

HARVARD THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

XVI

THE TWO TREATISES OF
SERVETUS ON THE TRINITY

ON THE ERRORS OF THE TRINITY

SEVEN BOOKS · A.D. MDXXXI

DIALOGUES ON THE TRINITY

TWO BOOKS

ON THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

FOUR CHAPTERS

A.D. MDXXXII

By MICHAEL SERVETO *alias* Reves

a Spaniard of Aragon

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY

EARL MORSE WILBUR, D.D.

ISSUED AS AN EXTRA NUMBER OF THE
HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

CAMBRIDGE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1932

KRAUS REPRINT CO.

New York

1969

ON THE ERRORS OF THE TRINITY

SEVEN BOOKS

BY

MICHAEL SERVETO, *alias* REVES

A SPANIARD OF ARAGON

MDXXXI

BOOK I

Argument

ANY discussion of the Trinity should start with the man. That Jesus, surnamed Christ, was not a hypostasis but a human being is taught both by the early Fathers and in the Scriptures, taken in their literal sense, and is indicated by the miracles that he wrought. He, and not the Word, is also the miraculously born Son of God in fleshly form, as the Scriptures teach — not a hypostasis, but an actual Son. He is God, sharing God's divinity in full; and the theory of a *communicatio idiomatum* is a confusing sophistical quibble. This does not imply two Gods, but only a double use of the term God, as is clear from the Hebrew use of the term. Christ, being one with God the Father, equal in power, came down from heaven and assumed flesh as a man. In short, all the Scriptures speak of Christ as a man.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a third separate being lands us in practical tritheism no better than atheism, even though the unity of God be insisted on. Careful interpretation of the usual proof-texts shows that they teach not a union of three beings in one, but a harmony between them. The Holy Spirit as a third person of the Godhead is unknown in Scripture. It is not a separate being, but an activity of God himself. The doctrine of the Trinity can be neither established by logic nor proved from Scripture, and is in fact inconceivable. There are many reasons against it. The Scriptures and the Fathers teach one God the Father, and Jesus Christ his Son; but scholastic philosophy has introduced terms which are not understood, and do not accord with Scripture. Jesus taught that he himself was the Son of God. Numerous heresies have sprung from this philosophy, and fruitless questions have arisen out of it. Worst of all, the doctrine of the Trinity incurs the ridicule of the Mohammedans and the Jews. It arose out of Greek philosophy rather than from the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and he will be with the Church only if it keeps his teaching.

Synopsis

1. This discussion of the Trinity will begin not with the Word, as is usually done, but with the man Christ. 2. Three points will be discussed. First point: Christ was named Jesus, as is shown by

many texts from Scripture. 3. Early writers teach that Christ was a man, 4. as do various Scripture texts. 5. The nouns and pronouns referring to him imply this. 6. The language used of him is to be taken in its plain sense. 7. That he was a man is further shown by his relation to others; 8. while his miracles prove that Jesus was the Christ. 9. Second point: Christ is the Son of God. Many Scripture texts, referring to his supernatural birth, prove this. 10. Christ was begotten by the Word, and was an actual man in the flesh. 11. It can not be argued that there were two Sons. 12. Other passages of Scripture prove that Jesus himself was the Son of God, and that no hypostasis is implied. 13. Christ is a true Son of God by nature; others are sons only by adoption. He is Son, and God is Father, in a higher sense than that used of men. 14. Third point: Christ is God, as the Scriptures clearly prove. 15. The common doctrine of a *communicatio idiomatum* is a sophistical invention, inconsistent with Scripture. 16. God shares his full deity with Christ, but does not share any imperfections of man. 17. What has been said does not imply more than one God, but only a different use of the word, God; and Scripture plainly shows God and Christ as distinct beings. 18. The texts cited are not invalidated because heretics have misused them. 19. The word God must be interpreted in the light of its Hebrew equivalent. 20. The nature of Christ's deity is seen from the Old Testament use of the word *Elohim* for beings less than the supreme God. 21. Christ is one God with the Father, not a second God. 22. Christ came down from heaven as the Word of God, 23. sent as a man, who put on flesh. 24. Though humble in form, Christ was made equal to God. 25. This was equality in power, 26. not in Nature or Essence. 27. It was not robbery, for he bore the humble form of a man. 28. Psalms cx. 1 does not show the equality of Christ's Nature with God's. 29. In fine, all the Scriptures speak of Christ the man.

30. Philosophers make the Holy Spirit to be a third being, and this leads to a plurality of Gods. 31. Thus we become Tritonites and Atheists, though they affirm the unity of God. 32. The word spirit is variously used in Scripture. 33. Certain proof-texts for the Trinity refer not to oneness of Nature, but to harmony of mind and will. 34. It is oneness not of Nature but of power. 35. Christ's own words show that there is not a oneness of Nature. 36. The Father,

