the different kinds of premises.

Hence, for a believer in the Law and a follower of it, it is necessary to know these things before he begins to look into creation, for they are like instruments for observation. For, just as a student discovers by the study of the law, the necessity of knowledge of legal reasoning with all its kinds and distinctions, a student will find out by observing the creation the necessity of metaphysical reasoning. Indeed, he has a greater claim on it than the jurist. For if a jurist argues the necessity of legal reasoning from the saying of God: "Wherefore take example *from them* O you who have eyes" [Qur'an 59.2], a student of



divinity has a better right to establish the same from it on behalf of metaphysical reasoning.

One cannot maintain that this kind of reasoning is an innovation in religion because it did not exist in the early days of Islam. For legal reasoning and its kinds are things which were invented also in later ages, and no one thinks they are innovations. Such should also be our attitude towards philosophical reasoning. There is another reason why it should be so, but this is not the proper place to mention it. A large number of the followers of this religion confirm philosophical reasoning, all except a small worthless minority, who argue from religious ordinances. Now, as it is established that the Law makes the consideration of philosophical reasoning and its kinds as necessary as legal reasoning, if none of our predecessors has made an effort to enquire into it, we should begin to do it, and so help them, until the knowledge is complete. For if it is difficult or rather impossible for one person to acquaint himself single-handed with all things which it is necessary to know in legal matters, it is still more difficult in the case of philosophical reasoning. And, if before us, somebody has enquired into it, we should derive help from what he has said. It is quite immaterial whether that man is our co-religionist or not; for the instrument by which purification is perfected is not made uncertain in its usefulness by its being in the hands of one of our own party, or of a foreigner, if it possesses the attributes of truth. By these latter we mean those Ancients who investigated these things before the advent of Islam.

Now, such is the case. All that is wanted in an enquiry into philosophical reasoning has already been perfectly examined by the Ancients. All that is required of us is that we should go back to their books and see what they have said in this connection. If all that they say be true, we should accept it and if there be something wrong, we should be warned by it. Thus, when we have finished this kind of research we shall have acquired instruments by which we can observe the universe, and consider its general character. For so long as one does not know its general character one cannot know the created, and so long as he does not know the created, he cannot know its nature.

All things have been made and created. This is quite clear in itself, in the case of animals and plants, as God has said "Verily the idols which you invoke, beside God, can never create a single fly, though they may all assemble for that purpose" [Qur'an 22.72]. We see an inorganic substance and then there is life in it. So we know for certain that there is an inventor and bestower of life, and He is God. Of the heavens we know by their movements, which never become slackened, that they work for our benefit by divine solicitude, and are subordinate to our welfare. Such an appointed and subordinate object is always created for some purpose. The second principle is that for every created thing there is a creator. So it is right to say from the two foregoing principles that for every existent thing there is an inventor. There are many arguments, according to the number of the created things, which can be advanced to prove this premise. Thus, it is necessary for one who wants to know God as He ought to be known to acquaint himself with the essence of things, so that he may get information about the creation of all things. For who cannot understand the real substance and purpose of a thing, cannot understand the minor meaning of its creation. It is to this that God refers in the following verse "Or do they not



contemplate the heaven and the earth, and the things which God has created?" [Qur'an 7.184]. And so a man who would follow the purpose of philosophy in investigating the existence of things, that is, would try to know the cause which led to its creation, and the purpose of it would know the argument of kindness most perfectly. These two arguments are those adopted by Law.

The verses of the Qur'an leading to a knowledge of the existence of God are dependent only on the two foregoing arguments. It will be quite clear to anyone who will examine closely the verses, which occur in the Divine Book in this connection. These, when investigated, will be found to be of three kinds: either they are verses showing the "arguments of kindness," or those mentioning the "arguments of creation, " or those which include both the kinds of arguments. ...

It is evident from the above arguments for the existence of God that they are dependent upon two categories of reasoning. It is also clear that both of these methods are meant for particular people; that is, the learned. Now as to the method for the masses. The difference between the two lies only in details. The masses cannot understand the two above-mentioned arguments but only what they can grasp by their senses; while the learned men can go further and learn by reasoning also, besides learning by sense. ... The atheists, who deny the Creator altogether, are like men who can see and feel the created things, but would not acknowledge any Creator for them, but would attribute all to chance alone, and that they come into being by themselves.

Now, then, if this is the method adopted by the Law, it may be asked: What is the way of proving the unity of God by means of the Law; that is, the knowledge of the religious formula that "there is no god, but God. " The negation contained in it is an addition to the affirmative, which the formula contains, while the affirmative has already been proved. What is the purpose of this negation? We would say that the method, adopted by the Law, of denying divinity to all but God is according to the ordinance of God in the Qur'an. . .

If you look a little intently it will become clear to you, that in spite of the fact that the Law has not given illustration of those things for the common people, beyond which their imagination cannot go, it has also informed the learned men of the underlying meanings of those illustrations. So it is necessary to bear in mind the limits which the Law has set about the instruction of every class of men, and not to mix them together. For in this manner the purpose of the Law is multiplied. Hence it is that the Prophet has said, "We, the prophets, have been commanded to adapt ourselves to the conditions of the people, and address them according to their intelligence." He who tries to instruct all the people in the matter of religion, in one and the same way, is like a man who wants to make them alike in actions too, which is quite against apparent laws and reason.

From the foregoing it must have become clear to you that the divine vision has an esoteric meaning in which there is no doubt, if we take the words of the Qur'an about God as they stand, that is, without proving or disproving the anthropomorphic attribute of God. Now since the first part of the Law has been made quite clear as to God's purity, and the quantity of the teaching fit for the common people; it is time to begin the

discussion about the actions of God, after which our purpose in writing this treatise will be over.

In this section we will take up five questions around which all others in this connection revolve. In the first place a proof of the creation of the universe; secondly, the advent of the prophets; thirdly, predestination and fate; fourthly, Divine justice and injustice; and fifthly, the Day of Judgment.

*Problem First: the Creation of the Universe*

The Law teaches that the universe was invented and created by God, and that it did not come into being by chance or by itself. The method adopted by the Law for proving this is not the one upon which the Asharites have depended. For we have already shown that those methods are not specially certain for the learned, nor common enough to satisfy all the classes of men. The methods which are really serviceable are those which have a very few premises, and the results of which fall very near to the commonly known ideas. But in instructing the common people the Law does not favor statements composed of long and complete reasoning, based upon different problems. So everyone who, in teaching them, adopts a different course, and interprets the Law according to it, has lost sight of its purpose and gone astray from the true path. And so also, the Law in giving illustrations for its reasoning uses only those which are present before us.

Whatever has been thought necessary for the common people to know, has been explained to them by the nearest available examples, as in the case of the day of Judgment. But whatever was unnecessary for them to know, they have been told that it was beyond their knowledge, as the words of God about the Soul [Qur'an 22.85]. Now that we have established this, it is necessary that the method adopted by the Law for teaching the creation of the universe to the common people be such as would be acknowledged by all. It is also necessary that since there cannot be found anything present to illustrate the creation of the universe the Law must have used the examples of the creation of things in the visible world.

So the method adopted by Law is that the universe was made by God. If we look intently into the verse pertaining to this subject we shall see that the method adopted is that of divine solicitude, which we know to be one of those which prove the existence of God. When a man sees a thing made in a certain shape, proportion and fashion, for a particular advantage is derived from it, and purpose which is to be attained, so that it becomes clear to him, that had it not been found in that shape, and proportion, then that advantage would have been wanting in it, he comes to know for certain that there is a maker of that thing, and that he had made it in that shape and proportion, for a set purpose. For it is not possible that all those qualities serving that purpose be collected in that thing by chance alone. For instance, if a man sees a stone on the ground in a shape fit for sitting, and finds its proportions and fashion of the same kind, then he would come to know that it was made by a maker, and that he had made it and placed it there. But when he sees nothing in it which may have made it fit for sitting then he becomes certain that its existence in the place was by chance only, without its being fashioned by any maker.

Such is also the case with the whole of the universe. For when a man sees the sun, the moon, and all the stars, which are the cause of the four seasons; of days and nights, of rain, water and winds, of the inhabitation of the parts of the earth, of the existence of man, and of the being of all the animals and the plants and of the earth being fit for the habitation of a man, and other animals living in it; and the water fit for the animals living in it; and the air fit for birds, and if there be anything amiss in this creation and edifice, the whole world would come to confusion and disorder, then he would come to know with certainty that it is not possible that this harmony in it for the different members of the universe -- man, animals, and plants -- be found by chance only.

He will know that there is one who determined it, and so one who made it by intention, and that is God, exalted and magnified may He be. He would know with certainty that the universe is a created thing, for he would necessarily think that it is not possible that in it should be found all this harmony, if it be not made by someone, and had come into existence by chance alone. This kind of argument, is quite definite and at the same time clear, and some have mentioned it here. It is based upon two principles which are acknowledged by all. One of them being, that the universe, with all its component parts, is found fit for the existence of man and things; secondly, that which is found suitable in all its parts, for a single purpose, leading to a single goal, is necessarily a created thing. So those two principles lead us naturally to admit that the universe is a created thing, and that there is a maker of it. Hence "the argument of analogy" leads to two things at one and the same time, and that is why it is the best argument for proving the existence of God. This kind of reasoning is also found in the Qur'an in many verses in which the creation of the universe is mentioned.. . .

#### *Problem Second: The Advent of the Prophets*

If we admit the existence of the prophetic mission, by putting the idea of possibility, which is in fact ignorance, in place of certainty, and make miracles a proof of the truth of man who claims to be a prophet it becomes necessary that they should not be used by a person, who says that they can be performed by others than prophets, as the Mutakallimun do. They think that the miracles can be performed by the magicians and saints. The condition which they attach with them is that miracles prove a man to be a prophet, when he at the same time claims to be so, for the true prophet can perform them as opposed to the false ones. This is an argument without any proof, for it can be understood either by hearing or reason That is, it is said that one whose claims to prophecy are wrong, cannot perform miracles, but as we have already said, when they cannot be performed by a liar, then they can only be done by the good people, whom God has meant for this purpose. These people, if they speak a lie, are not good, and hence cannot perform the miracles. But this does not satisfy the people who think miracles to be possible from the magicians, for they certainly are not good men. It is here that the weakness of the argument lies. Hence some people have thought that the best thing is to believe that they cannot be performed but by the prophets.

It is clear to you from the life of the prophet, peace be upon him, that he never invited any man or community to believe in his prophecy, and that which he has brought with

him from God, by means of the performance of any miracles in support of his claim, such as changing one element into another. Whatever miracles did appear from him were only performed in the natural course of things, without on his part any intention of contention or competition. The following words of the Qur'an will make this clear "And they say: We will by no means believe in you, until you cause a spring of water to gush forth for us out of the earth, and you have a garden of palm-trees and vines, and you cause rivers to spring forth from the midst thereof in abundance; or you cause the heaven to fall down in pieces upon us, as you have given out, or you bring down God and the angels to vouch for you; or you have a house of gold, or you ascend by a ladder to heaven; neither will we believe your ascending there alone, until you cause a book to descend unto us, bearing witness of you which we may read. Answer: My Lord be praised, Am I other than a man sent as an apostle?" [Qur'an 17.92-95]. Then again, "Nothing hindered us from sending you with miracles, except that the former nations have charged them with imposture" [Qur'an 17.61].

The thing by which we invited the people to believe in him, and with which he vied with them is the Qur'an. For, says God, "Say, verily, if men and *jinn* were purposely assembled, that they might produce a book like this Qur'an, they could not produce one like unto it, although the one of them assigned the other" [Qur'an 17.90]. Then further, he says, "will they say, He hath forged the Qur'an? Answer, bring therefore ten chapters like unto it forged by yourself" [Qur'an 11.16]. This being the case the miracle of the Prophet with which he vied with the people and which he advanced as an argument for the truth of his claim to the prophetic mission, was the Qur'an. If it be said that this is quite clear, but how does it appear that the Qur'an is a miracle, and that it proves his prophecy, while just now we have proved the weakness of the proof of prophecy by means of miracles without any exceptions in the case of any prophet. Besides, the people have differed in taking the Qur'an to be a miracle at all. For in their opinion one of the conditions of a miracle is that it should be quite different from any act which may have become habitual. But the Qur'an is of this sort, because it is only words, though it excels all created words. So it becomes a miracle by its superiority only, that is, the impossibility for people bringing anything like it, on account of its being highly eloquent. This being the case, it differs from the habitual, not in *genus* but in details only, and that which differs in this way is of the same genus. ...

### *Problem Third: Of Fate And Predestination*

This is one of the most intricate problems of religion. For if you look into the traditional arguments (*Hadith*) about this problem you will find them contradictory; such also being the case with arguments of reason. The contradiction in the arguments of the first kind is found in the Qur'an and the *Hadith*. There are many verses of the Qur'an, which by their universal nature teach that all the things are predestined and that man is compelled to do his acts; then there are verses which say that man is free in his acts and not compelled in performing them. The following verses tell us that all the things are by compulsion, and are predestined, "Everything have We created bound by a fixed degree" [Qur'an 56.49]; again, "With Him everything is regulated according to a determined measure" [Qur'an 13.9]. Further, He says, "No accident happened in the earth, nor in your persons, but the

same was entered in the Book verily it is easy with God" [Qur'an 57.22]. There may be quoted many other verses on this subject.

Now, as to the verses which say that man can acquire deeds by free will, and that things are only possible and not necessary, the following may be quoted: "Or He destroys them (by ship-wreck), because of that which their crew have merited; though He pardons many things" [Qur'an 42.32]. And again, "Whatever misfortune befalls you is sent you by God, for that which your hands have deserved" [Qur'an 42.32]. Further, He says, "But they who commit evil, equal thereunto" [Qur'an 10.28]. Again, He says, "It shall have the good which it gains, and it shall have the evil which it gains" [Qur'an 2.278]. And, "And as to Thamud, We directed them, but they loved blindness better than the true directions" [Qur'an 41.16].

Sometimes contradiction appears even in a single verse of the Qur'an. For instance, He says, "After a misfortune has befallen you (you had already attained two equal advantages), do you say, whence comes this? Answer, This is from yourselves" [Qur'an 3.159]. In the next verse, He says, "And what happened unto you, on the day whereon the two armies met, was certainly by permission of the Lord" [Qur'an 3.160]. Of this kind also is the verse, "Whatever good befalls you, O man, it is from God; and whatever evil befalls you, it is from yourself" [Qur'an 4.81]; while the preceding verse says, "All is from God" [Qur'an 4.80]. ...

Now it may be asked that if the case is so, how is this contradiction which is to be found both in *hadith* and reason to be reconciled we would say, that apparently the purpose of religion in this problem is not to divide it into two separate beliefs, but to reconcile them by means of a middle course, which is the right method. It is evident that God has created in us power by which we can perform deeds which are contradictory in their nature. But as this cannot be complete except by the cause which God has furnished for us, from outside, and the removal of difficulties from them, the deeds done are only completed by the conjunction of both these things at the same time. This being so, the deeds attributed to use are done by our intention, and by the fitness of the causes which are called the *Predestination* of God, which He has furnished for us from outside. They neither complete the works which we intend nor hinder them, but certainly become the cause of our intending them -- one of the two things. For intention is produced in us by our imagination, or for the verification of a thing, which in itself is not in our power, but comes into being by causes outside us. For instance, if we see a good thing, we like it, without intention, and move towards acquiring it. So also, if we happen to come to a thing which it is better to shun, we leave it without intention. Hence our intentions are bound and attached to causes lying outside ourselves.

...As these outside causes take this course according to a well-defined order and arrangement, and never go astray from the path which their Creator has appointed for them, and our own intentions can neither be compelled, nor ever found, on the whole, but by *their* fitness, so it is necessary that actions too should also be within well-defined limits, that is, they be found in a given period of time and in a given quantity. This is necessary because our deeds are only the effects of causes, lying outside us; and all the



effects which result from limited and prearranged causes are themselves limited, and are found in a given quantity only. This relation does not exist only between our actions and outside causes, but also between them and the causes which God has created in our body, and the well-defined order existing between the inner and outer causes. This is what is meant by Fate and predestination, which is found mentioned in the Qur'an and is incumbent upon man. ...

#### *Problem Fourth: Divine Justice and Injustice*

The Asharites have expressed a very peculiar opinion, both with regard to reason and religion; about this problem they have explained it in a way in which religion has not, but have adopted quite an opposite method. They say that in this problem the case of the invisible world is quite opposed to the visible. They think that God is just or unjust within the limits of religious actions. So when a man's action is just with regard to religion, he also is just; and whatever religion calls it to be unjust, He is unjust. They say that whatever has not been imposed as a divinely ordained duty upon men, does not come within the four walls of religion. He is neither just or unjust, but all His actions about such things are just. They have laid down that there is nothing in itself which may be called just or unjust. But to say that there is nothing which may in itself be called good or bad is simply intolerable. Justice is known as good, and injustice as bad. So according to them, polytheism is in itself neither injustice nor evil, but with regard to religion, and had religion ordained it, it would have been just and true. Such also would have been the case with any kind of sin. But all this is quite contrary to our *hadith* and reason...

#### *Problem Fifth: The Day of Judgment*

Come the Day of Judgment, some believe that the body will be different from our present body. This is only transient, that will be eternal. For this also there are religious arguments. It seems that even Abdullah ben-Abbas held this view. For it is related of him that he said, "There is nought in this world of the hereafter, but names." It seems that this view is better suited to the learned men because its possibility is based upon principles, in which there is no disagreement according to all men: the one being that the soul is immortal, and the second is that the return of the souls into other bodies does not look so impossible as the return of the bodies themselves. It is so because the material of the bodies here is found following and passing from one body to another, *i.e.*, one and the same matter is found in many people and in many different times. The example of bodies cannot be found, for their matter is the same. For instance a man dies and his body becomes dissolved into earth. The earth ultimately becomes dissolved into vegetable, which is eaten by quite a different man from whom another man comes into being. If we suppose them to be different bodies, then our aforesaid view cannot be true.

The truth about this question is this question is that man should follow that which he himself has thought out but anyhow it should not be the view which may deny the fundamental principle altogether. For this would be denying its existence. Such a belief leads to infidelity, on account of a distinct knowledge of this condition being given to man, both by religion and by human reason, which is all based upon the eternal nature of

the soul. If it be said whether there is any argument or information in the Law about this eternal nature of the soul, we would say that it is found in the Qur'an itself, where God says, "God takes unto himself the souls of men at the time of their death; and those which die not He also takes in their sleep" [Qur'an 39.43]. ...

The purpose of our writing this book is now completed. We took it up because we thought that it was the most important of all purposes -- connected with God and the Law.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Averroes>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Averroes>

<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/default.htm>

<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ir/art/ir100.htm>

## CHAPTER 33 : “THE THIRTEEN ARTICLES OF JEWISH FAITH” OF MAIMONIDES

### Background Information

Maimonides (1135–1204), or Moses ben Maimon, was a Jewish scholar, physician, and philosopher, and the most influential Jewish thinker of the Middle Ages. He was born in Córdoba in Moorish (i.e., Muslim) Spain, and he died in Cairo, Egypt. His organization and systemization of the corpus of Jewish oral law, is called the *Mishneh Torah* [the Torah Reviewed] and is still used as a standard compilation of halakah. Maimonides, in his commentary on the Mishnah, compiles what he refers to as the Shloshah-Asar Ikkarim, the Thirteen Articles of Faith, compiled from Judaism's 613 commandments found in the Torah. He also produced a number of discourses on legal topics; a work on logic; a treatise on the calendar; and several medical books, including an important work on hygiene. His great philosophical work is the *Moreh Nevukhim* (tr., *Guide for the Perplexed*, 1963), written in Arabic, in which he sought to explain esoteric ideas in the Bible, formulated a proof of the existence of God, expounded the principles of creation, and sought to elucidate baffling metaphysical and religious problems. The *Moreh Nevukhim*, which reflects Maimonides's great knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy, dominated Jewish thought and exerted a profound influence upon Christian thinkers.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

The Thirteen Articles of Jewish faith are as follows:

1. Belief in the existence of the Creator, be He Blessed, who is perfect in every manner of existence and is the Primary Cause of all that exists.
2. The belief in G-d's absolute and unparalleled unity.
3. The belief in G-d's noncorporeality, nor that He will be affected by any physical occurrences, such as movement, or rest, or dwelling.
4. The belief in G-d's eternity.
5. The imperative to worship Him exclusively and no foreign false gods.
6. The belief that G-d communicates with man through prophecy.
7. The belief that the prophecy of Moses our teacher has priority.
8. The belief in the divine origin of the Torah.
9. The belief in the immutability of the Torah.
10. The belief in divine omniscience and providence.
11. The belief in divine reward and retribution.
12. The belief in the arrival of the Messiah and the messianic era.
13. The belief in the resurrection of the dead.

### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.factmonster.com/ce6/people/A0831247.html>

[http://www.jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/mss/html/rambam\\_1.htm](http://www.jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/mss/html/rambam_1.htm)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rambam13.html>



## **CHAPTER 34 : PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL**

### **Background Information**

After the separation of the Eastern and Western churches in 1054 AD it became characteristic of the Pope to convene councils in the Roman Catholic Church. Beginning in 1123 a series of so-called Lateran Councils was held at Rome in the Church of St. John Lateran. For instance, at the Second Lateran Council in 1139, the Latin Church took its first definitive stand forbidding its priests to marry. The most important of the Lateran councils was the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), convened by the great Pope Innocent III. This council declared transubstantiation to be the accepted interpretation of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. Many precepts still binding on Roman Catholics (such as the Easter duty, or obligation, of annual confession and Holy Communion) were adopted at this council. Plus the Council reaffirmed the existence of seven sacraments, which Peter Lombard had cited in his *Sentences*.

The council also attempted to organize a new crusade to the Holy Land and to encourage crusading efforts against the Albigenses and Waldenses. This was followed by various efforts to suppress the distribution of Bibles in the vernacular, such as by the Albigenses and Waldenses. The Catholic Council of Toulouse of 1229 explicitly forbade the laity from possessing the Scriptures in any language. Certain devotional books were permitted but only in Latin, not in translation: "We prohibit also that the laity should be permitted to have the books of the Old or the New Testament; unless anyone from motives of devotion should wish to have the Psalter or the Breviary for divine offices or the hours of the blessed Virgin; but we most strictly forbid their having any translation of these books." And the Catholic Council of Tarragona in 1234 proclaimed: "No one may possess the books of the Old and New Testaments in the Romance language, and if anyone possesses them he must turn them over to the local bishop within eight days after promulgation of this decree, so that they may be burned lest, be he a cleric or a layman, he be suspected until he is cleared of all suspicion."

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

...The body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood by divine power. . . . And this sacrament no one can in any case administer except a priest who has been properly ordained...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://mb-soft.com/believe/txs/councils.htm>

<http://www.myfortress.org/CouncilofTrent.html>

## CHAPTER 35 : COMMENTARIES ON THE FOUR BOOKS OF SENTENCES OF JOHN BONAVENTURE

### Background Information

John Bonaventure (1217-1274) was a contemporary of Albertus Magnus, as well as Thomas Aquinas. He went to the University of Paris when he was 14. There he studied theology under the English Franciscan, Alexander of Hales (the "Unanswerable Doctor"); and it was perhaps the influence of this teacher that induced him to enter the order when he was 20. Having joined the Franciscans at Paris, he took the religious name of Bonaventure. He studied theology in Paris, becoming a master in 1254. Bonaventure taught at Paris from 1254 until 1257, when he was elected Minister General of the Franciscan order. Bonaventure refused the archbishopric of York in 1265, but under pressure accepted the post of cardinal of Ablino in 1273. Bonaventure resigned as Minister General in 1274 and died later that same year while taking part in the Council of Lyons.



John Bonaventure was noted as a theological scholar, and he has left us a variety of his writings. Below are excerpts from his *Commentaries on the Four Books of Sentences*. We have previously noted how many Scholastic theologians wrote commentaries on Master Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences*, and this is a good example of one.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### FOREWORD TO THE FIRST BOOK OF THE SENTENCES

*The depths of rivers He has scrutinized, and things hidden away He has brought to light.*  
Job 28:11

That word, which<sup>1</sup> is taken from the twenty-eighth chapter of Job, having been considered more diligently by us, opened the way to foreknow the fourfold kinds of cause in the Book of Sentences, namely, the *material*, the *formal*, the *efficient*, and the *final*. For the material cause is signified in the name of *rivers*, the formal cause in the investigation of *the depths*, the final cause in the revelation of *hidden things*, but the efficient cause is understood in the addition of two phrases, namely *He has scrutinized* and *He has brought to light*.

The *material* cause is hinted at<sup>2</sup> by the name of *ivers* in the plural, not the singular, to not only touch upon the matter and/or subject of the whole book in general, but even of the smaller parts of the books in detail. On account of which it must be noted, that just as there is a fourfold property of a material river, so there is a fourfold property of a spiritual river, concerning which, according to their fourfold difference, are the four Books of the Sentences. For I consider<sup>3</sup> the material river in regard to its duration, and I find its *perenniality*. For as Isidore says:<sup>4</sup> The river is a perennial flowing. I consider it as much as regards its extension, and I find its *spaciousness*. For in this a river is distinguished from a rivulet. I consider it as much as regards its motion, and I find its *circulation*. For as is said in the first chapter of Ecclesiastes:<sup>5</sup> *To the place, whence streams go forth, they return* etc.. I consider<sup>6</sup> its effect, and I find its *cleansing*. For a river, on account of the abundance of its waters, cleanses the lands, through which it runs, so that it is not polluted.<sup>7</sup> And since every one speaking figuratively [transferentes] according to some similitude, figuratively speaks,<sup>8</sup> according to the metaphor taken from this fourfold condition, a river is found to be fourfold in spiritual things, as we can gather from the Scriptures.

*First*, on account of its *perenniality* the emanation of the Persons is called a river, since that emanation alone is without beginning, without end.<sup>9</sup> Concerning this river in the seventh chapter of Daniel:<sup>10</sup> *The Ancient of Days sat, and a fiery and swift river stepped forth from His face*. That Ancient of Days is the eternal Father, whose antiquity is eternity. That Ancient One *sat*, because not only is eternity in Him, but also immutability.<sup>11</sup> *From the face of that Ancient One a fiery and swift river stepped forth*, that is, from the loftiness of His Divinity there proceeded the fullness of love and the fullness of virtue: the fullness of virtue in the Son,<sup>12</sup> for that reason the river was swift; the fullness of love in the Holy Spirit, and for that reason the river was fiery.

*Second*, on account of its *spaciousness* an extension of mundane things is called a river, because of which reason this world is called not only a river, but the sea by the Prophet in the Psalm:<sup>1</sup> *This sea, great and spacious* etc. This river is spoken of in the twenty-ninth chapter of Ezechiel:<sup>2</sup> *Behold I (come) for you Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who recline in the midst of the streams and say: "Mine is the river, and I made it Myself." I will place a bridle upon your jaws* etc. That great dragon, to whom the Lord speaks and which He threatens in the figure and person of the Pharaoh, is the Devil, who is the king of Egypt,<sup>3</sup> since he reigns in those, whom he has thoroughly blinded with the darkness of error, as heretics are reckoned to be, to whom<sup>4</sup> he also says: *Mine is the river, and I made it Myself*, as if to say that he himself had made this world and he himself has no other beginning. He mentioned this error and suggested it<sup>5</sup> for the sake of the impious Manicheans, who contend that the entire machine of visible things was established by an evil god. The jaws of this dragon the Lord *shall crush*,<sup>6</sup> when with his power to suggest false things born away, He will show, that He is the Establisher of this river; whence in the same authority it follows: *Let all the inhabitants of Egypt know, that I am the Lord*.  
...

And this depth the Master thoroughly scrutinizes in the third book. For the merit of Christ consists in two things, namely in His *Passion*, through which He redeemed us, and in His *action*, through which He formed [informavit] us, which consists in His works of virtue,

of gifts, and of precepts, of which two things is the third book. For in the first part the Incarnation and Passion are dealt with, in which consists our redemption, in the second<sup>8</sup> the virtues, gifts, and precepts, in which consist our formation [informatio]. The depth of the *sacramental dispensation* is the efficacy of a perfect medicine. For so great is the efficacy of sacramental medicine, that it exceeds the human mind, so that it can truly be called a depth. Of this (there is said) in the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah:<sup>9</sup> *Thou has placed the depth of the sea as Thy way, so that they (who) have been freed might pass over.* That depth, in which the Egyptians are submerged and the sons of Israel,<sup>10</sup> having been freed, pass over and are saved, is the efficacy of the Sacraments, in which the works of darkness are destroyed and there are conferred the arms of light and the gifts of graces, through which man is transferred from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son of God of charity. This efficacy of the Sacraments is a depth *of a sea* and *of a stream: of a sea*,<sup>11</sup> in as much as at first it frees from fault and introduces one into the bitterness of penitence; *of a stream*, in as much as it frees from misery and introduces one into the sweetness of glory.<sup>12</sup> Which was pre-signified best of all in the sons of Israel, for whom, as they went forth from Egypt, the sea was dried up, and they passed over *through dry land in its midst*, as is said in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus;<sup>13</sup> and for those entering into the land of promise the river was dried up, and they passed over through its midst, as is said in the fourth chapter of Josuah.<sup>14</sup>

This depth the Master thoroughly scrutinizes in the fourth book. For the efficacy of perfect medicine consists in two things, namely in its *healing* of a variety of depressing infirmities and in its *freeing* from the totality of worsening miseries; and of these two is the entire fourth book. For in the first part he deals with the manifold *healing*, which the seven Sacraments effect. In the second<sup>15</sup> he deals with *perfect healing*, to which they lead, as with *the glory of the resurrected*, who truly and faithfully perceived the Sacraments of the Church; and contrariwise with *the punishments of the wicked*, who contemned the Sacraments of the Church.

Moreover from the thorough scrutiny of the four depths in the four books there is elicited their *end*, namely the revelation of *four hidden things*.

The First is *the magnitude of the Divine Substance*, of which in the forty-fifth<sup>1</sup> chapter of Isaiah (it is said): *Truly Thou art a God hidden away, the God of Israel, the Savior.* Truly the magnitude of the Divine Substance is hidden away according to that (which is said) in the twenty-sixth<sup>2</sup> chapter of Job: *Since we have scarcely heard a tiny drop of His speech, who can gaze at the magnitude of His thunder?* Certainly no one can gaze upon it, except him, with whom the wisdom of God dwells. On account of this that lover of wisdom asked, in the ninth chapter of Wisdom:<sup>3</sup> *Send her from Thy holy heavens and from the throne of Thy magnitude.*

This hidden thing the Master, replete with wisdom from on high, brought to light through the thorough scrutiny of the first book. For with the noblest emanations and noblest properties seen and known, there becomes known [innotescit] to us, according to what is possible for travelers, the magnitude of the Divine Substance.

The second hidden thing is *the order of Divine Wisdom*, of which in the twenty-eighth<sup>4</sup> chapter of Job (it is said): *Where is wisdom found? and what is the place of understanding? it is hidden away from the eyes of all the living*. Truly hidden away, because, as is said in the same place,<sup>5</sup> *wisdom is brought from hidden places*; thus, for her to become known [cognoscatur], there needs to be a thorough scrutiny not of the profundity in her, but (of that) in her works, in which she herself glitters. Whence it is said in the first<sup>6</sup> chapter of Ecclesiasticus, that *one is the Most High Creator, who pours her forth upon all His works...*

Therefore the public-exhibition [propalatio] of hidden things is the general end of the book, to which the Master of the Sentences, wanting to be lead and to lead, *has thoroughly scrutinized the depths of the previous rivers* by the grace of the Holy Spirit. For He is the chief thorough-scrutinizer of secrets and depths, according to that which is said in the second chapter of the First (Letter) to the Corinthians:<sup>16</sup> *The Spirit thoroughly scrutinizes all things, even the depths of God*. Driven by the charity of this Spirit and brightened by (His) light and clarity, the Master composed this work and scrutinized the depths of rivers; with this Spirit also helping, he has become the revealer of things hidden away. For he is that very one, of whom it is written in the second chapter of Daniel:<sup>17</sup> *He reveals depths and things hidden away; and he knows / those things constituted in darkness*.

constituted in darkness. And this was the intention and purpose [finis] of the Master, according to what he himself says in the Prologue: "Desiring, he said, to exalt a light of truth upon a candlestick, we have compiled this volume in sweat and much labor, with God as our witness, from the testimonies of truth founded upon eternity." And a little before this he had said, that his proposal is "to lay open the concealed things of theological inquiries".

Therefore it is clear in the word proposed (from Job) in the present book, (that) the material, formal, efficient and final cause (are hinted at)."

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.franciscan-archive.org/bonaventura/opera/bon01001.html>

## **CHAPTER 36 : “THE MIND'S ROAD TO GOD“ OF JOHN BONAVENTURE**

### **Background Information**

Below is an excerpt from another of Bonaventure's writings. It displays Bonaventure's devout character, as well as his various doctrinal errors. The monastic orders, such as that of the Franciscans founded by Francis of Assisi in the 12'th century, were well intentioned, albeit flawed, efforts to enhance spirituality and devotion in the midst of an increasingly worldly Christendom. But by the time of the Reformation the Franciscans and the Dominicans themselves were already well known for their vice and superstition.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

#### **PROLOGUE**

1. To begin with, the first principle from Whom all illumination descends as from the Father of Light, by Whom are given all the best and perfect gifts [James, 1, 17], the eternal Father do I call upon through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that by the intercession of the most holy Virgin Mary, mother of God Himself and of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and of the blessed Francis, our father and leader, He may enlighten the eyes of our mind to guide our feet into the way of that peace "which surpasses all understanding" [Eph., 1, 17; Luke, 1, 79; Phil., 4, 7], which peace our Lord Jesus Christ has announced and given to us; which lesson our father Francis always taught, in all of whose preaching was the annunciation of peace both in the beginning and in the end, wishing for peace in every greeting, yearning for ecstatic peace in every moment of contemplation, as a citizen of that Jerusalem of which that man of peace said, with those that hated peace he was peaceable [Ps., 119, 7], "Pray ye for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem" [Ps., 121, 6]. For he knew that the throne of Solomon was nowise save in peace, since it is written, "His place is in peace and His abode in Sion" [Ps., 75, 3].

2. Since, then, following the example of the most blessed father Francis, I breathlessly sought this peace, I, a sinner, who have succeeded to the place of that most blessed father after his death, the seventh Minister General of the brothers, though in all ways unworthy--it happened that by the divine will in the thirty-third year after the death of that blessed man I ascended to Mount Alverna as to a quiet place, with the desire of seeking spiritual peace; and staying there, while I meditated on the ascent of the mind to God, amongst other things there occurred that miracle which happened in the same place to the blessed Francis himself, the vision namely of the winged Seraph in the likeness of the Crucified. While looking upon this vision, I immediately saw that it signified the suspension of our

father himself in contemplation and the way by which he came to it.

3. For by those six wings are rightly to be understood the six stages of illumination by which the soul, as if by steps or progressive movements, was disposed to pass into peace by ecstatic elevations of Christian wisdom. The way, however, is only through the most burning love of the Crucified, Who so transformed Paul, "caught up into the third heaven" [II Cor., 12, 2], into Christ, that he said, "With Christ I am nailed to the cross, yet I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" [Gal., 2, 19]; who therefore so absorbed the mind of Francis that his soul was manifest in his flesh and he bore the most holy stigmata of the Passion in his body for two years before his death. Therefore the symbol of the six-winged Seraph signifies the six stages of illumination, which begin with God's creatures and lead up to God, to Whom no one can enter properly save through the Crucified. For he who does not enter by the door but otherwise, he is a thief and a robber [John, 10, 1]. But if anyone does enter by this door, he shall go in and go out and shall find pastures [John, 9]. Because of this John says in his Apocalypse [22, 14], "Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life and may enter in by the gates into the City"; as if he were to say that one cannot enter into the heavenly Jerusalem through contemplation unless one enter through the blood of the Lamb as through a gate. For one is not disposed to contemplation which leads to mental elevation unless one be with Daniel a man of desires [Dan., 9, 23]. But desires are kindled in us in two ways: by the cry of prayer, which makes one groan with the murmuring of one's heart, and by a flash of apprehension by which the mind turns most directly and intensely to the rays of light [Ps., 37, 9].

4. Therefore to the cry of prayer through Christ crucified, by Whose blood we are purged of the filth of vice, do I first invite the reader, lest perchance he should believe that it suffices to read without unction, speculate without devotion, investigate without wonder, examine without exultation, work without piety, know without love, understand without humility, be zealous without divine grace, see without wisdom divinely inspired. Therefore to those predisposed by divine grace, to the humble and the pious, to those filled with compunction and devotion, anointed with the oil of gladness [Ps., 44, 8], to the lovers of divine wisdom, inflamed with desire for it, to those wishing to give themselves over to praising God, to wondering over Him and to delighting in Him, do I propose the following reflections, hinting that little or nothing is the outer mirror unless the mirror of the mind be clear and polished.

Bestir yourself then, O man of God, you who previously resisted the pricks of conscience, before you raise your eyes to the rays of wisdom shining in that mirror, lest by chance you fall into the lower pit of shadows from the contemplation of those rays.

5. I have decided to divide my treatise into seven chapters, heading them with titles so that their contents may be the more easily understood. I ask therefore that one think rather of the intention of the writer than of his work, of the sense of the words rather than the rude speech, of truth rather than beauty, of the exercise of the affections rather than the erudition of the intellect. That such may come about, the progress of these thoughts must not be perused lightly, but should be meditated upon in greatest deliberation...

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://home.sandiego.edu/~macy/Bonaventure.html>

<http://www.franciscan-archive.org/bonaventura/index.html#COMMENTARIA>

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/SOURCES/ROAD.TXT>



## **CHAPTER 37 : “PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION“ OF JOHN BONAVENTURE**

### **Background Information**

Below is an excerpt from another of Bonaventure's writings, again displaying his devout character.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

Pierce, O most sweet Lord Jesus, my inmost soul with the most joyous and healthful wound of Thy love, and with true, calm and most holy apostolic charity, that my soul may ever languish and melt with entire love and longing for Thee, may yearn for Thee and for thy courts, may long to be dissolved and to be with Thee. Grant that my soul may hunger after Thee, the Bread of Angels, the refreshment of holy souls, our daily and supersubstantial bread, having all sweetness and savor and every delightful taste. May my heart ever hunger after and feed upon Thee, Whom the angels desire to look upon, and may my inmost soul be filled with the sweetness of Thy savor; may it ever thirst for Thee, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the fulness of the house of God; may it ever compass Thee, seek Thee, find Thee, run to Thee, come up to Thee, meditate on Thee, speak of Thee, and do all for the praise and glory of Thy name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, with perseverance to the end; and be Thou alone ever my hope, my entire confidence, my riches, my delight, my pleasure, my joy, my rest and tranquility, my peace, my sweetness, my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help, my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure; in Whom may my mind and my heart be ever fixed and firm and rooted immovably. Amen.

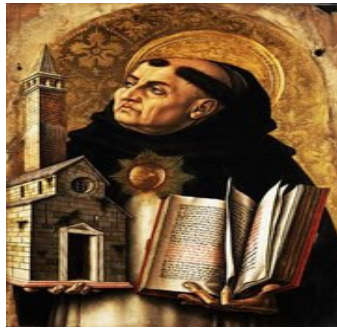
### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/PRAYER/BONAVENT.TXT>

## CHAPTER 38 : *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* OF THOMAS AQUINAS

### Background Information

Averroes, as we have previously seen, posed a significant challenge to Medieval Catholicism. He had sought to show how Aristotelian logic, which scholars of the High Middle Ages highly esteemed, refuted Catholicism. Albertus Magnus, along with his student Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), sought to show how Catholicism was consistent with Aristotelian logic. In the process of this philosophical argumentation, Aquinas came to be regarded as the preeminent Catholic theologian. Indeed, Aquinas gave birth to the Thomistic school of philosophy, which has long been the primary philosophical approach of the Roman Catholic Church, and he is considered by the Roman Catholic Church to be her greatest theologian. At the Council of Trent of the Roman Catholic Church, of which we shall read about in our subsequent study of Reformation literature, only two books were placed on the Altar, the Bible and Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, the latter a testimony to Aquinas' influence, but also a testimony to the fact that the Church came to put the words of man on par with the word of God.



Aquinas' principal theological works are a commentary in three volumes on the *Books of the Sentences* of Peter Lombard (*Magister Sententiarum*), and the *Summa Theologiae* in two volumes. This last is in substance a repetition of the first in a more didactic form. The *Summa Theologiae* attempts to present all of Christian theology as systematically as possible. Thomas worked on it from 1266 through 1273. Then, when he was nearly finished, he underwent an experience so intense that, as he himself explained, everything he had written seemed like straw. He completely stopped writing and died three months later.

The *Summa theologiae* is written in a form common to treatises of that age. All of theology is divided into its major topics. These, in turn, are divided into subtopics described by Thomas as 'questions.' The first "question" in the *Summa Theologiae* deals with the nature of theology itself, the second with God's existence. The 'questions' are in turn divided into what Thomas calls "articles," specific queries concerning the topic being explored in that particular "question." (Thus, confusingly enough, what Thomas calls "questions" are actually general topics, whereas what he calls "articles" are really what we would mean by the word "questions.") These "articles" form the basic unit of the *Summa theologiae*, and they proceed according to an invariable form. A specific query is made, then a section beginning with the word *videtur* ("it seems that") offers arguments

for what will later turn out to be the wrong answer to that query. Next, a brief section beginning with the words *sed contra* ("but on the contrary") introduces a different answer. A section labeled *responsio* ("response") finally presents arguments for what Thomas considers the correct view. The question then closes with a refutation of the arguments presented in the *videtur* section. The following selection consists of the prologue and first two questions of the *Summa theologiae*. Some articles of the first question are omitted, but those included are given in their entirety.

## **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

### **Prologue**

Since a teacher of catholic truth should instruct not only the advanced but beginners as well - as St. Paul says, "Like babes in Christ I fed you milk and not meat" (I Cor. 3:1) - our intention in this work is to convey the content of the Christian religion in a way fit for the training of beginners. We have seen that novices in this study are greatly hindered by the various writings on the subject. They are hindered partly because of the multiplication of useless questions, articles and arguments in these writings; partly because the order in which essential material is delivered in these writings is determined, not by the nature of doctrine itself, but by the books on which the writings are commenting; and partly because frequent repetition has bred boredom and confusion in the minds of hearers.

Eager to avoid these and other pitfalls we shall now attempt to examine the content of sacred doctrine briefly and clearly, so far as the material allows, twisting in God's aid.

Question 1: Sacred doctrine, what it is and what it includes.

In order to contain our investigation within limits, we must first investigate sacred doctrine itself, asking what it is and how far it extends. Ten questions must be asked.

1. Whether it is necessary
2. Whether it is a science
3. Whether it is one or many
4. Whether it is speculative or practical
5. How it compares with other sciences
6. Whether it is wisdom
7. What is its subject
8. Whether it is argumentative
9. Whether it should use metaphorical or symbolic language
10. Whether the sacred scripture containing this doctrine is to be interpreted according to several senses.

Article 1: Whether it is necessary to have another doctrine besides the philosophical disciplines.

Let us proceed to the first point. It seems that there is no necessity for any doctrine beyond the philosophical disciplines. Man should not strive after that which is beyond his reason. As Ecclesiastics says, "Do not be curious about what is above you" (Ecclus. 3:22). The things which can be investigated by reason are sufficiently covered in the philosophical disciplines, however. Thus it seems superfluous to have some doctrine beyond the philosophical disciplines.

Furthermore, any doctrine can deal only with that which is; for nothing can be known except that which is true, and that which is true is identical with that which is. Yet everything other signification, through which the things signified by the words signify something else in turn, is called the spiritual sense. It is based on the literal sense and presupposes it.

But on the contrary Paul says, "All divinely-inspired scripture is useful for teaching, arguing, correcting and instructing in justice" (II Tim. 3:16). Divinely- inspired scripture does not pertain to philosophical disciplines, however, for they are discovered by human reason. Thus it is useful to have another, divinely- inspired doctrine besides the philosophical disciplines.

Response: It must be said that, besides the philosophical disciplines which are investigated by human reason, another doctrine based on revelation was necessary for human well-being. Such is true, in the first place, because man is ordered by God to a certain end which exceeds the grasp of reason. As Isaiah says, "Eye has not seen, God, without you, what you have prepared for those who love you" (Isa. 64:4). The end must be fore known to man, however, since he must order his intentions and actions to that end. Thus it was necessary to human well-being that certain things exceeding human reason be made known to man through divine revelation.

Even in the case of those things which can be investigated by human reason, it was necessary for man to be instructed by divine revelation. The truth concerning God, if left to human reason alone, would have appeared only to a few, and only after a long search, and even then mixed with many errors; yet all of man's well-being, which is in God, depends on knowledge of this truth. Thus, in order that this well-being should become known to men more commonly and more securely, it was necessary that they be instructed by divine revelation.

Thus it was necessary that, besides the philosophical doctrines which can be investigated by reason, there be a sacred doctrine known through revelation.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that, although what is above human knowledge should not be investigated by reason, once revealed by God it should be accepted through faith. Thus it is added in the same chapter of Ecclesiasticus, "Many things above human understanding are shown to you" (Ecclus. 3:25). Sacred doctrine consists of these things.

To the second argument it must be said that there are diverse sciences because things can be known in various ways. For example, the astronomer and the natural philosopher both demonstrate the same conclusion, such as that the world is round; yet the astronomer does so through mathematics, while the natural philosopher does so in a way that takes matter into account. Thus there is no reason why those things treated by the philosophical disciplines through natural reason should not also be treated by another science insofar as they are known by the light of divine revelation. Thus the theology which pertains to sacred doctrine differs from that theology which is a part of philosophy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Article 5: Whether sacred doctrine is worthier than the other sciences.

Let us proceed to the fifth point. It seems that sacred doctrine is not worthier than other sciences. Certitude contributes to the worth of a science; yet other sciences, the premises of which cannot be doubted, seem to be more certain than sacred doctrine, the principles of which (that is, the articles of faith) are open to doubt.

Furthermore, it is characteristic of a lower science to draw on a higher one, just as music draws on arithmetic. Sacred doctrine draws from the philosophical disciplines, for Jerome says that "the ancient teachers so filled their books with the doctrines and opinions of philosophers that you do not know which to marvel at first, their worldly erudition or their knowledge of the scriptures." Thus sacred doctrine is inferior to other sciences.

But on the contrary, other sciences are called the maidservants of this one. Proverbs says, "She has sent her servants to invite to the tower (Prov. 9:3).

Response: It must be said that, since this science is practical in one respect and speculative in another, it transcends all other sciences, both speculative and practical. Among the speculative sciences, one is said to be worthier than another either because of its certainty or because of the worth of its subject. This science exceeds all others on both counts. It does so in regard to certainty because other sciences gain their certainty through the light of natural reason, which can err, whereas this one gains its certainty through the light of divine wisdom, which cannot be deceived. It does so in regard to the dignity of its matter because this science deals principally with things which transcend reason, being above it, whereas other sciences consider only those things which are subject to reason.

Among the practical sciences, one is said to be worthier if it is ordered to a higher end. Thus the study of politics is worthier than that of warfare because the good of an army is ordered to the good of the city it serves. The end of this science insofar as it is practical is eternal bliss, to which all other practical sciences are ordered as the ultimate end. Thus it is evident that this science is worthier than all others in every way.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that there is nothing to prevent that which is more certain in itself from being less certain to us because of the weakness of our

intellects, which, as Aristotle says, "are related to the most evident things as the eyes of a bat are to the sun." Thus the doubt some people experience regarding articles of the faith is not due to their uncertainty, but to the weakness of the human mind. Nevertheless, as Aristotle observes, the smallest inkling of the highest matters is more desirable than certain knowledge of the least important matters.

To the second argument it must be said that this science can borrow something from the philosophical disciplines, not because it needs to do so, but in order to clarify its content. For it accepts its principles, not from other sciences, but immediately from God through revelation. Thus it does not receive from other sciences as from superiors, but rather uses them as inferiors and servants, just as an architect uses workers or a statesman uses soldiers. Moreover, its use of other sciences is due, not to any defect or insufficiency within itself, but to a defect in our intellect, which are more easily led to the things above reason set forth in this science if they travel by way of those things known through natural reason, which is the source of other sciences.

\* \* \* \* \*

Article 8: Whether one can defend this doctrine through argument.

Thus we proceed to the eighth point. It seems that this doctrine cannot be defended through argument, for Ambrose says, "Away with argument where faith is sought!" Faith, however, is primarily sought in this doctrine, for as John says, "These things are written in order that you may believe" (Jn. 20:30). Thus sacred doctrine cannot be defended through argument.

But on the contrary, Paul says that a bishop should "embrace the faithful word according to sound doctrine, so that he will be able to exhort in sound doctrine and argue with those who deny it" (Titus 1:9).

Response: It must be said that other sciences do not argue to prove their premises, but rather argue from these premises to establish other things within the particular science. Thus this doctrine does not argue to prove its premises, which are the articles of faith, but proceeds from them to establish other things, just as the apostle Paul argues from the resurrection of Christ to prove a general resurrection (I Cor. 15:12).

It must be born in mind, then, that within the philosophical sciences the inferior sciences neither prove their principles nor dispute with those who deny them. They leave that task to a superior science. The supreme philosophical science, metaphysics, can dispute against someone who denies its premises only if the adversary will concede something. If he concedes nothing, then debate is impossible, although it may still be possible to show that the adversary's argument is invalid.

Thus sacred scripture, having no superior, can debate with one who denies its premises only if the adversary concedes some part of divine revelation. In this way we debate with heretics on the basis of sacred doctrine, using one article which they accept to support

another which they deny. If the adversary believes nothing of what is revealed in sacred doctrine, then there is no way left to prove the articles of faith through reason. It is still possible to refute arguments advanced against the faith, however. Since the faith rests upon infallible truth and it is impossible to prove what is contrary to truth, it is clear that arguments against the faith are not really proofs and can be refuted.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that the arguments of human reason cannot prove the faith, but one can argue from articles of faith to other conclusions, as was said above.

To the second, it must be said that argument from authority is very appropriate to this doctrine, since its premises are derived from revelation. Thus one must believe in the authority of those to whom the revelation was given. Nor does this fact derogate from the worth of this doctrine, for an argument from authority may be the weakest kind when it is based on human revelation, but it is the strongest kind when based on divine revelation.

Nevertheless, sacred doctrine also uses human reason. It does so not to prove the faith - for that would detract from the merit of faith - but to clarify some of its implications. Therefore, since grace protects nature rather than erasing it, natural reason should serve faith just as the natural inclination of the will obeys love. The apostle Paul speaks of "bringing every understanding into captivity in the service of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). Thus sacred doctrine appeals to the authority of philosophers in those areas where they were able to arrive at the truth through natural reason, just as Paul employs a passage from Aratus, saying, "As some of your poets have said, we are the offspring of God" (Acts 17:28).

Nevertheless, sacred doctrine employs such authorities only insofar as they can provide extraneous arguments, the proofs of which are probable rather than certain. It appeals to the authority of canonical scripture as an authority proper to itself, that of the teachers of the church, but here again the arguments are merely probable. For our faith rests on the revelation made to the apostles and prophets who wrote the canonical books, and not on any revelation (if such there was) made to teachers. Thus Augustine says in his letter to Jerome, "Only to those books of the scripture called 'canonical' have I learned to pay such honor that I believe no author to have erred in writing them. Other writers I read in such a way that, whatever holiness and learning they display, I do not consider what they say to be true simply because they say it."

Article 9: Whether holy scripture should use metaphorical or symbolic language.

Thus we proceed to the ninth point. It seems that holy scripture should not use metaphors. That which is proper to a lower type of learning does not seem fitting for this science, which, as has been said, holds the highest place. It is proper to poetry, the lowest type of learning, to proceed through various similitudes and representations, however. Thus the use of such similitudes is not fitting for this science.

Furthermore, it seems that the purpose of this doctrine is to make the truth appear plainly, and there is a reward promised to those who do so. Ecclesiasticus says, "Those who explain me shall have eternal life" (Ecclus. 24:31). The truth is hidden through similitudes, however. Thus it is unfitting for this doctrine to convey divine matters through similitudes taken from the corporeal world.

Furthermore, the more sublime creatures are, the more similar they are to God. If, then, some properties of created beings are used in speaking of God, then they should be taken from higher rather than lower creatures. This is, however, frequently the case in scripture.

But on the contrary, in Hosea God says, "I have multiplied visions in them and I have used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets" (Hos. 12:10). To communicate something by similitude is to speak metaphorically. Thus sacred doctrine employs metaphors.

Response: It must be said that the communication of divine and spiritual things through corporeal similitudes is quite fitting for holy scripture. God provides for all things according to their natures. It is natural for man to attain knowledge through the use of sensible things, for all of our knowledge begins with sense experience. Thus in sacred scripture spiritual matters are quite properly conveyed to us through metaphors taken from the corporeal world. That is what Dionysius means when he says, "The divine rays cannot illuminate us unless they are wrapped in many sacred veils.

The presentation of spiritual matters through corporeal similitudes is also fitting because holy scripture is addressed to all of us in common. As Paul says, "I am a debtor to the wise and to the foolish" (Rom. 1:14). Scripture discusses spiritual matters in the form of physical likenesses so that they can be understood by the uneducated, who are incapable of understanding them in themselves.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that poetry uses metaphors for the sake of representation, for representation is naturally delightful to man. Sacred doctrine, however, uses metaphors because they are necessary and useful, as has been said.

To the second it must be said that the ray of divine revelation is not destroyed by the sensible figures veiling it, but, as Dionysius says, it remains in its truth in order that the minds receiving the revelation should not be permitted to stay on the level of the similitudes but should be raised to an understanding of the ideas behind them, and so that others should be instructed by those to whom the revelation is made. To this end the things conveyed through metaphor in one part of scripture are more directly explained in other parts.

Moreover, veiling the message in metaphor has certain advantages. It is good training for scholars and guards the faith against ridicule by infidels, of whom Christ speaks when he says, "Do not throw that which is holy to the dogs" (Mtt. 7:6).



In reply to the third, it must be said that, as Dionysius teaches, divine things are more fittingly conveyed in scripture by the images of vile bodies than by images of noble bodies. There are three reasons why this is so. First, it guards us against error, since there can be no doubt that such images are not literally true. If divine things were described in terms of noble bodies, such a mistake might be made, particularly by those who can think of nothing nobler than a body. Second, because this practice is more appropriate to the knowledge of God attained in this life, when we see what God is not more clearly than what he is. Thus similitudes taken from things furthest removed from God give us a truer picture of him in the sense that they convey how far above our word or thought he really is. Third, because in this way divine things are more effectively hidden from the unworthy.

Article 10: Whether the same passage of holy scripture can have several senses.

Thus we proceed to the tenth point. It seems that the same passage of holy scripture cannot have several senses, namely the historical or literal, the allegorical, the tropological or moral, and the anagogical. Multiple senses in scripture prepare the way for confusion and deception. They also compromise coherent reasoning. From several propositions there results, not an argument, but a collection of fallacies. Sacred scripture, however, should display the truth without any fallacy whatsoever. Thus there should not be several senses in the same passage.

Furthermore, Augustine says, "The scripture which is called 'The Old Testament' has a fourfold meaning, namely history, etiology, analogy and allegory." These four seem inconsistent with the aforementioned. Thus it does not seem fitting that the same passage of sacred scripture should be expounded according to the four aforementioned senses.

Furthermore, there is also a parabolic sense, which does not seem to be included among these four senses.

But on the contrary Gregory says, "Sacred scripture transcends all other sciences in the manner of its expression, because in one and the same statement, while narrating an event, it proclaims a mystery."

Response: It must be said that the author of sacred scripture is God, who has the power not only to use words in expressing himself - men can do that much - but of using things as well. Thus, since words signify something in any science, this science is special in that not only the words but the things signified by the words signify something. The primary signification, through which words signify things, is called the literal or historical sense. That *signification whereby things signified by words have themselves also a signification is called the spiritual sense, which is based on the literal, and presupposes it. Now this spiritual sense has a threefold division.*

[This phrase in italics was missing in the base file for this text, and has been supplied from the Dominican Fathers' translation.]

This spiritual sense is itself divided in a threefold way. Paul says, "The Old Law is a figure of the New Law" (Heb. 7:19), and the New Law is, as Dionysius says, "a figure of the glory to come." Moreover, in the New Law the things that are done are signs of what we ourselves should do.

Thus, insofar as things in the Old Law signify things in the New Law, we have the allegorical sense. Insofar as things done by Christ or by those who prefigure Christ are signs of what we ourselves should do, we have the moral sense. Insofar as they signify what is involved in eternal glory, we have the anagogical sense.

Because the literal sense is what the author intends, and because the author of sacred scripture is God who contains all things within his understanding, there is nothing impossible about even the literal sense containing several meanings, as Augustine suggests.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that manifold senses do not lead to equivocation or to any other type of ambiguity, for, as was just said, these senses are not multiplied in such a way that a single word signifies several things, but rather because the things signified by these words can be signs of still other things. Thus no confusion follows from the reading of sacred scripture, for all other senses are founded on the literal sense. From it alone arguments can be drawn, and not from what is said allegorically, as Augustine explains in his letter against Vincent the Donatist. Nor does this fact detract in any way from sacred scripture, for nothing necessary to the faith is said in a spiritual sense which is not explicitly stated in the literal sense elsewhere.

To the second argument it must be said that these three things - history, etiology and analogy - belong to a single literal sense. It is history when, as Augustine explains, something is straightforwardly reported. It is etiology when the cause of that thing is explained, as when God explains why Moses permitted the repudiation of wives, namely because of the hardness of their hearts. It is analogy when the truth of one scripture is shown to be consistent with the truth of another. Among the four, allegory alone stands for the spiritual senses. In the same way, Hugh of St. Victor includes the anagogical sense under the allegorical and enumerates only three senses: The historical, allegorical and tropological.

To the third it must be said that the parabolic sense is included under the literal, for words can signify something properly and something else figuratively. In the latter case, the literal sense is not the figure of speech itself but the thing figured by it. For example, when scripture refers to the arm of God, the literal sense is not that God has a physical limb, but that he has what that limb signifies, namely the power to do things. Thus it is clear that no falsehood can ever underlie the literal sense of sacred scripture.

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Question 2: Concerning God, whether God exists

As to this question, there are three points of inquiry:

1. Whether God's existence is self-evident
2. Whether it can be demonstrated
3. Whether God exists.

Article 1: Whether God's existence is self-evident.

Thus we proceed to the first point. It seems that God's existence is self-evident, for those things are said by us to be self-evident the knowledge of which is naturally within us, as is the case with first principles. But, as John of Damascus says, "The knowledge of God's existence is naturally implanted in all things." Therefore God's existence is self-evident.

Furthermore, those things are said to be self-evident the truth of which is obvious once the meaning of the words is clear. For example, when we understand the means of the words "whole" and "part," we immediately realize that every whole is greater than its part. Once we understand the meaning of the word "God," however, it immediately follows that God exists. The word itself signifies "that being a greater than which cannot be signified." That which exists in fact and in the mind is greater than that which exists in the mind alone. Thus, since the moment we understand the meaning of the word "God" he exists in our minds, it follows that he must also exist in fact. Thus God's existence is self-evident.

Furthermore, it is self-evident that truth exists, for whoever denies the existence of truth simultaneously concedes its existence. If truth does not exist, then it is true that truth does not exist; yet if something is true, then truth exists. God, however, is truth itself. "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Therefore God's existence is self-evident.

But on the contrary, no one can think the opposite of what is self-evident, as Aristotle remarks. One can, however, think the opposite of the proposition "God exists," for, as the Psalm says, "The fool says in his heart, 'there is no God.'" (Ps. 13:1, 52:1). Thus it is not self-evident that God exists.

Response: It must be said that a thing can be called "self-evident" in two- ways, in itself and in relation to us. A proposition is self-evident when its predicate is included in the definition of its subject. For example, in the proposition "man is an animal," the idea of "animal" is included in the definition of "man." Thus if everyone knows the definitions of both subject and predicate, the proposition will be self-evident to all, as is the case with the first principles of demonstration, the terms of which are so common that no one is ignorant of them, such as "being" and "nonbeing," "whole" and "part," etc. If, the proposition may be self-evident in itself, but not to them. Thus it happens, as Boethius says, that some things are common conceptions of the mind" and are self-evident "among the learned only, such as that incorporeal beings do not occupy a place."

I say, therefore, that this proposition, "God exists," is self-evident in itself, since the predicate is the same as the subject. For God is his own existence, as will be seen later.

Nevertheless, because we do not know what is involved in being God, the proposition is not self-evident to us, but needs to be demonstrated through those things that are more evident to us though less evident to themselves, namely God's effects.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that a general and confused knowledge of God's existence is naturally infused within us, for God is man's beatitude and man naturally desires beatitude. What man naturally desires he naturally knows. This is not to know God's existence specifically, however. It is one thing to know that someone is approaching and quite another to know that Peter is approaching, even though that someone may actually be Peter. Many people think that the perfect good of man called "beatitude" is wealth, some imagine it to be pleasure, and so on.

To the second argument it must be said that he who hears the name "God" may perhaps not know that it signifies "something greater than which cannot be conceived," since some people have thought of God as a body. Granting, however, that someone should think of God in this way, namely as "that being a greater than which cannot be conceived," it does not follow on this account that the person must understand what is signified to exist in the world of fact, but only in the mind. Nor can one argue that it exists in fact unless one grants that there actually exists in fact something a greater than which cannot be conceived. It is, however, precisely this assertion the atheist denies.

To the third, it must be said that the existence of truth in general is self-evident to us, but it is not self-evident that this particular being is the primal truth.

Article 2: Whether God's existence is demonstrable.

We proceed thus to the second point. It seems that God's existence is not demonstrable, for it is an article of faith. What is a matter of faith cannot be demonstrable, for demonstration allows one to know, whereas faith, as Paul says, is in "things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Therefore God's existence is not demonstrable.

Furthermore, the central link in any demonstration is a definition; yet we cannot know what God is, but only what he is not, as John of Damascus says. Therefore we cannot demonstrate God's existence.

Furthermore, if God's existence were demonstrable, this could only be through his effects; yet his effects are not proportionate to him, for he is infinite, his effects are infinite, and there is no proportion between the two. Therefore, since a cause cannot be demonstrated through an effect which is not proportioned to it, it seems that God's existence cannot be demonstrated.

But on the contrary Paul says, "The invisible things of God are understood by the things that are made" (Romans 1:20). Such could not be the case unless God's existence could be demonstrated by the things that are made, for the first thing to be understood about a thing is whether it exists.

Response: It must be said that there are two types of demonstration. One is through the cause, is called a demonstration *propter quid*, and argues from what is prior in an absolute sense. The other is through the effect, is called a demonstration *quia*, and argues from what is prior according to our perspectives; for when an effect is better known to us than its cause, we proceed from the effect to knowledge of the cause. In situations where the effect is better known to us than the cause, the existence of the cause can be demonstrated from that of the effect, since the effect depends on the cause and can only exist if the cause already does so. Thus God's existence, though not self-evident to us, can be demonstrated through his effects.

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that God's existence and other things about him which (as Paul says) can be known by natural reason are not articles of faith but preambles to the articles of faith. For faith presupposes natural knowledge just as grace presupposes nature and perfection presupposes something which can be perfected. Nothing prohibits what is demonstrable and knowable in itself from being accepted on faith by someone who does not understand the demonstration.

To the second it must be said that, when a cause is demonstrated through its effect, the effect substitutes for the definition of the cause within the demonstration. This is particularly true in arguments concerning God. When we prove that something exists, the middle term in the demonstration is what we are taking the word to mean for purposes of the demonstration, not what the thing signified by the word actually is (since the latter, the actual nature of the thing in question, is determined only after we determine that it exists). In demonstrating that God exists, we can take as our middle term definition of what this word "God" means for us, for, as we shall see, the words we use in connection with God are derived from his effects.

To the third, it must be said that perfect knowledge of a cause cannot be derived from an effect that is not proportionate to the cause. Nevertheless, the existence of the cause can be demonstrated clearly from the existence of the effects, even though we cannot know the cause perfectly according to its essence.

Article 3: Whether God exists.

Thus we proceed to the third point. It seems that God does not exist, for if one of two contrary things were infinite, its opposite would be completely destroyed. By "God," however, we mean some infinite good. Therefore, if God existed evil would not. Evil does exist in the world, however. Therefore God does not exist.

Furthermore, one should not needlessly multiply elements in an explanation. It seems that we can account for everything we see in this world on the assumption that God does not exist. All natural effects can be traced to natural causes, and all contrived effects can be traced to human reason and will. Thus there is no need to suppose that God exists.

But on the contrary God says, "I am who I am" (Ex. 3:14).

Response: It must be said that God's existence can be proved in five ways. The first and most obvious way is based on the existence of motion. It is certain and in fact evident to our senses that some things in the world are moved. Everything that is moved, however, is moved by something else, for a thing cannot be moved unless that movement is potentially within it. A thing moves something else insofar as it actually exists, for to move something is simply to actualize what is potentially within that thing. Something can be led thus from potentiality to actuality only by something else which is already actualized. For example, a fire, which is actually hot, causes the change or motion whereby wood, which is potentially hot, becomes actually hot. Now it is impossible that something should be potentially and actually the same thing at the same time, although it could be potentially and actually different things. For example, what is actually hot cannot at the same moment be actually cold, although it can be actually hot and potentially cold. Therefore it is impossible that a thing could move itself, for that would involve simultaneously moving and being moved in the same respect. Thus whatever is moved must be moved by something, else, etc. This cannot go on to infinity, however, for if it did there would be no first mover and consequently no other movers, because these other movers are such only insofar as they are moved by a first mover. For example, a stick moves only because it is moved by the hand. Thus it is necessary to proceed back to some prime mover which is moved by nothing else, and this is what everyone means by "God."

The second way is based on the existence of efficient causality. We see in the world around us that there is an order of efficient causes. Nor is it ever found (in fact it is impossible) that something is its own efficient cause. If it were, it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Nevertheless, the order of efficient causes cannot proceed to infinity, for in any such order the first is cause of the middle (whether one or many) and the middle of the last. Without the cause, the effect does not follow. Thus, if the first cause did not exist, neither would the middle and last causes in the sequence. If, however, there were an infinite regression of efficient causes, there would be no first efficient cause and therefore no middle causes or final effects, which is obviously not the case. Thus it is necessary to posit some first efficient cause, which everyone calls "God."

The third way is based on possibility and necessity. We find that some things can either exist or not exist, for we find them springing up and then disappearing, thus sometimes existing and sometimes not. It is impossible, however, that everything should be such, for what can possibly not exist does not do so at some time. If it is possible for every particular thing not to exist, there must have been a time when nothing at all existed. If this were true, however, then nothing would exist now, for something that does not exist can begin to do so only through something that already exists. If, therefore, there had been a time when nothing existed, then nothing could ever have begun to exist, and thus there would be nothing now, which is clearly false. Therefore all beings cannot be merely possible. There must be one being which is necessary. Any necessary being, however, either has or does not have something else as the cause of its necessity. If the former, then there cannot be an infinite series of such causes, any more than there can be an infinite series of efficient causes, as we have seen. Thus we must posit the existence of

something which is necessary and owes its necessity to no cause outside itself. That is what everyone calls "God."

The fourth way is based on the gradations found in things. We find that things are more or less good, true, noble, etc.; yet when we apply terms like "more" and "less" to things we imply that they are closer to or farther from some maximum. For example, a thing is said to be hotter than something else because it comes closer to that which is hottest. Therefore something exists which is truest, greatest, noblest, and consequently most fully in being; for, as Aristotle says, the truest things are most fully in being. That which is considered greatest in any genus is the cause of everything is that genus, just as fire, the hottest thing, is the cause of all hot things, as Aristotle says. Thus there is something which is the cause of being, goodness, and every other perfection in all things, and we call that something "God."

The fifth way is based on the governance of things. We see that some things lacking cognition, such as natural bodies, work toward an end, as is seen from the fact that they always (or at least usually) act the same way and not accidentally, but by design. Things without knowledge tend toward a goal, however, only if they are guided in that direction by some knowing, understanding being, as is the case with an arrow and archer. Therefore, there is some intelligent being by whom all natural things are ordered to their end, and we call this being "God."

To the first argument, therefore, it must be said that, as Augustine remarks, "since God is the supreme good he would permit no evil in his works unless he were so omnipotent and good that he could produce good even out of evil."

To the second, it must be said that, since nature works according to a determined end through the direction of some superior agent, whatever is done by nature must be traced back to God as its first cause. In the same way, those things which are done intentionally must be traced back to a higher cause which is neither reason nor human will, for these can change and cease to exist and, as we have seen, all such things must be traced back to some first principle which is unchangeable and necessary, as has been shown...

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

[http://www.freivald.org/~jake/church-history/historyOfTheChurch\\_volume2chapter10.html#section6](http://www.freivald.org/~jake/church-history/historyOfTheChurch_volume2chapter10.html#section6)

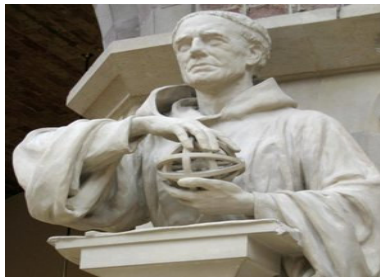
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aquinas1.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Aquinas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas)

## CHAPTER 39 : “ON EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE” BY ROGER BACON

### Background Information

Roger Bacon (c. 1214 – 1294) was another philosopher during the High Middle Ages, whose influence, like that of Aquinas, has increased with time. He was a Franciscan friar of English extraction. He was also an enthusiastic proponent and practitioner of the experimental method of acquiring knowledge about the world, for which he is chiefly noted. His work “On Experimental Science” conveys this philosophical perspective. Bacon also called for a reform of theological study, arguing that less emphasis should be placed on minor philosophical distinctions as in scholasticism, but instead the Bible itself should return to the center of attention and theologians should thoroughly study the languages in which their original sources were composed. Sadly, however, he also tended towards various occult and alchemical practices and traditions.



### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

...Having laid down the main points of the wisdom of the Latins as regards language, mathematics and optics, I wish now to review the principles of wisdom from the point of view of experimental science, because without experiment it is impossible to know anything thoroughly.

There are two ways of acquiring knowledge, one through reason, the other by experiment. Argument reaches a conclusion and compels us to admit it, but it neither makes us certain nor so annihilates doubt that the mind rests calm in the intuition of truth, unless it finds this certitude by way of experience. Thus many have arguments toward attainable facts, but because they have not experienced them, they overlook them and neither avoid a harmful nor follow a beneficial course. Even if a man that has never seen fire, proves by good reasoning that fire burns, and devours and destroys things, nevertheless the mind of one hearing his arguments would never be convinced, nor would he avoid fire until he puts his hand or some combustible thing into it in order to prove by experiment what the argument taught. But after the fact of combustion is experienced, the mind is satisfied and lies calm in the certainty of truth. Hence argument is not enough, but experience is.



This is evident even in mathematics, where demonstration is the surest. The mind of a man that receives that clearest of demonstrations concerning the equilateral triangle without experiment will never stick to the conclusion nor act upon it till confirmed by experiment by means of the intersection of two circles from either section of which two lines are drawn to the ends of a given line. Then one receives the conclusion without doubt. What Aristotle says of the demonstration by the syllogism being able to give knowledge, can be understood if it is accompanied by experience, but not of the bare demonstration. What he says in the first book of the *Metaphysics*, that those knowing the reason and cause are wiser than the experienced, he speaks concerning the experienced who know the bare fact only without the cause. But I speak here of the experienced that know the reason and cause through their experience. And such are perfect in their knowledge, as Aristotle wishes to be in the sixth book of the *Ethics*, whose simple statements are to be believed as if they carried demonstration, as he says in that very place.

Whoever wishes without proof to revel in the truths of things need only know how to neglect experience. This is evident from examples. Authors write many things and the people cling to them through arguments which they make without experiment, that are utterly false. It is commonly believed among all classes that one can break adamant only with the blood of a goat, and philosophers and theologians strengthen this myth. But it is not yet proved by adamant being broken by blood of this kind, as much as it is argued to this conclusion. And yet, even without the blood it can be broken with ease. I have seen this with my eyes; and this must needs be because gems cannot be cut out save by the breaking of the stone. Similarly it is commonly believed that the secretions of the beaver that the doctors use are the testicles of the male, but this is not so, as the beaver has this secretion beneath its breast and even the male as well as the female produces a secretion of this kind. In addition also to this secretion the male has its testicles in the natural place and thus again it is a horrible lie that, since hunters chase the beaver for this secretion, the beaver knowing what they are after, tears out his testicles with his teeth and throws them away. Again it is popularly said that cold water in a vase freezes more quickly than hot; and the argument for this is that contrary is excited by the contrary, like enemies running together. They even impute this to Aristotle in the second book of *Meteorology*, but he certainly did not say this, but says something like it by which they have been deceived, that if both cold and hot water are poured into a cold place as on ice, the cold freezes quicker (which is true), but if they are placed in two vases, the hot will freeze quicker. It is necessary, then, to prove everything by experience.

Experience is of two kinds. One is through the external senses: such are the experiments that are made upon the heaven through instruments in regard to facts there, and the facts on earth that we prove in various ways to be certain in our own sight. And facts that are not true in places where we are, we know through other wise men that have experienced them. Thus Aristotle with the authority of Alexander, sent 2,000 men throughout various parts of the earth in order to learn at first hand everything on the surface of the world, as Pliny says in his *Natural History*. And this experience is human and philosophical just as far as a man is able to make use of the beneficent grace given to him, but such experience

is not enough for man, because it does not give full certainty as regards corporeal things because of their complexity and touches the spiritual not at all. Hence man's intellect must be aided in another way, and thus the patriarchs and prophets who first gave science to the world secured inner light and did not rest entirely on the senses. So also many of the faithful since Christ. For grace makes many things clear to the faithful, and there is divine inspiration not alone concerning spiritual but even about corporeal things. In accordance with which Ptolemy says in the *Centilogium* that there is a double way of coming to the knowledge of things, one through the experiments of science, the other through divine inspiration, which latter is far the better as he says.

Of this inner experience there are seven degrees, one through spiritual illumination in regard to scientific things. The second grade consists of virtue, for evil is ignorance as Aristotle says in the second book of the *Ethics*. And Algazel says in the logic that the mind is disturbed by faults, just as a rusty mirror in which the images of things cannot be clearly seen, but the mind is prepared by virtue like a well polished mirror in which the images of things show clearly. On account of this, true philosophers have accomplished more in ethics in proportion to the soundness of their virtue, denying to one another that they can discover the cause of things unless they have minds free from faults. Augustine relates this fact concerning Socrates in Book VIII, chapter III, of the *City of God*: to the same purpose Scripture says, to an evil mind, etc., for it is impossible that the mind should lie calm in the sunlight of truth while it is spotted with evil, but like a parrot or magpie it will repeat words foreign to it which it has learned through long practice. And this is our experience, because a known truth draws men into its light for love of it, but the proof of this love is the sight of the result. And indeed he that is busy against truth must necessarily ignore this, that it is permitted him to know how to fashion many high sounding words and to write sentences not his own, just as the brute that imitates the human voice or an ape that attempts to carry out the works of men, although he does not understand their purpose. Virtue, then, clears the mind so that one can better understand not only ethical, but even scientific things. I have carefully proved this in the case of many pure youths who, on account of their innocent minds, have gone further in knowledge than I dare to say, because they have had correct teaching in religious doctrine, to which class the bearer of this treatise belongs, to whose knowledge of principles but few of the Latins rise. Since he is so young (about twenty years old) and poor besides, not able to have masters nor the length of any one year to learn all the great things he knows, and since he neither has great genius or a wonderful memory, there can be no other cause, save the grace of God, which, on account of the clearness of his mind, has granted to him these things which it has refused to almost all students, for a pure man, he has received pure things from me. Nor have I been able to find in him any kind of a mortal fault, although I have searched diligently, and he has a mind so clear and far seeing that he receives less from instruction than can be supposed. And I have tried to lend my aid to the purpose that these two youths may be useful implements for the Church of God, inasmuch as they have with the Grace of God examined the whole learning of the Latins.

The third degree of spiritual experience is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which Isaiah describes. The fourth lies in the beatitudes which our Lord enumerates in the Gospels.

The fifth is the spiritual sensibility. The sixth is in such fruits as the peace of God, which passes all understanding. The seventh lies in states of rapture and in the methods of those also, various ones of whom receive it in various ways, that they may see many things which it is not permitted to speak of to man. And whoever is thoroughly practiced in these experiences or in many of them, is able to assure himself and others, not only concerning spiritual things, but all human knowledge. And indeed, since all speculative thought proceeds through arguments which either proceed through a proposition by authority or through other propositions of argument, in accordance with this which I am now investigating, there is a science that is necessary to us, which is called experimental. I wish to explain this, not only as useful to philosophy, but to the knowledge of God and the understanding of the whole world: as in a former book I followed language and science to their end, which is the Divine wisdom by which all things are ordered. And because this experimental science is a study entirely unknown by the common people, I cannot convince them of its utility, unless its virtue and characteristics are shown. This alone enables us to find out surely what can be done through nature, what through the application of art, what through fraud, what is the purport and what is mere dream in chance, conjuration, invocations, imprecations, magical sacrifices and what there is in them; so that all falsity may be lifted and the truths we alone of the art retained. This alone teaches us to examine all the insane ideas of the magicians in order not to confirm but to avoid them, just as logic criticizes the art of sophistry. This science has three great purposes in regard to the other sciences: the first is that one may criticize by experiment the noble conclusions of all the other sciences, for the other sciences know that their principles come from experiment, but the conclusions through arguments drawn from the principles discovered, if they care to have the result of their conclusions precise and complete. It is necessary that they have this through the aid of this noble science. It is true that mathematics reaches conclusions in accordance with universal experience about figures and numbers, which indeed apply to all sciences and to this experience, because no science can be known without mathematics. If we would attain to experiments precise, complete and made certain in accordance with the proper method, it is necessary to undertake an examination of the science itself, which is called experimental on our authority. I find an example in the rainbow and in like phenomena, of which nature are the circles about the sun and stars, also the halo beginning from the side of the sun or of a star which seems to be visible in straight lines and is called by Aristotle in the third book of the Meteorology a perpendicular, but by Seneca a halo, and is also called a circular corona, which have many of the colors of the rainbow. Now the natural philosopher discusses these things, and in regard to perspective has many facts to add which are concerned with the operation of seeing which is pertinent in this place. But neither Aristotle or Avicenna have given us knowledge of these things in their books upon Nature, nor Seneca, who wrote a special book concerning them. But experimental science analyzes such things.

The experimenter considers whether among visible things, he can find colors formed and arranged as given in the rainbow. He finds that there are hexagonal crystals from Ireland or India which are called rainbow-hued in Solinus Concerning the Wonders of the World and he holds these in a ray of sunlight falling through the window, and finds all the colors of the rainbow, arranged as in it in the shaded part next the ray. Moreover, the same

experimenter places himself in a somewhat shady place and puts the stone up to his eye when it is almost closed, and beholds the colors of the rainbow clearly arranged, as in the bow. And because many persons making use of these stones think that it is on account of some special property of the stones and because of their hexagonal shape the investigator proceeds further and finds this in a crystal, properly shaped, and in other transparent stones. And not only are these Irish crystals in white, but also black, so that the phenomenon occurs in smoky crystal and also in all stones of similar transparency. Moreover, in stones not shaped hexagonally, provided the surfaces are rough, the same as those of the Irish crystals, not entirely smooth and yet not rougher than those---the surfaces have the same quality as nature has given the Irish crystals, for the difference of roughness makes the difference of color. He watches, also, rowers and in the drops falling from the raised oars he finds the same colors, whenever the rays of the sun penetrate the drops.

The case is the same with water falling from the paddles of a water-wheel. And when the investigator looks in a summer morning at the drops of dew clinging to the grass in the field or plane, he sees the same colors. And, likewise, when it rains, if he stands in a shady place and the sun's rays beyond him shine through the falling drops, then in some rather dark place the same colors appear, and they can often be seen at night about a candle. In the summer time, as soon as he rises from sleep while his eyes are not yet fully opened, if he suddenly looks at a window through which the light of the sun is streaming, he will see the colors. Again, sitting outside of the sunlight, if he holds his head covering beyond his eyes, or, likewise, if he closes his eyes, the same thing happens in the shade at the edges, and it also takes place through a glass vase filled with water, sitting in the sunlight. Similarly, if any one holding water in his mouth suddenly sprinkles the water in jets and stands at the side of them; or if through a lamp of oil hanging in the air the rays shine in the proper way, or the light shines upon the surface of the oil, the colors again appear. Thus, in an infinite number of ways, natural as well as artificial, colors of this kind are to be seen, if only the diligent investigator knows how to find them.

Experimental science is also that which alone, as the mistress of the speculative sciences, can discover magnificent truths in the fields of the other sciences, to which these other sciences can in no way attain. And these truths are not of the nature of former truths, but they may be even outside of them, in the fields of things where there are neither as yet conclusions or principles, and good examples may be given of this, but in everything which follows it is not necessary for the inexperienced to seek a reason in order to understand at the beginning, but rather he will never have a reason before he has tried the experiment. Whence in the first place there should be credulity until experiment follows, in order that the reason may be found. If one who has never seen that a magnet draws iron nor heard from others that it attracts, seeks the reason before experimenting, he will never find it. Indeed, in the first place, he ought to believe those who have experimented or who have it from investigators, nor ought he to doubt the truth of it because he himself is ignorant of it and because he has no reason for it.

The third value of this science is this---it is on account of the prerogatives through which it looks, not only to the other sciences, but by its own power investigates the secrets of

nature, and this takes place in two ways---in the knowledge of future and present events, and in those wonderful works by which it surpasses astronomy commonly so-called in the power of its conclusions. For Ptolemy in the introduction of the Almagest, says that there is another and surer way than the ordinary astronomy; that is, the experimental method which follows after the course of nature, to which many faithful philosophers, such as Aristotle and a vast crowd of the authors of predictions from the stars, are favorable, as he himself says, and we ourselves know through our own experience, which cannot be denied. This wisdom has been found as a natural remedy for human ignorance or imprudence; for it is difficult to have astronomical implements sufficiently exact and more difficult to have tables absolutely verified, especially when the motion of the planets is involved in them. The use of these tables is difficult, but the use of the instruments more so.

This science has found definitions and ways through which it quickly comes to the answer of a whole question, as far as the nature of a single science can do so, and through which it shows us the outlines of the virtues of the skies and the influence of the sky upon this earth, without the difficulty of astronomy. This part so-called has four principal laws as the secret of the science, and some bear witness that a use of this science, which illustrates its nature, is in the change of a region in order that the customs of the people may be changed. In connection with which Aristotle, the most learned of philosophers, when Alexander asked of him concerning some tribes that he had found, whether he should kill them on account of their barbarity or let them live, responded in the Book of Secrets if you can change their air let them live; if not, kill them. He wished that their air could be altered usefully, so that the complexion of their bodies could be changed, and finally the mind aroused through the complexion should absorb good customs from the liberty of their environment; this is one use of this science.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/bacon2.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger\\_Bacon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Bacon)

## CHAPTER 40 : “ON THE FITTINGNESS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION” BY JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

### Background Information

John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) was another prominent Franciscan priest and theologian of the High Middle Ages. Sadly, he aided and abetted the Romish Church's further decline into doctrinal corruption. Perhaps the most influential point of Duns Scotus' theology was his defense of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, from which he became known as the "Marian Doctor". At the time, there was a great deal of argument about the subject. The general opinion was that it was appropriate, but it could not be seen how to resolve the problem that only with Christ's death would the stain of original sin be removed. The great philosophers and theologians of the west were divided on the subject. The feast day had existed in the East since the seventh century and had been introduced in several dioceses in the West as well, even though the philosophical basis was lacking. Citing Anselm of Canterbury's principle, "*potuit, deuit, ergo fecit*" (God could do it, it was appropriate, therefore he did it), Duns Scotus devised the following argument: Mary was in need of redemption like all other human beings, but through the merits of Jesus' crucifixion, given in advance, she was conceived without the stain of original sin. This argument appears in Pope Pius IX's declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and Pope John XXIII recommended the reading of Duns Scotus' theology to modern theology students. Since Scotus' time the "Sacred Magisterium of the Church" has solemnly defined this doctrine and declared it to belong to "the deposit of the Faith which Christ entrusted to His Apostles", even though there is no hint of this doctrine in the writings of the Apostles themselves. Below is an excerpt from John Duns Scotus' defense.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

...Was the Blessed Virgin conceived in sin? The answer is no, for as Augustine writes: "When sin is treated, there can be no inclusion of Mary in the discussion." And Anselm says: "It was fitting that the Virgin should be resplendent with a purity greater than which none under God can be conceived." Purity here is to be taken in the sense of pure innocence under God, such as was in Christ. The contrary, however, is commonly asserted on two grounds. First, the dignity of Her Son, who, as universal Redeemer, opened the gates of heaven. But if blessed Mary had not contracted original sin, She would not have needed the Redeemer, nor would He have opened the door for Her because it was never closed. For it is only closed because of sin, above all original sin.

In respect to this first ground, one can argue from the dignity of Her Son *qua* Redeemer, Reconciler, and Mediator, that She did not contract original sin. For a most perfect mediator exercises the most perfect mediation possible in regard to some person for whom he mediates. Thus Christ exercised a most perfect act of mediation in regard to some person for whom He was Mediator. In regard to no person did He have a more

exalted relationship than to Mary. Such, however, would not have been true had He not preserved Her from original sin. The proof is threefold: in terms of God to whom He reconciles; in terms of the evil from which He frees; and in terms of the indebtedness of the person whom He reconciles.