the Word, and the Spirit agree in bearing testimony to Christ. 37. The belief that Jesus was the Son of God is the foundation of the Church. 38. The text Romans xi. 36 does not refer to three Persons, 39. nor can they be inferred from numerals in a parable. 40. Many passages of Scripture emphasize God and Christ while ignoring the third Person. 41. The threefoldness in God sometimes inferred from Exodus iii. 6 is to be explained not as three separate beings, but as a distribution of functions. 42. In this passage God sought to keep the Jews from believing in more than one God. 43. The same passage properly explained, and many others, show that the Holy Spirit is not a distinct being, but an activity of God himself. 44. Current arguments of scholastic theologians are passed by as resting on grounds not mentioned in Scripture. 45. The beings are not even imaginable, but are pure phantasms. 46. What can not be understood should not be received. 47. The Old and New Testaments clearly teach one God, the Father, and one Christ, his Son, but nothing of beings. 48. The Fathers also teach that God is the Father of Christ. 49. The Old Testament repeatedly teaches but one God. 50. The Sophists, following tradition blindly, use terms they do not understand, disputing about mere words. 51. They use the term Persons in a wholly unscriptural sense. 52. The Jewish law teaches the strict unity of God. 53. Jesus taught that he himself, a man, was Son of God. 54. The same attributes are applied to the Messiah-king in the Old Testament as to Christ in the New. 55. The monstrous views of sundry heretics sufficiently shame the current view. 56. Also among teachers in the Church countless insoluble questions arise out of the doctrine of the Trinity, 57. and as to the relation of Mary, Christ, the Father, and the beings to one another. 58. Such subtleties are ridiculous, and wholly foreign to the Bible. 59. The Trinity excites the derision of Mohammedans and Jews, though Mohammed holds Christ and the Apostles in the highest honor. 60. This doctrine was due to Greek philosophy, whereas the Church should be founded on the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 61. Christ will be with the Church only on condition that its members keep his teaching.

ON THE ERRORS OF THE TRINITY

BOOK THE FIRST

1. In investigating the holy mysteries of the divine Triad, I have thought that one ought to start from the man; for I see most men approaching their lofty speculation about the Word without having any fundamental understanding of CHRIST, and they attach little or no importance to the man, and give the true CHRIST quite over to oblivion. But I shall endeavor to recall to their memories who the CHRIST is. However, what and how much importance is to be attached to CHRIST, the Church shall decide.

2. Seeing that the pronoun ¹ indicates a man, whom they call the human nature,² I shall admit ³ these three things: first, this man is JESUS CHRIST; second, he is the Son of God; third, he is God.

That he was called JESUS at the beginning, who would deny? That is, in accordance with the angel's command, the boy was on the day of his circumcision given a name,⁴ even as you were called John, and this man, Peter. JESUS, as Tertullian says,⁵ is a man's proper name, and CHRIST is a surname. The Jews all admitted that he was JESUS, but denied that he was CHRIST, asking about JESUS *who is called* CHRIST,⁶ and they put out of the synagogue those who confessed that he was CHRIST;⁷ and the Apostles had frequent disputes with them about him, as to whether JESUS were the CHRIST. But as to JESUS, there was never any doubt or question, nor did any one ever deny this name. See what the discourse is aiming at, and with what pur-

These three things must be understood with regard to the man before we speak of the Word.

The name and surname of the boy Jesus.

Note in what sense they took these things, before John wrote concerning the Word.

¹ *Ille Christus.*

² *Humanitas*, and so throughout the work.

³ Throughout the discussion Servetus is addressing an imagined opponent, apparently using memoranda of oral debates had or planned with fellow students or others. He thus begins here with concessions.

⁴ Luke i, 31; ii, 21.

⁵ Adv. Praxean, xxviii, the argument of which Servetus follows here. (MPL. ii, 192 f.; ANF. iii, 624 f.; ANCL. xv, 399 f.)

⁶ Matt. xxvii, 17, 22.

⁷ John ix, 22; xii, 42.

pose Paul testifies to the Jews that JESUS is the CHRIST;¹ with what fervor of spirit Apollos of Alexandria publicly confuted the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that JESUS was the Messiah.² Of what JESUS do you suppose those things were said? Do you think they disputed there about a *hypostasis*? I am bound therefore to admit that he was CHRIST as well as JESUS, since I admit that he was anointed of God; for this is *thy holy Servant, whom thou didst anoint*.³ This is *the most holy*, who, Daniel foretold, should be anointed.⁴ And Peter spoke of it as an accomplished fact: Ye yourselves know, for the saying about JESUS is known to all men, namely, that God anointed JESUS of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, for God was with him;⁵ and, *This is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead*;⁶ and, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that this JESUS whom ye crucified God hath made both Lord and Christ*,⁷ that is, anointed. Some, however, try to show that these pronouns mean another being. But John calls him a liar that denies that this JESUS is anointed of God;⁸ and, He that admits that JESUS is the CHRIST is begotten of God.⁹

3. Tertullian also says that the term CHRIST is a word belonging to a human nature.¹⁰ And although he makes careful inquiry concerning the word CHRIST,¹¹ he makes no mention of that being¹² which some make CHRIST out to be. Who, he also says, is the Son of man, if not himself a man, born of a man, a body born of a body?¹³ For the Hebrew expression son of man, son of Adam, means nothing else than *man*. Again, the way the word is used implies this, for to be anointed can refer only to a human nature. If, then, being anointed, as he says,¹⁴ is an affair of the