First, no one absolutely and perfectly placates anyone about to be offended in any way unless he can avert the offense. For to placate only in view of remitting the offense once committed is not to placate most perfectly. But God does not undergo offense because of some experience in Himself, but only because of sin in the soul of a creature. Hence, Christ does not placate the Trinity most perfectly for the sin to be contracted by the sons of Adam if He does not prevent the Trinity from being offended in someone, and if the soul of some child of Adam does not contract such a sin; and thus it is possible that a child of Adam not have such a sin.

Secondly, a most perfect mediator merits the removal of all punishment from the one whom he reconciles. Original sin, however, is a greater privation than the lack of the vision of God. Hence, if Christ most perfectly reconciles us to God, He merited that this most heavy of punishments be removed from some one person. This would have been His Mother. Further, Christ is primarily our Redeemer and Reconciler from original sin rather than actual sin, for the need of the Incarnation and suffering of Christ is commonly ascribed to original sin. But He is also commonly assumed to be the perfect Mediator of at least one person, namely, Mary, whom He preserved from actual sin. Logically one should assume that He preserved Her from original sin as well.

Thirdly, a person reconciled is not absolutely indebted to his mediator, unless he receives from that mediator the greatest possible good. But this innocence, namely, preservation from the contracted sin or from the sin to be contracted, is available from the Mediator. Thus, no one would be absolutely indebted to Christ as Mediator unless preserved from original sin. It is a greater good to be preserved from evil than to fall into it and afterwards be freed from it. If Christ merited grace and glory for so many souls, who, for these gifts, are indebted to Christ as Mediator, why should no soul be His debtor for the gift of its innocence? And why, since the blessed Angels are innocent, should there be no human soul in heaven (except the human soul of Christ) who is innocent, that is, never in the state of original sin?...

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.dunsscotus.com>

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/duns-scotus/>

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/SCOTUS.htm>

<http://www.franciscan-archive.org/scotus/index.html>

[http://www.marymediatrix-resourceonline.com/library/files/franciscan/scotus\\_ic.htm](http://www.marymediatrix-resourceonline.com/library/files/franciscan/scotus_ic.htm)

## CHAPTER 41 : *THE DIVINE COMEDY* BY DANTE

### Background Information

Dante Alighieri (1265 –1321) was a Florentine poet. His greatest work, *La divina commedia* (*The Divine Comedy*), is considered by many the greatest literary statement produced in Europe in the medieval period, and the basis of the modern Italian language.

During the time in which Dante lived, politically speaking, two were the *auctoritates* in the world: the Emperor and the Pope. In Italy, there was no political union, but the country was divided into many different town councils. The political parties were two: the Guelfi and the Ghibellini. The former ones were in favor of the Pope and the latter ones were in favor of the Emperor. At the beginning of the XIV century, the Guelfi led most of the councils in Italy.

In this same period a new poetical movement was born: the Stilnovo (the name, invented by Dante (see *Purgatorio*, XXIV, ll. 55–57) is the Italian for "new style"). This movement used the poetical art only to speak about love, and to celebrate it. To do this, the Stilnovo poems were a deep analysis of the love feeling, even psychologically. In this theory, love is seen as an absolute ideal, a sort of god, which is able to ennoble and save man; women are seen as angels, and often celebrated as examples of purity and virtue. Clearly this was anti-Biblical. It was really a new way to intend and to write poetry and was founded by Guido Guinizzelli (a poet who lived in Bologna) but widely diffused only in Tuscany, especially in Florence.

In his youth, Dante was a Stilnovo poet and had many friends among the other members of the Stilnovo Poetical School. After the death of Bice di Folco Portinari (loved by Dante, who mentioned her in his work with the name of Beatrice) Dante began studying philosophy and theology in depth, also attending some sort of cultural associations in Florence (the *Studia*), which provided lessons mainly about Aristotle and St. Thomas.

Dante entered Florentine politics, but his political fortunes waned, and he was forced to flee Florence. It was during this time that he composed his *Divina Commedia* (Italian for "divine comedy"). The word *Commedia* indicates the literary genre of the work. Dante himself explains, in his XIII epistle (addressed to Cangrande della Scala, duke of Verona) that a *commedia* is a work representing a story with a happy ending (opposite to *tragedia*, Italian for "tragedy", an episode which ends badly). In fact, Dante's *Commedia* ends well, since the protagonist meets God. The *commedia* genre is also characterized by a varied content and style.

Dante's primary literary models in his writing the *Commedia*, were the Bible and the VI canto of Virgil's *Aeneid*. There's also a certain influence from some of Cicero's works. Basically, Dante modified Virgil's pagan vision of after-life, according it to the religious dogmas of the Bible. Moreover, he used Aristotle's physical vision of Universe and Thomistic philosophy. The result is a typical Medieval vision of the cosmos, based mainly on religious ideals, but considering also classical culture. In other words, it represents the syncretism of paganism with Christianity.



Generally speaking, the *Commedia* is an eschatological adventure, consistent with false Romish eschatology. In other words, it is the description of Dante's travel through the three transmundane kingdoms: Hell (*Inferno*), Purgatory (*Purgatorio*) and Heaven (*Paradiso*). During this imaginary journey, Dante tries to describe the situation of the human souls after their deaths.

The unifying elements of the *Commedia* are the constant presence of some protagonists and the theme of the travel. The whole journey can be also seen as a moral and religious conversion of the protagonist, Dante, symbolizing the conversion of the whole mankind. The protagonists of this travel are mainly three. The first one is Dante himself, symbol of the whole mankind. The second one is Virgil, symbol of human reason. He's Dante's guide through *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*. The third is Beatrice, a woman loved by Dante during his life. In the *Commedia*, she's the symbol of God's love which can help the man to be saved. She guides Dante through *Paradiso*.

Analyzing the first line of the poem and the lines 112-114 of *Inferno*'s XXI canto, we can understand the year in which Dante sets the poem. The journey begins in 1300, on Good Friday, and lasts seven days. The poem is divided into three books, each one representing a kingdom: *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*. Each book is composed by 33 cantos, except for the *Inferno*, which has 34 cantos (the first is a general introduction to the whole poem). So the *Commedia* is composed of 100 cantos. The cantos are composed by triplets, rhyming with an ABABCBC... scheme (*rima concatenata*). Each verse is 11 syllables long. This uniformity and well-organized structure represent the structure of God's Trinity and reveal the strong religious culture of the author.

The *Commedia* can be read on different levels of meaning. Dante himself says that his work has more than one meaning (*polisignificante*). In his writings the poet lists four levels of meaning: the literal one, the metaphorical one, the moral one and the anagogical one. Dante's main purpose in writing the *Commedia* was to preach the necessity of a moral and religious renewal for everybody, in order to get ready for the after-life and to ascend to Heaven, eternally saved. Dante acts as a prophet who speaks in behalf of God to the whole mankind. In this sense, he's strongly medieval and his poem is the higher expression of this culture.

Let's now read excerpts from this work.

### **The Work or Excerpts from the Work**

*The Divine Comedy (translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)*



### Inferno: Canto I

Midway upon the journey of our life  
I found myself within a forest dark,  
For the straightforward pathway had been lost.

Ah me! how hard a thing it is to say  
What was this forest savage, rough, and stern,  
Which in the very thought renews the fear.

So bitter is it, death is little more;  
But of the good to treat, which there I found,  
Speak will I of the other things I saw there.

I cannot well repeat how there I entered,  
So full was I of slumber at the moment  
In which I had abandoned the true way.

But after I had reached a mountain's foot,  
At that point where the valley terminated,  
Which had with consternation pierced my heart,

Upward I looked, and I beheld its shoulders,  
Vested already with that planet's rays  
Which leadeth others right by every road.

Then was the fear a little quieted  
That in my heart's lake had endured throughout  
The night, which I had passed so piteously.

And even as he, who, with distressful breath,  
Forth issued from the sea upon the shore,  
Turns to the water perilous and gazes;

So did my soul, that still was fleeing onward,  
 Turn itself back to re-behold the pass  
 Which never yet a living person left.

After my weary body I had rested,  
 The way resumed I on the desert slope,  
 So that the firm foot ever was the lower.

And lo! almost where the ascent began,  
 A panther light and swift exceedingly,  
 Which with a spotted skin was covered o'er!

And never moved she from before my face,  
 Nay, rather did impede so much my way,  
 That many times I to return had turned.

The time was the beginning of the morning,  
 And up the sun was mounting with those stars  
 That with him were, what time the Love Divine

At first in motion set those beauteous things;  
 So were to me occasion of good hope,  
 The variegated skin of that wild beast,

The hour of time, and the delicious season;  
 But not so much, that did not give me fear  
 A lion's aspect which appeared to me.

He seemed as if against me he were coming  
 With head uplifted, and with ravenous hunger,  
 So that it seemed the air was afraid of him;

And a she-wolf, that with all hungerings  
 Seemed to be laden in her meagreness,  
 And many folk has caused to live forlorn!

She brought upon me so much heaviness,  
 With the affright that from her aspect came,  
 That I the hope relinquished of the height.

And as he is who willingly acquires,  
 And the time comes that causes him to lose,  
 Who weeps in all his thoughts and is despondent,

E'en such made me that beast withouten peace,  
 Which, coming on against me by degrees  
 Thrust me back thither where the sun is silent.

While I was rushing downward to the lowland,  
 Before mine eyes did one present himself,  
 Who seemed from long-continued silence hoarse.

When I beheld him in the desert vast,  
 "Have pity on me," unto him I cried,  
 "Whiche'er thou art, or shade or real man!"

He answered me: "Not man; man once I was,  
And both my parents were of Lombardy,  
And Mantuans by country both of them.

'Sub Julio' was I born, though it was late,  
And lived at Rome under the good Augustus,  
During the time of false and lying gods.

A poet was I, and I sang that just  
Son of Anchises, who came forth from Troy,  
After that Ilion the superb was burned.

But thou, why goest thou back to such annoyance?  
Why climb'st thou not the Mount Delectable,  
Which is the source and cause of every joy?"

"Now, art thou that Virgilius and that fountain  
Which spreads abroad so wide a river of speech?"  
I made response to him with bashful forehead.

"O, of the other poets honour and light,  
Avail me the long study and great love  
That have impelled me to explore thy volume!

Thou art my master, and my author thou,  
Thou art alone the one from whom I took  
The beautiful style that has done honour to me.

Behold the beast, for which I have turned back;  
Do thou protect me from her, famous Sage,  
For she doth make my veins and pulses tremble."

"Thee it behoves to take another road,"  
Responded he, when he beheld me weeping,  
"If from this savage place thou wouldst escape;

Because this beast, at which thou criest out,  
Suffers not any one to pass her way,  
But so doth harass him, that she destroys him;

And has a nature so malign and ruthless,  
That never doth she glut her greedy will,  
And after food is hungrier than before.

Many the animals with whom she weds,  
And more they shall be still, until the Greyhound  
Comes, who shall make her perish in her pain.

He shall not feed on either earth or pelf,  
But upon wisdom, and on love and virtue;  
'Twixt Feltro and Feltro shall his nation be;

Of that low Italy shall he be the saviour,  
On whose account the maid Camilla died,  
Euryalus, Turnus, Nisus, of their wounds;

Through every city shall he hunt her down,  
Until he shall have driven her back to Hell,  
There from whence envy first did let her loose.

Therefore I think and judge it for thy best  
Thou follow me, and I will be thy guide,  
And lead thee hence through the eternal place,

Where thou shalt hear the desperate lamentations,  
Shalt see the ancient spirits disconsolate,  
Who cry out each one for the second death;

And thou shalt see those who contented are  
Within the fire, because they hope to come,  
Whene'er it may be, to the blessed people;

To whom, then, if thou wishest to ascend,  
A soul shall be for that than I more worthy;  
With her at my departure I will leave thee;

Because that Emperor, who reigns above,  
In that I was rebellious to his law,  
Wills that through me none come into his city.

He governs everywhere, and there he reigns;  
There is his city and his lofty throne;  
O happy he whom thereto he elects!"

And I to him: "Poet, I thee entreat,  
By that same God whom thou didst never know,  
So that I may escape this woe and worse,

Thou wouldst conduct me there where thou hast said,  
That I may see the portal of Saint Peter,  
And those thou makest so disconsolate."

Then he moved on, and I behind him followed.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

[http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/dante/dante\\_contents.htm](http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/dante/dante_contents.htm)

## CHAPTER 42 : *PIERS PLOWMAN* BY WILLIAM LANGLAND

### Background Information

William Langland (c.1332?-c.1400?) is generally thought to be the author of *Piers Plowman*, was apparently born and raised in the West of England, but he lived in London, which is a principal subject of the early parts of his poem.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### *Prologue*

IN a summer season · when soft was the sun,  
I clothed myself in a cloak as I shepherd were,  
Habit like a hermit's · unholy in works,  
And went wide in the world · wonders to hear.  
But on a May morning · on Malvern hills,  
A marvel befell me · of fairy, methought.  
I was weary with wandering · and went me to rest  
Under a broad bank · by a brook's side,  
And as I lay and leaned over · and looked into the waters  
I fell into a sleep · for it sounded so merry.

Then began I to dream · a marvellous dream,  
That I was in a wilderness · wist I not where.  
As I looked to the east · right into the sun,  
I saw a tower on a toft · worthily built;  
A deep dale beneath · a dungeon therein,  
With deep ditches and dark · and dreadful of sight  
A fair field full of folk · found I in between,  
Of all manner of men · the rich and the poor,  
Working and wandering · as the world asketh.  
Some put them to plow · and played little enough,  
At setting and sowing · they sweated right hard  
And won that which wasters · by gluttony destroy.

Some put them to pride · and apparelled themselves so  
In a display of clothing · they came disguised.  
To prayer and penance · put themselves many,  
All for love of our Lord · living hard lives,  
In hope for to have · heavenly bliss.  
Such as anchorites and hermits · that kept them in their cells,  
And desired not the country · around to roam;  
Nor with luxurious living · their body to please.

And some chose trade · they fared the better,  
As it seemeth to our sight · that such men thrive.

And some to make mirth · as minstrels know how,  
And get gold with their glees · guiltlessly, I hold.  
But jesters and janglers · children of Judas,  
Feigning their fancies · and making folk fools,  
They have wit at will · to work, if they would;  
Paul preacheth of them · I'll not prove it here --  
*Qui turpiloquium loquitur* · is Lucifer's hind.

Tramps and beggars · went quickly about,  
Their bellies and their bags · with bread well crammed;  
Cadging for their food · fighting at ale;  
In gluttony, God knows · going to bed,  
And getting up with ribaldry · the thieving knaves!

Sleep and sorry sloth · ever pursue them.  
Pilgrims and palmers · pledged them together  
To seek Saint James · and saints in Rome.  
They went forth on their way · with many wise tales,  
And had leave to lie · all their life after --  
I saw some that said · they had sought saints:  
Yet in each tale that they told · their tongue turned to lies  
More than to tell truth · it seemed by their speech.  
Hermits, a heap of them · with hooked staves,  
Were going to Walsingham · and their wenches too;  
Big loafers and tall · that loth were to work,  
Dressed up in capes · to be known from others;  
And so clad as hermits · their ease to have.

I found there friars · of all the four orders,  
Preaching to the people · for profit to themselves,  
Explaining the Gospel · just as they liked,  
To get clothes for themselves · they construed it as they would.  
Many of these master friars · may dress as they will,  
For money and their preaching · both go together.  
For since charity hath been chapman · and chief to shrive lords,  
Many miracles have happened · within a few years.  
Except Holy Church and they · agree better together,  
Great mischief on earth · is mounting up fast.

There preached a pardoner · as if he priest were:  
He brought forth a brief · with bishops' seals thereon,  
And said that himself · might absolve them all  
From falseness in fasting and of broken vows.

Laymen believed him · welcomed his words,

And came up on their knees · to kiss his seals;  
He cozened them with his brevet · dimmed their eyes,  
And with his parchment · got his rings and brooches:  
Thus they gave their gold · gluttons to keep.  
And lend it to such louts · as follow lechery.  
If the bishop were holy · and worth both his ears,  
His seal should not be sent · to deceive the people.  
But a word 'gainst bishop · the knave never preacheth.  
Parish priest and pardoner · share all the silver  
That the parish poor would have · if he were not there.

Parsons and parish priests · complained to the bishop  
That their parishes were poor · since the pestilence time,  
And asked leave and licence · in London to dwell  
And sing *requiems* for stipends · for silver is sweet.

Bishops and bachelors · both masters and doctors,  
That have charge under Christ · and the tonsure as token  
And sign that they should · shrive their parishioners,  
Preach and pray for them · and feed the poor,  
These lodge in London in Lent · and at other times too.  
Some serve the king · and his silver count  
In Chequer and Chancery courts · making claim for his debts  
Of wards and of wardmotes · waifs and estrays.  
And some serve as servants · to lords and ladies,  
And instead of stewards · sit in session to judge.  
Their mass and their matins · their canonical hours,  
Are said undevoutly · I fear at the last  
Lest Christ in his council · accurse will full many.  
I perceived of the power · that Peter had to keep,  
To bind and to unbind · as the Book telleth,  
How he left it with love · as our Lord ordained,  
Amongst four virtues · the best of all virtues,  
That cardinal are called · for they hinge the gates  
Where Christ is in glory · to close and to shut  
And to open it to them · and show heavenly bliss.  
But of cardinals at Rome · that received that name  
And power presumed in them · a pope to make,  
That they have Peter's power · deny it I will not;  
For to love and learning · that election belongeth,  
Therefore I can, and yet cannot · of that court speak more.

Then came there a king · with knighthood before him,



The might of the commons · made him to reign;  
Then came Mother-Wit · and he made wise clerks  
For to counsel the king · and the commons save.

The king and the knighthood · the clergy as well,  
Planned that the commons · should provide for themselves.

The commons contrived · of Mother-Wit crafts,  
And for profit of all · they plowmen ordained  
To till and travail · as true life asketh.  
The king and the commons · and Mother-Wit too  
Cause by law and loyalty · each man to know his own.

Then looked up a lunatic · a lean thing withal,  
And kneeling before the king well speaking said:  
'Christ keep thee sir King · and thy kingdom,  
And grant thee to rule the realm · so Loyalty may love thee,  
And for thy rightful ruling · be rewarded in heaven.'  
Then in the air on high · an angel of heaven  
Stooped and spoke in Latin · for simple men could not  
Discuss nor judge · that which should justify them,  
But should suffer and serve · therefore said the angel:

*'Sum Rex, sum Princeps: neutram fortasse deinceps;  
O qui jura regis Christi specialia regis, hoc quod agas melius Justus es,  
esto pius!  
Nudum jus a te vestiri vult pietate; qualia vis metere talia grand sere.  
Si jus nudatur nudo de jure metatur; si seritur pietas de pietate  
metas.'*

Then an angry buffoon · a glutton of words,  
To the angel on high · answered after:  
*'Dum rex a regere dicatur nomen habere,  
Nomen habet sine re nisi studet jura tenere.'*  
Then began all the commons · to cry out in Latin,  
For counsel of the king · construe how-so he would:  
*'Praecepta regis sunt nobis vincula legis.'*  
With that there ran a rout of rats at once,  
And small mice with them · more than thousand,  
And came to a council · for their common profit;  
For a cat from the Court · came when he liked  
And o'er leaped them lightly · and caught them at will,  
Played with them perilously · and pushed them about.  
'For dread of divers dangers · we dare not look about;  
If we grumble at his game · he will attack us all,  
Scratch us or clutch us · and in his claws hold us,

So that we loathe life · ere he lets us go.  
Could we with any wit · his will withstand  
We might be lords above him · and live at our ease.'

A rat of renown · most ready of tongue  
Said, as a sovereign · help to himself:  
'I have seen men,' quoth he · 'in the city of London  
Bearing bright necklaces · about their necks,  
Some with collars of skilful work · uncoupled they wander  
Both in warrens and wastes · wherever they like;  
And otherwhile they are elsewhere · as I tell you.  
Were there a bell on their collars · by Jesus, I think  
Men might know where they went · and get out of their way!  
And right so,' quoth that rat · 'reason me showeth  
To buy a brass bell · or one of bright silver  
Make it fast to a collar · for our common profit,  
And hang it on the cat's neck · then we may hear  
When he romps or rests · or runneth to play.  
And if he wants play · then we may look out  
And appear in his presence · the while he play liketh,  
And if he gets angry, · beware and shun all his paths.'  
All this rout of rats · to this plan assented.  
But though the bell was bought · and on the collar hanged,  
There was not a rat in the rout · for all the realm of France  
That dare bind on the bell · about the cat's neck,  
Nor hang it round her ears · all England to win;  
They held themselves not bold · and their counsel feeble,  
Esteemed their labour as lost · and all their long plotting.

A mouse that knew much more · as it seemed to me,  
Ran forth determined · and stood before them all,  
And to the rout of rats · rehearsed these words:  
'Though we killed the cat · yet there would come another,  
To scratch us and all our kind · though we creep under benches.  
Therefore I counsel all the commons · to let the cat be,  
And be we never so bold · to show to him the bell;  
For I heard my sire say · now seven years ago,  
"When the cat is a kitten · the Court is right wretched,"  
As witnesseth Holy Writ · whoso will it read:

*"Vae tibi, terra, cujus rex puer est."*

No man can have rest there · for the rats by night;  
While the cat catcheth conies · he covets not our carrion,  
But feeds himself on venison · may we never defame him!

For better is a little loss · than a long sorrow;  
He's the fear among us all · whereby we miss worse things.  
For many men's malt · we mice would destroy,  
And the riot of rats · would rend men's clothes,  
Were it not for that Court cat · that can leap in among you;  
For had ye rats your will · ye could not rule yourselves.  
As for me,' quoth the mouse · 'I see so much to come  
That cat nor kitten never shall · by my counsel be harmed,  
Nor carping of this collar · that cost me nothing.  
Though it had cost me full dear · I would not own to it  
But suffer him to live · and do just as he liketh:  
Coupled and uncoupled · to catch what they can.  
Therefore each wise wight I warn · to watch well his own.'

What this dream meaneth · ye men that be merry,  
Divine ye, for I never dare · by dear God in heaven!

There hovered an hundred · in caps of silk,  
Serjeants they seemed · who practised at Bar,  
Pleading the law · for pennies and pounds,  
And never for love of our Lord · unloosing their lips.  
You might better measure the mist · on the Malvern hills,  
Than get a sound out of their mouth · unless money were showed.  
Barons and burgesses · and bondmen also  
I saw in this crowd · as you shall hear later.  
Bakers and brewers · and butchers a-many,  
Woollen-websters · and weavers of linen,  
Tailors and tinkers · toll-takers in markets,  
Masons and miners · and men of all crafts.  
Of all kinds of labourers · there stood forth some;  
Ditchers and diggers · that do their work ill  
And spend all the day singing · '*Dieu vous sauve, dame Emme!*'  
Cooks and their knaves · cried 'Pies, hot pies!  
Good pork and good goose! · Come, dine! Come, dine!'

Taverners unto them · told the same tale:  
`White wine of Alsace · red wine of Gascony,  
Wine of the Rhine, of Rochelle · to help settle your meat!'  
All this I saw sleeping · and seven times more.

***PASSUS I (The Dreamer is instructed by Holy Church.)***

WHAT this mountain meaneth · and the dark dale  
And the field full of folk · I fairly will show.  
A lady, lovely of looks · in linen clothed,  
Came down from a castle · and called me fairly  
And said: `Son, sleepest thou? · Seest thou this people,

How busy they be · about all the throng?  
The most part of this people · that passeth on earth,  
Have worship in this world · and wish for no better;  
Of other heaven than here · they hold no account.'

I was feared of her face · though she were so fair,  
And said, 'Mercy, madam · what is this to mean?'  
'The tower on the toft,' quoth she 'Truth is therein  
And would have that ye do · as his word teacheth;  
For he is Father of Faith · formed you all  
Both with flesh and with face and gave you fine wits  
To worship him therewith · while that ye are here.  
Therefore he hath bade the earth to help you each one  
With woollen, with linen · with food at your need,  
In reasonable measure to make you at case.

`And commanded of his courtesy · three things in common.  
None are needful but those · and name them I will  
And reckon them rightly · rehearse thou them after.  
The first one is vesture · to save thee from chill;  
And meat for meals · to save thee misease  
And drink when thou art dry · but do naught out of reason  
Lest thy worth be wanting · when thou shouldest work.

`For Lot in his lifetime · for liking of drink  
Did with his daughters · what the Devil liked.  
He delighted in drink · as the Devil wished,  
And Lechery was gainer · and lay with them both,  
Putting blame on the wine · for that wicked deed:

*Inebriamus eum vino, dormiamusque cum eo, ut servare possimus de patre nostro semen.*  
Through wine and through women · there was Lot overcome,  
Begetting in gluttony · boys that were blackguards.  
*Piers The Plowman, Passus I, p. 8*

Therefore dread delicious drink · and thou shalt do the better;  
Measure is medicine · though thou yearn for much.  
All is not good for the spirit · that the guts asketh,  
Nor livelihood to thy body · that is life to the soul.  
Believe not thy body for · him a liar teacheth:  
That is, the wretched world · which would thee betray.  
For the fiend and thy flesh · follow thee together;  
This and that chaseth thy soul · and speak in thine heart;  
That thou shouldest be ware · I teach thee the best.'

`Madam, mercy,' quoth I · `I like well your words.  
But the money of this earth · that men hold to so fast, Tell me, madam, to whom that  
treasure belongeth?'

`Go to the Gospel,' quoth she · `that God spoke himself,  
When the people posed him · with a penny in the Temple,

Whether they should therewith · worship king Caesar.  
And God asked of them · of whom spake the writing  
And likewise the image · that stood thereon?  
"Caesaris," they said · "Each one sees him well."

`"*Reddite Caesari*," quoth God · "that *Caesari* belongeth  
*Et quae sunt Dei, Deo* · or else ye do ill."  
For rightful Reason · should rule you all,  
And Mother-Wit be warden · your wealth to keep,  
And tutor of your treasure · to give it you at need;  
For husbandry and they · hold well together.'  
Then I asked her plainly · by him that made her,  
`That dungeon in the dale · that dreadful is to see,  
What may it mean · *ma dame*, I beseech you?'

`That is the castle of Care · whoso cometh therein  
May curse he was born · in body or in soul.  
Therein abideth a wight · that is called Wrong,  
Father of Falsehood · who built it himself.  
Adam and Eve · he egged on to ill;  
Counselled Cain · to kill his brother;  
Judas he jockeyed · with Jewish silver,  
And then on elder · hanged him after.  
He is the letter of love · and lieth to all;  
Those who trust in his treasure · betrayeth he soonest.

Then had I wonder in my wit · what woman it were  
That such wise words · of Holy Writ showed,  
And asked her in the high name · ere she thence went,  
Who indeed she was · that taught me so fairly?

*Piers The Plowman, Passus I, p. 9*

`Holy Church I am,' quoth she · 'thou oughtest me to know.  
I received thee first · and taught thee the faith,  
And thou broughtest me sponsors · my bidding to fulfil  
And to love me loyally · while thy life lasteth.'

Then I fell on my knees · and cried of her grace,  
And prayed her piteously · to pray for my sins,  
And to teach me kindly · on Christ to believe,  
That I might work his will · that made of me man.  
`Show me no treasure · but tell me this only --  
How may I save my soul · thou that holy art held?'

When al I trasures are tried,' quoth she · 'truth is the best;  
I appeal to *Deus caritas* · to tell thee truth;  
It is as dear a darling · as dear God himself.

`Whoso is true of his tongue · and telleth none other,  
And doth works therewith · and willeth no man ill:  
He is a god, says the Gospel · on earth and in heaven.

And like to our Lord · by Saint Luke's own words.  
The clergy that know this · should tell it about,  
For Christian and heathen · alike claim the truth.

`Kings and their knights all · should care for it rightly;  
Ride to reach the oppressors · all round the realms,  
And take *trangressores* · tying them tightly,  
Till Truth had determined · the tale of their trespass.  
That the profession plainly · pertaineth to knights;  
Not to fast on one Friday · in five score winters,  
But hold with him and with her · that desireth all truth  
And never leave them for love · nor for seizing of silver.

`For David in his days · dubbed knights,  
And swore them on their swords · to serve Truth ever;  
And whoso passed that point · *apostate* was from the order.

`But Christ, king of all kings · ten orders knighted,  
Cherubim and Seraphim · seven such and one other,  
And gave them might of his majesty · the merrier they thought it;  
And over his common court · made them archangels,  
Taught them by the Trinity · the truth to know  
And to bow to his bidding · he bade them naught else.

`Lucifer with his legions · learned it in Heaven,  
But because he obeyed not · his bliss he did lose,  
And fell from that fellowship · in a fiend's likeness  
Into a deep dark hell · to dwell there for ever;  
And more thousands with him · than man could number

Leapt out with Lucifer · in loathly form:  
For they believed in him · that lied in this manner --

*Ponam pedem in alquilone, et similis ero altissimo.*

`And all that hoped it might be so · no Heaven might hold them;  
They fell out in fiend's likeness · nine days together,  
Till God of his goodness · steadied and stayed  
Made the heavens to be shut · and stand so in quiet.

'When these wicked went out · wonderwise they fell;  
Some in air, some in earth · and some in deep hell;  
But Lucifer lowest · lieth of them all.

For the pride he put on · his pain hath no end;  
And all that work wrong · wander they shall  
After their death day · and dwell with that wretch.  
But those that work well · as holy writ telleth,  
And end, as I have said · in truth, that is best,  
May be sure that their soul · shall wend to Heaven,  
Where Truth is in Trinity · and entroneth them all.  
Therefore I say, as I said · in sight of these texts,  
When all treasures are tried · Truth is the best.

Learn these unlearned · for lettered men know it,  
That Truth is treasure · the best tried on earth.'

`Yet have I no natural knowing,' quoth I · 'ye must teach me better,  
By what craft of my body · begins it, and where.'

`Thou doting duffer,' quoth she · 'dull are thy wits;  
Too little Latin thou learnest · man, in thy youth;

*Heu mihi, quod sterilem duxi vitam juvenilem!*

`It is natural knowing,' quoth she · 'that teacheth thine heart  
For to love thy good Lord · liefer than thyself;  
No deadly sin to do · die though thou shouldest:  
This I trow to be Truth · who can teach thee better,  
See you suffer him to say · and then teach it after.  
For thus witnesseth his words · work thou thereafter;  
For Truth telleth that Love · is the remedy of Heaven;  
No sin may be seen in him · that useth that sort,  
And all his works he wrought · with Love as he listed;  
And taught it Moses for the best thing · and most like to Heaven  
With the plant of peace · most precious of virtues.

`For Heaven might not hold it · so heavy of itself,  
Till it had of the earth · eaten its fill.

`And when it had of this fold · flesh and blood taken,

Never was leaf upon linden · lighter thereafter,  
And pricking and piercing · as the point of a needle,  
That no armour might stay it · nor any high walls.

`Therefore is Love leader · of the Lord's folk of Heaven,  
And a mean, as the mayor is · between king and commons;  
Right so is Love a leader · and the law shapeth,  
Upon man for his misdeeds · he fixeth the fine.  
And for to know it by nature · it springeth in might,  
In the heart is its head · and there its well-spring.

`For in natural knowing · there might beginneth  
That comes from the Father · that formed us all,  
Looked on us with love and · let his Son die  
Meekly for our misdeeds · to amend us all;  
And yet would he them no woe · that wrought him that pain,  
But meekly with his mouth · mercy he besought  
To have pity of that people · that pained him to death.

`Here might thou see examples · in himself alone,  
That he was mightful and meek · and mercy did grant  
To them that hanged him on high · and pierced his heart.

`Therefore I rede you rich · to have pity on the poor;  
Though ye be mighty at law be · meek in your works.

`For the same measures that ye mete · amiss or aright,  
Ye shall be weighed therewith · when ye wend hence;

*Eadem mensura qua mensifueritis, remetietur vobis.*

`For though ye be true of your tongue · and honestly earn,  
And as chaste as a child · that weepeth in church,  
Unless ye love loyally · and give to the poor,  
Such goods as God sends you · to them gladly giving,  
Ye have no more merit · in mass or in hours  
Than Malkin of her maidenhood · that no man desireth.

`For James the gentle · judged in his books  
That faith without fact · is right nothing worth  
And as dead as a door-post · unless the deeds follow;

*Fides sine operibus mortua est, etc.*

`Therefore chastity without charity · shall be chained in hell;  
It is lacking as a lamp · that no light is in.  
Many churchmen are chaste · but their charity is away;  
Are no men more avaricious · when they be advanced:  
Unkind to their kin · and to all Christian folk,  
They chew up their charity · and cride after more.  
Such chastity without charity · shall be chained in hell.

*Piers The Plowman, Passus I, p. 12*

`Many pastors keep themselves · clean in their bodies  
But are cumbered with covetousness · they can not drive it from them  
So hardly hath avarice · hasped them together.  
And that is no truth of the Trinity · but treachery of hell,  
Lessoning the unlearned · to withhold their alms.

`Therefore these words · are written in the Gospel,  
*Date et dabitur vobis* · for I give to you all.  
And that is the lock of Love · that letteth out my grace  
To comfort the care full · encumbered with sin.

`Love is leech of life · and next our Lord's self,  
And also the right road · that runneth unto Heaven;  
Therefore I say as I said · before by the texts,  
When all treasures be tried · Truth is the best.  
Now have I told thee what Truth is · that no treasure is better;  
I may linger no longer thee with · now look on thee our Lord!"

...

## Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/special/authors/langland/>



## CHAPTER 43 : “A HYMN TO THE VIRGIN” (AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

### Background Information

The wicked sin of Mariolatry (or worshipping Mary) was in full bloom in the High Middle Ages, as exemplified by this sample hymn and poem to the Virgin Mary from the time period (c 1300). Its author is anonymous.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Of on that is so fayr and bright

Of on that is so fayr and bright

*Velut maris stella,*

Brighter than the day is light

*Parens et puella:*

Ic crie to the, thou see to me,

Levedy, preye thi Sone for me,

*Tam pia*

That ic mote come to thee

*Maria*

Al this world was for-lore

*Eva peccatrice,*

Tyl our Lord was y-bore

*De te genetrice.*

With *ave* it went away

Thuster nyth and cometh the day

*Salutis;*

The welle springeth ut of the

*Virtutis.*

Levedy, flour of alle thing,

*Rosa sine spina,*

Thu bere Jhesu, hevene king,

*Gratia divina:*

Of alle thu berst the pris,

Levedy, quene of paradys

*Electa:*

Mayde milde, Moder *es*

*Effecta.*

### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

[http://wikisource.org/wiki/Three\\_hymns\\_to\\_the\\_Virgin](http://wikisource.org/wiki/Three_hymns_to_the_Virgin)

## CHAPTER 44 : UNAM SANCTAM

### Background Information

The Papacy was in the apex of its power during the High Middle Ages. The Unam Sanctam, a Papal bull promulgated by Pope Boniface VIII in 1302, lays bare the Romish position regarding Papal power.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins, as the Spouse in the Canticles [Sgs 6:8] proclaims: 'One is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only one, the chosen of her who bore her,' and she represents one sole mystical body whose Head is Christ and the head of Christ is God [1 Cor 11:3]. In her then is one Lord, one faith, one baptism [Eph 4:5]. There had been at the time of the deluge only one ark of Noah, prefiguring the one Church, which ark, having been finished to a single cubit, had only one pilot and guide, i.e., Noah, and we read that, outside of this ark, all that subsisted on the earth was destroyed.

We venerate this Church as one, the Lord having said by the mouth of the prophet: 'Deliver, O God, my soul from the sword and my only one from the hand of the dog.' [Ps 21:20] He has prayed for his soul, that is for himself, heart and body; and this body, that is to say, the Church, He has called one because of the unity of the Spouse, of the faith, of the sacraments, and of the charity of the Church. This is the tunic of the Lord, the seamless tunic, which was not rent but which was cast by lot [Jn 19:23-24]. Therefore, of the one and only Church there is one body and one head, not two heads like a monster; that is, Christ and the Vicar of Christ, Peter and the successor of Peter, since the Lord speaking to Peter Himself said: 'Feed my sheep' [Jn 21:17], meaning, my sheep in general, not these, nor those in particular, whence we understand that He entrusted all to him [Peter]. Therefore, if the Greeks or others should say that they are not confided to Peter and to his successors, they must confess not being the sheep of Christ, since Our Lord says in John 'there is one sheepfold and one shepherd.' We are informed by the texts of the gospels that in this Church and in its power are two swords; namely, the spiritual and the temporal. For when the Apostles say: 'Behold, here are two swords' [Lk 22:38] that is to say, in the Church, since the Apostles were speaking, the Lord did not reply that there were too many, but sufficient. Certainly the one who denies that the temporal sword is in the power of Peter has not listened well to the word of the Lord commanding: 'Put up thy sword into thy scabbard' [Mt 26:52]. Both, therefore, are in the power of the Church, that is to say, the spiritual and the material sword, but the former is to be administered *for* the Church but the latter by the Church; the former in the hands of the priest; the latter by the hands of kings and soldiers, but at the will and sufferance of the priest.

However, one sword ought to be subordinated to the other and temporal authority, subjected to spiritual power. For since the Apostle said: 'There is no power except from God and the things that are, are ordained of God' [Rom 13:1-2], but they would not be ordained if one sword were not subordinated to the other and if the inferior one, as it were, were not led upwards by the other.

For, according to the Blessed Dionysius, it is a law of the divinity that the lowest things reach the highest place by intermediaries. Then, according to the order of the universe, all things are not led back to order equally and immediately, but the lowest by the intermediary, and the inferior by the superior. Hence we must recognize the more clearly that spiritual power surpasses in dignity and in nobility any temporal power whatever, as spiritual things surpass the temporal. This we see very clearly also by the payment, benediction, and consecration of the tithes, but the acceptance of power itself and by the government even of things. For with truth as our witness, it belongs to spiritual power to establish the terrestrial power and to pass judgement if it has not been good. Thus is accomplished the prophecy of Jeremias concerning the Church and the ecclesiastical power: 'Behold to-day I have placed you over nations, and over kingdoms' and the rest. Therefore, if the terrestrial power err, it will be judged by the spiritual power; but if a minor spiritual power err, it will be judged by a superior spiritual power; but if the highest power of all err, it can be judged only by God, and not by man, according to the testimony of the Apostle: 'The spiritual man judgeth of all things and he himself is judged by no man' [1 Cor 2:15]. This authority, however, (though it has been given to man and is exercised by man), is not human but rather divine, granted to Peter by a divine word and reaffirmed to him (Peter) and his successors by the One Whom Peter confessed, the Lord saying to Peter himself, 'Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in Heaven' etc., [Mt 16:19]. Therefore whoever resists this power thus ordained by God, resists the ordinance of God [Rom 13:2], unless he invent like Manicheus two beginnings, which is false and judged by us heretical, since according to the testimony of Moses, it is not in the beginnings but in the beginning that God created heaven and earth [Gen 1:1]. Furthermore, we declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff.

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

[http://wikisource.org/wiki/Unam\\_sanctam\\_%28English%29\\_%28Version\\_2%29](http://wikisource.org/wiki/Unam_sanctam_%28English%29_%28Version_2%29)

## CHAPTER 45 : *EVERYMAN*, A MORALITY PLAY

### Background Information

Early in this textbook we saw how the waxing influence of the Christian Church brought the theater virtually to an end, at least in the West. Ironically, it was also the Christian Church that ushered theater and drama back onto the stage, but only through gradual evolution. This evolutionary process seems to have begun by the introduction of tropes into the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. A trope, meaning 'turn' in Greek, is a phrase or verse added as an embellishment or interpolation to the sung parts of the Mass. Some time before the tenth century, parts of the liturgy at Easter and Christmas were embellished by such tropes as the Nativity antiphonies and the "Quem Quaeritis" before the Easter Introit. For instance, ""Quem Quaeritis", Latin for "Whom do you seek?" (spoken to the three Marys by the angel at the sepulcher, who told them that Christ was not to be found in the tomb, for He had risen), was used as a trope during the Easter liturgy, and was adapted and elaborated into a dialogue that became the source of liturgical drama in the Romish Church. Liturgical drama over time took on a greater presence in the church. As the liturgical playlets were extended and additional scenes were added, they were staged on a number of small "platforms" distributed around the church. Both the performer and the audience (congregation) would move from one "platform" (or scene) to the next, watching the Romish priests act. As the plays became longer and more complicated, it became more and more difficult to stage them indoors. There was also the feeling that the action in some of the plays, such as the *Slaughter of the Innocents* from the *Ordo Rachelis*, an *Epiphany Play*, was too violent, too non-Christian, to be presented within the church. When the dramatic production moved outdoors, the plays were presented (spoken, not sung) in the *vernacular* (the language of the people) by laymen. Although the dramas were still religious, they were no longer a part of worship. Medieval unions, called trade guilds, provided the money and personnel needed to present the plays, but the church continued to provide the scripts and directorial leadership.

These nonliturgical vernacular religious dramas took various forms. The mystery and miracle plays developed first, around 1100 AD. The mystery plays dramatized sacred history, representing events from Creation to Judgment Day. Miracle plays presented the lives and miracles of the saints, or episodes of divine intervention in human affairs, often through the agency of the Virgin Mary. Late in the fourteenth century, morality plays on such subjects as the seven deadly sins became popular in France, England and the Netherlands. Unlike the perspective of the mystery and miracle plays, that of the morality play was individual rather than collective. The morality play (usually called simply a "morality") presented religious and ethical concerns from the point of view of the individual Christian, whose main concern was to effect the salvation of his soul. (In the first decades of the fifteenth century, secular allegorical plays concerning the conflict between good and evil in the individual soul began to be performed in France by law clerks and students. This type of play soon became popular all over Europe, including England.)

The play *Everyman*, excerpted in this chapter, is an example of an English morality play of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Called by Death, Everyman can persuade none of his friends - Beauty, Kindred, Worldly Goods - to go with him, except Good Deeds. We see how the Romish doctrine of justification based upon works was communicated in this morality play. Various other aspects of this play make it clearly Romish as well.

## The Work or Excerpts from the Work

### Characters

Everyman-----Strength  
 God: Adonai-----Discretion  
 Death-----Five-Wits  
 Messenger-----Beauty  
 Fellowship-----Knowledge  
 Cousin-----Confession  
 Kindred-----Angel  
 Goods-----Doctor  
 Good-Deeds

HERE BEGINETH A TREATISE HOW THE HIGH FATHER OF HEAVEN  
 SENDETH DEATH TO SUMMON EVERY CREATURE TO COME AND GIVE  
 ACCOUNT OF THEIR LIVES IN THIS WORLD AND IS IN MANNER OF A  
 MORAL PLAY.

*Messenger:* I pray you all give your audience,

And here this matter with reverence,

By figure a moral play-

The *Summoning of Everyman* called it is,

That of our lives and ending shows

How transitory we be all day.

This matter is wonderous precious,

But the intent of it is more gracious,

And sweet to bear away.

The story saith,-Man, in the beginning,

Look well, and take good heed to the ending,  
Be you never so gay!  
Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,  
Which in the end causeth thy soul to weep,  
When the body lieth in clay.  
Here shall you see how *Fellowship* and *Jollity*,  
Both *Strength*, *Pleasure*, and *Beauty*,  
Will fade from thee as flower in May.  
For ye shall here, how our heavenly king  
Calleth *Everyman* to a general reckoning:  
Give audience, and here what he doth say.  
*God:*        I perceive here in my majesty,  
How that all the creatures be to me unkind,  
Living without dread in worldly prosperity:  
Of ghostly sight the people be so blind,  
Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God;  
In worldly riches is all their mind,  
They fear not my rightwiseness, the sharp rod;  
My law that I shewed, when I for them died,  
They forget clean, and shedding of my blood red;  
I hanged between two, it cannot be denied;  
To get them life I suffered to be dead;  
I healed their feet; with thorns hurt was my head:

I could do no more than I did truly,  
And now I see the people do clean forsake me.  
They use the seven deadly sins damnable;  
As pride, covetise, wrath, and lechery,  
Now in the world be made commendable;  
And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company;  
Everyman liveth so after his own pleasure,  
And yet of their life they be nothing sure:  
I see the more that I them forbear  
The worse they be from year to year;  
All that liveth appaireth\* fast, \*is impaired  
Therefore I will in all the haste  
Have a reckoning of Everyman's person  
For and I leave the people thus alone  
In their life and wicked tempests,  
Verily they will become much worse than beasts;  
For now one would by envy another up eat;  
Charity they all do clean forget.  
I hope well that Everyman  
In my glory should make his mansion,  
And thereto I had them all elect;  
But now I see, like traitors deject,  
They thank me not for the pleasure that I to them meant,

Nor yet for their being that I them have lent;  
I proffered the people great multitude of mercy,  
And few there be that asketh it heartily;  
They be so cumbered with worldly riches,  
That needs on them I must do justice,  
On Everyman living without fear.

Where art thou, *Death*, thou mighty messenger?

*Death:*        Almighty God, I am here at your will,  
Your commandment to fulfil.

*God:*        Go thou to *Everyman*,  
And show him in my name  
A pilgrimage he must on him take,  
Which he in no wise may escape;  
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning  
Without delay or any tarrying.

*Death:*        Lord, I will in the world go run over all,  
And cruelly outsearch both great and small;  
Every man will I beset that liveth beastly  
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly;  
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,  
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,  
Except that alms be his good friend,  
In hell for to dwell, world without end.



Lo, yonder I see *Everyman* walking;

Full little he thinketh on my coming;

His mind is on fleshly lust and his treasure,

And great pain it shall cause him to endure

Before the Lord Heaven King.

*Everyman*, stand still; whither art thou going

Thus gaily? Hast thou thy Maker forget?

*Everyman*: Why askst thou?

Wouldest thou wete\*? \*know

*Death*: Yea, sir, I will show you;

In great haste I am sent to thee

From God out of his great majesty.

*Everyman*: What, sent to me?

*Death*: Yea, certainly.

Though thou have forget him here,

He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,

As, or we depart, thou shalt know.

*Everyman*: What desireth God of me?

*Death*: That shall I show thee;

A reckoning he will needs have

Without any longer respite.

...

*Everyman*: Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,

To make my reckoning and my debts pay,

For I see my time is nigh spent away.

Take example, all ye that do hear or see,

How they that I loved best do forsake me,

Except my *Good-Deeds* that bideth truly.

*Good-Deeds*: All earthly things is but vanity:

*Beauty*, *Strength*, and *Discretion*, do man forsake,

Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,

All fleeth save *Good-Deeds*, and that am I.

*Everyman*: Have mercy on me, God, most mighty;

And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy *Mary*.

*Good-Deeds*: Fear not, I will speak for thee.

*Everyman*: Here I cry God mercy.

*Good-Deeds*: Short our end, and minish our pain;

Let us go and never come again.

*Everyman*: Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;

Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost;

As thou me boughtest, so me defend,

And save me from the fiend's boast,

That I may appear with that blessed host

That shall be saved at the day of doom.

*In manus tuas*- of might's most

*For ever- commendo spiritum meum.*

*Knowledge:* Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure;

The *Good-Deeds* shall make all sure.

Now hath he made ending;

Methinketh that I hear angels sing

And make great joy and melody,

Where *Everyman's* soul received shall be.

*Angel:* Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu:

Hereabove thou shalt go

Because of thy singular virtue:

Now the soul is taken the body fro;

Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.

Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,

Unto the which all ye shall come

That liveth well before the day of doom.

*Doctor:* This moral men may have in mind;

Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,

And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,

And remember *Beauty, Five-wits, Strength, and Discretion,*

They all at last do *Everyman* forsake,

Save his *Good-Deeds*, there doth he take.

But beware, and they be small

Before God, he hath no help at all.

None excuse may be there for *Everyman*:

Alas, how shall he do then?

For after death amends may no man make,

For then mercy and pity do him forsake.

If his reckoning be not clear when he do come,

God will say- *ite maledicti in ignem aeternum*.

And he that hath his account whole and sound,

High in heaven he shall be crowned;

Unto which place God bring us all thither

That we may live body and soul together.

Thereto help the Trinity,

Amen, say ye, for saint *Charity*.

THUS ENDETH THIS MORALL PLAY OF EVERYMAN

**Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/everyman.html>

## CHAPTER 46 : *THE MARRIAGE OF SIR GAWAIN*

### Background Information

One popular theme of Medieval literature, even as we have seen before, is King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Many Medieval romances centered around this theme. *The Marriage of Sir Gawain*, excerpted in this chapter, is an example.

*The Marriage of Sir Gawain* is composed in ballad meter, namely four-line stanzas rhyming *xaxa*. The lines tend not to fall into regular metrical feet; instead they alternate, with four-stress unrhymed lines followed by three-stress lines containing the rhyming final word. As the oral sources of the meter would suggest, the poetry is most effective when read aloud; lines that "sound" clumsy when not vocalized take on life in spoken form.

As a proper ballad, *Marriage* maintains the fundamental simplicity of the plot. There are none of the learned allusions to Ovid, Dante, and Boethius of Chaucer's version. Character motives and reactions are simple as well: Arthur says he was afraid to fight, he offers Gawain in marriage before the lady even expresses an interest, and the crux of the story - what women most desire - turns out to be a tautology, for "a woman will have her will": she wants what she wants.

Like the majority of Gawain romances, *Marriage* places Arthur's court at Carlisle (line 1), and sets its action in Inglewood Forest, and specifically at the Tarn Wathelene (lines 32, 51). Arthur is presumably hunting when he encounters the "bold barron".

This ballad reveals the corrupted and superstitious state of affairs at the time.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### THE MARRIAGE OF SIR GAWAIN

##### *The Marriage of Sir Gawain*

Edited by Thomas Hahn

Originally Published in *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales*

Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995

Kinge Arthur lives in merry Carleile,  
And seemely is to see,  
And there he hath with him Queene Genever,  
That bride soe bright of blee.

*Carlisle*

*woman; countenance*

- 5 And there he hath with Queene Genever,  
That bride soe bright in bower,  
And all his barons about him stoode

*has been  
chamber*

	That were both stiffe and stowre.	<i>brave</i>
10	The King kept a royall Christmasse Of mirth and great honor, And when . . .	
	[In a missing half page, Arthur arranges a hunt; he is accosted by a Baron - an armed warrior - who demands the King fulfill a quest.]	
15	"And bring me word what thing it is That a woman most desire. This shal be thy ransome, Arthur," he sayes, "For Ile have noe other hier."	<i>I will; recompense</i>
	King Arthur then held up his hand According thene as was the law; He tooke his leave of the Baron there, And homward can he draw.	<i>gave his hand (in agreement) custom did</i>
20	And when he came to merry Carlile, To his chamber he is gone; And ther came to him his cozen Sir Gawaine As he did make his mone.	<i>kinsman lament</i>
25	And there came to him his cozen Sir Gawaine, That was a curteous knight: "Why sigh you soe sore, uncle Arthur," he said, "Or who hath done thee unright?"	<i>Who wrong</i>
30	"O peace, O peace, thou gentle Gawaine, That faire may thee beffall, For if thou knew my sighing soe deepe, Thou wold not mervaile att all.	<i>(see note) knew [the cause of]</i>
35	"For when I came to Tearne Wadling, A bold Barron there I fand With a great club upon his backe, Standing stiffe and strong.	<i>Tarn Wathelene; (see note) encountered</i>
	"And he asked me wether I wold fight, Or from him I shold begone - Or else I must him a ransome pay And soe depart him from.	<i>(In which case)</i>

- 40 "To fight with him I saw noe cause,  
Methought it was not meet, *suitable*  
For he was stiffe and strong withall, *indeed*  
His strokes were nothing sweete.
- "Therefor this is my ransome, Gawaine,  
45 I ought to him to pay: *owe*  
I must come againe, as I am sworne,  
Upon the New Yeers Day.
- "And I must bring him word what thing it is . . .
- [Here a half page is missing. Arthur and  
Gawain spend their time searching for an  
answer to the Baron's question, and collect a  
sheaf of answers, none satisfactory. Finally,  
Arthur sets out for his New Year's meeting.]
- 50 Then King Arthur drest him for to ryde *prepared himself*  
In one soe rich array  
Toward the foresaid Tearne Wadling,  
That he might keepe his day.
- And as he rode over a more, *moor*  
Hee see a lady where shee sate *sat*  
55 Betwixt an oke and a greene hollen: *holly*  
She was cladd in red scarlett.
- Then there as shold have stood her mouth, *where*  
Then there was sett her eye;  
The other was in her forehead fast,  
60 The way that she might see.
- Her nose was crooked and turnd outward,  
Her mouth stood foule awry;  
A worse formed lady than shee was,  
Never man saw with his eye.
- 65 To halch upon him, King Arthur, *greet him*  
This lady was full faine, *eager*  
But King Arthur had forgott his lesson, *was at a loss for words*  
What he shold say againe. *again (i.e., in reply)*
- "What knight art thou," the lady sayd,  
70 "That will not speak to me?  
Of me be thou nothing dismayd

	Tho I be ugly to see.	
	"For I have halched you curteouslye, And you will not me againe; 75 Yett I may happen, Sir Knight," shee said, "To ease thee of thy paine."	<i>greeted not [greet] me in turn turn out</i>
	"Give thou ease me, lady," he said, Or helpe me any thing, Thou shalt have gentle Gawaine, my cozen, 80 And marry him with a ring."	<i>If in any way</i>
	"Why, if I help thee not, thou noble King Arthur, Of thy owne hearts desiringe, Of gentle Gawaine . . .	
	[The lady agrees to the marriage bargain, and tells Arthur what women most desire. The King proceeds to his appointed meeting.]	
85	And when he came to the Tearne Wadling The Baron there cold he finde, With a great weapon on his backe, Standing stiffe and stronge.	<i>could  (see note) written answers</i>
90	And then he tooke King Arthurs letters in his hands And away he cold them fling, And then he puld out a good browne sword, And cryd himselfe a king.	<i>did bright declared</i>
95	And he sayd, "I have thee and thy land, Arthur, To doe as it pleaseth me, For this is not thy ransome sure: Therefore yeeld thee to me."	<i>recompense  bade</i>
	And then bespoke him noble Arthur, And bad him hold his hand, 100 "And give me leave to speake my mind In defence of all my land."	
	He said, "As I came over a more, I see a lady where shee sate Betweene an oke and a green hollen:	



105 Shee was clad in red scarlett.

"And she says, 'A woman will have her will,  
And this is all her cheef desire.'

Doe me right, as thou art a baron of skill:

This is thy ransome and all thy hyer."

110

He sayes, "An early vengeance light on her!

She walkes on yonder more -

It was my sister that told thee this,

And she is a misshappen hore!

115 "But heer Ile make mine avow to God

To doe her an evill turne,

For an ever I may thate fowle theefe gett,

In a fyer I will her burne."

[Having satisfactorily answered the Baron's question, Arthur returns to court. He gathers his knights and returns to the lady in the forest, though he appears to have informed Gawain alone of his marriage pact.]

## The Second Part

Sir Lancelott and Sir Steven bold

They rode with them that day,

120 And the formost of the company

There rode the steward Kay.

Soe did Sir Banier and Sir Bore,

Sir Garrett with them soe gay,

Soe did Sir Tristeram that gentle knight,

125 To the forrest fresh and gay.

And when he came to the greene forrest,

Underneath a greene holly tree

Their sate that lady in red scarlet

That unseemly was to see.

130

Sir Kay beheld this ladys face,

And looked uppon her swire:

"Whosoever kisses this lady," he says,

"Of his kisse he stands in feare."

135 Sir Kav beheld the lady againe.

And looked upon her snout:  
"Whosoever kisses this lady," he saies,  
"Of his kisse he stands in doubt."

"Peace cozen Kay," then said Sir Gawaine,  
"Amend thee of thy life."  
140 For there is a knight amongst us all  
That must marry her to his wife."

"What! Wedd her to wiffe!" then said Sir Kay.  
"In the divells name anon,  
Gett me a wiffe where ere I may,  
145 For I had rather be slaine!"

*wherever  
destroyed; [\(see note\)](#)*

Then some tooke up their hawkes in hast,  
And some tooke up their hounds,  
And some sware they wold not marry her  
For citty nor for towne.

*swore*

*spoke out*

150 And then bespake him noble King Arthur,  
And sware there by this day:  
"For a litle foule sight and misliking . . .

[After Arthur's speech, Gawain announces his intention to marry the lady. All return to the court, the marriage is celebrated, and the lady and Gawain retire to their marriage bed. The lady metamorphoses into a beautiful young woman, and then offers Gawain a choice.]

Then she said, "Choose thee, gentle Gawaine,  
Truth as I doe say,  
Wether thou wilt have me in this liknesse  
155 In the night or else in the day."

*appearance*

*With a demeanor ever so*

...

... I had rather, if I might,  
160 Have thee fowle in the day."

*[I choose]  
make love*

"What! When lords goe with ther feires," shee  
said,  
"Both to the ale and wine?  
Alas! Then I must hvde mv selfe.

*companions; [\(see note\)](#)*

165	I must not goe withinne."	<i>into the hall (public space)</i>
	And then bespake him gentle Gawaine, Said, "Lady, thats but a skill: And because thou art my owne lady, Thou shalt have all thy will."	<i>spoke out trick (i.e., trial response)</i>
170	Then she said, "Blesed be thou gentle Gawain, This day that I thee see, For as thou see me att this time, From hencforth I wil be.	<i>remain; (see note)</i>
175	"My father was an old knight. And yett it chanced soe That he marryed a younge lady That brought me to this woe.	<i>(see note)</i>
180	"Shee witched me, being a faire young lady, To the greene forrest to dwell, And there I must walke in womans liknesse, Most like a feeind of hell.	<i>bewitched</i>
	"She witched my brother to a carlish B. . . .	<i>like a monstrous woman; (see note)</i>
	[The lady continues her explanation, and then she and Gawain consummate the marriage. In the morning Kay comes to check on Gawain's welfare, and Gawain explains his wife's history.]	<i>churlish B[aron?]</i>
185	"That looked soe foule, and that was wont On the wild more to goe. "Come kisse her, brother Kay," then said Sir Gawaine, "And amend thé of thy liffe: I sweare this is the same lady That I marryed to my wiffe."	<i>accustomed moor thee</i>
190	Sir Kay kissed that lady bright, Standing upon his feete; He swore, as he was trew knight, The spice was never soe sweete.	<i>(see note)</i>
195	"Well, cozen Gawaine," sayes Sir Kay, "Thy chance is fallen arright, For thou hast gotten one of the fairest maids	<i>luck</i>

I ever saw with my sight."

"It is my fortune," said Sir Gawaine.

"For my uncle Arthurs sake,  
200 I am glad as grasse wold be of raine,  
Great joy that I may take."

Sir Gawaine tooke the lady by the one arme,

Sir Kay tooke her by the tother;

They led her straight to King Arthur  
205 As they were brother and brother.

*the other*

King Arthur welcomed them there all,  
And soe did Lady Genever his Queene,  
With all the knights of the Round Table  
Most seemly to be seene.

210 King Arthur beheld that lady faire  
That was soe faire and bright.  
He thanked Christ in Trinity  
For Sir Gawaine that gentle knight.

Soe did the knights, both more and lesse,  
215 Rejoyced all that day,  
For the good chance that hapened was  
To Sir Gawaine and his lady gay.

*handsome*

Fins.

*The End*

### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/marintro.htm>

## CHAPTER 47 : *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA* OF CHAUCER

### Background Information

Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340 – 1400) was an English author, poet, philosopher, bureaucrat (courtier), and diplomat. Chaucer is best known as the author of *The Canterbury Tales*. He is sometimes credited with being the first author to demonstrate the artistic legitimacy of the vernacular English language, rather than French or Latin.



Although Chaucer's best known work is *The Canterbury Tales*, which we shall consider in the next chapter, he also wrote other influential literature. For instance, during what is called Chaucer's Italian period (up to c.1387), he wrote works modeled primarily on Dante and Boccaccio. His major works of this period include *The House of Fame*, recounting the adventures of Aeneas after the fall of Troy; *The Parliament of Fowls*, which tells of the mating of fowls on St. Valentine's Day and is thought to celebrate the betrothal of Richard II to Anne of Bohemia; a prose translation of Boethius' *De consolazione philosophiae*; and *Troilus and Cressida* (based on Boccaccio's *Filostrato*), a love poem using a seven-line stanza later called *rhyme royal*.

*Troilus and Cressida*, excerpted below, is a medieval romance distantly related to characters in Greek legend. Troilus, a Trojan prince (son of Priam and Hecuba), fell in love with Cressida (Chryseis), daughter of Calchas. When she was exchanged for a Trojan prisoner of war, Cressida swore to be faithful to Troilus, but then deceived him with Diomed. Troilus was killed by Achilles. Not only did Boccaccio and Chaucer base their works on this ancient story, but others like Shakespeare also have used this story.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

#### THE FIRST BOOK.

THE double sorrow <1> of Troilus to tell,  
 That was the King Priamus' son of Troy,  
 In loving how his adventures\* fell \*fortunes  
 From woe to weal, and after\* out of joy, \*afterwards  
 My purpose is, ere I you parte froy.\* \*from  
 Tisiphone,<2> thou help me to indite  
 These woeful words, that weep as I do write.

To thee I call, thou goddess of torment!  
 Thou cruel wight, that sorrowest ever in pain;  
 Help me, that am the sorry instrument  
 That helpeth lovers, as I can, to plain.\* \*complain  
 For well it sits,\* the soothe for to sayn, \*befits  
 Unto a woeful wight a dreary fere,\* \*companion  
 And to a sorry tale a sorry cheer.\* \*countenance

For I, that God of Love's servants serve,  
 Nor dare to love for mine unlikeliness,\* <3> \*unsuitableness  
 Praye for speed,\* although I shoulde sterve,\*\* \*success \*\*die  
 So far I am from his help in darkness;  
 But natheless, might I do yet gladness  
 To any lover, or any love avail,\* \*advance  
 Have thou the thank, and mine be the travail.

But ye lovers that bathen in gladness,  
 If any drop of pity in you be,  
 Remember you for old past heaviness,  
 For Godde's love, and on adversity  
 That others suffer; think how sometime ye  
 Founde how Love durste you displease;  
 Or elles ye have won it with great ease.

And pray for them that been in the case  
 Of Troilus, as ye may after hear,  
 That Love them bring in heaven to solace;\* \*delight, comfort  
 And for me pray also, that God so dear  
 May give me might to show, in some mannere,  
 Such pain or woe as Love's folk endure,  
 In Troilus' \*unseely adventure\* \*unhappy fortune\*

And pray for them that eke be despair'd  
 In love, that never will recover'd be;  
 And eke for them that falsely be appair'd\* \*slandered  
 Through wicked tongues, be it he or she:  
 Or thus bid\* God, for his benignity, \*pray  
 To grant them soon out of this world to pace,\* \*pass, go

That be despaired of their love's grace.

And bid also for them that be at ease  
In love, that God them grant perseverance,  
And send them might their loves so to please,  
That it to them be \*worship and pleasance;\*      \*honour and pleasure\*  
For so hope I my soul best to advance,  
To pray for them that Love's servants be,  
And write their woe, and live in charity;

And for to have of them compassion,  
As though I were their owen brother dear.  
Now listen all with good entention,\*      \*attention  
For I will now go straight to my mattere,  
In which ye shall the double sorrow hear  
Of Troilus, in loving of Cresside,  
And how that she forsook him ere she died.

In Troy, during the siege, dwelt "a lord of great authority, a great divine," named Calchas; who, through the oracle of Apollo, knew that Troy should be destroyed. He stole away secretly to the Greek camp, where he was gladly received, and honoured for his skill in divining, of which the besiegers hoped to make use. Within the city there was great anger at the treason of Calchas; and the people declared that he and all his kin were worthy to be burnt. His daughter, whom he had left in the city, a widow and alone, was in great fear for her life.

Cressida was this lady's name aright;  
\*As to my doom,\* in alle Troy city      \*in my judgment\*  
So fair was none, for over ev'ry wight  
So angelic was her native beauty,  
That like a thing immortal seemed she,  
As sooth a perfect heav'nly creature,  
That down seem'd sent in scorning of Nature.

In her distress, "well nigh out of her wit for pure fear," she appealed for protection to Hector; who, "piteous of nature," and touched by her sorrow and her beauty, assured her of safety, so long as she pleased to dwell in Troy. The siege went on; but they of Troy did not neglect the honour and worship of their deities; most of all of "the relic hight Palladion, <4> that was their trust aboven ev'ry one." In April, "when clothed is the mead with newe green, of jolly Ver [Spring] the prime," the Trojans went to hold the festival of Palladion -- crowding to the temple, "in all their beste guise," lusty knights, fresh ladies,

and maidens bright.

Among the which was this Cresseida,  
In widow's habit black; but natheless,  
Right as our firste letter is now A,  
In beauty first so stood she makeless;\*      \*matchless  
Her goodly looking gladdened all the press;\*      \*crowd  
Was never seen thing to be praised derre,\*      \*dearer, more worthy  
Nor under blacke cloud so bright a sterre,\*      \*star

As she was, as they saiden, ev'ry one  
That her behelden in her blacke weed;\*      \*garment  
And yet she stood, full low and still, alone,  
Behind all other folk, \*in little brede,\*      \*inconspicuously\*  
And nigh the door, ay \*under shame's drede;\*      \*for dread of shame\*  
Simple of bearing, debonair\* of cheer,      \*gracious  
With a full sure\* looking and mannere.      \*assured

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to guide  
His younge knightes, led them up and down  
In that large temple upon ev'ry side,  
Beholding ay the ladies of the town;  
Now here, now there, for no devotioun  
Had he to none, to \*reave him\* his rest,      \*deprive him of\*  
But gan to \*praise and lacke whom him lest;\*      \*praise and disparage  
whom he pleased\*  
And in his walk full fast he gan to wait\*      \*watch, observe  
If knight or squier of his company  
Gan for to sigh, or let his eyen bait\*      \*feed  
On any woman that he could espy;  
Then he would smile, and hold it a folly,  
And say him thus: "Ah, Lord, she sleepeth soft  
For love of thee, when as thou turnest oft.

"I have heard told, pardie, of your living,  
Ye lovers, and your lewed\* observance,      \*ignorant, foolish  
And what a labour folk have in winning  
Of love, and in it keeping with doubtance;\*      \*doubt  
And when your prey is lost, woe and penance;\*      \*suffering  
Oh, very fooles! may ye no thing see?  
Can none of you aware by other be?"

But the God of Love vowed vengeance on Troilus for that  
despite, and, showing that his bow was not broken, "hit him at  
the full."



Within the temple went he forth playing,  
 This Troilus, with ev'ry wight about,  
 On this lady and now on that looking,  
 Whether she were of town, or \*of without;\*      \*from beyond the walls\*  
 And \*upon cas\* befell, that through the rout\*      \*by chance\* \*crowd  
 His eye pierced, and so deep it went,  
 Till on Cresside it smote, and there it stent;\*      \*stayed

And suddenly wax'd wonder sore astoned,\*      \*amazed  
 And gan her bet\* behold in busy wise:      \*better  
 "Oh, very god!" <5> thought he; "where hast thou woned\*      \*dwelt  
 That art so fair and goodly to devise?\*      \*describe  
 Therewith his heart began to spread and rise;  
 And soft he sighed, lest men might him hear,  
 And caught again his former \*playing cheer.\*      \*jesting demeanour\*

\*She was not with the least of her stature,\*      \*she was tall\*  
 But all her limbes so well answering  
 Were to womanhood, that creature  
 Was never lesse mannish in seeming.  
 And eke \*the pure wise of her moving\*      \*by very the way  
 She showed well, that men might in her guess she moved\*  
 Honour, estate,\* and womanly nobless.      \*dignity

Then Troilus right wonder well withal  
 Began to like her moving and her cheer,\*      \*countenance  
 Which somedea! dainous\* was, for she let fall      \*disdainful  
 Her look a little aside, in such mannere  
 Ascaunce\* "What! may I not stande here?"      \*as if to say <6>  
 And after that \*her looking gan she light,\*      \*her expression became  
 That never thought him see so good a sight. more pleasant\*

And of her look in him there gan to quicken  
 So great desire, and strong affection,  
 That in his heart's bottom gan to sticken  
 Of her the fix'd and deep impression;  
 And though he erst\* had pored\*\* up and down,      \*previously \*\*looked  
 Then was he glad his hornes in to shrink;  
 Unnethes\* wist he how to look or wink.      \*scarcely

Lo! he that held himselfe so cunning,  
 And scorned them that Love's paines drien,\*      \*suffer  
 Was full unaware that love had his dwelling  
 Within the subtile streames\* of her eyen;      \*rays, glances  
 That suddenly he thought he felte dien,  
 Right with her look, the spirit in his heart;

Blessed be Love, that thus can folk convert!

She thus, in black, looking to Troilus,  
Over all things he stoode to behold;  
But his desire, nor wherefore he stood thus,  
He neither \*cheere made,\* nor worde told; \*showed by his countenance\*  
But from afar, \*his manner for to hold,\* \*to observe due courtesy\*  
On other things sometimes his look he cast,  
And eft\* <7> on her, while that the service last.\*\* \*again \*\*lasted

And after this, not fully all awhaped,\* \*daunted  
Out of the temple all easily be went,  
Repenting him that ever he had japed\* \*jested  
Of Love's folk, lest fully the descent  
Of scorn fell on himself; but what he meant,  
Lest it were wist on any manner side,  
His woe he gan dissemble and eke hide.

Returning to his palace, he begins hypocritically to smile and  
jest at Love's servants and their pains; but by and by he has to  
dismiss his attendants, feigning "other busy needs." Then, alone  
in his chamber, he begins to groan and sigh, and call up again  
Cressida's form as he saw her in the temple -- "making a mirror  
of his mind, in which he saw all wholly her figure." He thinks no  
travail or sorrow too high a price for the love of such a goodly  
woman; and, "full unadvised of his woe coming,"

Thus took he purpose Love's craft to sue,\* \*follow  
And thought that he would work all privily,  
First for to hide his desire all \*in mew\* \*in a cage, secretly  
From every wight y-born, all utterly,  
\*But he might aught recover'd be thereby;\* \*unless he gained by it\*  
Rememb'ring him, that love \*too wide y-blow\* \*too much spoken of\*  
Yields bitter fruit, although sweet seed be sow.

And, over all this, much more he thought  
What thing to speak, and what to holden in;  
And what to arten\* her to love, he sought; \*constrain <8>  
And on a song anon right to begin,  
And gan loud on his sorrow for to win;\* \*overcome  
For with good hope he gan thus to assent\* \*resolve  
Cressida for to love, and not repent.

The Song of Troilus. <9>

"If no love is, O God! why feel I so?

And if love is, what thing and which is he?  
 If love be good, from whence cometh my woe?  
 If it be wick', a wonder thinketh me  
 Whence ev'ry torment and adversity  
 That comes of love \*may to me savoury think:\* \*seem acceptable to me\*  
 For more I thirst the more that I drink.

"And if I \*at mine owen luste bren\* \*burn by my own will\*  
 From whence cometh my wailing and my plaint?  
 If maugre me,<10> \*whereto plain I\* then? \*to what avail do I complain?\*

I wot ner* why, unwearie, that I faint.	*neither
O quicke death! O sweete harm so quaint!*	*strange

How may I see in me such quantity,  
 But if that I consent that so it be?

"And if that I consent, I wrongfully  
 Complain y-wis: thus pushed to and fro,  
 All starreless within a boat am I,  
 Middles the sea, betwixte windes two,  
 That in contrary standen evermo'.  
 Alas! what wonder is this malady! --  
 For heat of cold, for cold of heat, I die!"

Devoting himself wholly to the thought of Cressida -- though he yet knew not whether she was woman or goddess -- Troilus, in spite of his royal blood, became the very slave of love. He set at naught every other charge, but to gaze on her as often as he could; thinking so to appease his hot fire, which thereby only burned the hotter. He wrought marvellous feats of arms against the Greeks, that she might like him the better for his renown; then love deprived him of sleep, and made his food his foe; till he had to "borrow a title of other sickness," that men might not know he was consumed with love. Meantime, Cressida gave no sign that she heeded his devotion, or even knew of it; and he was now consumed with a new fear -- lest she loved some other man. Bewailing his sad lot -- ensnared, exposed to the scorn of those whose love he had ridiculed, wishing himself arrived at the port of death, and praying ever that his lady might glad him with some kind look -- Troilus is surprised in his chamber by his friend Pandarus, the uncle of Cressida. Pandarus, seeking to divert his sorrow by making him angry, jeeringly asks whether remorse of conscience, or devotion, or fear of the Greeks, has caused all this ado. Troilus pitifully beseeches his friend to leave him to die alone, for die he must, from a cause which he must keep hidden; but Pandarus argues against Troilus' cruelty in hiding from a friend such a sorrow, and Troilus at last confesses

that his malady is love. Pandarus suggests that the beloved object may be such that his counsel might advance his friend's desires; but Troilus scouts the suggestion, saying that Pandarus could never govern himself in love.

"Yea, Troilus, hearken to me," quoth Pandare,  
"Though I be nice;\* it happens often so,                   \*foolish  
That one that access\* doth full evil fare,           \*in an access of fever  
By good counsel can keep his friend therefro'.  
I have my selfe seen a blind man go  
Where as he fell that looke could full wide;  
A fool may eke a wise man often guide.

"A whetstone is no carving instrument,  
But yet it maketh sharpe carving tooles;  
And, if thou know'st that I have aught miswent,\*           \*erred, failed  
Eschew thou that, for such thing to thee school\* is. \*schooling, lesson  
Thus oughte wise men to beware by fooles;  
If so thou do, thy wit is well bewared;  
By its contrary is everything declared.

"For how might ever sweetness have been know  
To him that never tasted bitterness?  
And no man knows what gladness is, I trow,  
That never was in sorrow or distress:  
Eke white by black, by shame eke worthiness,  
Each set by other, \*more for other seemeth,\*           \*its quality is made  
As men may see; and so the wise man deemeth." more obvious by  
the contrast\*

Troilus, however, still begs his friend to leave him to mourn in peace, for all his proverbs can avail nothing. But Pandarus insists on plying the lover with wise saws, arguments, reproaches; hints that, if he should die of love, his lady may impute his death to fear of the Greeks; and finally induces Troilus to admit that the well of all his woe, his sweetest foe, is called Cressida. Pandarus breaks into praises of the lady, and congratulations of his friend for so well fixing his heart; he makes Troilus utter a formal confession of his sin in jesting at lovers and bids him think well that she of whom rises all his woe, hereafter may his comfort be also.

"For thilke\* ground, that bears the weedes wick'           \*that same  
Bears eke the wholesome herbes, and full oft  
Next to the foule nettle, rough and thick,  
The lily waxeth,\* white, and smooth, and soft;           \*grows  
And next the valley is the hill aloft,

And next the darke night is the glad morrow,  
And also joy is next the fine\* of sorrow." \*end, border

Pandarus holds out to Troilus good hope of achieving his desire; and tells him that, since he has been converted from his wicked rebellion against Love, he shall be made the best post of all Love's law, and most grieve Love's enemies. Troilus gives utterance to a hint of fear; but he is silenced by Pandarus with another proverb -- "Thou hast full great care, lest that the carl should fall out of the moon." Then the lovesick youth breaks into a joyous boast that some of the Greeks shall smart; he mounts his horse, and plays the lion in the field; while Pandarus retires to consider how he may best recommend to his niece the suit of Troilus.

## THE SECOND BOOK.

[IN the Proem to the Second Book, the poet hails the clear weather that enables him to sail out of those black waves in which his boat so laboured that he could scarcely steer -- that is, "the tempestuous matter of despair, that Troilus was in; but now of hope the kalendes begin." He invokes the aid of Clio; excuses himself to every lover for what may be found amiss in a book which he only translates; and, obviating any lover's objection to the way in which Troilus obtained his lady's grace - - through Pandarus' mediation -- says it seems to him no wonderful thing: ]

"For ev'ry wighte that to Rome went  
Held not one path, nor alway one mannere;  
Eke in some lands were all the game y-shent  
If that men far'd in love as men do here,  
As thus, in open dealing and in cheer,  
In visiting, in form, or saying their saws,\* \*speeches  
For thus men say: Each country hath its laws.

"Eke scarcely be there in this place three  
That have in love done or said \*like in all;\* \*alike in all respects\*

And so that which the poem relates may not please the reader -- but it actually was done, or it shall yet be done. The Book sets out with the visit of Pandarus to Cressida:--

In May, that mother is of monthes glade,\* \*glad

When all the freshe flowers, green and red,  
 Be quick\* again, that winter deade made,                   \*alive  
 And full of balm is floating ev'ry mead;  
 When Phoebus doth his brighte beames spread  
 Right in the white Bull, so it betid\*                   \*happened  
 As I shall sing, on Maye's day the thrird, <11>

That Pandarus, for all his wise speech,  
 Felt eke his part of Love's shottes keen,  
 That, could he ne'er so well of Love preach,  
 It made yet his hue all day full green;\*                   \*pale  
 So \*shope it,\* that him fell that day a teen\*   \*it happened\* \*access  
 In love, for which full woe to bed he went,  
 And made ere it were day full many a went.\*           \*turning <12>

The swallow Progne, <13> with a sorrowful lay,  
 When morrow came, gan make her waimenting,\*                   \*lamenting  
 Why she foshapen\* was; and ever lay                   \*transformed  
 Pandare a-bed, half in a slumbering,  
 Till she so nigh him made her chittering,  
 How Tereus gan forth her sister take,  
 That with the noise of her he did awake,

And gan to call, and dress\* him to arise,                   \*prepare  
 Rememb'ring him his errand was to do'n  
 From Troilus, and eke his great emprise;  
 And cast, and knew in \*good plight\* was the Moon   \*favourable aspect\*  
 To do voyage, and took his way full soon  
 Unto his niece's palace there beside  
 Now Janus, god of entry, thou him guide!

Pandarus finds his niece, with two other ladies, in a paved parlour, listening to a maiden who reads aloud the story of the Siege of Thebes. Greeting the company, he is welcomed by Cressida, who tells him that for three nights she has dreamed of him. After some lively talk about the book they had been reading, Pandarus asks his niece to do away her hood, to show her face bare, to lay aside the book, to rise up and dance, "and let us do to May some observance." Cressida cries out, "God forbid!" and asks if he is mad -- if that is a widow's life, whom it better becomes to sit in a cave and read of holy saints' lives. Pandarus intimates that he could tell her something which could make her merry; but he refuses to gratify her curiosity; and, by way of the siege and of Hector, "that was the towne's wall, and Greekes' yerd" or scourging-rod, the conversation is brought round to Troilus, whom Pandarus highly extols as "the wise

worthy Hector the second." She has, she says, already heard Troilus praised for his bravery "of them that her were liefest praised be" [by whom it would be most welcome to her to be praised].

"Ye say right sooth, y-wis," quoth Pandarus;  
For yesterday, who so had with him been,  
Might have wonder'd upon Troilus;  
For never yet so thick a swarm of been\*                      \*bees  
Ne flew, as did of Greekes from him flee'n;  
And through the field, in ev'ry wighte's ear,  
There was no cry but 'Troilus is here.'

"Now here, now there, he hunted them so fast,  
There was but Greekes' blood; and Troilus  
Now him he hurt, now him adown he cast;  
Ay where he went it was arrayed thus:  
He was their death, and shield of life for us,  
That as that day there durst him none withstand,  
While that he held his bloody sword in hand."

Pandarus makes now a show of taking leave, but Cressida detains him, to speak of her affairs; then, the business talked over, he would again go, but first again asks his niece to arise and dance, and cast her widow's garments to mischance, because of the glad fortune that has befallen her. More curious than ever, she seeks to find out Pandarus' secret; but he still parries her curiosity, skilfully hinting all the time at her good fortune, and the wisdom of seizing on it when offered. In the end he tells her that the noble Troilus so loves her, that with her it lies to make him live or die -- but if Troilus dies, Pandarus shall die with him; and then she will have "fished fair." <14> He beseeches mercy for his friend:

"\*Woe worth\* the faire gemme virtueless! <15>                      \*evil befall!\*

Woe worth the herb also that \*doth no boot!\*                      \*has no remedial power\*

Woe worth the beauty that is ruthelless!\*                      \*merciless

Woe worth that wight that treads each under foot!

And ye that be of beauty \*crop and root\*                      \*perfection <16>

If therewithal in you there be no ruth,\*                      \*pity

Then is it harm ye live, by my truth!"

Pandarus makes only the slight request that she will show Troilus somewhat better cheer, and receive visits from him, that his life may be saved; urging that, although a man be soon going to the temple, nobody will think that he eats the images; and

that "such love of friends reigneth in all this town."

Cressida, which that heard him in this wise,  
Thought: "I shall feelee\* what he means, y-wis;" \*test  
"Now, eme\* quoth she, "what would ye me devise? \*uncle  
What is your rede\* that I should do of this?" \*counsel, opinion  
"That is well said," quoth he;" certain best it is  
That ye him love again for his loving,  
As love for love is \*skilful guerdoning.\* \*reasonable recompense\*

"Think eke how elde\* wasteth ev'ry hour \*age  
In each of you a part of your beauty;  
And therefore, ere that age do you devour,  
Go love, for, old, there will no wight love thee  
Let this proverb a lore\* unto you be: \*lesson  
"'Too late I was ware," quoth beauty when it past;  
And \*elde daunteth danger\* at the last.' \*old age overcomes disdain\*

"The kinge's fool is wont to cry aloud,  
When that he thinks a woman bears her high,  
'So longe may ye liven, and all proud,  
Till crowes' feet be wox\* under your eye! \*grown  
And send you then a mirror \*in to pry\* \*to look in\*  
In which ye may your face see a-morrow!\* \*in the morning  
\*I keep then wishe you no more sorrow.'"\* \*I care to wish you  
nothing worse\*

Weeping, Cressida reproaches her uncle for giving her such  
counsel; whereupon Pandarus, starting up, threatens to kill  
himself, and would fain depart, but that his niece detains him,  
and, with much reluctance, promises to "make Troilus good  
cheer in honour." Invited by Cressida to tell how first he know  
her lover's woe, Pandarus then relates two soliloquies which he  
had accidentally overheard, and in which Troilus had poured  
out all the sorrow of his passion.

With this he took his leave, and home he went  
Ah! Lord, so was he glad and well-begone!\* \*happy  
Cresside arose, no longer would she stent,\* \*stay  
But straight into her chamber went anon,  
And sat her down, as still as any stone,  
And ev'ry word gan up and down to wind  
That he had said, as it came to her mind.

And wax'd somedeal astonish'd in her thought,  
Right for the newe case; but when that she  
\*Was full advised,\* then she found right naught \*had fully considered\*



Of peril, why she should afeared be:  
 For a man may love, of possibility,  
 A woman so, that his heart may to-brest,\*      \*break utterly  
 And she not love again, \*but if her lest.\*      \*unless it so please her\*

But as she sat alone, and thoughte thus,  
 In field arose a skirmish all without;  
 And men cried in the street then:"  
 Troilus hath right now put to flight the Greekes' rout."\*      \*host  
 With that gan all the meinie\* for to shout:      \*(Cressida's) household  
 "Ah! go we see, cast up the lattice wide,  
 For through this street he must to palace ride;

"For other way is from the gates none,  
 Of Dardanus,<18> where open is the chain." <19>  
 With that came he, and all his folk anon,  
 An easy pace riding, in \*routes twain,\*      \*two troops\*  
 Right as his \*happy day\* was, sooth to sayn:      \*good fortune <20>\*  
 For which men say may not disturbed be  
 What shall betiden\* of necessity.      \*happen

This Troilus sat upon his bay steed  
 All armed, save his head, full richely,  
 And wounded was his horse, and gan to bleed,  
 For which he rode a pace full softly  
 But such a knightly sighte\* truly      \*aspect  
 As was on him, was not, withoute fail,  
 To look on Mars, that god is of Battaile.

So like a man of armes, and a knight,  
 He was to see, full fill'd of high prowess;  
 For both he had a body, and a might  
 To do that thing, as well as hardiness;\*      \*courage  
 And eke to see him in his gear\* him dress,      \*armour  
 So fresh, so young, so wieldy\* seemed he,      \*active  
 It was a heaven on him for to see.\*      \*look

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### Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=ChaTroi.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/lv1/Archive/mideng-parsed&tag=public&part=1&division=div1>

[http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/Geoffrey\\_Chaucer/chaucer\\_poems\\_TROILUS\\_AND\\_CRESSIDA.htm](http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/Geoffrey_Chaucer/chaucer_poems_TROILUS_AND_CRESSIDA.htm)

## CHAPTER 48 : *THE CANTERBURY TALES* OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER

### Background Information

Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories in a frame story, between 1387 and 1400. It is the story of a group of thirty people who travel as pilgrims from London to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury (England). The pilgrims, who come from all layers of society, tell stories to each other to kill time while they travel to Canterbury. Chaucer never finished his enormous project, and even the completed tales were not finally revised. Scholars are uncertain about the order of the tales. As the printing press had yet to be invented when Chaucer wrote his works, *The Canterbury Tales* has been passed down in several handwritten manuscripts.

The pilgrims' tales include a variety of Medieval genres, from the fabliau to the homily, and they vividly indicate medieval attitudes and customs in such areas as love, marriage, and religion. Through Chaucer's superb powers of characterization the pilgrims—such as the earthy wife of Bath, the gentle knight, the worldly prioress, and the evil summoner—come intensely alive. Chaucer was a master storyteller and craftsman.

It is especially fitting that we close this textbook with a selection from *The Canterbury Tales* of Geoffrey Chaucer, for it, like perhaps none other, opens a window into the life of the High Middle Ages. What we see in it of life at the time exhibits to us how doctrinal corruption invariably leads to behavioral corruption. The piling up of one heresy upon another over the course of the Medieval era came at a heavy price. But just when wickedness and apostasy had reached a crescendo in the High Middle Ages, God mercifully ushered in the Protestant Reformation, the literature of which we shall consider in the next textbook in our series. But, for now, let's consider the excerpts below from *The Canterbury Tales*.