¹ Acts xviii, 5.² Acts xviii, 28.³ Acts iv, 27.⁴ Dan. ix, 24.⁵ Acts x, 37, 38.⁶ Acts x, 42.⁷ Acts ii, 36.⁸ I. John ii, 22.⁹ I. John v, 1.¹⁰ Adv. Praxean, xxviii. (MPL. ii, 192 f.; ANF. iii, 624 f.; ANCL. xv, 399 f.).¹¹ Adv. Marcionem III. xv, IV. x. (MPL. ii, 341 f., 377 ff.; ANF. iii, 333 f., 357 ff.; ANCL. vii, 148 ff., 205 ff.).¹² Res. Servetus repeatedly uses this word in avoidance of the term Person (of the Trinity) to which he objects as unscriptural. This usage was very common among the scholastics. See par. 30.¹³ Adv. Marcionem IV. x. (MPL. ii, 380; ANF. iii, 360; ANCL. vii, 210).¹⁴ Tertullian, adv. Marcionem III. xv. (MPL. ii, 341 f.; ANF. iii, 334; ANCL. vii, 150).

body, who can deny that the one anointed is a man? Moreover, in the Clementine Recognitions,¹ Peter brings out the meaning of the word: because kings used to be called Christs,² therefore he, being distinguished above others by his anointing, is called Christ the king; because just as God made an angel chief over the angels, and a beast over the beasts, and a heavenly body over the heavenly bodies, so he made the man Christ chief over men.

4. Again, on the authority of Holy Scripture we are taught very plainly that Christ is called a man, since even an earthly king is called Christ.³ Again, *Of whom was born JESUS, the one who is called CHRIST.*⁴ Note the article, and note the surname; for these words and the pronouns are to be understood in the simplest sense: they denote something perceived by the senses. Again, *Thou shalt call his name JESUS;*⁵ and he is very evidently writing of JESUS as a man, when he says, *And JESUS himself began to be thirty years of age, and was supposed to be the son of Joseph.*⁶ And, *Of David's seed hath God according to promise brought JESUS.*⁷ And John said, Think not that I am CHRIST.⁸ How absurd John's disclaimer would be, if the word Christ can not refer to a man. Moreover, to what end does CHRIST warn us to shun those men that called themselves Christs?⁹ CHRIST's question and Peter's answer would be silly, when CHRIST said, *Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, thou art the Son of the living God.*¹⁰ Nor would it mean the living Word of God, for in speaking to a man he ought to have said, CHRIST is in thee, the Son of God is in thee, and not, Thou art. And when he charged them there that they should tell no man that he was CHRIST,¹¹ tell me, what did he mean by that pronoun?¹² For it is clearer than day that he meant himself, and was speaking of himself. Do you not blush

¹ I. xlv. (MPG. i, 1233; ANF. viii, 89; ANCL. iii, 173).

² i. e., anointed.

³ I. Sam. xii, 3; II. Sam. xxii, 51; Isa. xlv, 1.

⁴ Matt. i, 16. *Jesus ille, qui.*

⁵ Luke i, 31.

⁶ Luke iii, 23.

⁷ Acts xiii, 23.

⁸ John i, 20; Acts xiii, 25.

⁹ Matt. xxiv, 23, 24.

¹⁰ Matt. xvi, 13, 16 (Pagn.).

¹¹ Matt. xvi, 20.

¹² *Quod ipse esset CHRISTUS.*

to say that he was without a name, and that the Apostles had preached him so long time without having called him by his own name; and do you on your own authority impose upon him a new and unfitting name, and one unheard of by the Apostles, calling him only the human nature?

5. Again, let not the Greek title *χριστός*¹ deceive you; but take the word *מָשִׁיחַ*,² or the Latin word *unctus*,³ and see whether you, who admit that we have been anointed, will venture to admit that he was anointed. Nor should I so strongly insist upon proving this point, which is clear enough at the very outset, were it not that I see that the minds of some are misled. Again, CHRIST's testimony is very clear, when he calls himself a man: *Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth.*⁴ And, *A mediator between God and men, the man CHRIST JESUS.*⁵ Again, pay no regard to the word *homo*,⁶ which, if you hold to the *communicatio idiomatum*,⁷ has been corrupted in meaning; but take the word *vir*,⁸ and hear Peter when he says that CHRIST was a man⁹ approved.¹⁰ And, *Concerning JESUS the Nazarene, who was a man, a mighty prophet.*¹¹ And, *After me cometh a man;*¹² and, *Rejected of men, a man of sorrows;*¹³ and, *Behold, the man whose name is the Branch;*¹⁴ and, *God will judge by that man,*¹⁵ namely, CHRIST.

Again, do not misrepresent the law of God by circumlocutions. Consider rather the nature of the demonstrative pronoun,¹⁶ and you will see that this is the original meaning of the word; for when he is pointed out to the eye it is very often admitted, This is the CHRIST, Thou art JESUS; and that he speaks, asks, answers, eats, and that they saw him walking upon the

Christ.

Messiah.

¹ *Christos*, anointed.² *Mashiach*, anointed.³ Anointed.⁴ John viii, 40.⁵ I. Tim. ii, 5.⁶ Man, human being.⁷ Sharing of attributes: a doctrine as to the union of the divine and the human natures in the person of Christ.⁸ Man.⁹ *Vir*, and so in the quotations immediately following.¹⁰ Acts ii, 22.¹¹ Luke xxiv, 19, by a change of punctuation in the Latin.¹² John i, 30.¹³ Isa. liii, 3.¹⁴ Zech. vi, 12.¹⁵ Acts xvii, 31.¹⁶ i. e., *ille Christus*, cf. par. 2.

water. Likewise, I am he whom ye seek, JESUS of Nazareth;¹ and, *Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he: take him.*² And in another place, *It is I myself: handle me, and see;*³ and, *This JESUS, whom ye slew, did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.*⁴ Just what will you mean by such pronouns? As for an eye-witness, are we not in worse case than the Samaritan woman who said, *Come and see a man, who told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ?*⁵ No wonder that a woman founded on CHRIST spoke thus, for when she was herself looking for a Messiah to come, who is called CHRIST, he replied, *I that speak unto thee am he*⁶ — I, I, not the *being*, but, *I that speak*.

6. Again, to what man do you understand that that word of the Apostle refers, *As by the trespass of one man, . . . so by the grace of one man, JESUS CHRIST;*⁷ and, *As by a man came death, so by a man came the resurrection of the dead?*⁸ For the Scripture does not take *man* connotatively;⁹ it calls him not only man, but Adam.¹⁰ Yet for our basis we would have a connotative man, and a speculative substance.¹¹ Away, I pray, with these sophistical tricks, and you shall see a great light. The foundation of the Church is the words of CHRIST, which are most simple and plain. Let us imitate the Apostles, who preached Christ not with words composed by art of man.¹² The words of the Lord are pure words,¹³ they are to be received with simplicity. And witness the Apostle: *Not with excellency of speech* is the testimony of CHRIST to be proclaimed,¹⁴ but plainly, and as if we had become babes,¹⁵ and as if we knew nothing else *save JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.*¹⁶

7. Again, what brotherhood shall you say that we have with CHRIST? Who is he that is exalted above his fellows?¹⁷ What kind of comparison is it that the Apostle makes between CHRIST

¹ John xviii, 4-8.

² Luke xxiv, 39.

³ John iv, 29.

⁴ Rom. v, 15-19.

⁵ i. e., it is not speaking of man in general, but of a particular man.

⁶ I. Cor. xv, 22.

⁷ I. Cor. ii, 1; II. Pet. i, 16.

⁸ I. Cor. ii, 1; i, 17.

⁹ I. Cor. ii, 2.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvi, 48.

¹¹ Acts ii, 32; v, 30.

¹² John iv, 26.

¹³ I. Cor. xv, 21.

¹⁴ *Sophisticum suppositum.*

¹⁵ Ps. xii, 6.

¹⁶ I. Thess. ii, 7 (Vulg.).

¹⁷ Heb. i, 9.

and Moses, saying, *For he hath been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, . . . since Moses was as a servant, but CHRIST as a son?*¹ To what end also does the Apostle in the same epistle² so strongly insist upon showing that CHRIST was exalted even above the angels? For it would be silly enough to prove that the second Person of the Godhead is by nature more exalted than the angels. Nor can his meaning be thus construed; for the Apostle is speaking in accordance with the thought of the prophet, and David is marveling at the great glory of Christ because, though he is a man, all things have been subjected to him.³

8. Again, he did miracles that we may believe that JESUS is the CHRIST, the Son of God.⁴ Note that he considers the matter settled as regards JESUS; but, that we may believe that this JESUS is he who was to be anointed, being begotten of the only God the Father. And how is the second unknown being recognized by miracles, unless it is understood of him whom they saw doing the miracles, as Nicodemus declares?⁵ For the outward miracles are no proof of the inward speculations. Likewise CHRIST himself bears witness that the works that he does sufficiently show that he has been sent by the Father.⁶ And Nathanael, from his saying, *I saw thee underneath the fig tree*, concludes that he is the Son of God who was to be sent as King of Israel.⁷ They draw a similar conclusion from his stilling the wind;⁸ and from the miracles that he did, Peter concludes,
 6a *We know that thou art the CHRIST, the Son of the living God.*⁹

9. These conclusions also clearly prove what I said in the second place: namely, that he whom I call CHRIST is the Son of God; for from the miracles that he did they conclude that he is the Son of God. And it having been proved that he is JESUS CHRIST, this turns out as proved; for one who denies that he is the Son denies JESUS CHRIST, since Scripture proclaims nothing else than that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God. Moreover, by

Second
proposi-
tion.

¹ Heb. iii, 3-6.

³ Ps. viii, 6.

⁵ John iii, 2.

⁷ John i, 48, 49.

⁹ John vi, 69 (Pagn.); Matt. xvi, 16.

² Heb. i, ii.

⁴ John xx, 30, 31.

⁶ John v, 36.

⁸ Matt. xiv, 33.

many testimonies of the Scriptures he is shown to be especially the Son, and God is called Father with regard to him — really a Father, I say — because he was begotten by one filling the place of a human father. For he was not begotten of the seed of Joseph, as Carpocrates, Cerinthus, and Photinus ¹ wickedly and falsely declared. But instead of the seed of a man, the almighty power of the Word of God overshadowed Mary, the Holy Spirit acting within her; and it continues, *Wherefore also that which is born shall be called holy, the Son of God.*² Weigh the word, *wherefore*, note the conclusion, note the reason why he is called the Son of God. The same kind of sonship ³ in the man JESUS CHRIST is disclosed to us by Daniel, who calls him *a stone cut out without hands.*⁴ Again, the same kind of sonship is expressed when it says that she became with child of the Holy Spirit, and, That which hath been conceived in her has come from the Holy Spirit.⁵ Tell me, pray, what is the offspring begotten and conceived in her, which comes from the Holy Spirit, from which he concludes that the son whom she brings forth will be the Saviour, Immanuel? Take note of what Luke says: This son whom thou shalt conceive and bring forth *shall be called the Son of the Most High.* He says furthermore, *He shall be great, and God shall give unto him the throne.*⁶ Has the second Person, then, become great, and received from God the throne of his father David? Why did he not say, *He shall be called the Son of the first Person, and the first Person shall give unto him the throne?* But he said, *the Son of the most high God, and, God shall give unto him the throne.* Some, striving to pervert the words of the angel, misinterpret the word *holy* in this passage,⁷ as though the first-born CHRIST were not worthy of it, although Luke also expressly shows in the chapter following why he had said *holy*; because every first-born thing shall be called *holy* to God.⁸ In like man- 6b