### The Work or Excerpts from the Work

The Canterbury Tales : Prologue (Left column: original Middle English / Right column: Modern English translation)

#### Here bygynneþ the Book of the tales of Caunterbury

1: Whan that aprill with his shoures soote  
2: The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,  
3: And bathed every veyne in swich licour  
4: Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
5: Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth  
6: Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
7: Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne  
8: Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,  
9: And smale foweles maken melodye,  
10: That slepen al the nyght with open ye

#### Here begins the Book of the Tales of Canterbury

When April with his showers sweet with fruit  
The drought of March has pierced unto the root  
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power  
To generate therein and sire the flower;  
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,  
Quickened again, in every holt and heath,  
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun  
Into the Ram one half his course has run,  
And many little birds make melody  
That sleep through all the night with open eye

11: (so priketh hem nature in hir corages);  
 12: Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,  
 13: And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,  
 14: To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;  
 15: And specially from every shires ende  
 16: Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,  
 17: The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
 18: That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.  
 19: Bifil that in that seson on a day,  
 20: In southwerk at the tabard as I lay  
 21: Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
 22: To caunterbury with ful devout corage,  
 23: At nyght was come into that hostelrye  
 24: Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,  
 25: Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle  
 26: In felawshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,  
 27: That toward caunterbury wolden ryde.  
 28: The chambres and the stables weren wyde,  
 29: And wel we weren esed atte beste.  
 30: And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,  
 31: So hadde I spoken with hem everichon  
 32: That I was of hir felawshipe anon,  
 33: And made forward erly for to ryse,  
 34: To take oure wey ther as I yow devyse.  
 35: But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,  
 36: Er that I ferther in this tale pace,  
 37: Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun  
 38: To telle yow al the condicioun  
 39: Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,  
 40: And whiche they weren, and of what degree,  
 41: And eek in what array that they were inne;  
 42: And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

### **The Knight's Portrait**

43: A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man,  
 44: That fro the tyme that he first bigan  
 45: To riden out, he loved chivalrie,  
 46: Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.  
 47: Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,  
 48: And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,  
 49: As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,  
 50: And evere honoured for his worthynesse.  
 51: At alisaundre he was whan it was wonne.  
 52: Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne  
 53: Aboven alle nacions in pruce;  
 54: In lettow hadde he reysed and in ruce,  
 55: No cristen man so ofte of his degree.  
 56: In gernade at the seege eek hadde he be  
 57: Of algezir, and riden in belmarye.  
 58: At lyeys was he and at satalye,  
 59: Whan they were wonne; and in the grete see  
 60: At many a noble armee hadde he be.  
 61: At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,  
 62: And foughten for oure feith at tramyssene  
 63: In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.  
 64: This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also

(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-  
 Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,  
 And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,  
 To distant shrines well known in sundry lands.  
 And specially from every shire's end  
 Of England they to Canterbury wend,  
 The holy blessed martyr there to seek  
 Who helped them when they lay so ill and weal  
 Befell that, in that season, on a day  
 In Southwark, at the Tabard, as I lay  
 Ready to start upon my pilgrymage  
 To Canterbury, full of devout homage,  
 There came at nightfall to that hostelry  
 Some nine and twenty in a company  
 Of sundry persons who had chanced to fall  
 In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all  
 That toward Canterbury town would ride.  
 The rooms and stables spacious were and wide,  
 And well we there were eased, and of the best.  
 And briefly, when the sun had gone to rest,  
 So had I spoken with them, every one,  
 That I was of their fellowship anon,  
 And made agreement that we'd early rise  
 To take the road, as you I will apprise.  
 But none the less, whilst I have time and space,  
 Before yet farther in this tale I pace,  
 It seems to me accordant with reason  
 To inform you of the state of every one  
 Of all of these, as it appeared to me,  
 And who they were, and what was their degree,  
 And even how arrayed there at the inn;  
 And with a knight thus will I first begin.

### **THE KNIGHT**

A knight there was, and he a worthy man,  
 Who, from the moment that he first began  
 To ride about the world, loved chivalry,  
 Truth, honour, freedom and all courtesy.  
 Full worthy was he in his liege-lord's war,  
 And therein had he ridden (none more far)  
 As well in Christendom as heathenesse,  
 And honoured everywhere for worthiness.  
 At Alexandria, he, when it was won;  
 Full oft the table's roster he'd begun  
 Above all nations' knights in Prussia.  
 In Latvia raided he, and Russia,  
 No christened man so oft of his degree.  
 In far Granada at the siege was he  
 Of Algeciras, and in Belmarie.  
 At Ayas was he and at Satalye  
 When they were won; and on the Middle Sea  
 At many a noble meeting chanced to be.  
 Of mortal battles he had fought fifteen,  
 And he'd fought for our faith at Tramissene  
 Three times in lists, and each time slain his foe.  
 This self-same worthy knight had been also

65: Somtyme with the lord of palatye  
 66: Agayn another hethen in turkye.  
 67: And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys;  
 68: And though that he were worthy, he was wys,  
 69: And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.  
 70: He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde  
 71: In al his lyf unto no maner wight.  
 72: He was a verray, parfit gentil knyght.  
 73: But, for to tellen yow of his array,  
 74: His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.  
 75: Of fustian he wered a gypon  
 76: Al bismotered with his habergeon,  
 77: For he was late ycome from his viage,  
 78: And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.

#### **The Squire's Portrait**

79: With hym ther was his sone, a yong squier,  
 80: A lovyere and a lusty bachelor,  
 81: With lokkes crulle as they were leyed in presse.  
 82: Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.  
 83: Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,  
 84: And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.  
 85: And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie  
 86: In flaundes, in artoys, and pycardie,  
 87: And born hym weel, as of so litel space,  
 88: In hope to stonden in his lady grace.  
 89: Embrouded was he, as it were a meede  
 90: Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.  
 91: Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;  
 92: He was as fressh as is the month of may.  
 93: Short was his gowne, with sleeves longe and wyde.  
 94: Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.  
 95: He koude songes make and wel endite,  
 96: Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreie and write.  
 97: So hoot he lovede that by nyghtertale.  
 98: He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.  
 99: Courteis he was, lowely, and servysable,  
 100: And carf biforn his fader at the table.

#### **The Yeoman's Portrait**

101: A yeman hadde he and servantz namo  
 102: At that tyme, for hym liste ride so,  
 103: And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.  
 104: A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,  
 105: Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,  
 106: (wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:  
 107: His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe)  
 108: And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.  
 109: A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage.  
 110: Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.  
 111: Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,  
 112: And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,  
 113: And on that oother syde a gay daggere  
 114: Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;  
 115: A cristopher on his brest of silver sheene.  
 116: An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;  
 117: A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

At one time with the lord of Palatye  
 Against another heathen in Turkey:  
 And always won he sovereign fame for prize.  
 Though so illustrious, he was very wise  
 And bore himself as meekly as a maid.  
 He never yet had any vileness said,  
 In all his life, to whatsoever wight.  
 He was a truly perfect, gentle knight.  
 But now, to tell you all of his array,  
 His steeds were good, but yet he was not gay.  
 Of simple fustian wore he a jupon  
 Sadly discoloured by his habergeon;  
 For he had lately come from his voyage  
 And now was going on this pilgrimage.

#### **THE SQUIRE**

With him there was his son, a youthful squire,  
 A lover and a lusty bachelor,  
 With locks well curled, as if they'd laid in press.  
 Some twenty years of age he was, I guess.  
 In stature he was of an average length,  
 Wondrously active, aye, and great of strength.  
 He'd ridden sometime with the cavalry  
 In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardy,  
 And borne him well within that little space  
 In hope to win thereby his lady's grace.  
 Prinked out he was, as if he were a mead,  
 All full of fresh-cut flowers white and red.  
 Singing he was, or fluting, all the day;  
 He was as fresh as is the month of May.  
 Short was his gown, with sleeves both long and wide.  
 Well could he sit on horse, and fairly ride.  
 He could make songs and words thereto indite,  
 Joust, and dance too, as well as sketch and write.  
 So hot he loved that, while night told her tale,  
 He slept no more than does a nightingale.  
 Courteous he, and humble, willing and able,  
 And carved before his father at the table.

#### **THE YEOMAN**

A yeoman had he, nor more servants, no,  
 At that time, for he chose to travel so;  
 And he was clad in coat and hood of green.  
 A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen  
 Under his belt he bore right carefully  
 (Well could he keep his tackle yeomanly:  
 His arrows had no draggled feathers low),  
 And in his hand he bore a mighty bow.  
 A cropped head had he and a sun-browned face.  
 Of woodcraft knew he all the useful ways.  
 Upon his arm he bore a bracer gay,  
 And at one side a sword and buckler, yea,  
 And at the other side a dagger bright,  
 Well sheathed and sharp as spear point in the light;  
 On breast a Christopher of silver sheen.  
 He bore a horn in baldric all of green;  
 A forester he truly was, I guess.

### **The Prioress' Portrait**

118: Ther was also a nonne, a prioresse,  
119: That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;  
120: Hire gretteste ooth was but by seinte loy;  
121: And she was cleped madame eglentyne.  
122: Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,  
123: Entuned in hir nose ful semely,  
124: And frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,  
125: After the scole of stratford atte bowe,  
126: For frenssh of parys was to hire unknowe.  
127: At mete wel ytaught was she with alle:  
128: She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,  
129: Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe;  
130: Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe  
131: That no drope ne fille upon hire brest.  
132: In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest.  
133: Hir over-lippe wyped she so clene  
134: That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene  
135: Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.  
136: Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.  
137: And sikerly she was of greet desport,  
138: And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,  
139: And peyned hire to countrefete cheere  
140: Of court, and to been estatlich of manere,  
141: And to ben holden digne of reverence.  
142: But, for to spoken of hire conscience,  
143: She was so charitable and so pitous  
144: She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous  
145: Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.  
146: Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde  
147: With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel-breed.  
148: But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,  
149: Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;  
150: And al was conscience and tendre herte.  
151: Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,  
152: Hir nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,  
153: Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;  
154: But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;  
155: It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;  
156: For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.  
157: Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.  
158: Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar  
159: A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,  
160: And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,  
161: On which ther was first write a crowned a,  
162: And after amor vincit omnia.

### **The Second Nun's Portrait**

163: Another nonne with hire hadde she,

### **THE THREE PRIESTS**

164: That was hir chapeleyne, and preestes thre.

### **The Monk's Portrait**

165: A monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie,  
166: An outridere, that lovede venerie,  
167: A manly man, to been an abbot able.

### **THE PRIORESS**

There was also a nun, a prioress,  
Who, in her smiling, modest was and coy;  
Her greatest oath was but "By Saint Eloy!"  
And she was known as Madam Eglantine.  
Full well she sang the services divine,  
Intoning through her nose, becomingly;  
And fair she spoke her French, and fluently,  
After the school of Stratford-at-the-Bow,  
For French of Paris was not hers to know.  
At table she had been well taught withal,  
And never from her lips let morsels fall,  
Nor dipped her fingers deep in sauce, but ate  
With so much care the food upon her plate  
That never dribble fell upon her breast.  
In courtesy she had delight and zest.  
Her upper lip was always wiped so clean  
That in her cup was no iota seen  
Of grease, when she had drunk her draught of wine.  
Becomingly she reached for meat to dine.  
And certainly delighting in good sport,  
She was right pleasant, amiable- in short.  
She was at pains to counterfeit the look  
Of courtliness, and stately manners took,  
And would be held worthy of reverence.  
But, to say something of her moral sense,  
She was so charitable and piteous  
That she would weep if she but saw a mouse  
Caught in a trap, though it were dead or bled.  
She had some little dogs, too, that she fed  
On roasted flesh, or milk and fine white bread.  
But sore she'd weep if one of them were dead,  
Or if men smote it with a rod to smart:  
For pity ruled her, and her tender heart.  
Right decorous her pleated wimple was;  
Her nose was fine; her eyes were blue as glass;  
Her mouth was small and therewith soft and red;  
But certainly she had a fair forehead;  
It was almost a full span broad, I own,  
For, truth to tell, she was not undergrown.  
Neat was her cloak, as I was well aware.  
Of coral small about her arm she'd bear  
A string of beads and gauded all with green;  
And therefrom hung a brooch of golden sheen  
Whereon there was first written a crowned "A,"  
And under, Amor vincit omnia.

### **THE NUN**

Another little nun with her had she,

### **THE THREE PRIESTS**

Who was her chaplain; and of priests she'd three.

### **THE MONK**

A monk there was, one made for mastery,  
An outrider, who loved his venery;  
A manly man, to be an abbot able.

168: Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,  
 169: And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere  
 170: Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere  
 171: And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle.  
 172: Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle,  
 173: The reule of seint maure or of seint beneit,  
 174: By cause that it was old and somdel streit  
 175: This ilke monk leet olde thynges pace,  
 176: And heeld after the newe world the space.  
 177: He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,  
 178: That seith that hunters ben nat hooly men,  
 179: Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,  
 180: Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees, --  
 181: This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.  
 182: But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre;  
 183: And I seyde his opinion was good.  
 184: What sholde he studie and make hymselfen wood,  
 185: Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,  
 186: Or swynken with his handes, and laboure,  
 187: As austyn bit? how shal the world be served?  
 188: Lat austyn have his swynk to hym reserved!  
 189: Therefore he was a prikasour aright:  
 190: Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;  
 191: Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare  
 192: Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.  
 193: I seigh his sleeves purfild at the hond  
 194: With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;  
 195: And, for to festne his hood under his chyn,  
 196: He hadde of gold ywroght a ful curious pyn;  
 197: A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.  
 198: His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,  
 199: And eek his face, as he hadde been enoynt.  
 200: He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;  
 201: His eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,  
 202: That stemed as a forneys of a leed;  
 203: His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat.  
 204: Now certainly he was a fair prelaat;  
 205: He was nat pale as a forpynded goost.  
 206: A fat swan loved he best of any roost.  
 207: His palfrey was as brown as is a berye.

#### The Friar's Portrait

208: A frere ther was, a wantowne and a merye,  
 209: A lymytour, a ful solempne man.  
 210: In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan  
 211: So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage.  
 212: He hadde maad ful many a mariage  
 213: Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.  
 214: Unto his ordre he was a noble post.  
 215: Ful wel biloved and famulier was he  
 216: With frankeleyns over al in his contree,  
 217: And eek with worthy wommen of the toun;  
 218: For he hadde power of confessioun,  
 219: As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,  
 220: For of his ordre he was licenciad.  
 221: Ful swetely herde he confessioun,

Full many a blooded horse had he in stable:  
 And when he rode men might his bridle hear  
 A-jingling in the whistling wind as clear,  
 Aye, and as loud as does the chapel bell  
 Where this brave monk was of the cell.  
 The rule of Maurus or Saint Benedict,  
 By reason it was old and somewhat strict,  
 This said monk let such old things slowly pace  
 And followed new-world manners in their place.  
 He cared not for that text a clean-plucked hen  
 Which holds that hunters are not holy men;  
 Nor that a monk, when he is cloisterless,  
 Is like unto a fish that's waterless;  
 That is to say, a monk out of his cloister.  
 But this same text he held not worth an oyster;  
 And I said his opinion was right good.  
 What? Should he study as a madman would  
 Upon a book in cloister cell? Or yet  
 Go labour with his hands and swink and sweat,  
 As Austin bids? How shall the world be served?  
 Let Austin have his toil to him reserved.  
 Therefore he was a rider day and night;  
 Greyhounds he had, as swift as bird in flight.  
 Since riding and the hunting of the hare  
 Were all his love, for no cost would he spare.  
 I saw his sleeves were purfled at the hand  
 With fur of grey, the finest in the land;  
 Also, to fasten hood beneath his chin,  
 He had of good wrought gold a curious pin:  
 A love-knot in the larger end there was.  
 His head was bald and shone like any glass,  
 And smooth as one anointed was his face.  
 Fat was this lord, he stood in goodly case.  
 His bulging eyes he rolled about, and hot  
 They gleamed and red, like fire beneath a pot;  
 His boots were soft; his horse of great estate.  
 Now certainly he was a fine prelate:  
 He was not pale as some poor wasted ghost.  
 A fat swan loved he best of any roast.  
 His palfrey was as brown as is a berry.

#### THE FRIAR

A friar there was, a wanton and a merry,  
 A limiter, a very festive man.  
 In all the Orders Four is none that can  
 Equal his gossip and his fair language.  
 He had arranged full many a marriage  
 Of women young, and this at his own cost.  
 Unto his order he was a noble post.  
 Well liked by all and intimate was he  
 With franklins everywhere in his country,  
 And with the worthy women of the town:  
 For at confessing he'd more power in gown  
 (As he himself said) than it good curate,  
 For of his order he was licentiate.  
 He heard confession gently, it was said,

222: And plesaunt was his absolucioun:  
 223: He was an esy man to yeve penaunce,  
 224: Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce.  
 225: For unto a povre ordre for to yive  
 226: Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;  
 227: For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,  
 228: He wiste that a man was repentaunt;  
 229: For many a man so hard is of his herte,  
 230: He may nat wepe, althogh hym soore smerte.  
 231: Therfore in stede of wepyng and preyer  
 232: Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.  
 233: His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves  
 234: And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.  
 235: And certeinly he hadde a murye note:  
 236: Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;  
 237: Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.  
 238: His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys;  
 239: Therto he strong was as a champioun.  
 240: He knew the tavernes wel in every toun  
 241: And everich hostiler and tappestere  
 242: Bet than a lazor or a beggestere;  
 243: For unto swich a worthy man as he  
 244: Acorded nat, as by his facultee,  
 245: To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce.  
 246: It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce,  
 247: For to deelen with no swich poraille,  
 248: But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.  
 249: And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,  
 250: Courteis he was and lowely of servyse.  
 251: Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.  
 252: He was the beste beggere in his hous;  
 252.1: (and yaf a certeyne ferme for the graunt;  
 252.2: Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt;)  
 253: For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,  
 254: So plesaunt was his in principio,  
 255: Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente.  
 256: His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.  
 257: And rage he koude, as it were right a whelp.  
 258: In love-dayes ther koude he muchel help,  
 259: For ther he was nat lyk a cloysterer  
 260: With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scolere,  
 261: But he was lyk a maister or a pope.  
 262: Of double worstede was his semycope,  
 263: That rounded as a belle out of the presse.  
 264: Somwhat he lipped, for his wantownesse,  
 265: To make his englissh sweete upon his tonge;  
 266: And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,  
 267: His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght,  
 268: As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.  
 269: This worthy lymytour was cleped huberd.

#### **The Merchant's Portrait**

270: A marchant was ther with a forked berd,  
 271: In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat;  
 272: Upon his heed a flaundryssh bever hat,  
 273: His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.

Gently absolved too, leaving naught of dread.  
 He was an easy man to give penance  
 When knowing he should gain a good pittance;  
 For to a begging friar, money given  
 Is sign that any man has been well shriven.  
 For if one gave (he dared to boast of this),  
 He took the man's repentance not amiss.  
 For many a man there is so hard of heart  
 He cannot weep however pains may smart.  
 Therefore, instead of weeping and of prayer,  
 Men should give silver to poor friars all bare.  
 His tippet was stuck always full of knives  
 And pins, to give to young and pleasing wives.  
 And certainly he kept a merry note:  
 Well could he sing and play upon the rote.  
 At balladry he bore the prize away.  
 His throat was white as lily of the May;  
 Yet strong he was as ever champion.  
 In towns he knew the taverns, every one,  
 And every good host and each barmaid too-  
 Better than begging lepers, these he knew.  
 For unto no such solid man as he  
 Accorded it, as far as he could see,  
 To have sick lepers for acquaintances.  
 There is no honest advantageousness  
 In dealing with such poverty-stricken curs;  
 It's with the rich and with big victuallers.  
 And so, wherever profit might arise,  
 Courteous he was and humble in men's eyes.  
 There was no other man so virtuous.  
 He was the finest beggar of his house;  
 A certain district being farmed to him,  
 None of his brethren dared approach its rim;  
 For though a widow had no shoes to show,  
 So pleasant was his In principio,  
 He always got a farthing ere he went.  
 He lived by pickings, it is evident.  
 And he could romp as well as any whelp.  
 On love days could he be of mickle help.  
 For there he was not like a cloisterer,  
 With threadbare cope as is the poor scholar,  
 But he was like a lord or like a pope.  
 Of double worsted was his semi-cope,  
 That rounded like a bell, as you may guess.  
 He lisped a little, out of wantonness,  
 To make his English soft upon his tongue;  
 And in his harping, after he had sung,  
 His two eyes twinkled in his head as bright  
 As do the stars within the frosty night.  
 This worthy limiter was named Hubert.

#### **THE MERCHANT**

There was a merchant with forked beard, and girt  
 In motley gown, and high on horse he sat,  
 Upon his head a Flemish beaver hat;  
 His boots were fastened rather elegantly.

274: His resons he spak ful solempnely,  
 275: Sownyng alwey th' encrees of his wynnyng.  
 276: He wolde the see were kept for any thyng  
 277: Bitwixe middelburgh and orewelle.  
 278: Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.  
 279: This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette:  
 280: Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,  
 281: So estatly was he of his governaunce  
 282: With his bargaynes and with his chevyssaunce.  
 283: For sothe he was a worthy man with alle,  
 284: But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.

#### **The Clerk's Portrait**

285: A clerk ther was of oxenford also,  
 286: That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.  
 287: As leene was his hors as is a rake,  
 288: And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,  
 289: But looked holwe, and therto sobrelly.  
 290: Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy;  
 291: For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,  
 292: Ne was so worldly for to have office.  
 293: For hym was levere have at his beddes heed  
 294: Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed,  
 295: Of aristotle and his philosophie,  
 296: Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie.  
 297: But al be that he was a philosophre,  
 298: Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;  
 299: But al that he myghte of his freendes hente,  
 300: On bookes and on lernynge he it spente,  
 301: And bisily gan for the soules preye  
 302: Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.  
 303: Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede,  
 304: Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,  
 305: And that was seyde in forme and reverence,  
 306: And short and quyke and ful of hy sentence;  
 307: Sownyng in moral vertu was his speche,  
 308: And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

#### **The The Man of Law's Portrait**

309: A sergeant of the lawe, war and wys,  
 310: That often hadde been at the parvys,  
 311: Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.  
 312: Discreet he was and of greet reverence --  
 313: He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.  
 314: Justice he was ful often in assise,  
 315: By patente and by pleyn commissioun.  
 316: For his science and for his heigh renoun,  
 317: Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.  
 318: So greet a purchasour was nowher noon:  
 319: Al was fee symple to hym in effect;  
 320: His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.  
 321: Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,  
 322: And yet he semed bisier than he was.  
 323: In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle  
 324: That from the tyme of kyng william were falle.  
 325: Therto he koude endite, and make a thyng,  
 326: Ther koude no wight pynche at his writyng;

His spoke his notions out right pompously,  
 Stressing the times when he had won, not lost.  
 He would the sea were held at any cost  
 Across from Middleburgh to Orwell town.  
 At money-changing he could make a crown.  
 This worthy man kept all his wits well set;  
 There was no one could say he was in debt,  
 So well he governed all his trade affairs  
 With bargains and with borrowings and with shares.  
 Indeed, he was a worthy man withal,  
 But, sooth to say, his name I can't recall.

#### **THE CLERK**

A clerk from Oxford was with us also,  
 Who'd turned to getting knowledge, long ago.  
 As meagre was his horse as is a rake,  
 Nor he himself too fat, I'll undertake,  
 But he looked hollow and went soberly.  
 Right threadbare was his overcoat; for he  
 Had got him yet no churchly benefice,  
 Nor was so worldly as to gain office.  
 For he would rather have at his bed's head  
 Some twenty books, all bound in black and red,  
 Of Aristotle and his philosophy  
 Than rich robes, fiddle, or gay psalterly.  
 Yet, and for all he was philosopher,  
 He had but little gold within his coffer;  
 But all that he might borrow from a friend  
 On books and learning he would swiftly spend,  
 And then he'd pray right busily for the souls  
 Of those who gave him wherewithal for schools.  
 Of study took he utmost care and heed.  
 Not one word spoke he more than was his need;  
 And that was said in fullest reverence  
 And short and quick and full of high good sense.  
 Pregnant of moral virtue was his speech;  
 And gladly would he learn and gladly teach.

#### **THE LAWYER**

A sergeant of the law, wary and wise,  
 Who'd often gone to Paul's walk to advise,  
 There was also, compact of excellence.  
 Discreet he was, and of great reverence;  
 At least he seemed so, his words were so wise.  
 Often he sat as justice in assize,  
 By patent or commission from the crown;  
 Because of learning and his high renown,  
 He took large fees and many robes could own.  
 So great a purchaser was never known.  
 All was fee simple to him, in effect,  
 Wherefore his claims could never be suspect.  
 Nowhere a man so busy of his class,  
 And yet he seemed much busier than he was.  
 All cases and all judgments could he cite  
 That from King William's time were apposite.  
 And he could draw a contract so explicit  
 Not any man could fault therefrom elicit;



327: And every statut koude he pleyn by rote.  
328: He rood but hoonly in a medlee cote.  
329: Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;  
330: Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

#### **The Franklin's Portrait**

331: A frankeleyn was in his compaignye.  
332: Whit was his berd as is the dayesye;  
333: Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.  
334: Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn;  
335: To lyven in delit was evere his wone,  
336: For he was epicurus owene sone,  
337: That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit  
338: Was verray felicitee parfit.  
339: An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;  
340: Seint julian he was in his contree.  
341: His breed, his ale, was always after oon;  
342: A better envyned man was nowher noon.  
343: Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous  
344: Of fissh and flessch, and that so plenteuous,  
345: It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,  
346: Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.  
347: After the sondry sesons of the yeer,  
348: So chaunged he his mete and his soper.  
349: Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe,  
350: And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe.  
351: Wo was his cook but if his sauce were  
352: Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his geere.  
353: His table dormant in his halle alway  
354: Stood redy covered al the longe day.  
355: At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;  
356: Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.  
357: An anlaas and a gipser al of silk  
358: Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.  
359: A shirreve hadde he been, and a contour.  
360: Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour.

#### **The Guildsmen's Portrait**

361: An haberdasshere and a carpenter,  
362: A webbe, a dyere, and a tapyer, --  
363: And they were clothed alle in o lyveree  
364: Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.  
365: Ful fresch and newe hir geere apiked was;  
366: Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras  
367: But al with silver; wroght ful clene and weel  
368: Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.  
369: Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys  
370: To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.  
371: Everich, for the wisdom that he kan,  
372: Was shaply for to been an alderman.  
373: For catel hadde they ynogh and rente,  
374: And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;  
375: And elles certeyn were they to blame.  
376: It is ful fair to been ycleped madame,  
377: And goon to vigilies al bfore,

And every statute he'd verbatim quote.  
He rode but badly in a medley coat,  
Belted in a silken sash, with little bars,  
But of his dress no more particulars.

#### **THE FRANKLIN**

There was a franklin in his company;  
White was his beard as is the white daisy.  
Of sanguine temperament by every sign,  
He loved right well his morning sop in wine.  
Delightful living was the goal he'd won,  
For he was Epicurus' very son,  
That held opinion that a full delight  
Was true felicity, perfect and right.  
A householder, and that a great, was he;  
Saint Julian he was in his own country.  
His bread and ale were always right well done;  
A man with better cellars there was none.  
Baked meat was never wanting in his house,  
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous  
It seemed to snow therein both food and drink  
Of every dainty that a man could think.  
According to the season of the year  
He changed his diet and his means of cheer.  
Full many a fattened partridge did he mew,  
And many a bream and pike in fish-pond too.  
Woe to his cook, except the sauces were  
Poignant and sharp, and ready all his gear.  
His table, waiting in his hall alway,  
Stood ready covered through the livelong day.  
At county sessions was he lord and sire,  
And often acted as a knight of shire.  
A dagger and a trinket-bag of silk  
Hung from his girdle, white as morning milk.  
He had been sheriff and been auditor;  
And nowhere was a worthier vavasor.

#### **THE HABERDASHER AND THE CARPENTER THE WEAVER, THE DYER, AND THE ARRAS- MAKER**

A haberdasher and a carpenter,  
An arras-maker, dyer, and weaver  
Were with us, clothed in similar livery,  
All of one sober, great fraternity.  
Their gear was new and well adorned it was;  
Their weapons were not cheaply trimmed with brass,  
But all with silver; chastely made and well  
Their girdles and their pouches too, I tell.  
Each man of them appeared a proper burges  
To sit in guildhall on a high dais.  
And each of them, for wisdom he could span,  
Was fitted to have been an alderman;  
For chattels they'd enough, and, too, of rent;  
To which their goodwives gave a free assent,  
Or else for certain they had been to blame.  
It's good to hear "Madam" before one's name,  
And go to church when all the world may see,

378: And have a mantel roialliche ybore.

#### **The Cook's Portrait**

379: A cook they hadde with hem for the nones  
380: To boille the chiknes with the marybones,  
381: And poudre-marchant tart and galyngale.  
382: Wel koude he knowe a draughte of londoun ale.  
383: He koude rooste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,  
384: Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.  
385: But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,  
386: That on his shyne a mormal hadde he.  
387: For blankmanger, that made he with the beste

#### **The Shipman's Portrait**

388: A shipman was ther, wonynge fer by weste;  
389: For aught I woot, he was of dertemouthe.  
390: He rood upon a rounce, as he kouthe,  
391: In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.  
392: A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he  
393: Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.  
394: The hote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;  
395: And certainly he was a good felawe.  
396: Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe  
397: Fro burdeux-ward, whil that the chapmen sleep.  
398: Of nyce conscience took he no keep.  
399: If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,  
400: By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.  
401: But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,  
402: His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,  
403: His herberwe, and his moone, his lodemenage,  
404: Ther nas noon swich from hulle to cartage.  
405: Hardy he was and wys to undertake;  
406: With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.  
407: He knew alle the havenes, as they were,  
408: Fro gootlond to the cape of fynystere,  
409: And every cryke in britaigne and in spayne.  
410: His barge ycleped was the maudelayne.

#### **The Physician's Portrait**

411: With us ther was a doctour of phisik;  
412: In al this world ne was the noon hym lik,  
413: To speke of phisik and of surgerye  
414: For he was grounded in astronomye.  
415: He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel  
416: In houres by his magyk natureel.  
417: Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent  
418: Of his ymages for his pacient.  
419: He knew the cause of everich maladye,  
420: Were it of hoot, or coold, or moyste, or drye,  
421: And where they engendred, and of what humour.  
422: He was a verray, parfit praktisour:  
423: The cause yknowe, and of his harm the roote,  
424: Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.  
425: Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries  
426: To sende hym drogges and his letuaries,  
427: For ech of hem made oother for to wyne --  
428: Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.

Having one's mantle borne right royally.

#### **THE COOK**

A cook they had with them, just for the nonce,  
To boil the chickens with the marrow-bones,  
And flavour tartly and with galingale.  
Well could he tell a draught of London ale.  
And he could roast and seethe and broil and fry,  
And make a good thick soup, and bake a pie.  
But very ill it was, it seemed to me,  
That on his shin a deadly sore had he;  
For sweet blanc-mange, he made it with the best.

#### **THE SAILOR**

There was a sailor, living far out west;  
For aught I know, he was of Dartmouth town.  
He sadly rode a hackney, in a gown,  
Of thick rough cloth falling to the knee.  
A dagger hanging on a cord had he  
About his neck, and under arm, and down.  
The summer's heat had burned his visage brown;  
And certainly he was a good fellow.  
Full many a draught of wine he'd drawn, I trow,  
Of Bordeaux vintage, while the trader slept.  
Nice conscience was a thing he never kept.  
If that he fought and got the upper hand,  
By water he sent them home to every land.  
But as for craft, to reckon well his tides,  
His currents and the dangerous watersides,  
His harbours, and his moon, his pilotage,  
There was none such from Hull to far Carthage.  
Hardy. and wise in all things undertaken,  
By many a tempest had his beard been shaken.  
He knew well all the havens, as they were,  
From Gottland to the Cape of Finisterre,  
And every creek in Brittany and Spain;  
His vessel had been christened Madeleine.

#### **THE PHYSICIAN**

With us there was a doctor of physic;  
In all this world was none like him to pick  
For talk of medicine and surgery;  
For he was grounded in astronomy.  
He often kept a patient from the pall  
By horoscopes and magic natural.  
Well could he tell the fortune ascendent  
Within the houses for his sick patient.  
He knew the cause of every malady,  
Were it of hot or cold, of moist or dry,  
And where engendered, and of what humour;  
He was a very good practitioner.  
The cause being known, down to the deepest root,  
Anon he gave to the sick man his boot.  
Ready he was, with his apothecaries,  
To send him drugs and all electuaries;  
By mutual aid much gold they'd always won-  
Their friendship was a thing not new begun.

429: Wel knew he the olde esculapius,  
 430: And deyscorides, and eek rufus,  
 431: Olde ypocras, haly, and galyen,  
 432: Serapion, razis, and avycen,  
 433: Averrois, damascien, and constantyn,  
 434: Bernard, and gatesden, and gilbertyn.  
 435: Of his diete mesurable was he,  
 436: For it was of no superfluitee,  
 437: But of greet norissyng and digestible.  
 438: His studie was but litel on the bible.  
 439: In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,  
 440: Lynced with taffata and with sendal;  
 441: And yet he was but esy of dispence;  
 442: He kepte that he wan in pestilence.  
 443: For gold in phisik is a cordial,  
 444: Therefore he lovede gold in special.

#### **The Wife of Bath's Portrait**

445: A good wif was ther of biside bathe,  
 446: But she was somdel deaf, and that was scathe.  
 447: Of clooth-makynge she hadde swich an haunt,  
 448: She passed hem of ypres and of gaunt.  
 449: In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon  
 450: That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;  
 451: And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,  
 452: That she was out of alle charitee.  
 453: Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground;  
 454: I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound  
 455: That on a sonday weren upon hir heed.  
 456: Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,  
 457: Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.  
 458: Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.  
 459: She was a worthy womman al hir lyve:  
 460: Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,  
 461: Withouten oother compaignye in youthe, --  
 462: But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.  
 463: And thries hadde she been at jerusalem;  
 464: She hadde passed many a straunge strem;  
 465: At rome she hadde been, and at boloigne,  
 466: In galice at seint-jame, and at coloigne.  
 467: She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye.  
 468: Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.  
 469: Upon an ambler esily she sat,  
 470: Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat  
 471: As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;  
 472: A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,  
 473: And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.  
 474: In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe.  
 475: Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,  
 476: For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

#### **The Parson's Portrait**

477: A good man was ther of religioun,  
 478: And was a povre persoun of a toun,  
 479: But riche he was of hooly thought and werk.  
 480: He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
 481: That cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;

Well read was he in Esculapius,  
 And Deiscorides, and in Rufus,  
 Hippocrates, and Hali, and Galen,  
 Serapion, Rhazes, and Avicen,  
 Averrhoes, Gilbert, and Constantine,  
 Bernard and Gatisden, and John Damascene.  
 In diet he was measured as could be,  
 Including naught of superfluity,  
 But nourishing and easy. It's no libel  
 To say he read but little in the Bible.  
 In blue and scarlet he went clad, withal,  
 Lined with a taffeta and with sendal;  
 And yet he was right chary of expense;  
 He kept the gold he gained from pestilence.  
 For gold in physic is a fine cordial,  
 And therefore loved he gold exceeding all.

#### **THE WIFE OF BATH**

There was a housewife come from Bath, or near,  
 Who- sad to say- was deaf in either ear.  
 At making cloth she had so great a bent  
 She bettered those of Ypres and even of Ghent.  
 In all the parish there was no goodwife  
 Should offering make before her, on my life;  
 And if one did, indeed, so wroth was she  
 It put her out of all her charity.  
 Her kerchiefs were of finest weave and ground;  
 I dare swear that they weighed a full ten pound  
 Which, of a Sunday, she wore on her head.  
 Her hose were of the choicest scarlet red,  
 Close gartered, and her shoes were soft and new.  
 Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.  
 She'd been respectable throughout her life,  
 With five church'd husbands bringing joy and strife,  
 Not counting other company in youth;  
 But thereof there's no need to speak, in truth.  
 Three times she'd journeyed to Jerusalem;  
 And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;  
 At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,  
 In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.  
 She could tell much of wandering by the way:  
 Gap-toothed was she, it is no lie to say.  
 Upon an ambler easily she sat,  
 Well wimpled, aye, and over all a hat  
 As broad as is a buckler or a targe;  
 A rug was tucked around her buttocks large,  
 And on her feet a pair of sharpened spurs.  
 In company well could she laugh her slurs.  
 The remedies of love she knew, perchance,  
 For of that art she'd learned the old, old dance.

#### **THE PARSON**

There was a good man of religion, too,  
 A country parson, poor, I warrant you;  
 But rich he was in holy thought and work.  
 He was a learned man also, a clerk,  
 Who Christ's own gospel truly sought to preach;

482: His parisshe devoutly wolde he teche.  
 483: Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,  
 484: And in adversitee ful pacient,  
 485: And swich he was ypreved ofte sithes.  
 486: Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,  
 487: But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,  
 488: Unto his povre parisshe aboute  
 489: Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce.  
 490: He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.  
 491: Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,  
 492: But he ne lefte nat, for reyn ne thonder,  
 493: In siknesse nor in meschief to visite  
 494: The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,  
 495: Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.  
 496: This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,  
 497: That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte.  
 498: Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,  
 499: And this figure he added eek therto,  
 500: That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?  
 501: For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,  
 502: No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;  
 503: And shame it is, if a prest take keep,  
 504: A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.  
 505: Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,  
 506: By his clenness, how that his sheep sholde lyve.  
 507: He sette nat his benefice to hyre  
 508: And leet his sheep encombred in the myre  
 509: And ran to londoun unto seinte poules  
 510: To seken hym a chaunterie for soules,  
 511: Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;  
 512: But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,  
 513: So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie;  
 514: He was a shepherde and noght a mercenarie.  
 515: And though he hooly were and vertuous,  
 516: He was to synful men nat despitous,  
 517: Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,  
 518: But in his techyng discreet and benygne.  
 519: To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,  
 520: By good ensample, this was his bisynesse.  
 521: But it were any persone obstinat,  
 522: What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,  
 523: Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.  
 524: A better preest I trowe that nowher noon ys.  
 525: He waited after no pompe and reverence,  
 526: Ne maked him a spiced conscience,  
 527: But cristes loore and his apostles twelve  
 528: He taughte, but first he folwed it hymselfe.

#### **The Plowman's Portrait**

529: With hym ther was a plowman, was his brother,  
 530: That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother;  
 531: A trewe swynkere and a good was he,  
 532: Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.  
 533: God loved he best with al his hoole herte  
 534: At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,  
 535: And thanne his neighebor right as hymselfe.

Devoutly his parishioners would he teach.  
 Benign he was and wondrous diligent,  
 Patient in adverse times and well content,  
 As he was oftentimes proven; always blithe,  
 He was right loath to curse to get a tithe,  
 But rather would he give, in case of doubt,  
 Unto those poor parishioners about,  
 Part of his income, even of his goods.  
 Enough with little, coloured all his moods.  
 Wide was his parish, houses far asunder,  
 But never did he fail, for rain or thunder,  
 In sickness, or in sin, or any state,  
 To visit to the farthest, small and great,  
 Going afoot, and in his hand, a stave.  
 This fine example to his flock he gave,  
 That first he wrought and afterwards he taught;  
 Out of the gospel then that text he caught,  
 And this figure he added thereunto-  
 That, if gold rust, what shall poor iron do?  
 For if the priest be foul, in whom we trust,  
 What wonder if a layman yield to lust?  
 And shame it is, if priest take thought for keep,  
 A shitty shepherd, shepherding clean sheep.  
 Well ought a priest example good to give,  
 By his own cleanness, how his flock should live.  
 He never let his benefice for hire,  
 Leaving his flock to flounder in the mire,  
 And ran to London, up to old Saint Paul's  
 To get himself a chantry there for souls,  
 Nor in some brotherhood did he withhold;  
 But dwelt at home and kept so well the fold  
 That never wolf could make his plans miscarry;  
 He was a shepherd and not mercenary.  
 And holy though he was, and virtuous,  
 To sinners he was not impiteous,  
 Nor haughty in his speech, nor too divine,  
 But in all teaching prudent and benign.  
 To lead folk into Heaven but by stress  
 Of good example was his busyness.  
 But if some sinful one proved obstinate,  
 Be who it might, of high or low estate,  
 Him he reproved, and sharply, as I know.  
 There is nowhere a better priest, I trow.  
 He had no thirst for pomp or reverence,  
 Nor made himself a special, spiced conscience,  
 But Christ's own lore, and His apostles' twelve  
 He taught, but first he followed it himselfe.

#### **THE PLOWMAN**

With him there was a plowman, was his brother,  
 That many a load of dung, and many another  
 Had scattered, for a good true toiler, he,  
 Living in peace and perfect charity.  
 He loved God most, and that with his whole heart  
 At all times, though he played or plied his art,  
 And next, his neighbour, even as himself.

536: He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,  
 537: For cristes sake, for every povre wight,  
 538: Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.  
 539: His tithes payde he ful faire and wel,  
 540: Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.  
 541: In a tabard he rood upon a mere.  
 542: Ther was also a reve, and a millere,  
 543: A somnour, and a pardoner also,  
 544: A maunciple, and myself -- ther were namo.

#### **The Miller's Portrait**

545: The millere was a stout carl for the nones;  
 546: Ful byg he was of brawn, and eek of bones.  
 547: That proved wel, for over al ther he cam,  
 548: At wrastlyng he wolde have alwey the ram.  
 549: He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre;  
 550: Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,  
 551: Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.  
 552: His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,  
 553: And therto brood, as though it were a spade.  
 554: Upon the cop right of his nose he hade  
 555: A werthe, and thereon stood a toft of herys,  
 556: Reed as the bristles of a sowes erys;  
 557: His nosethirles blake were and wyde.  
 558: A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.  
 559: His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.  
 560: He was a jangler and a goliardeys,  
 561: And that was moost of synne and harlotries.  
 562: Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries;  
 563: And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.  
 564: A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.  
 565: A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne,  
 566: And therewithal he broghte us out of towne.

#### **The Manciple's Portrait**

567: A gentil maunciple was ther of a temple,  
 568: Of which achatours myghte take exemple  
 569: For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;  
 570: For whether that he payde or took by taille,  
 571: Algate he wayted so in his achaat  
 572: That he was ay biforn and in good staat.  
 573: Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace  
 574: That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace  
 575: The wisdom of an heap of lerned men?  
 576: Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten,  
 577: That weren of lawe expert and curious,  
 578: Of which ther were a duszeyne in that hous  
 579: Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond  
 580: Of any lord that is in engelond,  
 581: To make hym lyve by his propre good  
 582: In honour dettelees (but if he were wood),  
 583: Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;  
 584: And able for to helpen al a shire  
 585: In any caas that myghte falle or happe;  
 586: And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe.

#### **The Reeve's Portrait**

He'd thresh and dig, with never thought of pelf,  
 For Christ's own sake, for every poor wight,  
 All without pay, if it lay in his might.  
 He paid his taxes, fully, fairly, well,  
 Both by his own toil and by stuff he'd sell.  
 In a tabard he rode upon a mare.  
 There were also a reeve and miller there;  
 A summoner, manciple and pardoner,  
 And these, beside myself, made all there were.