¹ Carpocrates, an Alexandrian Gnostic of the early second century; Cerinthus, a Gnostic of Asia Minor at the end of the first century; Photinus, Bishop of Sirmium in the fourth century. Servetus's statement as to Photinus is hardly accurate.

² Luke i, 35, cf. margin.

⁴ Dan. ii, 34.

⁶ Luke i, 32.

⁸ Luke ii, 23; cf. Ex. xiii, 2, 12; xxxiv, 19; Num. viii, 17.

³ *Filiatio.*

⁵ Matt. i, 18, 20.

⁷ Luke i, 35b.

ner the Apostles say, *Of thy holy Son JESUS*.¹ Moreover, they would call the power of God something merely speculative² (but oh, that they knew what the Word of God is!). They neither show how that was instead of the seed of a man (for the angel answers the question asked by Mary as to the seed of a man);³ nor do they explain what that is which, being begotten by the power which fills the place of the seed, will be called the Son of God. For Luke does not say that the *power* is called the Son; but, that which is begotten by the power.⁴ He shall be called the
 7a Son of God for the reason that the power of God is instead of the seed of a man.

10. Nor do they notice how wide and deep are the mysteries of this Word and of the seed, in illustration of which it says that the seed of the sower is the Word of God.⁵ For just as CHRIST was begotten and born by the Word of God, so we are born again by the Word of God; *born again*, says Peter, *through the Word of the living God*.⁶ And this seed he calls incorruptible; and, *He begat us by the word of truth*.⁷ They have speculated ill, therefore, in denying that the Son was a man, that they may make a Son of the Word; but the truth of the matter proves to be otherwise, and John thought it more fitting to say Word than Son. Indeed, in his discussion of the Word, the Son is said to be flesh.⁸ Of the Word, I shall speak later; ⁹ for the present let us keep his proper honor and glory for JESUS CHRIST, for even by this we shall understand the Word also. Again, the very nature of the word teaches us that the Son is called a man; for just as being anointed is an affair of the body, so being born is an affair of the flesh. The flesh, therefore, says Tertullian,¹⁰ was born, and the Son of God will be flesh. Again, who is the little boy of whom mention is so often made in Matt. ii., whom Joseph took [to Egypt] and back? Say, is boy the name of a *hypostasis*? See whether the boy there is the son called out of Egypt.¹¹ Again,

¹ Acts iv, 30.

² *Philosophicum*.

³ Luke i, 34.

⁴ Luke i, 35.

⁵ Luke viii, 11.

⁶ I. Pet. i, 23 (Vulg.).

⁷ James i, 18.

⁸ John i, 14.

⁹ Book III.

¹⁰ De carne Christi, vi. (MPL. ii, 763; ANF. iii, 526; ANCL. xv, 176).

¹¹ Matt. ii, 15.

tell me whether he whom you call the human nature was beast or man; for if man, he was both begotten and born, and if so, he had a parent. Say, then, of whom he was begotten and consequently he will be the son of him who begot him. Say whether he was begotten by Joseph as his father, or by some other father. Nor will you find any other father than God. Or will you say that he was a mere appearance,¹ and not flesh? For if he is flesh, he was born of some father, hence he is some one's son; nor do I believe that you can escape here, unless you make one son out of two, or conjure up imaginary sonships, unknown to CHRIST himself. 7b

11. But what is there so strange, you will say (not to speak of *Substances*²), in acknowledging two Sons; for we admit that the two beings had two births, and very different ones, likewise that the two beings had two begettings; hence we can not deny that two were begotten and two were born. Speculate as much as ever you will on the kind of sonship, in order to make of the two one mass, one aggregate, or one connotative Substance;³ for you are deceived if from this it seems to you that, taking Scripture in its plain sense, there was an only Son, when you nevertheless see before your eyes two begotten and born. Who would make any difference between *born* and *sons*?⁴ Nor did the Scriptures ever contemplate such subtleties, but they speak in the simplest way of JESUS, the only Son of God. And Scripture mentions no other being, no other nature, nothing besides a man born or begotten. And so Ignatius, speaking of one and the same being, says, Concerning JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, who was truly born of God and of the Virgin — of God before the world began, but afterwards of Mary, without the seed of a man;⁵ but how — this will appear below.⁶ For the present, I most sincerely would that little old women, half-blind men, and barbers might acknowledge that CHRIST is the Son of God, and that their root and foundation might be in him. We shall speak of the Word 8a

¹ *Phantasma*.² *Suppositis*.³ *Connotativum suppositum*.⁴ *Natos et filios*.⁵ Loosely quoted from Ep. ad Trallianos, x. (MPG. v, 791; ANF. i, 70 f.; ANCL. i, 202).⁶ Book III, paragraph 1.

more at large later on.¹ For CHRIST proclaimed even to women that he was the Messiah. Pray consider how a little old woman can understand the metaphysical Son, when most heresiarchs, and those the most subtle, have stumbled at it.

12. Again, in addition to what has been said before, God said to John, *Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit of God descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he. . . . And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.*² Pray note the words, very plain and without circumlocution. For in your opinion John would have been deceived in saying that the one whom he saw was the Son of God; nor is it credible that he himself had thought out anything about the separate being, nor had God given him any sign by which to recognize it. Or will you say that the voice from heaven was misleading in saying, *Upon whomsoever thou shalt see . . . the same is he?* It would also have been misleading when, descending, it said of a being present to all, *This is my Son*, or, *Thou art my Son.*³ If by the pronoun⁴ he meant to indicate some other hidden being, then the witness would not have been clear; it would have led the people astray. Again, when JESUS, being asked, Who is this Son of God? answered, *Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee,*⁵ what could have been said more clearly? This being plainly shown, the Centurion said, *Truly this man was the Son of God.*⁶ Observe now that the pronouns indicate a being perceived by the senses; nor do I believe that the Centurion would have played the Sophist, or have spoken of the *communicatio idiomatum*. Again, hear Paul, who, as soon as he received his sight, went into the synagogue and *proclaimed JESUS, that he is the Son of God.*⁷ Nor are we seeking here to make any discussion about a *hypostasis* of the Word. Indeed, he was afterwards proclaimed by John in order to establish this doctrine; for he is not opposed to our view, but joins us in proving it. See also whether the high priest had a second *hypostasis* in mind when he said, *Art thou the Son of God the blessed? And JESUS answered, I am.*⁸ *Ye say that I*

¹ Book III.

² Matt. iii, 17; Luke iii, 22.

³ John ix, 36, 37.

⁴ Acts ix, 20.

⁵ John i, 33, 34.

⁶ i. e., *this*, or *thou*.

⁷ Matt. xxvii, 54.

⁸ Mark xiv, 61 (Vulg.).

am the Son of God.¹ In like manner, *I have believed that thou art the CHRIST, the Son of God.*² But with what gross perversity these most transparent words have been misinterpreted in connection with the sophistical *communicatio idiomatum*, let them judge for themselves; for I understand the words of CHRIST in the very simplest sense, nor do I suffer any meaning to be imported into them. I would not have you press Scripture into service in order to construct fictions of your own. But because it attracts you when it is itself kept intact, I would not have you by your vain imaginings render uncertain such a manifest certainty of the Gospel.

13. If you say that nothing seems to be ascribed to CHRIST more than to other men, since we also are called sons of God; I reply that, on the contrary, from the fact that we are called sons of God, he himself is proved to be a real son. For men are called sons after the likeness of man; yet there is a wide difference, as will be evident when the mystery of the Word has been investigated.³ And if we are called sons (that is, by the gift and grace given us through him), the author of this sonship is therefore called a Son in a far higher sense. And when mention is made of CHRIST, the article is used, and it says, This is *the* Son of God,⁴ in order to indicate that he is called Son not by a general term, as we are, but in a certain special and unusual way. For he is a son by nature, while others are not sons originally: they become sons of God, they are not born sons of God. We are made sons of God, through faith, in JESUS CHRIST.⁵ Hence we are called sons by adoption.⁶ But to make CHRIST adopted in like manner is the heresy of the Bonosians.⁷ For with regard to CHRIST no such adoption is read of, but a real begetting by God, his Father. And he is called not merely a son, but a real son;⁸ not merely an ordinary son, but his own Son:⁹ And God is called the Father of

¹ Luke xxii, 70.

² John (Servetus wrongly says Luke) xi, 27.

³ Book III.

⁴ John i, 34.

⁵ Gal. iii, 26; John i, 12.

⁶ Rom. viii, 15; Eph. i, 5.

⁷ The Bonosians in Spain and southern Gaul from the fifth to the seventh centuries held that Christ was the Son of God by adoption rather than by nature.

⁸ Wisdom ii, 18 (Vulg.).

⁹ Rom. viii, 32.

JESUS CHRIST¹ with just as good right as earthly fathers are called the fathers of their own sons. Else God could not be called an especially efficient cause, and one productive of any certain effect. For if he chooses to have some child for himself in particular, and of himself alone merely acts to beget him, just as an earthly father can act, why will he not with just as good right deserve to be called Father? *Shall I, that cause others to bring forth, myself be barren? saith the Lord.*² Nay, rather is he himself called Father, because *from him every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named.*³ And that the more, because he not only begot him, but honored him with fulness of deity, that in this the Son may be made like the Father. Again, in another way God is said to be Father with better right than men, because he acts in the begettings of others. Others indeed do nothing in the begetting of their own sons; hence, if he is called Father with better right, CHRIST will with best right be said to be Son more than others.

14. In the third place, I said that this proposition is true: CHRIST is God, for he is said to be God in appearance, because, as the Apostle says, he was *in the form of God.*⁴ And, according to Tertullian, he was found to be God through his power, just as
 10a he was man through his flesh.⁵ For CHRIST after the inward man (to speak in the manner of Paul) means something divine, resulting from an inward anointing divinely done. According to the flesh, he is man; and in the spirit he is God, because *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,*⁶ and, *God is a Spirit.*⁷ And, *Unto us a child is born . . . his name shall be called . . . Mighty God.*⁸ See clearly that both the name and the might of God are attributed to a child that is born, unto whom *hath been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*⁹ And Thomas calls him, *My God, my Lord.*¹⁰ And CHRIST is called, God in all things to be praised and blessed.¹¹ And in many other passages is his divinity

Third proposition.