#### **THE MILLER**

The miller was a stout churl, be it known,  
 Hardy and big of brawn and big of bone;  
 Which was well proved, for when he went on lam  
 At wrestling, never failed he of the ram.  
 He was a chunky fellow, broad of build;  
 He'd heave a door from hinges if he willed,  
 Or break it through, by running, with his head.  
 His beard, as any sow or fox, was red,  
 And broad it was as if it were a spade.  
 Upon the coping of his nose he had  
 A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs,  
 Red as the bristles in an old sow's ears;  
 His nostrils they were black and very wide.  
 A sword and buckler bore he by his side.  
 His mouth was like a furnace door for size.  
 He was a jester and could poetize,  
 But mostly all of sin and ribaldries.  
 He could steal corn and full thrice charge his fees;  
 And yet he had a thumb of gold, begad.  
 A white coat and blue hood he wore, this lad.  
 A bagpipe he could blow well, be it known,  
 And with that same he brought us out of town.

#### **THE MANCIPLE**

There was a manciple from an inn of court,  
 To whom all buyers might quite well resort  
 To learn the art of buying food and drink;  
 For whether he paid cash or not, I think  
 That he so knew the markets, when to buy,  
 He never found himself left high and dry.  
 Now is it not of God a full fair grace  
 That such a vulgar man has wit to pace  
 The wisdom of a crowd of learned men?  
 Of masters had he more than three times ten,  
 Who were in law expert and curious;  
 Whereof there were a dozen in that house  
 Fit to be stewards of both rent and land  
 Of any lord in England who would stand  
 Upon his own and live in manner good,  
 In honour, debtless (save his head were wood),  
 Or live as frugally as he might desire;  
 These men were able to have helped a shire  
 In any case that ever might befall;  
 And yet this manciple outguessed them all.

#### **THE REEVE**

587: The reve was a sclendre colerik man.  
 588: His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;  
 589: His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn;  
 590: His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn  
 591: Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,  
 592: Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.  
 593: Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne;  
 594: Ther was noon auditour koude on him wyne.  
 595: Wel wiste he by the droghte and by the reyn  
 596: The yeldynge of his seed and of his greyn.  
 597: His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,  
 598: His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye  
 599: Was hoolly in this reves governynge,  
 600: And by his covenant yaf the rekenynge,  
 601: Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age.  
 602: Ther koude no man brynge hym in arrerage.  
 603: Ther nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne,  
 604: That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;  
 605: They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.  
 606: His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth;  
 607: With grene trees yshadwed was his place.  
 608: He koude bettre than his lord purchase.  
 609: Ful riche he was astored pryvely:  
 610: His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly,  
 611: To yeve and lene hym of his owene good,  
 612: And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.  
 613: In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster;  
 614: He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.  
 615: This reve sat upon a ful good stot,  
 616: That was al pomely grey and highte scot.  
 617: A long surcote of pers upon he hade,  
 618: And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.  
 619: Of northfolk was this reve of which I telle,  
 620: Biside a toun men clepen baldeswelle.  
 621: Tukked he was as is a frere aboute,  
 622: And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.

#### The Summoner's Portrait

623: A somonour was ther with us in that place,  
 624: That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face,  
 625: For saucefleem he was, with eyen narwe.  
 626: As hoot he was and lecherous as a sparwe,  
 627: With scalled browes blake and piled berd.  
 628: Of his visage children were aferd.  
 629: Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon,  
 630: Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon;  
 631: Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,  
 632: That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,  
 633: Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.  
 634: Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,  
 635: And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood;  
 636: Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.  
 637: And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,  
 638: Thanne wolde he speke no word but latyn.  
 639: A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,  
 640: That he had lerned out of som decree --

The reeve he was a slender, choleric man  
 Who shaved his beard as close as razor can.  
 His hair was cut round even with his ears;  
 His top was tonsured like a pulpiter's.  
 Long were his legs, and they were very lean,  
 And like a staff, with no calf to be seen.  
 Well could he manage granary and bin;  
 No auditor could ever on him win.  
 He could foretell, by drought and by the rain,  
 The yielding of his seed and of his grain.  
 His lord's sheep and his oxen and his dairy,  
 His swine and horses, all his stores, his poultry,  
 Were wholly in this steward's managing;  
 And, by agreement, he'd made reckoning  
 Since his young lord of age was twenty years;  
 Yet no man ever found him in arrears.  
 There was no agent, hind, or herd who'd cheat  
 But he knew well his cunning and deceit;  
 They were afraid of him as of the death.  
 His cottage was a good one, on a heath;  
 By green trees shaded with this dwelling-place.  
 Much better than his lord could he purchase.  
 Right rich he was in his own private right,  
 Seeing he'd pleased his lord, by day or night,  
 By giving him, or lending, of his goods,  
 And so got thanked- but yet got coats and hoods.  
 In youth he'd learned a good trade, and had been  
 A carpenter, as fine as could be seen.  
 This steward sat a horse that well could trot,  
 And was all dapple-grey, and was named Scot.  
 A long surcoat of blue did he parade,  
 And at his side he bore a rusty blade.  
 Of Norfolk was this reeve of whom I tell,  
 From near a town that men call Badeswell.  
 Bundled he was like friar from chin to croup,  
 And ever he rode hindmost of our troop.

#### THE SUMMONER

A summoner was with us in that place,  
 Who had a fiery-red, cherubic face,  
 For eczema he had; his eyes were narrow  
 As hot he was, and lecherous, as a sparrow;  
 With black and scabby brows and scanty beard;  
 He had a face that little children feared.  
 There was no mercury, sulphur, or litharge,  
 No borax, ceruse, tartar, could discharge,  
 Nor ointment that could cleanse enough, or bite,  
 To free him of his boils and pimples white,  
 Nor of the bosses resting on his cheeks.  
 Well loved he garlic, onions, aye and leeks,  
 And drinking of strong wine as red as blood.  
 Then would he talk and shout as madman would.  
 And when a deal of wine he'd poured within,  
 Then would. he utter no word save Latin.  
 Some phrases had he learned, say two or three,  
 Which he had garnered out of some decree;

641: No wonder is, he herde it al the day;  
 642: And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay  
 643: Kan clepen watte as wel as kan the pope.  
 644: But whoso koude in oother thyng hym grope,  
 645: Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;  
 646: Ay questio quid iuris wolde he crie.  
 647: He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;  
 648: A better felawe sholde men noght fynde.  
 649: He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn  
 650: A good felawe to have his concubyn  
 651: A twelf month, and excuse hym atte fulle;  
 652: Ful prively a fynch eek koude he pulle.  
 653: And if he foond owher a good felawe,  
 654: He wolde techen him to have noon awe  
 655: In swich caas of the ercedekenes curs,  
 656: But if a mannes soule were in his purs;  
 657: For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be.  
 658: Purs is the ercedekenes helle, seyde he.  
 659: But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;  
 660: Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,  
 661: For curs wol slee right as assoillyng savith,  
 662: And also war hym of a significavit.  
 663: In daunger hadde he at his owene gise  
 664: The yonge girles of the diocise,  
 665: And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed.  
 666: A gerland hadde he set upon his heed  
 667: As greet as it were for an ale-stake.  
 668: A bokeleer hadde he maad hym of a cake.

#### The Pardoner's Portrait

669: With hym ther rood a gentil pardoner  
 670: Of rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,  
 671: That streight was comen fro the court of rome.  
 672: Ful loude he soong com hider, love, to me!  
 673: This somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun;  
 674: Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.  
 675: This pardoner hadde heer as yellow as wex,  
 676: But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;  
 677: By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,  
 678: And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;  
 679: But thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon.  
 680: But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon,  
 681: For it was trussed up in his walet.  
 682: Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet;  
 683: Dischevelee, save his cappe, he rood al bare.  
 684: Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.  
 685: A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe.  
 686: His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe,  
 687: Bretful of pardoun, comen from rome al hoot.  
 688: A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.  
 689: No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have;  
 690: As smothe it was as it were late shave.  
 691: I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.  
 692: But of his craft, fro berwyk into ware,  
 693: Ne was ther swich another pardoner  
 694: For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,

No wonder, for he'd heard it all the day;  
 And all you know right well that even a jay  
 Can call out "Wat" as well as can the pope.  
 But when, for aught else, into him you'd grope,  
 'Twas found he'd spent his whole philosophy;  
 Just "Questio quid iuris" would he cry.  
 He was a noble rascal, and a kind;  
 A better comrade 'twould be hard to find.  
 Why, he would suffer, for a quart of wine,  
 Some good fellow to have his concubine  
 A twelve-month, and excuse him to the full  
 (Between ourselves, though, he could pluck a gull).  
 And if he chanced upon a good fellow,  
 He would instruct him never to have awe,  
 In such a case, of the archdeacon's curse,  
 Except a man's soul lie within his purse;  
 For in his purse the man should punished be.  
 "The purse is the archdeacon's Hell," said he.  
 But well I know he lied in what he said;  
 A curse ought every guilty man to dread  
 (For curse can kill, as absolution save),  
 And 'ware significavit to the grave.  
 In his own power had he, and at ease,  
 The boys and girls of all the diocese,  
 And knew their secrets, and by counsel led.  
 A garland had he set upon his head,  
 Large as a tavern's wine-bush on a stake;  
 A buckler had he made of bread they bake.

#### THE PARDONER

With him there rode a gentle pardoner  
 Of Rouncival, his friend and his compeer;  
 Straight from the court of Rome had journeyed he.  
 Loudly he sang "Come hither, love, to me,"  
 The summoner joining with a burden round;  
 Was never horn of half so great a sound.  
 This pardoner had hair as yellow as wax,  
 But lank it hung as does a strike of flax;  
 In wisps hung down such locks as he'd on head,  
 And with them he his shoulders overspread;  
 But thin they dropped, and stringy, one by one.  
 But as to hood, for sport of it, he'd none,  
 Though it was packed in wallet all the while.  
 It seemed to him he went in latest style,  
 Dishevelled, save for cap, his head all bare.  
 As shiny eyes he had as has a hare.  
 He had a fine veronica sewed to cap.  
 His wallet lay before him in his lap,  
 Stuffed full of pardons brought from Rome all hot.  
 A voice he had that bleated like a goat.  
 No beard had he, nor ever should he have,  
 For smooth his face as he'd just had a shave;  
 I think he was a gelding or a mare.  
 But in his craft, from Berwick unto Ware,  
 Was no such pardoner in any place.  
 For in his bag he had a pillowcase

695: Which that he seyde was oure lady veyl:  
 696: He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl  
 697: That seint peter hadde, whan that he wente  
 698: Upon the see, til jhesu crist hym hente.  
 699: He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones,  
 700: And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.  
 701: But with thise relikes, whan that he fond  
 702: A povre person dwellynge upon lond,  
 703: Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye  
 704: Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;  
 705: And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,  
 706: He made the person and the peple his apes.  
 707: But trewely to tellen atte laste,  
 708: He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.  
 709: Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,  
 710: But alderbest he song an offertorie;  
 711: For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,  
 712: He moste preche and wel affile his tonge  
 713: To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude;  
 714: Therefore he song the murierly and loude.

715: Now have I toold you soothly, in a clause,  
 716: Th' estaat, th' array, the nombre, and eek the cause  
 717: Why that assembled was this compaignye  
 718: In southwerk at this gentil hostelrye  
 719: That highte the tabard, faste by the belle.  
 720: But now is tyme to yow for to telle  
 721: How that we baren us that ilke nyght,  
 722: Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght;  
 723: And after wol I telle of our viage  
 724: And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.  
 725: But first I pray yow, of youre curteisye,  
 726: That ye n' arette it nat my vileynye,  
 727: Thogh that I pleylnly speke in this mateere,  
 728: To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,  
 729: Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.  
 730: For this ye knowen al so wel as I,  
 731: Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,  
 732: He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan  
 733: Everich a word, if it be in his charge,  
 734: Al speke he never so rudeliche and large,  
 735: Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,  
 736: Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.  
 737: He may nat spare, although he were his brother;  
 738: He moot as wel seye o word as another.  
 739: Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,  
 740: And wel ye woot no vileynye is it.  
 741: Eek plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,  
 742: The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.  
 743: Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,  
 744: Al have I nat set folk in hir degree  
 745: Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde.  
 746: My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.  
 747: Greet chiere made oure hoost us everichon,  
 748: And to the soper sette he us anon.

The which, he said, was Our True Lady's veil:  
 He said he had a piece of the very sail  
 That good Saint Peter had, what time he went  
 Upon the sea, till Jesus changed his bent.  
 He had a latten cross set full of stones,  
 And in a bottle had he some pig's bones.  
 But with these relics, when he came upon  
 Some simple parson, then this paragon  
 In that one day more money stood to gain  
 Than the poor dupe in two months could attain.  
 And thus, with flattery and suchlike japes,  
 He made the parson and the rest his apes.  
 But yet, to tell the whole truth at the last,  
 He was, in church, a fine ecclesiast.  
 Well could he read a lesson or a story,  
 But best of all he sang an offertory;  
 For well he knew that when that song was sung,  
 Then might he preach, and all with polished tongue.  
 To win some silver, as he right well could;  
 Therefore he sang so merrily and so loud.

### PROLOGUE

Now have I told you briefly, in a clause,  
 The state, the array, the number, and the cause  
 Of the assembling of this company  
 In Southwark, at this noble hostelry  
 Known as the Tabard Inn, hard by the Bell.  
 But now the time is come wherein to tell  
 How all we bore ourselves that very night  
 When at the hostelry we did alight.  
 And afterward the story I engage  
 To tell you of our common pilgrimage.  
 But first, I pray you, of your courtesy,  
 You'll not ascribe it to vulgarity  
 Though I speak plainly of this matter here,  
 Retailing you their words and means of cheer;  
 Nor though I use their very terms, nor lie.  
 For this thing do you know as well as I:  
 When one repeats a tale told by a man,  
 He must report, as nearly as he can,  
 Every least word, if he remember it,  
 However rude it be, or how unfit;  
 Or else he may be telling what's untrue,  
 Embellishing and fictionizing too.  
 He may not spare, although it were his brother;  
 He must as well say one word as another.  
 Christ spoke right broadly out, in holy writ,  
 And, you know well, there's nothing low in it.  
 And Plato says, to those able to read:  
 "The word should be the cousin to the deed."  
 Also, I pray that you'll forgive it me  
 If I have not set folk, in their degree  
 Here in this tale, by rank as they should stand.  
 My wits are not the best, you'll understand.  
 Great cheer our host gave to us, every one,  
 And to the supper set us all anon;



749: He served us with vitaille at the beste;  
 750: Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.  
 751: A semely man oure hooste was withalle  
 752: For to han been a marchal in an halle.  
 753: A large man he was with eyen stepe --  
 754: A fairer burgeys is ther noon in chepe --  
 755: Boold of his speche, and wys, and wel ytaught,  
 756: And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.  
 757: Eek therto he was right a myrie man,  
 758: And after soper pleyen he bigan,  
 759: And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,  
 760: Whan that we hadde maad oure rekenynges,  
 761: And seyde thus: now, lordynges, trewely,  
 762: Ye been to me right welcome, hertely;  
 763: For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,  
 764: I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye  
 765: Atones in this herberwe as is now.  
 766: Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how.  
 767: And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,  
 768: To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.  
 769: Ye goon to caunterbury -- God yow speede,  
 770: The blisful martir quite yow youre meede!  
 771: And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,  
 772: Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;  
 773: For trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon  
 774: To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;  
 775: And therfore wol I maken yow disport,  
 776: As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.  
 777: And if yow liketh alle by oon assent  
 778: For to stonden at my juggement,  
 779: And for to werken as I shal yow seye,  
 780: To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,  
 781: Now, by my fader soule that is deed,  
 782: But ye be myrie, I wol yeve yow myn heed!  
 783: Hoold up youre hondes, withouten moore speche.  
 784: Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche.  
 785: Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,  
 786: And graunted hym withouten moore avys,  
 787: And bad him seye his voirdit as hym leste.  
 788: Lordynges, quod he, now herkneth for the beste;  
 789: But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn.  
 790: This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,  
 791: That ech of yow, to shorte with oure weye,  
 792: In this viage shal telle tales tweye  
 793: To caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,  
 794: And homward he shal tellen othere two,  
 795: Of aventures that whilom han bifalle.  
 796: And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle,  
 797: That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas  
 798: Tales of best sentence and moost solaas,  
 799: Shal have a soper at oure aller cost  
 800: Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,  
 801: Whan that we come agayn fro caunterbury.  
 802: And for to make yow the moore mury,  
 803: I wol myselfen goodly with yow ryde,  
 804: Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde,

And served us then with victuals of the best.  
 Strong was the wine and pleasant to each guest.  
 A seemly man our good host was, withal,  
 Fit to have been a marshal in some hall;  
 He was a large man, with protruding eyes,  
 As fine a burgher as in Cheapside lies;  
 Bold in his speech, and wise, and right well taught,  
 And as to manhood, lacking there in naught.  
 Also, he was a very merry man,  
 And after meat, at playing he began,  
 Speaking of mirth among some other things,  
 When all of us had paid our reckonings;  
 And saying thus: "Now masters, verily  
 You are all welcome here, and heartily:  
 For by my truth, and telling you no lie,  
 I have not seen, this year, a company  
 Here in this inn, fitter for sport than now.  
 Fain would I make you happy, knew I how.  
 And of a game have I this moment thought  
 To give you joy, and it shall cost you naught.  
 "You go to Canterbury; may God speed  
 And the blest martyr soon requite your meed.  
 And well I know, as you go on your way,  
 You'll tell good tales and shape yourselves to play;  
 For truly there's no mirth nor comfort, none,  
 Riding the roads as dumb as is a stone;  
 And therefore will I furnish you a sport,  
 As I just said, to give you some comfort.  
 And if you like it, all, by one assent,  
 And will be ruled by me, of my judgment,  
 And will so do as I'll proceed to say,  
 Tomorrow, when you ride upon your way,  
 Then, by my father's spirit, who is dead,  
 If you're not gay, I'll give you up my head.  
 Hold up your hands, nor more about it speak."  
 Our full assenting was not far to seek;  
 We thought there was no reason to think twice,  
 And granted him his way without advice,  
 And bade him tell his verdict just and wise,  
 "Masters," quoth he, "here now is my advice;  
 But take it not, I pray you, in disdain;  
 This is the point, to put it short and plain,  
 That each of you, beguiling the long day,  
 Shall tell two stories as you wend your way  
 To Canterbury town; and each of you  
 On coming home, shall tell another two,  
 All of adventures he has known befall.  
 And he who plays his part the best of all,  
 That is to say, who tells upon the road  
 Tales of best sense, in most amusing mode,  
 Shall have a supper at the others' cost  
 Here in this room and sitting by this post,  
 When we come back again from Canterbury.  
 And now, the more to warrant you'll be merry,  
 I will myself, and gladly, with you ride  
 At my own cost, and I will be your guide.

805: And whoso wole my juggement withseye  
 806: Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.  
 807: And if ye vouche sauf that it be so,  
 808: Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,  
 809: And I wol erly shape me therfore.  
 810: This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore  
 811: With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also  
 812: That he wolde vouche sauf for to do so,  
 813: And that he wolde been oure governour,  
 814: And oure tales juge and reportour,  
 815: And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,  
 816: And we wol reuled been at his devys  
 817: In heigh and lough; and thus by oon assent  
 818: We been acorded to his juggement.  
 819: And therupon the wyn was fet anon;  
 820: We dronken, and to reste wente echon,  
 821: Withouten any lenger tarynge.  
 822: Amorwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,  
 823: Up roos oure hoost, and was oure aller cok,  
 824: And gradrede us togidre alle in a flock,  
 825: And forth we riden a litel moore than paas  
 826: Unto the wateryng of seint thomas;  
 827: And there oure hoost bigan his hors areste  
 828: And seyde, lordynges, herkneth, if yow leste.  
 829: Ye woot youre foreward, and I it yow recorde.  
 830: If even-song and morwe-song accorde,  
 831: Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.  
 832: As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,  
 833: Whoso be rebel to my juggement  
 834: Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.  
 835: Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne;  
 836: He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.  
 837: Sire knyght, quod he, my mayster and my lord,  
 838: Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.  
 839: Cometh neer, quod he, my lady prioress.  
 840: And ye, sire clerk, lat be youre shamefastnesse,  
 841: Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man!  
 842: Anon to drawen every wight bigan,  
 843: And shortly for to tellen as it was,  
 844: Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,  
 845: The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,  
 846: Of which ful blithe and glad was every wyght,  
 847: And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,  
 848: By foreward and by composicioun,  
 849: As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?  
 850: And whan this goode man saugh that it was so,  
 851: As he that wys was and obedient  
 852: To kepe his foreward by his free assent,  
 853: He seyde, syn I shal bigynne the game,  
 854: What, welcome be the cut, a goddes name!  
 855: Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye.  
 856: And with that word we ryden forth oure weye,  
 857: And he bigan with right a myrie cheere  
 858: His tale anon, and seyde as ye may heere.

But whosoever shall my rule gainsay  
 Shall pay for all that's bought along the way.  
 And if you are agreed that it be so,  
 Tell me at once, or if not, tell me no,  
 And I will act accordingly. No more."  
 This thing was granted, and our oaths we swore,  
 With right glad hearts, and prayed of him, also,  
 That he would take the office, nor forgo  
 The place of governor of all of us,  
 Judging our tales; and by his wisdom thus  
 Arrange that supper at a certain price,  
 We to be ruled, each one, by his advice  
 In things both great and small; by one assent,  
 We stood committed to his government.  
 And thereupon, the wine was fetched anon;  
 We drank, and then to rest went every one,  
 And that without a longer tarrying.  
 Next morning, when the day began to spring,  
 Up rose our host, and acting as our cock,  
 He gathered us together in a flock,  
 And forth we rode, a jog-trot being the pace,  
 Until we reached Saint Thomas' watering-place.  
 And there our host pulled horse up to a walk,  
 And said: "Now, masters, listen while I talk.  
 You know what you agreed at set of sun.  
 If even-song and morning-song are one,  
 Let's here decide who first shall tell a tale.  
 And as I hope to drink more wine and ale,  
 Whoso proves rebel to my government  
 Shall pay for all that by the way is spent.  
 Come now, draw cuts, before we farther win,  
 And he that draws the shortest shall begin.  
 Sir knight," said he, "my master and my lord,  
 You shall draw first as you have pledged your word.  
 Come near," quoth he, "my lady prioress:  
 And you, sir clerk, put by your bashfulness,  
 Nor ponder more; out hands, flow, every man!"  
 At once to draw a cut each one began,  
 And, to make short the matter, as it was,  
 Whether by chance or whatsoever cause,  
 The truth is, that the cut fell to the knight,  
 At which right happy then was every wight.  
 Thus that his story first of all he'd tell,  
 According to the compact, it befell,  
 As you have heard. Why argue to and fro?  
 And when this good man saw that it was so,  
 Being a wise man and obedient  
 To plighted word, given by free assent,  
 He slid: "Since I must then begin the game,  
 Why, welcome be the cut, and in God's name!  
 Now let us ride, and hearken what I say."  
 And at that word we rode forth on our way;  
 And he began to speak, with right good cheer,  
 His tale anon, as it is written here.

## Prologue to Wife of Bath's Tale



[The left column is in the original Middle English, and the right column is its modern English translation.]

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1: Experience, though noon auctoritee                  | Experience, though no authority                  |
| 2: Were in this world, is right ynogh for me           | Were in this world, were good enough for me,     |
| 3: To speke of wo that is in mariage;                  | To speak of woe that is in all marriage;         |
| 4: For, lordynges, sith I twelve yeer was of age,      | For, masters, since I was twelve years of age,   |
| 5: Thonked be God that is eterne on lyve,              | Thanks be to God Who is for aye alive,           |
| 6: Housbondes at chirche dore I have had fyve, --      | Of husbands at church door have I had five;      |
| 7: If I so ofte myghte have ywedded bee, --            | For men so many times have wedded me;            |
| 8: And alle were worthy men in hir degree.             | And all were worthy men in their degree.         |
| 9: But me was toold, certeyn, nat longe agoon is,      | But someone told me not so long ago              |
| 10: That sith that crist ne wente nevere but onis      | That since Our Lord, save once, would never go   |
| 11: To weddyng, in the cane of galilee,                | To wedding (that at Cana in Galilee),            |
| 12: That by the same ensample taughte he me            | Thus, by this same example, showed He me         |
| 13: That I ne sholde wedded be but ones.               | I never should have married more than once.      |
| 14: Herkne eek, lo, which a sharp word for the nones,  | Lo and behold! What sharp words, for the nonce,  |
| 15: Biside a welle, jhesus, God and man,               | Beside a well Lord Jesus, God and man,           |
| 16: Spak in repreeve of the samaritan:                 | Spoke in reproving the Samaritan:                |
| 17: Thou hast yhad fyve housbondes, -- quod he,        | 'For thou hast had five husbands,' thus said He, |
| 18: -- And that ilke man that now hath thee            | 'And he whom thou hast now to be with thee       |
| 19: Is noght thyn housbonde, -- thus seyde he certeyn. | Is not thine husband.' Thus He said that day,    |
| 20: What that he mente therby, I kan nat seyn;         | But what He meant thereby I cannot say;          |
| 21: But that I axe, why that the fifthe man            | And I would ask now why that same fifth man      |
| 22: Was noon housbonde to the samaritan?               | Was not husband to the Samaritan?                |
| 23: How manye myghte she have in mariage?              | How many might she have, then, in marriage?      |
| 24: Yet herde I nevere tellen in myn age               | For I have never heard, in all my age,           |
| 25: Upon this nombre diffinicioun.                     | Clear exposition of this number shown,           |
| 26: Men may devyne and glosen, up and down,            | Though men may guess and argue up and down.      |
| 27: But wel I woot, expres, withoute lye,              | But well I know and say, and do not lie,         |
| 28: God bad us for to wexe and multiolve:              | God bade us to increase and multiply:            |

29: That gentil text kan I wel understonde.  
 30: Eek wel I woot, he seyde myn housbonde  
 31: Sholde lete fader and mooder, and take to me.  
 32: But of no nombre mencion made he,  
 33: Of bigamye, or of octogamye;  
 34: Why sholde men thanne speke of it vileynye?  
 35: Lo, heere the wise kyng, daun salomon;  
 36: I trowe he hadde wyves mo than oon.  
 37: As wolde God it were lefevel unto me  
 38: To be refresshed half so ofte as he!  
 39: Which yifte of God hadde he for alle his wyvys!  
 40: No man hath swich that in this world alyve is.  
 41: God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,  
 42: The firste nyght had many a myrie fit  
 43: With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve.  
 44: Yblessed be God that I have wedded fyve!

45: Welcome the sixte, whan that evere he shal.  
 46: For sothe, I wol nat kepe me chaast in al.  
 47: Whan myn housbonde is fro the world ygon,  
 48: Som cristen man shal wedde me anon,  
 49: For thanne, th' apostle seith that I am free  
 50: To wedde, a goddes half, where it liketh me.  
 51: He seith that to be wedded is no synne;  
 52: Bet is to be wedded than to brynne  
 53: What rekketh me, thogh folk seye vileynye  
 54: Of shrewed lameth and his bigamye?  
 55: I woot wel abraham was an hooly man,  
 56: And jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan;  
 57: And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than two,  
 58: And many another holy man also.  
 59: Wher can ye seye, in any manere age,  
 60: That hye God defended mariage  
 61: By expres word? I pray yow, telleth me.  
 62: Or where comanded he virginitee?  
 63: I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,  
 64: Th' apostel, whan he speketh of maydenhede,  
 65: He seyde that precept therof hadde he noon.  
 66: Men may conseilte a womman to been oon,  
 67: But conseillyng is no comandement.  
 68: He putte it in oure owene juggement;  
 69: For hadde God comanded maydenhede,  
 70: Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede.  
 71: And certes, if ther were no seed ysowe,  
 72: Virginitee, thanne wherof sholde it growe?  
 73: Poul dorste nat comanden, atte leeste,  
 74: A thyng of which his maister yaf noon heeste.  
 75: The dart is set up for birginittee:  
 76: Cacche whoso mav. who renneth best lat see.

That worthy text can I well understand.  
 And well I know He said, too, my husband  
 Should father leave, and mother, and cleave to me;  
 But no specific number mentioned He,  
 Whether of bigamy or octogamy;  
 Why should men speak of it reproachfully?  
 Lo, there's the wise old king Dan Solomon;  
 I understand he had more wives than one;  
 And now would God it were permitted me  
 To be refreshed one half as oft as he!  
 Which gift of God he had for all his wives!  
 No man has such that in this world now lives.  
 God knows, this noble king, it strikes my wit,  
 The first night he had many a merry fit  
 With each of them, so much he was alive!  
 Praise be to God that I have wedded five!  
 Of whom I did pick out and choose the best  
 Both for their nether purse and for their chest  
 Different schools make divers perfect clerks,  
 Different methods learned in sundry works  
 Make the good workman perfect, certainly.  
 Of full five husbands tutoring am I.  
 Welcome the sixth whenever come he shall.  
 Forsooth, I'll not keep chaste for good and all;  
 When my good husband from the world is gone,  
 Some Christian man shall marry me anon;  
 For then, the apostle says that I am free  
 To wed, in God's name, where it pleases me.  
 He says that to be wedded is no sin;  
 Better to marry than to burn within.  
 What care I though folk speak reproachfully  
 Of wicked Lamech and his bigamy?  
 I know well Abraham was holy man,  
 And Jacob, too, as far as know I can;  
 And each of them had spouses more than two;  
 And many another holy man also.  
 Or can you say that you have ever heard  
 That God has ever by His express word  
 Marriage forbidden? Pray you, now, tell me.  
 Or where commanded He virginity?  
 I read as well as you no doubt have read  
 The apostle when he speaks of maidenhead;  
 He said, commandment of the Lord he'd none.  
 Men may advise a woman to be one,  
 But such advice is not commandment, no;  
 He left the thing to our own judgment so.  
 For had Lord God commanded maidenhood,  
 He'd have condemned all marriage as not good;  
 And certainly, if there were no seed sown,  
 Virginity- where then should it be grown?  
 Paul dared not to forbid us, at the least,  
 A thing whereof his Master'd no behest.  
 The dart is set up for virginity;  
 Catch it who can; who runs best let us see.  
 "But this word is not meant for every wight.

77: But this word is nat taken of every wight,  
 78: But ther as God lust gyve it of his myght.  
 79: I woot wel that th' apostel was a mayde;  
 80: But nathelees, thogh that he wroot and sayde  
 81: He wolde that every wight were swich as he,  
 82: Al nys but conseil to virginitee.  
 83: And for to been a wyf he yaf me leve  
 84: Of indulgence; so nys it no repreve  
 85: To wedde me, if that my make dye,  
 86: Withouten excepcion of bigamye.  
 87: Al were it good no womman for to touche, --  
 88: He mente as in his bed or in his couche;  
 89: For peril is bothe fyr and tow t' assemble:  
 90: Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble.  
 91: This is al and som, he heeld virginitee  
 92: Moore parfit than weddyng in freletee.  
 93: Freletee clepe I, but if that he and she  
 94: Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.  
 95: I graunte it wel, I have noon envie,  
 96: Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamye.  
 97: It liketh hem to be clene, body and goost;  
 98: Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost.  
 99: For wel ye knowe, a lord in his houshold,  
 100: He nath nat every vessel al of gold;  
 101: Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord servyse.  
 102: God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,  
 103: And everich hath of God a propre yifte,  
 104: Som this, som that, as hym liketh shifte.  
 105: Virginitee is greet perfeccion,  
 106: And continence eek with devocion,  
 107: But crist, that of perfeccion is welle,  
 108: Bad nat every wight he sholde go selle  
 109: Al that he hadde, and gyve it to the poore  
 110: And in swich wise folwe hym and his foore.  
 111: He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly;  
 112: And lordynges, by youre leve, that am nat I.  
 113: I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age  
 114: In the actes and in fruyt of mariage.  
 115: Telle me also, to what conclusion  
 116: Were membres maad of generacion,  
 117: And of so parfit wys a wight ywroght?  
 118: Trusteth right wel, they were nat maad for noght.  
 119: Glose whoso wole, and seye bothe up and down,  
 120: That they were maked for purgacioun  
 121: Of uryne, and oure bothe thynges smale  
 122: Were eek to knowe a femele from a male,  
 123: And for noon oother cause, -- say ye no?  
 124: The experience woot wel it is noht so.  
 125: So that the clerkes be nat with me wrothe,  
 126: I sey this, that they maked ben for bothe,  
 127: This is to seye, for office, and for ese  
 128: Of engendrure, ther we nat God displese.  
 129: Why sholde men elles in hir bookes sette  
 130: That man shal yelde to his wyf hire dette?  
 131: Now wherwith sholde he make his naiement.

But where God wills to give it, of His might.  
 I know well that the apostle was a maid;  
 Nevertheless, and though he wrote and said  
 He would that everyone were such as he,  
 All is not counsel to virginity;  
 And so to be a wife he gave me leave  
 Out of permission; there's no shame should grieve  
 In marrying me, if that my mate should die,  
 Without exception, too, of bigamy.  
 And though 'twere good no woman flesh to touch,  
 He meant, in his own bed or on his couch;  
 For peril 'tis fire and tow to assemble;  
 You know what this example may resemble.  
 This is the sum: he held virginity  
 Nearer perfection than marriage for frailty.  
 And frailty's all, I say, save he and she  
 Would lead their lives throughout in chastity.  
 "I grant this well, I have no great envy  
 Though maidenhood's preferred to bigamy;  
 Let those who will be clean, body and ghost,  
 Of my condition I will make no boast.  
 For well you know, a lord in his household,  
 He has not every vessel all of gold;  
 Some are of wood and serve well all their days.  
 God calls folk unto Him in sundry ways,  
 And each one has from God a proper gift,  
 Some this, some that, as pleases Him to shift.  
 "Virginity is great perfection known,  
 And continence e'en with devotion shown.  
 But Christ, Who of perfection is the well,  
 Bade not each separate man he should go sell  
 All that he had and give it to the poor  
 And follow Him in such wise going before.  
 He spoke to those that would live perfectly;  
 And, masters, by your leave, such am not I.  
 I will devote the flower of all my age  
 To all the acts and harvests of marriage.  
 "Tell me also, to what purpose or end  
 The genitals were made, that I defend,  
 And for what benefit was man first wrought?  
 Trust you right well, they were not made for naught.  
 Explain who will and argue up and down  
 That they were made for passing out, as known,  
 Of urine, and our two belongings small  
 Were just to tell a female from a male,  
 And for no other cause- ah, say you no?  
 Experience knows well it is not so;  
 And, so the clerics be not with me wroth,  
 I say now that they have been made for both,  
 That is to say, for duty and for ease  
 In getting, when we do not God displease.  
 Why should men otherwise in their books set  
 That man shall pay unto his wife his debt?  
 Now wherewith should he ever make navment.

132: If he ne used his sely instrument?  
 133: Thanne were they maad upon a creature  
 134: To purge uryne, and eek for engendrure.  
 135: But I seye noght that every wight is holde,  
 136: That hath swich harneys as I to yow tolde,  
 137: To goon and usen hem in engendrure.  
 138: Thanne sholde men take of chastitee no cure.  
 139: Crist was a mayde, and shapen as a man,  
 140: And many a seint, sith that the world bigan;  
 141: Yet lyved they evere in parfit chastitee.  
 142: I nyl envye no virginitee.  
 143: Lat hem be breed of pured whete-seed,  
 144: And lat us wyves hoten barly-breed;  
 145: And yet with barly-breed, mark telle kan,  
 146: Oure lord jhesu refresshed many a man.  
 147: In swich estaat as God hath cleped us  
 148: I wol persevere; I nam nat precius.  
 149: In wyfhod I wol use myn instrument  
 150: As frely as my makere hath it sent.  
 151: If I be daungerous, God yeve me sorwe!  
 152: Myn housbonde shal it have bothe eve and  
 morwe,  
 153: Whan that hym list come forth and paye his dette.  
 154: An housbonde I wol have, I wol nat lette,  
 155: Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral,  
 156: And have his tribulacion withal  
 157: Upon his flessch, whil that I am his wyf.  
 158: I have the power durynge al my lyf  
 159: Upon his propre body, and noght he.  
 160: Right thus the apostel tolde it unto me;  
 161: And bad oure housbondes for to love us weel.  
 162: Al this sentence me liketh every deel --  
 163: Up stirte the pardoner, and that anon:  
 164: Now, dame, quod he, by God and by seint john!  
 165: Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.  
 166: I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas!  
 167: What sholde I bye it on my flessch so deere?  
 168: Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!  
 169: Abyde! quod she, my tale is nat bigonne.  
 170: Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne,  
 171: Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.  
 172: And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale  
 173: Of tribulacion in mariage,  
 174: Of which I am expert in al myn age,  
 175: This is to seyn, myself have been the whippe, --  
 176: Than maystow chese wheither thou wolt sippe  
 177: Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.  
 178: Be war of it, er thou to ny approche;  
 179: For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.  
 180: -- Whoso that nyl be war by othere men,  
 181: By hym shul othere men corrected be. --  
 182: The same wordes writeth ptholomee;  
 183: Rede in his almageste, and take it there.  
 184: Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre wyl it were,  
 185: Sevde this pardoner. as ve bigan.

Except he used his blessed instrument?  
 Then on a creature were devised these things  
 For urination and engenderings.  
 "But I say not that every one is bound,  
 Who's fitted out and furnished as I've found,  
 To go and use it to beget an heir;  
 Then men would have for chastity no care.  
 Christ was a maid, and yet shaped like a man,  
 And many a saint, since this old world began,  
 Yet has lived ever in perfect chastity.  
 I bear no malice to virginity;  
 Let such be bread of purest white wheat-seed,  
 And let us wives be called but barley bread;  
 And yet with barley bread (if Mark you scan)  
 Jesus Our Lord refreshed full many a man.  
 In such condition as God places us  
 I'll persevere, I'm not fastidious.  
 In wifehood I will use my instrument  
 As freely as my Maker has it sent.  
 If I be niggardly, God give me sorrow!  
 My husband he shall have it, eve and morrow,  
 When he's pleased to come forth and pay his debt.  
 I'll not delay, a husband I will get  
 Who shall be both my debtor and my thrall  
 And have his tribulations therewithal  
 Upon his flesh, the while I am his wife.  
 I have the power during all my life  
 Over his own good body, and not he.  
 For thus the apostle told it unto me;  
 And bade our husbands that they love us well.  
 And all this pleases me whereof I tell."  
 Up rose the pardoner, and that anon.  
 "Now dame," said he, "by God and by Saint John,  
 You are a noble preacher in this case!  
 I was about to wed a wife, alas!  
 Why should I buy this on my flesh so dear?  
 No, I would rather wed no wife this year."  
 "But wait," said she, "my tale is not begun;  
 Nay, you shall drink from out another tun  
 Before I cease, and savour worse than ale.  
 And when I shall have told you all my tale  
 Of tribulation that is in marriage,  
 Whereof I've been an expert all my age,  
 That is to say, myself have been the whip,  
 Then may you choose whether you will go sip  
 Out of that very tun which I shall broach.  
 Beware of it ere you too near approach;  
 For I shall give examples more than ten.  
 Whoso will not be warned by other men  
 By him shall other men corrected be,  
 The self-same words has written Ptolemy;  
 Read in his Almagest and find it there."  
 "Lady, I pray you, if your will it were,"  
 Spoke up this pardoner, "as you began,  
 Tell forth your tale. nor snare for any man.

186: Telle forth youre tale, spareth for no man,  
 187: And teche us yonge men of youre praktike.  
 188: Gladly, quod she, sith it may yow like;  
 189: But that I praye to al this compaignye,  
 190: If that I speke after my fantasye,  
 191: As taketh not agrief of that I seye;  
 192: For myn entente is nat but for to pleye.  
 193: Now, sire, now wol I telle forth my tale. --  
 194: As evere moote I drynken wyn or ale,  
 195: I shal seye sooth, tho housbondes that I hadde,  
 196: As thre of hem were goode, and two were badde.  
 197: The thre were goode men, and riche, and olde;  
 198: Unnethe myghte they the statut holde  
 199: In which that they were bounden unto me.  
 200: Ye woot wel what I meene of this, pardee!  
 201: As help me god, I laughe whan I thynke  
 202: How pitously a-nyght I made hem swynke!  
 203: And, by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor.  
 204: They had me yeven hir lond and hir tresoor;  
 205: Me neded nat do lenger diligence  
 206: To wynne hir love, or doon hem reverence.  
 207: They loved me so wel, by God above,  
 208: That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!  
 209: A wys womman wol bisye hire evere in oon  
 210: To gete hire love, ye, ther as she hath noon.  
 211: But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,  
 212: And sith they hadde me yeven al hir lond,  
 213: What sholde I taken keep hem for to plesse,  
 214: But it were for my profit and myn ese?  
 215: I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey,  
 216: That many a nyght they songen -- weilaway! --  
 217: The bacon was nat fet for hem, I trowe,  
 218: That som men han in essex at dunmowe.  
 219: I governed hem so wel, after my lawe,  
 220: That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe  
 221: To brynge me gaye thynges fro the fayre.  
 222: They were ful glad whan I spak to hem faire;  
 223: For, God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.  
 224: Now herkneth hou I baar me proprely,  
 225: Ye wise wyves, that kan understonde.  
 226: Thus shulde ye speke and bere hem wrong on honde;  
 227: For half so boldely kan ther no man  
 228: Swere and lyen, as a womman kan.  
 229: I sey nat this by wyves that been wyse,  
 230: But if it be whan they hem mysavyse.  
 231: A wys wyf shal, it that she kan hir good,  
 232: Bere hym on honde that the cow is wood,  
 233: And take wisse of hir owene mayde  
 234: Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde:  
 235: Sire olde kaynard, is this thyn array?  
 236: Why is my neighebores wyf so gay?  
 237: She is honoured over al ther she gooth;  
 238: I sitte at hoom I have no thrifty clooth.  
 239: What dostow at my neighebores hous?