¹ Rom. xv, 6.

² Eph. iii, 15, margin.

³ Adv. Marcionem IV. xviii. (MPL. ii, 402; ANF. iii, 375; ANCL. vii, 247).

⁶ John iii, 6.

⁸ Isa. ix, 6.

¹⁰ John xx, 28.

² Isa. lxvi, 9 (Vulg.).

⁴ Phil. ii, 6.

⁷ John iv, 24.

⁹ Matt. xxviii, 18.

¹¹ Rom. ix, 5.

shown, because he was exalted that he might receive divinity, and the name above every name.¹ Let those therefore beware who endeavor to disparage him so much that they would have his human nature called only, as it were, a sort of inferior being, and make him out so much the more imperfect because they not only deny that he is their Lord, but deny that he was anointed by God King of the Jews, deny that he is a reconciler, a mediator, why, even rob him of what belongs to his nature, denying that he is the son of Mary, and finally deny that he is a man. Who can but weep at so great an injury to Christ, because the man Moses was called an earthly mediator between the people and God, while it is denied that the second man from heaven is a heavenly mediator. All these they would have as the names of a *hypostasis*.

They deny
that a man
is a man,
and admit
that God
is an ass.²

15. For this reason the popular school of thought has devised the *communicatio idiomatum*, namely, that the human nature shares its properties with God. They invent some new application of the term, *man*, so that it may be equivalent to the phrase, bearing a human nature; and then, by this *communicatio idiomatum*, they admit that the man is God. This entire doctrine rests upon the passage in the first chapter of John, *The Word became flesh*;³ but how far away they are from John's view, you shall learn hereafter.⁴ Meanwhile ask yourself just this question: If CHRIST himself were to be questioned, could any such sophistical fancy be found in his mouth? For we ought so to speak, as Peter says, as if we spoke oracles of God.⁵ After CHRIST commanded that he be called our Master, an answer was to be expected from his utterances. Ask yourself whether, if CHRIST, or his disciple Paul, were preaching to us again, he would be able to endure such inventions of men, and deliberate impositions of words, and that the universal and catholic faith should depend upon them. Are these things founded on the solid rock, or on the sand? How shall every tongue confess CHRIST, if these artificial and sophistical words are found in

¹ Phil. ii, 9.

² See below, paragraph 16, foot-note 8.

³ John i, 14.

⁵ I. Pet. iv, 11.

⁴ Book III.

their tongue¹ alone? What view of faith would they deem that other nations held? If you would know whether these things
 11a are founded on the Scriptures, see whether the word, *man*, in the Bible has the meaning they put upon it; whether in the Greek or in the Hebrew, in place of the Latin word all this is used: *bearing a human nature*. Do they not make CHRIST a great sophist and master of sophists, when they say that the expression, CHRIST, was employed by the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists to signify the second Person, by connoting, *what bears a human nature*? But what would they say if, in place of the word, CHRIST, the word, *anointed*, were used throughout the Bible? Would they, speaking in the simplest way, say that the second Person was anointed, and that it had received the Holy Spirit, and power, as is said of the real CHRIST? ² Or could the second being say, *All things have been delivered unto me of my Father*? ³ Would the Father also have spoken of it in a sophistical sense, saying, *Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved . . . I will put my spirit upon him*? ⁴ You will find that the reference is not to this, but to the man JESUS. Again, what is a "sharing of qualities," ⁵ and what is it like? For the quality, *bearing a human nature*, was formerly not appropriate to a man. How, then, does a man share his qualities with God, if they are not his own?

16. Rejecting these quibbles, then, we with a sincere heart acknowledge the real CHRIST, and him complete in divinity.
 11b But since this divinity of his depends upon the Mystery of the Word, let us for the present say roughly that God can share with a man the fulness of his deity, and give unto him the name which is above every name.⁶ For if we admit as touching Moses that he was made a God to Pharaoh,⁷ much more, and in a way far more exceptional, was CHRIST made the God, Lord, and Master of Thomas and of us all. And because God was in him in singular measure, and because through him we find God propitious, he is expressly called Emanuel, that is, God with us; ⁸ nay more,

¹ i. e., the Latin.² Acts x, 38.³ Matt. xi, 27.⁴ Matt. xii, 18; cf. Isa. xlii, 1.⁵ *Communicatio praedicatorum*, i. e., *idiomatum*.⁶ Phil. ii, 9.⁷ Ex. vii, 1.⁸ Matt. i, 23.

he himself is called *El*.¹ Again, if we are given by God the privilege of being called sons of God,² with CHRIST the privilege will be the broader, not only of being the Son of God, but also of being called and of being our God; for, *Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain* to receive divinity, that is, *to receive the power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing*.³ And there is in him another and a manifold fulness of Deity, and other unsearchable riches of his, of which we shall speak below,⁴ which are all qualities that God shares with man. But man gives God no quality *de novo*, for what can man bestow upon God *de novo*? Either this quality is a thing trifling and indifferent; or it is perfection, and thus God would have lacked this perfection before; or it is imperfection, and thus you will say that a sort of imperfection is now suitable for God; and these are shocking things to say. Moreover, the fact that God gives something to man is not a detriment to God but an honor to man, nor is the change in God, but in man. For, if the pronoun indicates CHRIST, I admit this is our God, the blessed God, the mighty God. But if the pronoun indicates the invisible God, I have a great dread of admitting, this is something dead, this is a thirsting, eating man, this is an ass, this has long ears, as the Sophists with their uncircumcised lips admit without the slightest shame.⁵ Nor will it do you any good though you move heaven and earth in crying out against them; on the contrary, they will say, with brazen front, that these are the oracles of God, pure as fire. Nor is there any other stronger argument against such men than to recall to their

12a

¹ Hebr., God; Isa. ix, 6.