And teach us younger men of your technique."  
 "Gladly," said she, "since it may please, not pique.  
 But yet I pray of all this company  
 That if I speak from my own phantasy,  
 They will not take amiss the things I say;  
 For my intention's only but to play.  
 "Now, sirs, now will I tell you forth my tale.  
 And as I may drink ever wine and ale,  
 I will tell truth of husbands that I've had,  
 For three of them were good and two were bad.  
 The three were good men and were rich and old.  
 Not easily could they the promise hold  
 Whereby they had been bound to cherish me.  
 You know well what I mean by that, pardie!  
 So help me God, I laugh now when I think  
 How pitifully by night I made them swink;  
 And by my faith I set by it no store.  
 They'd given me their gold, and treasure more;  
 I needed not do longer diligence  
 To win their love, or show them reverence.  
 They all loved me so well, by God above,  
 I never did set value on their love!  
 A woman wise will strive continually  
 To get herself loved, when she's not, you see.  
 But since I had them wholly in my hand,  
 And since to me they'd given all their land,  
 Why should I take heed, then, that I should please,  
 Save it were for my profit or my ease?  
 I set them so to work, that, by my fay,  
 Full many a night they sighed out 'Welaway!'  
 The bacon was not brought them home, I trow,  
 That some men have in Essex at Dunmowe.  
 I governed them so well, by my own law,  
 That each of them was happy as a daw,  
 And fain to bring me fine things from the fair.  
 And they were right glad when I spoke them fair;  
 For God knows that I nagged them mercilessly.  
 "Now hearken how I bore me properly,  
 All you wise wives that well can understand.  
 "Thus shall you speak and wrongfully demand;  
 For half so brazenfacedly can no man  
 Swear to his lying as a woman can.  
 I say not this to wives who may be wise,  
 Except when they themselves do misadvise.  
 A wise wife, if she knows what's for her good,  
 Will swear the crow is mad, and in this mood  
 Call up for witness to it her own maid;  
 But hear me now, for this is what I said.  
 "'Sir Dotard, is it thus you stand today?  
 Why is my neighbour's wife so fine and gay?  
 She's honoured over all where'er she goes;  
 I sit at home, I have no decent clo'es.  
 What do you do there at my neighbour's house?  
 Is she so fair? Are you so amorous?  
 Whv whisner to our maid? Benedicite!

240: Is she so fair? artow so amorous?  
 241: What rowne ye with oure mayde? benedicite!  
 242: Sire olde lecchour, lat thy japes be!  
 243: And if I have a gossib or a freend,  
 244: Withouten gilt, thou chidest as a feend,  
 245: If that I walke or pleye unto his hous!  
 246: Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous,  
 247: And prechest on thy bench, with yvel preef!  
 248: Thou seist to me it is a greet meschief  
 249: To wedde a povre womman, for costage;  
 250: And if that she be riche, of heigh parage,  
 251: Thanne seistow that it is a tormentrie  
 252: To soffre hire pride and hire malencolie.  
 253: And if that she be fair, thou verray knave,  
 254: Thou seyst that every holour wol hire have;  
 255: She may no while in chastitee abyde,  
 256: That is assailed upon ech a syde.  
 257: Thou seyst som folk desiren us for richesse,  
 258: Somme for oure shap, and somme for oure  
 fairnesse,  
 259: And som for she kan outhur synge or daunce,  
 260: And som for gentillesse and daliaunce;  
 261: Som for hir handes and hir armes smale:  
 262: Thus goth al to the devel, by thy tale.  
 263: Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal,  
 264: It may so longe assailed been over al.  
 265: And if that she be foul, thou seist that she  
 266: Coveiteth every man that she may se,  
 267: For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe,  
 268: Til that she fynde som man hire to chepe.  
 269: Ne noon so grey goos gooth ther in the lake  
 270: As, seistow, wol been withoute make.  
 271: And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde  
 272: A thyng that no man wole, his thanks, helde.  
 273: Thus seistow, lorel, whan thow goost to bedde;  
 274: And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,  
 275: Ne no man that entendeth unto hevene.  
 276: With wilde thonder-dynt and firy leveene  
 277: Moote thy welked nekke be tobroke!  
 278: Thow seyst that droppying houses, and eek  
 smoke,  
 279: And chidyng wyves maken men to flee  
 280: Out of his owene hous; a! benedicitee!  
 281: What eyleth swich an old man for to chide?  
 282: Thow seyst we wyves wol oure vices hide  
 283: Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem shewe, --  
 284: Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe!  
 285: Thou seist that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,  
 286: They been assayed at diverse stoundes;  
 287: Bacyns, lavours, er that men hem bye,  
 288: Spoones and stooles, and al swich housbondrye,  
 289: And so been pottes, clothes, and array;  
 290: But folk of wyves maken noon assay,  
 291: Til they be wedded; olde dotard shrewe!  
 292: And thanne. seistow. we wol oure vices shewe.

Sir Lecher old, let your seductions be!  
 And if I have a gossip or a friend,  
 Innocently, you blame me like a fiend  
 If I but walk, for company, to his house!  
 You come home here as drunken as a mouse,  
 And preach there on your bench, a curse on you!  
 You tell me it's a great misfortune, too,  
 To wed a girl who costs more than she's worth;  
 And if she's rich and of a higher birth,  
 You say it's torment to abide her folly  
 And put up with her pride and melancholy.  
 And if she be right fair, you utter knave,  
 You say that every lecher will her have;  
 She may no while in chastity abide  
 That is assailed by all and on each side.  
 "You say, some men desire us for our gold,  
 Some for our shape and some for fairness told:  
 And some, that she can either sing or dance,  
 And some, for courtesy and dalliance;  
 Some for her hands and for her arms so small;  
 Thus all goes to the devil in your tale.  
 You say men cannot keep a castle wall  
 That's long assailed on all sides, and by all.  
 "And if that she be foul, you say that she  
 Hankers for every man that she may see;  
 For like a spaniel will she leap on him  
 Until she finds a man to be victim;  
 And not a grey goose swims there in the lake  
 But finds a gander willing her to take.  
 You say, it is a hard thing to enfold  
 Her whom no man will in his own arms hold.  
 This say you, worthless, when you go to bed;  
 And that no wise man needs thus to be wed,  
 No, nor a man that hearkens unto Heaven.  
 With furious thunder-claps and fiery levin  
 May your thin, withered, wrinkled neck be broke:  
 "You say that dripping eaves, and also smoke,  
 And wives contentious, will make men to flee  
 Out of their houses; ah, benedicite!  
 What ails such an old fellow so to chide?  
 "You say that all we wives our vices hide  
 Till we are married, then we show them well;  
 That is a scoundrel's proverb, let me tell!  
 "You say that oxen, asses, horses, hounds  
 Are tried out variously, and on good grounds;  
 Basins and bowls, before men will them buy,  
 And spoons and stools and all such goods you try.  
 And so with pots and clothes and all array;  
 But of their wives men get no trial, you say,  
 Till they are married, base old dotard you!  
 And then we show what evil we can do.  
 "You say also that it displeases me  
 Unless you praise and flatter my beauty,  
 And save you gaze always upon my face  
 And call me "lovelv ladv" every nlace:



293: Thou seist also that it displeth me  
 294: But if that thou wolt preyne my beautee,  
 295: And but thou poure alwey upon my face,  
 296: And clepe me faire dame in every place.  
 297: And but thou make a feeste on thilke day  
 298: That I was born, and make me fressh and gay;  
 299: And but thou do to my norice honour,  
 300: And to my chamberere withinne my bour,  
 301: And to my fadres folk and his allyes, --  
 302: Thus seistow, olde barel-ful of lyes!  
 303: And yet of oure apprentice janekyn,  
 304: For his crispe heer, shynynge as gold so fyn,  
 305: And for he squiereth me bothe up and down,  
 306: Yet hastow caught a fals suspicioun.  
 307: I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed tomorwe!  
 308: But tel me this: why hydestow, with sorwe,  
 309: They keyes of thy cheste away fro me?  
 310: It is my good as wel as thyn, pardee!  
 311: What, wenestow make an ydiot of oure dame?  
 312: Now by that lord that called is seint jame,  
 313: Thou shalt nat bothe, thogh that thou were wood,  
 314: Be maister of my body and of my good;  
 315: That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne yen.  
 316: What helpith it of me to enquire or spyen?  
 317: I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy chiste?  
 318: Thou sholdest seye, wyf, go wher thee list;  
 319: Taak youre disport, I wol nat leve no talys.  
 320: I knowe yow for a trewe wyf, dame alys.  
 321: We love no man that taketh kep or charge  
 322: Wher that we goon; we wol ben at oure large.  
 323: Of alle men yblessed moot he be,  
 324: The wise astrologien, daun ptholome,  
 325: That seith this proverbe in his almageste --  
 326: Of alle men his wysdom is the hyeste  
 327: That rekketh nevere who hath the world in honde.  
 328: By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,  
 329: Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche or care  
 330: How myrily that othere folkes fare?  
 331: For, certeyn, olde dotard, by youre leve,  
 332: Ye shul have queynte right ynogh at eve.  
 333: He is to greet a nygard that wolde werne  
 334: A man to light a candle at his lanterne;  
 335: He shal have never the lasse light, pardee.  
 336: Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleyne thee.  
 337: Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay  
 338: With clothyng, and with precious array,  
 339: That it is peril of oure chastitee;  
 340: And yet, with sorwe! thou most enforce thee,  
 341: And seye thise wordes in the apostles name:  
 342: in habit maad with chastitee and shame  
 343: Ye wommen shul apparaille yow, quod he,  
 344: And noght in tressed heer and gay perree,  
 345: As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.  
 346: After thy text, ne after thy rubriche,  
 347: I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.

And save you make a feast upon that day  
 When I was born, and give me garments gay;  
 And save due honour to my nurse is paid  
 As well as to my faithful chambermaid,  
 And to my father's folk and his allies-  
 Thus you go on, old barrel full of lies!  
 "And yet of our apprentice, young Jenkin,  
 For his crisp hair, showing like gold so fine,  
 Because he squires me walking up and down,  
 A false suspicion in your mind is sown;  
 I'd give him naught, though you were dead  
 tomorrow.  
 "But tell me this, why do you hide, with sorrow,  
 The keys to your strong-box away from me?  
 It is my gold as well as yours, pardie.  
 Why would you make an idiot of your dame?  
 Now by Saint James, but you shall miss your aim,  
 You shall not be, although like mad you scold,  
 Master of both my body and my gold;  
 One you'll forgo in spite of both your eyes;  
 Why need you seek me out or set on spies?  
 I think you'd like to lock me in your chest!  
 You should say: "Dear wife, go where you like  
 best,  
 Amuse yourself, I will believe no tales;  
 You're my wife Alis true, and truth prevails."  
 We love no man that guards us or gives charge  
 Of where we go, for we will be at large.  
 "Of all men the most blessed may he be,  
 That wise astrologer, Dan Ptolemy,  
 Who says this proverb in his Almagest:  
 "Of all men he's in wisdom the highest  
 That nothing cares who has the world in hand."  
 And by this proverb shall you understand:  
 Since you've enough, why do you reck or care  
 How merrily all other folks may fare?  
 For certainly, old dotard, by your leave,  
 You shall have cunt all right enough at eve.  
 He is too much a niggard who's so tight  
 That from his lantern he'll give none a light.  
 For he'll have never the less light, by gad;  
 Since you've enough, you need not be so sad.  
 "You say, also, that if we make us gay  
 With clothing, all in costliest array,  
 That it's a danger to our chastity;  
 And you must back the saying up, pardie!  
 Repeating these words in the apostle's name:  
 "In habits meet for chastity, not shame,  
 Your women shall be garmented," said he,  
 "And not with brodered hair, or jewellery,  
 Or pearls, or gold, or costly gowns and chic;"  
 After your text and after your rubric  
 I will not follow more than would a gnat.  
 You said this, too, that I was like a cat;  
 For if one care to singe a cat's furred skin.

348: Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;  
 349: For whoso wolde senge a cattes skyn,  
 350: Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his in;  
 351: And if the cattes skyn be slyk and gay,  
 352: She wol nat dwelle in house half a day,  
 353: But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,  
 354: To shewe hir skyn, and goon a-caterwawed.  
 355: This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe,  
 356: I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.  
 357: Sire olde fool, what helpeth thee to spyen?  
 358: Thogh thou preye argus with his hundred yen  
 359: To be my warde-cors, as he kan best,  
 360: In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me lest;  
 361: Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I thee!  
 362: Thou seydest eek that ther been thynges thre,  
 363: The whiche thynges troublen al this erthe,  
 364: And that no wight may endure the ferthe.  
 365: O leeve sire shrewe, jhesu shorte thy lyf!  
 366: Yet prechestow and seyst and hateful wyf  
 367: Yrekened is for oon of thise meschances.  
 368: Been ther none othere maner resemblances  
 369: That ye may likne youre parables to,  
 370: But if a sely wyf be oon of tho?  
 371: Thou liknest eek wommenes love to helle,  
 372: To bareyne lond, ther water may nat dwelle.  
 373: Thou liknest it also to wilde fyr;  
 374: The moore it brenneth, the moore it hath desir  
 375: To consume every thyng that brent wole be.  
 376: Thou seyst, right as wormes shende a tree,  
 377: Right so a wyf destroyeth hire housbonde;  
 378: This knowe they that been to wyves bonde. --  
 379: Lordynges, right thus, as ye have understonde,  
 380: Baar I stifly myne olde housbondes on honde  
 381: That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;  
 382: And al was fals, but that I took wisesse  
 383: On janekyn, and on my nece also.  
 384: O lord! the peyne I dide hem and the wo,  
 385: Ful giltelees, by goddes sweete pyne!  
 386: For as an hors I koude byte and whyne.  
 387: I koude pleyne, and yit was in the gilt,  
 388: Or elles often tyme hadde I been spilt.  
 389: Whose that first to mille comth, first grynt;  
 390: I pleynd first, so was oure werre ystynt.  
 391: They were ful glade to excuse hem blyve  
 392: Of thyng of which they nevere agilde hir lyve.  
 393: Of wenches wolde I beren hem on honde,  
 394: Whan that for syk unnethes myghte they stonde.  
 395: Yet tikled I his herte, for that he  
 396: Wende that I hadde of hym so greet chiertee!  
 397: I swoor that al my walkynge out by nyghte  
 398: Was for t' espye wenches that he dighte;  
 399: Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe.  
 400: For al swich wit is yeven us in oure byrthe;  
 401: Deceite, wepyng, spyunnyng God hath yive  
 402: To wommen kvndelv. whil that they may lyve.

Then would the cat remain the house within;  
 And if the cat's coat be all sleek and gay,  
 She will not keep in house a half a day,  
 But out she'll go, ere dawn of any day,  
 To show her skin and caterwaul and play.  
 This is to say, if I'm a little gay,  
 To show my rags I'll gad about all day.  
 "Sir Ancient Fool, what ails you with your spies?  
 Though you pray Argus, with his hundred eyes,  
 To be my body-guard and do his best,  
 Faith, he sha'n't hold me, save I am modest;  
 I could delude him easily- trust me!  
 "You said, also, that there are three things- three-  
 The which things are a trouble on this earth,  
 And that no man may ever endure the fourth:  
 O dear Sir Rogue, may Christ cut short your life!  
 Yet do you preach and say a hateful wife  
 Is to be reckoned one of these mischances.  
 Are there no other kinds of resemblances  
 That you may liken thus your parables to,  
 But must a hapless wife be made to do?  
 "You liken woman's love to very Hell,  
 To desert land where waters do not well.  
 You liken it, also, unto wildfire;  
 The more it burns, the more it has desire  
 To consume everything that burned may be.  
 You say that just as worms destroy a tree,  
 Just so a wife destroys her own husband;  
 Men know this who are bound in marriage band.'  
 "Masters, like this, as you must understand,  
 Did I my old men charge and censure, and  
 Claim that they said these things in drunkenness;  
 And all was false, but yet I took witness  
 Of Jenkin and of my dear niece also.  
 O Lord, the pain I gave them and the woe,  
 All guiltless, too, by God's grief exquisite!  
 For like a stallion could I neigh and bite.  
 I could complain, though mine was all the guilt,  
 Or else, full many a time, I'd lost the tilt.  
 Whoso comes first to mill first gets meal ground;  
 I whimpered first and so did them confound.  
 They were right glad to hasten to excuse  
 Things they had never done, save in my ruse.  
 "With wenches would I charge him, by this hand,  
 When, for some illness, he could hardly stand.  
 Yet tickled this the heart of him, for he  
 Deemed it was love produced such jealousy.  
 I swore that all my walking out at night  
 Was but to spy on girls he kept outright;  
 And under cover of that I had much mirth.  
 For all such wit is given us at birth;  
 Deceit, weeping, and spinning, does God give  
 To women, naturally, the while they live.  
 And thus of one thing I speak boastfully,  
 I got the best of each one. finally.

403: And thus of o thyng I avaunte me,  
 404: Atte ende I hadde the better in ech degree,  
 405: By sleighte, or force, or by som maner thyng,  
 406: As by continueel murmur or grucchyng.  
 407: Namely abedde hadden they meschaunce:  
 408: Ther wolde I chide, and do hem no plesaunce;  
 409: I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,  
 410: If that I felte his arm over my syde,  
 411: Til he had maad his raunson unto me;  
 412: Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his necetee.  
 413: And therfore every man this tale I telle,  
 414: Wynne whose may, for al is for to selle;  
 415: With empty hand men may none haukes lure.  
 416: For wynnynge wolde I al his lust endure,  
 417: And make me feyned appetit;  
 418: And yet in bacon hadde I nevere delit;  
 419: That made me that evere I wolde hem chide.  
 420: For thogh the pope hadde seten hem biside,  
 421: I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord;  
 422: For, by my trouthe, I quitte hem word for word.  
 423: As helpe me verray God omnipotent,  
 424: Though I right now sholde make my testament,  
 425: I ne owe hem nat a word that it nys quit.  
 426: I broghte it so aboute by my wit  
 427: That they moste yeve it up, as for the beste,  
 428: Or elles hadde we nevere been in reste.  
 429: For thogh he looked as a wood leon,  
 430: Yet sholde he faille of his conclusion.  
 431: Thanne wolde I seye, -- goode lief, taak keep  
 432: How mekely looketh wilkyn, oure sheep!  
 433: Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy cheke!  
 434: Ye sholde been al pacient and meke,  
 435: And han a sweete spiced conscience,  
 436: Sith ye so preche of jobes pacience.  
 437: Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche;  
 438: And but ye do, certein we shal yow teche  
 439: That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.  
 440: Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees;  
 441: And sith a man is moore resonable  
 442: Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable.  
 443: What eyleth yow to grucche thus and grone?  
 444: Is it for ye wolde have my queynte allone?  
 445: Wy, taak it al! lo, have it every deel!  
 446: Peter! I shrewe yow, but ye love it weel;  
 447: For if I wolde selle my bele chose,  
 448: I koude walke as fressh as is a rose;  
 449: But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth.  
 450: Ye be to blame, by god! I sey yow sooth. --  
 451: Swiche manere wordes hadde we on honde.  
 452: Now wol I speken of my fourthe housbonde.  
 453: My fourthe housbonde was a revelour;  
 454: This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour;  
 455: And I was yong and ful of ragerye,  
 456: Stibourn and strong, and joly as a pye.  
 457: How koude I daunce to an harne smale.

By trick, or force, or by some kind of thing,  
 As by continual growls or murmuring;  
 Especially in bed had they mischance,  
 There would I chide and give them no plesaunce;  
 I would no longer in the bed abide  
 If I but felt his arm across my side,  
 Till he had paid his ransom unto me;  
 Then would I let him do his nicety.  
 And therefore to all men this tale I tell,  
 Let gain who may, for everything's to sell.  
 With empty hand men may no falcons lure;  
 For profit would I all his lust endure,  
 And make for him a well-feigned appetite;  
 Yet I in bacon never had delight;  
 And that is why I used so much to chide.  
 For if the pope were seated there beside  
 I'd not have spared them, no, at their own board.  
 For by my truth, I paid them, word for word.  
 So help me the True God Omnipotent,  
 Though I right now should make my testament,  
 I owe them not a word that was not quit.  
 I brought it so about, and by my wit,  
 That they must give it up, as for the best,  
 Or otherwise we'd never have had rest.  
 For though he glared and scowled like lion mad,  
 Yet failed he of the end he wished he had.  
 "Then would I say: 'Good dearie, see you keep  
 In mind how meek is Wilkin, our old sheep;  
 Come near, my spouse, come let me kiss your  
 cheek!  
 You should be always patient, aye, and meek,  
 And have a sweetly scrupulous tenderness,  
 Since you so preach of old Job's patience, yes.  
 Suffer always, since you so well can preach;  
 And, save you do, be sure that we will teach  
 That it is well to leave a wife in peace.  
 One of us two must bow, to be at ease;  
 And since a man's more reasonable, they say,  
 Than woman is, you must have patience aye.  
 What ails you that you grumble thus and groan?  
 Is it because you'd have my cunt alone?  
 Why take it all, lo, have it every bit;  
 Peter! Beshrew you but you're fond of it!  
 For if I would go peddle my belle chose,  
 I could walk out as fresh as is a rose;  
 But I will keep it for your own sweet tooth.  
 You are to blame, by God I tell the truth.'  
 "Such were the words I had at my command.  
 Now will I tell you of my fourth husband.  
 "My fourth husband, he was a reveller,  
 That is to say, he kept a paramour;  
 And young and full of passion then was I,  
 Stubborn and strong and jolly as a pie.  
 Well could I dance to tune of harp, nor fail  
 To sing as well as any nightingale

458: And synge, ywis, as any nyghtyngale,  
 459: Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweete wyn!  
 460: Metellius, the foule cherl, the swyn,  
 461: That with a staf birafted his wyf hir lyf,  
 462: For she drank wyn, thogh I hadde been his wyf,  
 463: He sholde nat han daunted me from drynke!  
 464: And after wyn on venus moste I thynke,  
 465: For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,  
 466: A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.  
 467: In wommen vinolent is no defence, --  
 468: This knowen lecchours by experience.  
 469: But, lord crist! whan that it remembreth me  
 470: Upon my yowthe, and on my jolitee,  
 471: It tikleth me aboute myn herte roote.  
 472: Unto this day it dooth myn herte boote  
 473: That I have had my world as in my tyme.  
 474: But age, alas! that al wole envenyme,  
 475: Hath me birafted my beautee and my pith.  
 476: Lat go, farewell! the devel go therewith!  
 477: The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle;  
 478: The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle;  
 479: But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.  
 480: Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.  
 481: I seye, I hadde in herte greet despit  
 482: That he of any oother had delit.  
 483: But he was quit, by God and by seint joce!  
 484: I made hym of the same wode a croce;  
 485: Nat of my body, in no foul manere,  
 486: But certainly, I made folk swich cheere  
 487: That in his owene grece I made hym frye  
 488: For angre, and for verray jalousye.  
 489: By god! in erthe I was his purgatorie,  
 490: For which I hope his soule be in glorie.  
 491: For, God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song,  
 492: Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong.  
 493: Ther was no wight, save God and he, that wiste,  
 494: In many wise, how soore I hym twiste.  
 495: He deyde whan I cam fro jerusalem,  
 496: And lith ygrave under the roode beem,  
 497: Al is his tombe noght so curyus  
 498: As was the sepulchre of hym daryus,  
 499: Which that appeles wroghte subtilly;  
 500: It nys but wast to burye hym preciously.  
 501: Lat hym fare wel, God yeve his soul reste!  
 502: He is now in his grave and in his cheste.  
 503: Now of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle.  
 504: God lete his soule nevere come in helle!  
 505: And yet was he to me the mooste shrewe;  
 506: That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,  
 507: And evere shal unto myn endyng day.  
 508: But in oure bed he was so fressh and gay,  
 509: And therewithal so wel koude he me glose,  
 510: Whan that he wolde han my bele chose,  
 511: That thogh he hadde me bete on every bon,  
 512: He koude wvonne agayn my love anon.

When I had drunk a good draught of sweet wine.  
 Metellius, the foul churl and the swine,  
 Did with a staff deprive his wife of life  
 Because she drank wine; had I been his wife  
 He never should have frightened me from drink;  
 For after wine, of Venus must I think:  
 For just as surely as cold produces hail,  
 A liquorish mouth must have a lickish tail.  
 In women wine's no bar of impotence,  
 This know all lechers by experience.  
 "But Lord Christ! When I do remember me  
 Upon my youth and on my jollity,  
 It tickles me about my heart's deep root.  
 To this day does my heart sing in salute  
 That I have had my world in my own time.  
 But age, alas! that poisons every prime,  
 Has taken away my beauty and my pith;  
 Let go, farewell, the devil go therewith!  
 The flour is gone, there is no more to tell,  
 The bran, as best I may, must I now sell;  
 But yet to be right merry I'll try, and  
 Now will I tell you of my fourth husband.  
 "I say that in my heart I'd great despite  
 When he of any other had delight.  
 But he was quit by God and by Saint Joce!  
 I made, of the same wood, a staff most gross;  
 Not with my body and in manner foul,  
 But certainly I showed so gay a soul  
 That in his own thick grease I made him fry  
 For anger and for utter jealousy.  
 By God, on earth I was his purgatory,  
 For which I hope his soul lives now in glory.  
 For God knows, many a time he sat and sung  
 When the shoe bitterly his foot had wrung.  
 There was no one, save God and he, that knew  
 How, in so many ways, I'd twist the screw.  
 He died when I came from Jerusalem,  
 And lies entombed beneath the great rood-beam,  
 Although his tomb is not so glorious  
 As was the sepulchre of Darius,  
 The which Apelles wrought full cleverly;  
 'Twas waste to bury him expensively.  
 Let him fare well. God give his soul good rest,  
 He now is in the grave and in his chest.  
 "And now of my fifth husband will I tell.  
 God grant his soul may never get to Hell!  
 And yet he was to me most brutal, too;  
 My ribs yet feel as they were black and blue,  
 And ever shall, until my dying day.  
 But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,  
 And therewithal he could so well impose,  
 What time he wanted use of my belle chose,  
 That though he'd beaten me on every bone,  
 He could re-win my love, and that full soon.  
 I guess I loved him best of all. for he

513: I trowe I loved hym best, for that he  
 514: Was of his love daungerous to me.  
 515: We wommen han if that I shal nat lye,  
 516: In this matere a queynte fantasye;  
 517: Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly have,  
 518: Therafter wol we crie al day and crave.  
 519: Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we;  
 520: Preesse on us faste, and thanne wol we fle.  
 521: With daunger oute we al oure chaffare;  
 522: Greet prees at market maketh deere ware,  
 523: And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys:  
 524: This knoweth every womman that is wys.  
 525: My fifthe housbonde, God his soule blesse!  
 526: Which that I took for love, and no richesse,  
 527: He som tyme was a clerk of oxenford,  
 528: And hadde left scole, and wente at hom to bord  
 529: With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun;  
 530: God have hir soule! hir name was alisoun.  
 531: She knew myn herte, and eek my privetee,  
 532: Bet than oure parisshe preest, so moot I thee!  
 533: To hire biwreyed I my conseil al.  
 534: For hadde myn housbonde pissed on a wal,  
 535: Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his lyf,  
 536: To hire, and to another worthy wyf,  
 537: And to my nece, which that I loved weel,  
 538: I wolde han toold his conseil every deel.  
 539: And so I dide ful often, God it woot,  
 540: That made his face often reed and hoot  
 541: For verray shame, and blamed hymself for he  
 542: Had toold to me so greet a pryvetee.  
 543: And so bifel that ones in a lente --  
 544: So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,  
 545: For evere yet I loved to be gay,  
 546: And for to walke in march, averill, and may,  
 547: Fro hous to hous, to heere sondry talys --  
 548: That jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame alys,  
 549: And I myself, into the feeldes wente.  
 550: Myn housbonde was at londoun al that lente;  
 551: I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,  
 552: And for to se, and eek for to be seye  
 553: Of lusty folk. What wiste I wher my grace  
 554: Was shapen for to be, or in what place?  
 555: Therfore I made my visitaciouns  
 556: To vigilies and to processions,  
 557: To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,  
 558: To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,  
 559: And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes.  
 560: Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise mytes,  
 561: Upon my peril, frete hem never a deel;  
 562: And wostow why? for they were used weel.  
 563: Now wol I tellen forth what happed me.  
 564: I seye that in the feeldes walked we,  
 565: Til trewely we hadde swich daliance,  
 566: This clerk and I, that of my purveiance  
 567: I spak to hym and sevde hym how that he.

Gave of his love most sparingly to me.  
 We women have, if I am not to lie,  
 In this love matter, a quaint fantasy;  
 Look out a thing we may not lightly have,  
 And after that we'll cry all day and crave.  
 Forbid a thing, and that thing covet we;  
 Press hard upon us, then we turn and flee.  
 Sparingly offer we our goods, when fair;  
 Great crowds at market for dearer ware,  
 And what's too common brings but little price;  
 All this knows every woman who is wise.  
 "My fifth husband, may God his spirit bless!  
 Whom I took all for love, and not riches,  
 Had been sometime a student at Oxford,  
 And had left school and had come home to board  
 With my best gossip, dwelling in our town,  
 God save her soul! Her name was Alison.  
 She knew my heart and all my privy  
 Better than did our parish priest, s'help me!  
 To her confided I my secrets all.  
 For had my husband pissed against a wall,  
 Or done a thing that might have cost his life,  
 To her and to another worthy wife,  
 And to my niece whom I loved always well,  
 I would have told it- every bit I'd tell,  
 And did so, many and many a time, God wot,  
 Which made his face full often red and hot  
 For utter shame; he blamed himself that he  
 Had told me of so deep a privy.  
 "So it befell that on a time, in Lent  
 (For oftentimes I to my gossip went,  
 Since I loved always to be glad and gay  
 And to walk out, in March, April, and May,  
 From house to house, to hear the latest malice),  
 Jenkin the clerk, and my gossip Dame Alis,  
 And I myself into the meadows went.  
 My husband was in London all that Lent;  
 I had the greater leisure, then, to play,  
 And to observe, and to be seen, I say,  
 By pleasant folk; what knew I where my face  
 Was destined to be loved, or in what place?  
 Therefore I made my visits round about  
 To vigils and processions of devout,  
 To preaching too, and shrines of pilgrimage,  
 To miracle plays, and always to each marriage,  
 And wore my scarlet skirt before all wights.  
 These worms and all these moths and all these mites,  
 I say it at my peril, never ate;  
 And know you why? I wore it early and late.  
 "Now will I tell you what befell to me.  
 I say that in the meadows walked we three  
 Till, truly, we had come to such dalliance,  
 This clerk and I, that, of my vigilance,  
 I spoke to him and told him how that he.

568: If I were wydwe, sholde wedde me.  
 569: For certainly, I sey for no bobance,  
 570: Yet was I nevere withouten purveiance  
 571: Of mariage, n' of othere thynges eek.  
 572: I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek  
 573: That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,  
 574: And if that faille, thanne is al ydo.  
 575: I bar hym on honde he hadde enchanted me, --  
 576: My dame taughte me that soutiltee.  
 577: And eek I seyde I mette of hym al nyght,  
 578: He wolde han slayn me as I lay upright,  
 579: And al my bed was ful of verray blood;  
 580: But yet I hope that he shal do me good,  
 581: For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was taught.  
 582: And al was fals; I dremed of it right naught,  
 583: But as I folwed ay my dames loore,  
 584: As wel of this as of othere thynges moore.  
 585: But now, sire, lat me se, what I shal seyn?  
 586: A ha! by god, I have my tale ageyn.  
 587: Whan that my fourthe housbonde was on beere,  
 588: I weep algate, and made sory cheere,  
 589: As wyves mooten, for it is usage,  
 590: And with my coverchief covered my visage,  
 591: But for that I was purveyed of a make,  
 592: I wepte but smal, and that I undertake.  
 593: To chirche was myn housbonde born a-morwe  
 594: With neighebores, that for hym maden sorwe;  
 595: And jankyn, oure clerk, was oon of tho.  
 596: As help me god! whan that I saugh hym go  
 597: After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a paire  
 598: Of legges and of feet so clene and faire  
 599: That al myn herte I yaf unto his hoold.  
 600: He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold,  
 601: And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;  
 602: But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.  
 603: Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel;  
 604: I hadde the prente of seinte venus seel.  
 605: As help me god! I was a lusty oon,  
 606: And faire, and riche, and yong, and wel bigon;  
 607: And trewely, as myne housbondes tolde me,  
 608: I hadde the beste quoniam myghte be.  
 609: For certes, I am al venerien  
 610: In feelynge, and myn herte is marcien.  
 611: Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,  
 612: And mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse;  
 613: Myn ascendent was taur, and mars thereinne.  
 614: Allas! allas! that evere love was synne!  
 615: I folwed ay myn inclinacioun  
 616: By vertu of my constellacioun;  
 617: That made me I koude noght withdrawe  
 618: My chambre of venus from a good felawe.  
 619: Yet have I martes mark upon my face,  
 620: And also in another privee place.  
 621: For God so wys be my savacioun,  
 622: I ne loved nevere by no discrecioun.

Were I a widow, might well marry me.  
 For certainly I say it not to brag,  
 But I was never quite without a bag  
 Full of the needs of marriage that I seek.  
 I hold a mouse's heart not worth a leek  
 That has but one hole into which to run,  
 And if it fail of that, then all is done.  
 "I made him think he had enchanted me;  
 My mother taught me all that subtlety.  
 And then I said I'd dreamed of him all night,  
 He would have slain me as I lay upright,  
 And all my bed was full of very blood;  
 But yet I hoped that he would do me good,  
 For blood betokens gold, as I was taught.  
 And all was false, I dreamed of him just- naught,  
 Save as I acted on my mother's lore,  
 As well in this thing as in many more.  
 "But now, let's see, what was I going to say?  
 Aha, by God, I know! It goes this way.  
 "When my fourth husband lay upon his bier,  
 I wept enough and made but sorry cheer,  
 As wives must always, for it's custom's grace,  
 And with my kerchief covered up my face;  
 But since I was provided with a mate,  
 I really wept but little, I may state.  
 "To church my man was borne upon the morrow  
 By neighbours, who for him made signs of sorrow;  
 And Jenkin, our good clerk, was one of them.  
 So help me God, when rang the requiem  
 After the bier, I thought he had a pair  
 Of legs and feet so clean-cut and so fair  
 That all my heart I gave to him to hold.  
 He was, I think, but twenty winters old,  
 And I was forty, if I tell the truth;  
 But then I always had a young colt's tooth.  
 Gap-toothed I was, and that became me well;  
 I had the print of holy Venus' seal.  
 So help me God, I was a healthy one,  
 And fair and rich and young and full of fun;  
 And truly, as my husbands all told me,  
 I had the silkiest quoniam that could be.  
 For truly, I am all Venusian  
 In feeling, and my brain is Martian.  
 Venus gave me my lust, my lickerishness,  
 And Mars gave me my sturdy hardiness.  
 Taurus was my ascendant, with Mars therein.  
 Alas, alas, that ever love was sin!  
 I followed always my own inclination  
 By virtue of my natal constellation;  
 Which wrought me so I never could withdraw  
 My Venus-chamber from a good fellow.  
 Yet have I Mars's mark upon my face,  
 And also in another private place.  
 For God so truly my salvation be  
 As I have never loved for policv.

623: But evere folwede myn appetit,  
 624: Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit;  
 625: I took no kep, so that he liked me,  
 626: How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.  
 627: What sholde I seye? but, at the monthes ende,  
 628: This joly clerk, jankyn, that was so hende,  
 629: Hath wedded me with greet solempnytee;  
 630: And to hym yaf I al the lond and fee  
 631: That evere was me yeven therbifoore.  
 632: But afterward repented me ful soore;  
 633: He nolde suffre nothyng of my list.  
 634: By god! he smoot me ones on the lyst,  
 635: For that I rente out of his book a leef,  
 636: That of the strook myn ere wax al deaf.  
 637: Stibourn I was as is a leonesse,  
 638: And of my tonge verray jangleresse,  
 639: And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,  
 640: From hous to hous, although he had it sworn;  
 641: For which he often tymes wolde preche,  
 642: And me of olde romayn geestes teche;  
 643: How he symplicius gallus lefted his wyf,  
 644: And hire forsook for terme of al his lyf,  
 645: Noght but for open-heveded he hir say  
 646: Lookyng out at his dore upon a day.  
 647: Another romayn tolde he me by name,  
 648: That, for his wyf was at a someres game  
 649: Withouten his wityng, he forsook hire eke.  
 650: And thanne wolde he upon his bible seke  
 651: That ilke proverbe of ecclesiaste  
 652: Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,  
 653: Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute.  
 654: Thanne wolde he seye right thus, withouten  
 doute:  
 655:-whoso that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,  
 656: And priketh his blynde hors over the falwes,  
 657: And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,  
 658: Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes! --  
 659: But al for noght, I sette noght an hawe  
 660: Of his proverbes n' of his olde sawe,  
 661: Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.  
 662: I hate hym that my vices telleth me,  
 663: And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.  
 664: This made hym with me wood al outrely;  
 665: I nolde noght forbere hym in no cas.  
 666: Now wol I seye yow sooth, by seint thomas,  
 667: Why that I rente out of his book a leef,  
 668: For which he smoot me so that I was deaf.  
 669: He hadde a book that gladly, nyght and day,  
 670: For his desport he wolde rede alway;  
 671: He cleped it valerie and theofraste,  
 672: At which book he lough alwey ful faste.  
 673: And eek ther was somtyme a clerk at rome,  
 674: A cardinal, that highte seint jerome,  
 675: That made a book agayn jovinian;  
 676: In which book eek ther was tertulan.

But ever followed my own appetite,  
 Though he were short or tall, or black or white;  
 I took no heed, so that he cared for me,  
 How poor he was, nor even of what degree.  
 "What should I say now, save, at the month's end,  
 This jolly, gentle, Jenkin clerk, my friend,  
 Had wedded me full ceremoniously,  
 And to him gave I all the land in fee  
 That ever had been given me before;  
 But, later I repented me full sore.  
 He never suffered me to have my way.  
 By God, he smote me on the ear, one day,  
 Because I tore out of his book a leaf,  
 So that from this my ear is grown quite deaf.  
 Stubborn I was as is a lioness,  
 And with my tongue a very jay, I guess,  
 And walk I would, as I had done before,  
 From house to house, though I should not, he  
 swore.  
 For which he oftentimes would sit and preach  
 And read old Roman tales to me and teach  
 How one Sulpicius Gallus left his wife  
 And her forsook for term of all his life  
 Because he saw her with bared head, I say,  
 Looking out from his door, upon a day.  
 "Another Roman told he of by name  
 Who, since his wife was at a summer-game  
 Without his knowing, he forsook her eke.  
 And then would he within his Bible seek  
 That proverb of the old Ecclesiast  
 Where he commands so freely and so fast  
 That man forbid his wife to gad about;  
 Then would he thus repeat, with never doubt:  
 'Whoso would build his whole house out of  
 sallows,  
 And spur his blind horse to run over fallows,  
 And let his wife alone go seeking hallows,  
 Is worthy to be hanged upon the gallows.'  
 But all for naught, I didn't care a haw  
 For all his proverbs, nor for his old saw,  
 Nor yet would I by him corrected be.  
 I hate one that my vices tells to me,  
 And so do more of us- God knows!- than I.  
 This made him mad with me, and furiously,  
 That I'd not yield to him in any case.  
 "Now will I tell you truth, by Saint Thomas,  
 Of why I tore from out his book a leaf,  
 For which he struck me so it made me deaf.  
 "He had a book that gladly, night and day,  
 For his amusement he would read alway.  
 He called it 'Theophrastus' and 'Valerius',  
 At which book would he laugh, uproarious.  
 And, too, there sometime was a clerk at Rome,  
 A cardinal, that men called Saint Jerome,  
 Who made a book against Jovinian:

677: Crisippus, trotula, and helowys,  
 678: That was abbesse nat fer fro parys;  
 679: And eek the parables of salomon,  
 680: Ovides art, and bookes many on,  
 681: And alle thise were bounden in o volume.  
 682: And every nyght and day was his custume,  
 683: Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun  
 684: From oother worldly occupacioun,  
 685: To reden on this book of wikked wyves.  
 686: He knew of hem mo legendes and lyves  
 687: Than been of goode wyves in the bible.  
 688: For trusteth wel, it is an impossible  
 689: That any clerk wol speke good of wyves,  
 690: But if it be of hooly seintes lyves,  
 691: Ne of noon oother womman never the mo.  
 692: Who peyntede the leon, tel me who?  
 693: By god! if wommen hadde writen stories,  
 694: As clerkes han withinne hire oratories,  
 695: They wolde han writen of men moore  
 wikkednesse  
 696: Than al the mark of adam may redresse.  
 697: The children of mercurie and of venus  
 698: Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius;  
 699: Mercurie loveth wysdam and science,  
 700: And venus loveth ryot and dispence.  
 701: And, for hire diverse disposicioun,  
 702: Ech falleth in otheres exaltacioun.  
 703: And thus, God woot, mercurie is desolat  
 704: In pisces, wher venus is exaltat;  
 705: And venus falleth ther mercurie is reysed.  
 706: Therefore no womman of no clerk is preysed.  
 707: The clerk, whan he is oold, and may noght do  
 708: Of venus werkes worth his olde sho,  
 709: Thanne sit he doun, and writ in his dotage  
 710: That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage!  
 711: But now to purpos, why I tolde thee  
 712: That I was beten for a book, pardee!  
 713: Upon a nyght jankyn, that was oure sire,  
 714: Redde on his book, as he sat by the fire,  
 715: Of eva first, that for hir wikkednesse  
 716: Was al mankynde broght to wrecchednesse,  
 717: For which that jhesu crist hymself was slayn,  
 718: That boghte us with his herte blood agayn.  
 719: Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,  
 720: That womman was the los of al mankynde.  
 721: The redde he me how sampson loste his heres:  
 722: Slepynge, he lemman kitte it with hir sheres;  
 723: Thurgh which treson loste he bothe his yen.  
 724: Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,  
 725: Of hercules and of his dianyre,  
 726: That caused hym to sette hymself afyre.  
 727: No thyng forgat he the care and the wo  
 728: That socrates hadde with his wyves two;  
 729: How xantippa caste pisse upon his heed.  
 730: This selv man sat stille as he were deed:

In which book, too, there was Tertullian,  
 Chrysippus, Trotula, and Heloise  
 Who was abbess near Paris' diocese;  
 And too, the Proverbs of King Solomon,  
 And Ovid's Art, and books full many a one.  
 And all of these were bound in one volume.  
 And every night and day 'twas his custom,  
 When he had leisure and took some vacation  
 From all his other worldly occupation,  
 To read, within this book, of wicked wives.  
 He knew of them more legends and more lives  
 Than are of good wives written in the Bible.  
 For trust me, it's impossible, no libel,  
 That any cleric shall speak well of wives,  
 Unless it be of saints and holy lives,  
 But naught for other women will they do.  
 Who painted first the lion, tell me who?  
 By God, if women had but written stories,  
 As have these clerks within their oratories,  
 They would have written of men more wickedness  
 Than all the race of Adam could redress.  
 The children of Mercury and of Venus  
 Are in their lives antagonistic thus;  
 For Mercury loves wisdom and science,  
 And Venus loves but pleasure and expense.  
 Because they different dispositions own,  
 Each falls when other's in ascendant shown.  
 And God knows Mercury is desolate  
 In Pisces, wherein Venus rules in state;  
 And Venus falls when Mercury is raised;  
 Therefore no woman by a clerk is praised.  
 A clerk, when he is old and can naught do  
 Of Venus' labours worth his worn-out shoe,  
 Then sits he down and writes, in his dotage,  
 That women cannot keep vow of marriage!  
 "But now to tell you, as I started to,  
 Why I was beaten for a book, pardieu.  
 Upon a night Jenkin, who was our sire,  
 Read in his book, as he sat by the fire,  
 Of Mother Eve who, by her wickedness,  
 First brought mankind to all his wretchedness,  
 For which Lord Jesus Christ Himself was slain,  
 Who, with His heart's blood, saved us thus again.  
 Lo here, expressly of woman, may you find  
 That woman was the ruin of mankind.  
 "Then read he out how Samson lost his hairs,  
 Sleeping, his leman cut them with her shears;  
 And through this treason lost he either eye.  
 "Then read he out, if I am not to lie,  
 Of Hercules, and Deianira's desire  
 That caused him to go set himself on fire.  
 "Nothing escaped him of the pain and woe  
 That Socrates had with his spouses two;  
 How Xantippe threw piss upon his head;  
 This hanless man sat still. as he were dead:



731: He wiped his heed, namoore dorste he seyn,  
 732: But -- er that thonder stynte, comth a reyn! --  
 733: Of phasipha, that was the queen of crete,  
 734: For shrewednesse, hym thoughte the tale swete;  
 735: Fy! spek namoore -- it is a grisly thyng --  
 736: Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng.  
 737: Of clitermystra, for hire lecherye,  
 738: That falsly made hire housbonde for to dye,  
 739: He redde it with ful good devocioun.  
 740: He tolde me eek for what occasioun  
 741: Amphiorax at thebes loste his lyf.  
 742: Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his wyf,  
 743: Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold  
 744: Hath prively unto the grekes told  
 745: Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in a place,  
 746: For which he hadde at thebes sory grace.  
 747: Of lyvia tolde he me, and of lucye:  
 748: They bothe made hir housbondes for to dye;  
 749: That oon for love, that oother was for hate.  
 750: Lyvia hir housbonde, on an even late,  
 751: Emposyned hath, for that she was his fo;  
 752: Lucia, likerous, loved hire housbonde so  
 753: That, for he sholde alwey upon hire thynke,  
 754: She yaf hym swich a manere love-drynke  
 755: That he was deed er it were by the morwe;  
 756: And thus algates housbondes han sorwe.  
 757: Thanne tolde he me how oon latumyus  
 758: Compleyned unto his felawe arrius  
 759: That in his gardyn growed swich a tree  
 760: On which he seyde how that his wyves thre  
 761: Hanged himself for herte despitus.  
 762: -- O leewe brother, -- quod this arrius,  
 763: -- Yif me a plante of thilke blissed tree,  
 764: And in my gardyn planted shal it bee. --  
 765: Of latter date, of wyves hath he red  
 766: That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed,  
 767: And lete hir lecchour dighte hire al the nyght,  
 768: Whan that the corps lay in the floor upright.  
 769: And somme han dryve nayles in hir brayn,  
 770: Whil that they slepte, and thus they had hem slayn.  
 771: Somme han hem yeve poysoun in hire drynke.  
 772: He spak moore harm than herte may bithynke;  
 773: And therwithal he knew of mo proverbes  
 774: Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.  
 775: -- Bet is, -- quod he, -- thyn habitacioun  
 776: Be with a leon or foul dragoun,  
 777: Than with a womman usynge for to chydre --  
 778: -- Bet is, -- quod he, -- hye in the roof abyde,  
 779: Than with an angry wyf down in the hous;  
 780: They been so wikked and contrarious,  
 781: They haten that hir housbondes loven ay. --  
 782: He seyde, -- a womman cast hir shame away,  
 783: Whan she cast of hir smok; -- and forthermo,  
 784: -- A fair womman. but she be chaast also.

He wiped his head, no more durst he complain  
 Than 'Ere the thunder ceases comes the rain.'  
 "Then of Pasiphae, the queen of Crete,  
 For cursedness he thought the story sweet;  
 Fie! Say no more- it is an awful thing-  
 Of her so horrible lust and love-liking.  
 "Of Clytemnestra, for her lechery,  
 Who caused her husband's death by treachery,  
 He read all this with greatest zest, I vow.  
 "He told me, too, just when it was and how  
 Amphiarus at Thebes lost his life;  
 My husband had a legend of his wife  
 Eriphyle who, for a brooch of gold,  
 In secrecy to hostile Greeks had told  
 Whereat her husband had his hiding place,  
 For which he found at Thebes but sorry grace.  
 "Of Livia and Lucia told he me,  
 For both of them their husbands killed, you see,  
 The one for love, the other killed for hate;  
 Livia her husband, on an evening late,  
 Made drink some poison, for she was his foe.  
 Lucia, lecherous, loved her husband so  
 That, to the end he'd always of her think,  
 She gave him such a, philtre, for love-drink,  
 That he was dead or ever it was morrow;  
 And husbands thus, by same means, came to sorrow.  
 "Then did he tell how one Latumius  
 Complained unto his comrade Arrius  
 That in his garden grew a baleful tree  
 Whereon, he said, his wives, and they were three,  
 Had hanged themselves for wretchedness and woe.  
 'O brother,' Arrius said, 'and did they so?  
 Give me a graft of that same blessed tree  
 And in my garden planted it shall be!'  
 "Of wives of later date he also read,  
 How some had slain their husbands in their bed  
 And let their lovers shag them all the night  
 While corpses lay upon the floor upright.  
 And some had driven nails into the brain  
 While husbands slept and in such wise were slain.  
 And some had given them poison in their drink.  
 He told more evil than the mind can think.  
 And therewithal he knew of more proverbs  
 Than in this world there grows of grass or herbs.  
 'Better,' he said, 'your habitation be  
 With lion wild or dragon foul,' said he,  
 'Than with a woman who will nag and chide.'  
 'Better,' he said, 'on the housetop abide  
 Than with a brawling wife down in the house;  
 Such are so wicked and contrarious  
 They hate the thing their husband loves, for aye.'  
 He said, 'a woman throws her shame away  
 When she throws off her smock,' and further, too:  
 'A woman fair. save she be chaste also.

785: Is lyk a gold ryng in a sowes nose. --  
 786: Who wolde wene, or who wolde suppose,  
 787: The wo that in myn herte was, and pyne?  
 788: And whan I saugh he wolde nevere fyne  
 789: To reden on this cursed book al nyght,  
 790: Al sodeynly thre leves have I plyght  
 791: Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke  
 792: I with my fest so took hym on the cheke  
 793: That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun.  
 794: And he up stirte as dooth a wood leoun,  
 795: And with his fest he smoot me on the heed,  
 796: That in the floor I lay as I were deed.  
 797: And whan he saugh how stille that I lay,  
 798: He was agast, and wolde han fled his way,  
 799: Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde.  
 800: -- O! hastow slayn me, false thief? -- I seyde,  
 801: -- And for my land thus hastow mordred me?  
 802: Er I be deed, yet wol I kisse thee. --  
 803: And neer he cam and kneled faire adoun,  
 804: And seyde, -- deere suster alisoun,  
 805: As help me god! I shal thee nevere smyte.  
 806: That I have doon, it is thyself to wyte.  
 807: Foryeve it me, and that I thee biseke! --  
 808: And yet eftsoones I hitte hym on the cheke,  
 809: And seyde, -- thief, thus muchel am I wreke;  
 810: Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke. --  
 811: But atte laste, with muchel care and wo,  
 812: We fille acorded by us selven two.  
 813: He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,  
 814: To han the governance of hous and lond,  
 815: And of his tonge, and of his hond also;  
 816: And made hym brenne his book anon right tho.  
 817: And whan that I hadde geten unto me,  
 818: By maistrie, al the soveraynette,  
 819: And that he seyde, -- myn owene trewe wyf,  
 820: Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf;  
 821: Keep thyn honour, and keep eek myn estaat --  
 822: After that day we hadden never debaat.  
 823: God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde  
 824: As any wyf from denmark unto ynde,  
 825: And also trewe, and so was he to me.  
 826: I prey to god, that sit in magestee,  
 827: So blesse his soule for his mercy deere.  
 828: Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.  
 829: The frere lough, whan he hadde herd al this;  
 830: Now dame, quod he, so have I joye or blis,  
 831: This is a long preamble of a tale!  
 832: And whan the somonour herde the frere gale,  
 833: Lo, quod the somonour, goddes armes two!  
 834: A frere wol entremette hym everemo.  
 835: Lo, goode men, a flye and eek a frere  
 836: Wol falle in every dyssh and eek mateere.  
 837: What spwkestow of preambulacioun?  
 838: What! amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit down!  
 839: Thou lettest oure disport in this manere.

Is like a ring of gold in a sow's nose.'  
 Who would imagine or who would suppose  
 What grief and pain were in this heart of mine?  
 "And when I saw he'd never cease, in fine,  
 His reading in this cursed book at night,  
 Three leaves of it I snatched and tore outright  
 Out of his book, as he read on; and eke  
 I with my fist so took him on the cheek  
 That in our fire he reeled and fell right down.  
 Then he got up as does a wild lion,  
 And with his fist he struck me on the head,  
 And on the floor I lay as I were dead.  
 And when he saw how limp and still I lay,  
 He was afraid and would have run away,  
 Until at last, out of my swoon I made:  
 'Oh, have you slain me, you false thief?' I said,  
 'And for my land have you thus murdered me?  
 Kiss me before I die, and let me be.'  
 "He came to me and near me he knelt down,  
 And said: 'O my dear sister Alison,  
 So help me God, I'll never strike you more;  
 What I have done, you are to blame therefor.  
 But all the same forgiveness now I seek!'  
 And thereupon I hit him on the cheek,  
 And said: 'Thief, so much vengeance do I wreak!  
 Now will I die; I can no longer speak!'  
 But at the last, and with much care and woe,  
 We made it up between ourselves. And so  
 He put the bridle reins within my hand  
 To have the governing of house and land;  
 And of his tongue and of his hand, also;  
 And made him burn his book, right then, oho!  
 And when I had thus gathered unto me  
 Masterfully, the entire sovereignty,  
 And he had said: 'My own true wedded wife,  
 Do as you please the term of all your life,  
 Guard your own honour and keep fair my state'-  
 After that day we never had debate.  
 God help me now, I was to him as kind  
 As any wife from Denmark unto Ind,  
 And also true, and so was he to me.  
 I pray to God, Who sits in majesty,  
 To bless his soul, out of His mercy dear!  
 Now will I tell my tale, if you will hear."  
 The friar laughed when he had heard all this.  
 "Now dame," said he, "so have I joy or bliss  
 This is a long preamble to a tale!"  
 And when the summoner heard this friar's hail,  
 "Lo," said the summoner, "by God's arms two!  
 A friar will always interfere, mark you.  
 Behold, good men, a housefly and a friar  
 Will fall in every dish and matters higher.  
 Why speak of preambles; you in your gown?  
 What! Amble, trot, hold peace, or go sit down;  
 You hinder our diversion thus to inquire."

840: Ye, woltow so, sire somonour? quod the frere;	"Aye, say you so, sir summoner?" said the friar,
841: Now, by my feith, I shal, er that I go,	"Now by my faith I will, before I go,
842: Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two,	Tell of a summoner such a tale, or so,
843: That alle the folk shal laughen in this place.	That all the folk shall laugh who're in this place'
844: Now elles, frere, I bishrewe thy face,	"Otherwise, friar, I beshrew your face,"
845: Quod this somonour, and I bishrewe me,	Replied this summoner, "and beshrew me
846: But if I telle tales two or thre	If I do not tell tales here, two or three,
847: Of freres, er I come to sidyngborne,	Of friars ere I come to Sittingbourne,
848: That I shal make thyn herte for to morne,	That certainly will give you cause to mourn,
849: For wel I woot thy pacience is gon.	For well I know your patience will be gone."
850: Oure hooste cride pees! and that anon!	Our host cried out, "Now peace, and that anon!"
851: And seyde, lat the womman telle hire tale.	And said he: "Let the woman tell her tale.
852: Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.	You act like people who are drunk with ale.
853: Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and that is best.	Do, lady, tell your tale, and that is best."
854: Al redy, sire, quod she, right as yow lest,	"All ready, sir," said she, "as you request,
855: If I have licence of this worthy frere.	If I have license of this worthy friar."
856: Yis, dame, quod he, tel forth, and I wol heere.	"Yes, dame," said he, "to hear you's my desire."

[After the Wife of Bath's Prologue, she tells her tale. In the tale The Wife of Bath returns to the Arthurian times of fairy queens and elves to tell her story. Her story runs thus: One day, one of King Arthur's knights found a maiden walking alone, and raped her. The crime of rape usually was awarded death; however, the queen begged to save the knight's life. She told the knight that she could save his life if he could answer the one question: What do women desire? "I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me / What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren. / Be war and keep thy nekke-boon from iren," Wife of Bath's Tale, 1.48-50.

The queen gave the knight one year to find the answer to her question before he lost his life. The knight began his journey to discover what women desire, but could find no satisfactory answers or responses. He was told wealth, status, sexual performance, happiness, and other such answers, but never found one solitary answer. After the full year almost passed, he knew that he must accept his death and return to the Queen. Before he gave up, he met an old woman who agreed to tell him the answer if he would marry her. She said that women desire control and sovereignty over their husbands. The knight returned to the queen and gave that answer, which turned out to be the correct response. The knight, now forced and bound to marry the old lady, became miserable and wished for death instead, for he knew he must now marry her. The two begin to quarrel and put each other down, for he believed her not only to be ugly, but of low-birth, and she called him a snob and un-gentlemanlike. The old woman decided to give the knight a choice.

He can marry her, an ugly old woman who is kind and devoted, or have a young, beautiful maiden with independence. He chooses to free the old woman and proceeds to kiss her old body. When they kiss, the old woman transforms into a beautiful young lady. The two live happily ever after and they were devoted to one another. The Wife of Bath concludes her tale with a moral that allows Christ to grant all women submissive husbands who will always satisfy them in bed. ]

[ Next a Friar complements the Wife of Bath on her tale and tells the group that he too has a story, and his is about an impious summoner. The summoner starts to pick a fight with the Friar for introducing such a tale, until the host breaks the two apart and tells the Friar to begin his tale. Below is this friar's prologue.]

## THE FRIAR'S PROLOGUE

This worthy limiter, this noble friar,  
He turned always a lowering face, and dire,  
Upon the summoner, but for courtesy  
No rude and insolent word as yet spoke he.  
But at the last he said unto the wife:  
"Lady," said he, "God grant you a good life!  
You have here touched, as I may prosperous be,  
Upon school matters of great difficulty;  
You have said many things right well, I say;  
But, lady, as we ride along our way,  
We need but talk to carry on our game,  
And leave authorities, in good God's name,  
To preachers and to schools for clergymen.  
But if it pleases all this company, then,  
I'll tell you of a summoner, to make game.  
By God, you could surmise it by the name  
That of a summoner may no good be said;  
I pray that no one will be angry made.  
A summoner is a runner up and down  
With summonses for fornication known,  
And he is beaten well at each town's end."  
Our host then spoke: "O sir, you should attend  
To courtesy, like man of your estate;  
In company here we will have no debate.  
Tell forth your tale and let the summoner be."  
"Nay," said the summoner, "let him say to me  
What pleases him; when it falls to my lot,  
By God I'll then repay him, every jot.  
I'll then make plain to him what great honour  
It is to be a flattering limiter;  
I'll certainly tell him what his business is."  
Our host replied: "Oh peace, no more of this!"  
And after that he said unto the friar:  
"Tell now your tale to us, good master dear."



[The friar then tells the Friar's Tale. The Friar's Tale is about an archdeacon's summoner extremely adept in discovering those against whom the Church declares malevolent. The Church has strict laws against fornication, witchcraft, and lechery. Although immoral to the core, the summoner was powerful in discovering the lechers and forcing them to pay large amounts to the church. The Summoner in the group of pilgrims interrupts the Friar's Tale with concern; however, the fair host allows the Friar to persist with his story. A feud has developed between these two pilgrims to Canterbury. The Friar insists that *his* summoner would only summon those who had money to actually pay the church and would also hire the help of prostitutes, who in exchange for names of clients would be given safety. Incidentally, the summoner also hired those prostitutes for sexual services.

*"That lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere.  
Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent;  
And he wolde fecche a feyned mandement,  
And somne hem to chapitre bothe two,  
And pile the man, and lete the wenche go."* Friar's Tale, l.58-62

The summoner was traveling one day to issue a summons to a hunting yeoman. Aware that his profession was not favorable, he assumed the identity of a bailiff. The yeoman also claimed to be a bailiff and therein offered his hospitality to his supposed kindred spirit. Both the summoner and the yeoman travel together until the summoner inquires as to the yeoman's lodgings. He plans to steal from him. The yeoman claims to make his money through extortion and the summoner claims to do the same. The two eventually admit to their own villainy, until the yeoman reveals that he is the devil living in hell. The two discuss their shape, dwellings on earth, ability to on take human form, and labors. The summoner inquires to the yeoman's (devil's) labors on earth, to which he responds that he and everyone else is an instrument of God. The devil tells the summoner that the two will meet again and he will give more evidence of hell than either Dante or Virgil could offer.

The summoner recommends that the two continue on their journey, with each taking a share of their earnings. They bump into a carter whose wagon was stuck in the mud and was overtly cursing the devil for his pains. The summoner gladly suggests that the yeoman (the devil) take all of the carter's possessions as revenge. As the carter prays to God, the horses pull the wagon out of the mud. The summoner had many more plans for

the two together; however, the devil plans to leave him. He says that they will meet again soon. An old crone, the woman whom the summoner wanted to visit with the devil, is given a summons to meet with the archdeacon for excommunication. She cannot attend due to illness and requests to pay the summoner to attend in her place. He demands a sum too large for her poor livelihood, and she cannot pay, despite her guiltlessness. She begins to curse the summoner for his unfair request, saying that she would like to give his body to the devil. The devil overhears the crone's request and grants his presence in hell that night. When she spoke, both the yeoman (devil) and the summoner arrived in hell, the home of true summoners. ]

[The Summoner, enraged by the Friar's tale, brings his own story into the group of pilgrims for entertainment. His tale is about a felonious friar: "This frere bosteth that he knoweth helle, / And God it woot, that it is litel wonder; / Freres and feendes been but lyte asonder." Summoner's Prologue, l.8-10. ]

### The Summoner's Tale (Modern English)

Masters, there is in Yorkshire, as I guess,  
A marshy region that's called Holderness,  
Wherein there went a limiter about  
To preach, and to beg too, beyond a doubt.  
And so befell that on a day this friar  
Had preached in church in his own manner dire,  
And specially, and above everything,  
Incited he the people, by preaching,  
To trentals, and to give, for God's own sake,  
The means wherewith men might new churches make,  
That there the services of God might flower,  
And not to them who waste and wealth devour,  
Nor where there's no necessity to give,  
As to the monks, who easily may live-  
Thanks be to God!- and need no wealth to gain.  
"Trentals," said he, "deliver from their pain  
The souls of friends who're dead, the old and young,  
Yea, even when they have been hastily sung;  
Not that I hold as frivolous and gay,  
A priest who only sings one mass a day.  
"Act quickly now," said he, "their souls redeem,  
For hard it is, with spikes and hooks, I deem,  
To be so torn, aye, or to burn or bake;  
Now speed you all to this, for Christ's own sake!"  
And when this friar had said all that he meant,  
With cui cum patre on his way he went.

When folk in church had given at his behest,  
 He went his way, no longer would he rest,  
 With scrip and ferruled staff and skirts tucked high;  
 In every house he went to peer and pry,  
 And beg for flour and cheese, or else for corn.  
 His fellow had a staff was tipped with horn,  
 A set of tablets all of ivory,  
 And stylus that was polished elegantly,  
 And wrote the names down always as he stood,  
 Of those that gave him anything of good,  
 As if for them he later meant to pray.  
 "Give us of wheat or malt or rye," he'd say,  
 "A bushel; or a God's cake; or some cheese;  
 We may not choose, so give us what you please;  
 Give us God's halfpenny or a mass-penny,  
 Or give us of your brawn, if you have any;  
 A small piece of your blanket, my dear dame,  
 Our sister dear, lo, here I write your name;  
 Bacon or beef, or such thing as you find."  
 A sturdy menial went these two behind-  
 The servant of their host- and bore a sack,  
 And what men gave them, laid it on his back.  
 And when they'd left the house, why, then anon  
 He planed away the names of folk, each one,  
 That he before had written on his tables;  
 And thus he served them mockeries and fables.  
 ("Nay, there you lie, you summoner!" cried the friar.  
 "Peace, for Christ's Mother's sake, call no one liar!"  
 Our host said. "Tell your tale, nor spare at all."  
 "So thrive I," said this summoner, "that I shall.")  
 Along he went from house to house, till he  
 Came to a house where he was wont to be  
 Refreshed more than in hundred places round.  
 And sick the goodman of the place he found;  
 Bedridden on a couch he prostrate lay.  
 "Deus hic," said he. "Thomas, my friend, good day,"  
 Said he, this friar, courteously and soft.  
 "Thomas," said he, "may God repay you! Oft  
 Have I sat on this bench and fared right well.  
 Here have I eaten many a merry meal."  
 And from the bench he drove away the cat,  
 And laid down there his steel-tipped staff and hat  
 And his scrip, too, and sat him softly down.  
 His fellow had gone walking into town,

With the said menial, to a hostelry  
 Wherein he thought that very night to lie.  
 "O my dear master," whispered this sick man,  
 "How have you fared since this month March began?  
 "I've seen you not this fortnight, aye or more."  
 "God knows," said he, "that I have toiled full sore;  
 And very specially for your salvation  
 Have I said precious prayers, and at each station,  
 And for our other friends, whom may God bless!  
 I have today been to your church, at Mass,  
 And preached a sermon after my poor wit,  
 Not wholly from the text of holy writ,  
 For that is hard and baffling in the main;  
 And therefore all its meaning I'll explain.  
 Glosing's a glorious thing, and that's certain,  
 For letters kill, as scholars say with pain.  
 Thus have I taught them to be charitable,  
 And spend their money reasonably, as well.  
 And there I saw your dame- ah, where is she?"  
 "Yonder within the yard I think she'll be,"  
 Said this sick man, "and she will come anon."  
 "Eh, master! Welcome be you, by Saint John!"  
 Exclaimed the wife. "How fare you, heartily?"  
 The friar arose, and that full courteously,  
 And her embraced within his two arms narrow,  
 And kissed her sweetly, chirping like a sparrow  
 With his two lips. "Ah, dame," said he, "right well  
 As one that is your servant, let me tell,  
 Thanks be to God Who gave you soul and life,  
 For saw I not this day so fair a wife  
 In all the congregation, God save me!"  
 "Yea, God correct all faults, sir," answered she,  
 "But you are always welcome, by my fay!"  
 "Many thanks, dame, this have I found alway.  
 But of your innate goodness, by your leave,  
 I'd beg of you, be cross or grieve  
 If I with Thomas speak a little now.  
 These curates are right negligent and slow  
 In searching tenderly into conscience.  
 To preach confession is my diligence,  
 And I do study Peter's words and Paul's.  
 I walk and fish for Christian persons' souls  
 To yield to Jesus Christ His increment;  
 To spread His gospel is my whole intent."



"Now, by your leave, O my dear sir," said she,  
 "Berate him well, for Holy Trinity.  
 He is as crabbed as an old pismire,  
 Though he has everything he can desire.  
 Though him I cover at night, and make him warm,  
 And lay my leg across him, or my arm,  
 He grunts and groans like our old boar in sty  
 And other sport- just none from him have I.  
 I cannot please him, no, in any case."  
 "O Thomas, je vous dis, Thomas, Thomas!  
 This is the Fiend's work, this must be amended,  
 Anger's a thing that makes High God offended,  
 And thereof will I speak a word or two."  
 "Now, master," said the wife, "before I go,  
 What will you eat? I will about it scoot."  
 "Now, dame," said he then, "je vous dis, sans doute,  
 Had I of a fat capon but the liver,  
 And of your soft white bread naught but a sliver,  
 And after that a pig's head well roasted  
 (Save that I would no beast for me were dead),  
 Then had I with you plain sufficiency.  
 I am a man of little gluttony.  
 My spirit has its nourishment in the Bible.  
 My body is so inured and so pliable  
 To watching, that my appetite's destroyed.  
 I pray you, lady, be you not annoyed  
 Though I so intimately my secret show;  
 By God, I would reveal it to but few."  
 "Now, sir," said she, "but one word ere I go;  
 My child has died within this fortnight- oh,  
 Soon after you left town last, it did die."  
 "His death saw I by revelation, aye,"  
 Replied this friar, "at home in dormitory  
 Less than an hour, I dare say, ere to glory,  
 After his death, I saw him borne in bliss  
 In vision mine, may God me guide in this!  
 So did our sexton and infirmarian,  
 Who have been true friars fifty years, each man;  
 And may now, God be thanked for mercy shown,  
 Observe their jubilee and walk alone.  
 And I rose up and did my brothers seek,  
 With many a tear down trickling on my cheek,  
 And without noise or clashing of the bells;  
 Te deum was our song and nothing else,

Save that to Christ I said an orison,  
And thanked Him for the vision he had shown  
For, sir and dame, trust me full well in all,  
Our orisons are more effectual,  
And more we see of Christ's own secret things  
Than folk of the laity, though they were kings.  
We live in poverty and abstinence  
And laymen live in riches and expense  
Of meat and drink, and in their gross delight.  
This world's desires we hold in great despite.  
Dives and Lazarus lived differently,  
And different recompense they had thereby.  
Whoso would pray, he must fast and be clean,  
Fatten his soul and keep his body lean.  
We fare as says the apostle; clothes and food  
Suffice us, though they be not over-good.  
The cleanness and the fasting of us friars  
Result in Christ's accepting all our prayers.  
"Lo, Moses forty days and forty nights  
Fasted before the mightiest God of might  
Spoke with him on the Mountain of Sinai.  
With empty belly, fasting long, say I,  
Received he there the law that had been writ  
By God's hand; and Elias (you know of it)  
On Mount Horeb, ere he had any speech  
With the High God, Who is our spirits' leech,  
He fasted long and deep his contemplation.  
"Aaron, who ruled the temple of his nation,  
And all the other great priests, every one,  
When they into the temple would be gone  
To pray there for the folk and do their rites.  
They would not drink of that which man excites  
And makes him drunk or stirs in any way,  
But there in abstinence they'd watch and pray  
Lest they should die- to what I say take heed!-  
Were they not sober when they prayed, indeed.  
Beware my words. No more! for it suffices.  
Our Lord Christ, as the holy writ apprises,  
Gave us example of fasting and of prayers.  
Therefore we mendicants, we simple friars,  
Are sworn to poverty and continence,  
To charity, meekness, and abstinence,  
To persecution for our righteousness,  
To weeping, pity, and to cleanliness.

And therefore may you see that all our prayers-  
 I speak of us, we mendicants, we friars-  
 Are to the High God far more acceptable  
 Than yours, with all the feasts you make at table.  
 From Paradise, if I am not to lie,  
 Was man chased out because of gluttony;  
 And chaste was man in Paradise, that's plain.  
 "But hear now, Thomas, lest I speak in vain.  
 I have no text for it, I must admit,  
 But by analogy the words will fit,  
 That specially our sweet Lord Christ Jesus  
 Spoke of the begging friars when He said thus:  
 'Blest are the poor in spirit.' So said He,  
 And so through all the gospel may you see  
 Whether the Word fit better our profession  
 Or theirs, the monks', who swim in rich possession,  
 Fie on their pomp and on their gluttony!  
 And for their lewdness do I them defy.  
 "It seems to me they're like Jovinian,  
 Fat as a whale and waddling as a swan;  
 As full of wine as bottle in the spence.  
 Their prayers are always of great reverence,  
 When they for souls that psalm of David say:  
 'Cor meum eructavit- bouf!'- that way!  
 Who follow Christ's Word going on before  
 But we who are so humble, chaste, and poor,  
 And doers of God's Word, not hearers, merely?  
 As falcons rise to heaven, just so clearly  
 Spring up into the air the holy prayers  
 Of charitable and chaste and toiling friars  
 Make their way upward into God's ears two.  
 Thomas, O Thomas! As I ride or go,  
 And by that lord whom all we call Saint Yve,  
 Were you not brother to us, you'd not thrive!  
 In our chapter we pray both day and night  
 To Christ, that He will send you health and might  
 To move about again, and speedily."  
 "God knows," said he, "nothing thereof feel I;  
 So help me Christ as I, these last few years,  
 Have spent on divers friars, it appears,  
 Full many a pound; and I'm no better yet.  
 Truly my wealth have I almost upset.  
 Farewell my gold! for it has slipped away."  
 The friar replied: "Ah, Thomas, so you say!

But why need you to different friars reach?  
 Why should he need, who has a perfect leech,  
 To call in other leeches from the town?  
 Your trouble from your fickleness has grown.  
 Think you that I, or at least our convent,  
 Could not suffice to pray? That's what I meant.  
 Thomas, your feeble joke's not worth a tittle;  
 Your illness lasts because you've given too little.  
 "'Ah, give that convent bushels four of oats!'  
 'Ah, give that convent four and twenty groats!'  
 'Ah, give that friar a penny and let him go!'  
 "Nay, nay, Thomas, the thing should not be so!  
 What is a farthing worth, when split twelve ways?  
 A thing in its integrity displays  
 Far greater strength than does a unit scattered.  
 Thomas, by me you shall not here be flattered;  
 You would you had our labour all for naught.  
 But the High God, Who all this world has wrought,  
 Says that the workman's worthy of his hire.  
 Thomas! Naught of your treasure I desire  
 As for myself, but that all our convent  
 To pray for you is always diligent,  
 And also to build up Christ's holy kirk.  
 Thomas! If you will learn the way to work,  
 Of building up of churches you may find  
 (If it be good) in Thomas' life, of Inde.  
 You lie here, full of anger and of ire,  
 Wherewith the Devil set your heart afire,  
 And you chide here this hapless innocent,  
 Your wife, who is so meek and so patient.  
 And therefore, Thomas, trust me if you please,  
 Scold not your wife, who tries to give you ease;  
 And bear this word away now, by your faith,  
 Touching this thing, lo what the wise man saith:  
 'Within thy house do not the lion play,  
 Oppress thy subjects in no kind of way,  
 Nor cause thine equals and thy friends to flee.'  
 And Thomas, yet again I charge you, be  
 Wary of her that in your bosom sleeps;  
 Beware the serpent that so slyly creeps  
 Under the grass and stings so treacherously.  
 Beware, my son, and hear this patiently,  
 That twenty thousand men have lost their lives  
 For quarrelling with their sweet ones, and their wives.

Now, since you have so holy and meek a wife,  
 Why need you, Thomas, so to stir up strife?  
 There is, indeed, no serpent so cruel,  
 When man treads on his tail, nor half so fell,  
 As woman is when she is filled with ire;  
 Vengeance is then the whole of her desire.  
 Anger's a sin, one of the deadly seven,  
 Abominable unto the God of Heaven;  
 And it is sure destruction unto one.  
 This every vulgar vicar or parson  
 Can say, how anger leads to homicide.  
 Truth, anger's the executant of pride.  
 I could of anger tell you so much sorrow  
 My tale should last until it were tomorrow.  
 And therefore I pray God both day and night,  
 An ireful man, God send him little might!  
 It is great harm and truly great pity  
 To set an ireful man in high degree.  
 "For once there was an ireful potentate,  
 (As Seneca says) and while he ruled the state,  
 Upon a day out riding went knights two,  
 And as Dame Fortune willed it, it was so  
 That one of them came home, and one did not.  
 Anon that knight before the judge was brought,  
 Who said thus: 'Sir, you have your fellow slain,  
 For which I doom you to the death, amain.'  
 And to another knight commanded he,  
 'Go lead him to his death, so I charge ye.'  
 It happened, as they went along their way,  
 Toward the place where he must die that day,  
 They met the knight that men had thought was dead  
 Then thought they, it were best not go ahead,  
 And so led both unto the judge again.  
 They said: 'O lord, this knight, he has not slain  
 His fellow; for he stands here sound, alive.'  
 'You shall die then,' he cried, 'so may I thrive!  
 That is to say, you shall all die, all three!'  
 And then to the first knight 'twas thus said he:  
 'I doomed you, and therefore you must be dead.  
 And you, also, must needs now lose your head,  
 Since you're the causing of your fellow's end.'  
 And then on the third knight did he descend:  
 'You have not done what I ordained should be!'  
 And thus he did away with all the three.

"Ireful Cambyses was a drunkard too,  
 And much delighted dirty deeds to do.  
 And so befell, a lord of his household,  
 Who loved all moral virtue, we are told,  
 Said on a day, when they were talking, thus:  
 'A lord is lost if he be too vicious;  
 And drunkenness is foul thing to record  
 Of any man, and specially of a lord.  
 There is full many an eye and many an ear  
 Waiting upon a lord, nor knows he where.  
 For God's dear love, sir, drink more moderately;  
 Wine causes man to lose, and wretchedly,  
 His mind, and his limbs' usage, every one.'  
 "'The opposite you'll see,' said he, 'anon;  
 And you'll prove, by your own experience,  
 That wine does not to men such foul offence.  
 There is no wine can rob me of my might  
 Of hand or foot, nor yet of my eyesight!'  
 And for despite he drank much wine the more,  
 A hundred times, than he had drunk before;  
 And then anon this ireful wicked wretch  
 Sent one this knight's young son to go and fetch,  
 And ordered that before him he should stand.  
 And suddenly he took his bow in hand,  
 And drew the string thereof up to his ear,  
 And with an arrow slew the child right there.  
 'Now tell me whether I've sure hand, or none!'  
 He said, 'And are my might and mind all gone?  
 Has wine deprived me of my good eyesight?'  
 "How shall I tell the answer of the knight?  
 His son was slain, there is no more to say.  
 Beware, therefore, with lords look how you play.  
 But sing placebo, and 'I shall, if I can,'  
 Unless it be unto a help less man.  
 To a poor man men should his vices tell,  
 But to a lord, no, though he go to Hell.  
 "Lo, ireful Cyrus, that great Persian king,  
 Destroyed the river Gyndes at its spring,  
 Because a horse of his was drowned therein  
 When he went forth old Babylon to win.  
 He caused the river to become so small  
 That women could go wading through it all.  
 "Lo, what said he whose teaching all commend?  
 'An angry man take never for a friend,

Nor with a madman walk along the way,  
 Lest you repent.' There is no more to say.  
 "Now, Thomas, my dear brother, leave your ire;  
 You shall find me as just as is a squire.  
 Hold not the Devil's knife against your heart;  
 Your anger does too sorely burn and smart;  
 But show me all, now, in confession, son."  
 "Nay," said the sick man, "by Saint Simeon!  
 I have been shriven today by my curate;  
 I have him told the whole truth of my state;  
 There's no more need to speak of it," said he,  
 "Save as I please, of my humility."  
 "Then give me of your gold to build our cloister,"  
 Said he, "for many a mussel and an oyster,  
 When other men have been well at their ease,  
 Have been our food, that building should not cease,  
 And yet, God knows, is finished nothing more  
 Than the foundation, while of all the floor  
 There's not a tile yet laid to call our own;  
 By God, we owe full forty pounds for stone!  
 Now help, Thomas, for Him that harried Hell!  
 Else must we turn about and our books sell.  
 And if you laymen lack our high instruction,  
 Then will the world go all to its destruction.  
 For whoso shall deny us right to live,  
 So may God save me, Thomas, by your leave,  
 He'll have deprived the whole world of the sun.  
 For who can teach and work as we have done?  
 And that's not been for little time," said he;  
 "Elias and Elisha used to be  
 Friars, you'll find the scriptures do record,  
 And beggars too, thanks be to the good Lord!  
 Now, Thomas, help for holy charity!"  
 And down he went then, kneeling on one knee.  
 This sick man, he went well-nigh mad for ire;  
 He would have had that friar set afire  
 For the hypocrisy that he had shown.  
 "Such things as I possess and are my own,"  
 Said he, "those may I give you and no other.  
 You tell me that I am as your own brother?"  
 "Yea, truly," said the friar, "trust me well;  
 I gave your wife a letter with our seal."  
 "That's well," said he, "and something will I give  
 Unto your holy convent while I live,

And right anon you'll have it in your hand,  
 On this condition only, understand,  
 That you divide it so, my own dear brother,  
 That every friar shall have as much as other.  
 This shall you swear upon the faith you own,  
 And without fraud or cavil, be it known."  
 "I swear it," said this friar, "on my faith!"  
 And on the sick man's laid his hand therewith.  
 "Lo, hear my oath! In me shall truth not lack."  
 "Now then, come put your hand right down my back,"  
 Replied this man, "and grope you well behind;  
 For underneath my buttocks shall you find  
 A thing that I have hid in privy."  
 "Ah," thought the friar, "this shall go with me!"  
 And down he thrust his hand right to the cleft,  
 In hope that he should find there some good gift.  
 And when the sick man felt the friar here  
 Groping about his hole and all his rear,  
 Into his hand he let the friar a fart.  
 There is no stallion drawing loaded cart  
 That might have let a fart of such a sound.  
 The friar leaped up as with wild lion's bound:  
 "Ah, treacherous churl," he cried, "by God's own bones,  
 I'll see that he who scorns me thus atones;  
 You'll suffer for this fart- I'll find a way!"  
 The servants, who had heard all this affray,  
 Came leaping in and chased the friar out;  
 And forth he scowling went, with angry shout,  
 And found his fellow, where he'd left his store.  
 He glared about as he were some wild boar;  
 He ground and gnashed his teeth, so wroth was he.  
 He quickly sought the manor, there to see  
 The lord thereof, whose honour was the best,  
 And always to the friar he confessed;  
 This worthy man was lord of that village.  
 The friar came, as he were in a rage,  
 Where sat the lord at dinner at his board.  
 And hardly could the friar speak a word,  
 Till at the last he said, "God be with ye!"  
 This lord looked up and said then, "Ben'cite!  
 What, Friar John! What kind of world is this?  
 I see right well that something is amiss.  
 You look as if the wood were full of thieves,  
 Sit down, and tell me what it is that grieves,



And it shall be amended, if I may."  
 "I have," said he, "insulted been today-  
 May God reward you!- down in your village.  
 And in this world is not so poor a page  
 As would not feel the insult, if 'twere thrown  
 At him, that I have suffered in your town.  
 Yet nothing grieves me in this matter more  
 Than that this peasant, with his long locks hoar,  
 Has thus blasphemed our holy convent too."  
 "Now, master," said his lordship, "I pray you-"  
 "No master, sir," said he, "but servitor,  
 Though true, I had in school such honour, sir.  
 But rabbi- God's not pleased that men so call  
 Us, in the public square or your wide hall."  
 "No matter," said he, "tell me all your grief."  
 "Sir," said this friar, "an odious mischief  
 Was this day done to my order and me,  
 And so, per consequens, to each degree  
 Of Holy Church, may God it soon amend!"  
 "Sir," said the lord, "the story I attend.  
 As my confessor, pray your wrath control;  
 Salt of the earth are you- the savour whole.  
 For love of God, I beg you patience hold;  
 Tell me your grievance."  
 And anon he told  
 As you have heard before, you know well what.  
 The lady of the house right silent sat  
 Till she had heard all that the friar said:  
 "Eh, by God's Mother," cried she, "Blessed Maid!  
 Is there aught else? A point that we did miss?"  
 "Madam," asked he, "what do you think of this?"  
 "What do I think?" she asked, "So God me speed,  
 I say, a churl has done a churlish deed.  
 What should I say? May God desert him! See-  
 Why his sick head is full of vanity.  
 The man, no doubt, is more or less insane."  
 "Madam," said he, "I will not lie or feign:  
 If otherwise I cannot vengeance wreak,  
 I will defame him wheresoe'er I speak,  
 This false blasphemer who has dared charge me  
 Thus to divide what won't divided be,  
 To every man alike, and with mischance!"  
 The lord sat still as he were in a trance,  
 And in his mind he rolled it up and down:

"How had this churl imagination grown  
To pose so fine a problem to the friar?  
I never heard the like, or I'm a liar;  
I think the devil stuck it in his mind.  
And in arithmetic did no man find,  
Before this day, such puzzling question shown.  
Who could be able, now, to make it known  
How every man should have an equal part  
Of both the sound and savour of a fart?  
O scrupulous proud churl, beshrew his face!  
Lo, sirs," this lord said then, with hard grimace,  
"Who ever heard of such a thing ere now?  
To every man alike? But tell me how!  
Why it's impossible, it cannot be!  
Exacting churl, God give him never glee!  
The rumbling of a fart, and every sound,  
Is but the air's reverberation round,  
And ever it wastes, by little and little, away.  
There is no man can judge, aye, by my fay,  
Whether it were divided equally.  
Behold, my church And yet how cursedly  
To my confessor has he made this crack!  
I hold him surely a demoniac!  
Now eat your meat and let the churl go play,  
Let him go hang himself, the devil's way!"  
Now the lord's squire stood ready near the board  
To carve his meat, and he heard, word for word,  
All of the things that I to you have said.  
"My lord," said he, "be not ill pleased indeed;  
For I could tell, for cloth to make a gown,  
To you, sir friar, so you do not frown,  
How this said fart evenly doled could be  
Among your fellows, if the thing pleased me."  
"Tell," said the lord, "and you shall have anon  
Cloth for a gown, by God and by Saint John!"  
"My lord," said he, "when next the weather's fair,  
And there's no wind to stir the quiet air,  
Let someone bring a cartwheel to this hall,  
But see there are no missing spokes at all.  
Twelve spokes a cartwheel has, sir, commonly.  
And bring me then twelve friars, and know you why?  
Because a convent's thirteen, as I guess.  
The present confessor, for his worthiness,  
He shall complete the tale of this convent.

Then shall they all kneel down, by one assent,  
 And at each spoke's end, in this manner, sire,  
 Let the nose be laid firmly of a friar.  
 Your noble sir confessor, whom God save,  
 Shall hold his nose upright beneath the nave.  
 Then shall this churl, with belly stiff and taut  
 As any tabour- let him here be brought;  
 And set him on the wheel of this same cart,  
 Upon the hub, and make him let a fart.  
 And you shall see, on peril of my life,  
 With proof so clear that there shall be no strife,  
 That equally the sound of it will wend,  
 And the stink too, to each spoke's utter end;  
 Save that this worthy man, your confessor,  
 Because he is a man of great honour,  
 Shall have first fruits, as reasonable it is;  
 The noble custom of all friars is this,  
 The worthy men of them shall be first served;  
 And certainly this has he well deserved.  
 He has today taught us so much of good,  
 With preaching in the pulpit where he stood,  
 That for my part I gladly should agree,  
 He might well have the first smell of farts three,  
 And so would all his convent, generously,  
 He bears himself so well and holily."  
 The lord, the lady, and each man, save the friar,  
 Agreed that Jenkin spoke, as classifier,  
 As well as Euclid or as Ptolemy.  
 Touching the churl, they said that subtlety  
 And great wit taught him how to make his crack.  
 He was no fool, nor a demoniac.  
 And Jenkin by this means has won a gown.  
 My tale is done, we're almost into town.

#### **Websites for Background Information and the Work or Excerpts from the Work**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/CT-prolog-bathpara.html>

<http://classiclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/gchaucer/bl-gchau-can-fri.htm>

<http://faculty.goucher.edu/eng330/chaucerfriar.htm> :

<http://www.bookrags.com/notes/ct/>