² I. John iii, 1; cf. John i, 12.

³ Rev. v, 12.

⁴ Book VII, paragraph 6.

⁵ Servetus follows Melancthon's example (*Loci Theologici*, 1521, *saepe*) in calling his scholastic opponents Sophists, and Pharisees. Aquinas (*Summa Theol.*, pars i, q. xxix, art. 4) in discussing the relations of the Persons of the Trinity, had argued that as a horse and an ass, though distinct, are one in being both of them animals, so with the Persons. This rather unhappy illustration was taken up by the later scholastic theologians (Duns Scotus, in lib. i. Sent., dist. 26, q. 1; dist. 2, q. 7; Pierre d'Ailly, in lib. i. Sent., q. 5; John Major, in lib. i. dist. 4; Robert Holkot, *super quatuor libros Sent.*, lib. i, q. v., prop. 2). Such an illustration of the God-head seemed to Servetus altogether shocking; and *personaliter* (as they defined Person) and *asinaliter* were associated in his mind as equivalent terms. He thus alludes, just below, to the Turks as calling Christians *asinarii*, ass-followers, or perhaps ass-worshippers. cf. marginal note, par. 14.

memories the precept of the Apostles Peter and Paul: *Hold the pattern of sound words as thou hast heard them from me*; ¹ and, *If any man speaketh, let him speak as it were oracles of God*; ² and, He that followeth a different doctrine from that which is according to godliness, the sound doctrine of CHRIST, he is puffed up, knowing nothing. ³ See now the "godliness" of the doctrine which they have learned from Paul, which admits that God has long ears, and is an ass. No wonder, if the Turks call us ass-worshippers, seeing that we do not blush to call God an ass.

Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth. ⁴

12b 17. In opposition to what has been said, you will insist, If CHRIST is God in that way, there will then be more than one God. Here I propose that CHRIST alone shall be my teacher, in order that he alone may defend me, for out of his words all your arguments can be refuted. To that argument of the Pharisees, the Master himself replies, *I said, Ye are Gods*. ⁵ CHRIST there makes it clear that he is God not in Nature but in appearance, not by nature but by grace. For when he was accused of making himself God, he spoke of God in his reply in the same way in which the prophet spoke of gods, ascribing that sort of deity to himself. Also, seeing that he adds, *If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came*, ⁶ how much more shall the Son of man, whom the Father sanctifies, ⁷ be called not merely Son, but even God. By way of privilege, therefore, it was given to him to be God, because the Father sanctifies him; he was anointed by grace, exalted because he humbled himself, ⁸ exalted above his fellows. ⁹ There was given unto him *the name which is above every name*; ¹⁰ and, as Peter says, *He received from God the Father honor and glory*, ¹¹ which things are all according to grace. For that only the Father is called God by nature is plainly enough shown by Scripture, which says, God and CHRIST, CHRIST and God. It so joins them as though CHRIST were a being distinct from God. Likewise, when it says, God is the Father of JESUS CHRIST, ¹² a

He refutes three arguments of the Pharisees. The words of Christ are to be especially heeded.

¹ II. Tim. i, 13.

² I. Pet. iv, 11.

³ I. Tim. vi (Servetus says iv), 3, 4.

⁴ Eph. iv, 29.

⁵ John x, 34.

⁶ John x, 35.

⁷ John x, 36.

⁸ Phil. ii, 8, 9.

⁹ Heb. i, 9.

¹⁰ Phil. ii, 9.

¹¹ II. Pet. i, 17.

¹² II. Cor. xi, 31; Rom. xv, 6.

difference is noted between God and CHRIST, just as between father and son. And also when it says, *the CHRIST of God*,¹ *the God of our Lord JESUS CHRIST*,² *the head of CHRIST is God*.³ And CHRIST cries to God, *My God, my God*.⁴ And by common usage of Scripture the Father is called God; and CHRIST, Lord and Master. And Christ himself says, *That they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even JESUS CHRIST*.⁵ For although I say that CHRIST is very God, yet in the relation which he holds to the Father this very passage notes a difference. In John it speaks of CHRIST in distinction from idols, and from those whom they falsely named gods.⁶ Likewise, only the Father is called the invisible God.⁷ CHRIST also, when he is called good, transfers the matter of goodness to the Father.⁸

18. Nor let any one be surprised that I bring forward Scriptures that have been cited by heretics in their own behalf; for although those have used them improperly, they have not for all that lost their integrity so that one may never use them. For I too, as well as you, understand them as referring to man. Nor do I bring them forward for their [the heretics'] purpose. For what if I say that JESUS CHRIST is the great God, and along with this what he himself says in speaking most simply: *The Father is greater than I*; ⁹ am I therefore an Arian? For when Arius held the very foolish view that the Son was of different Substance from the Father, having also no appreciation at all of the glory of CHRIST, he introduced a new creature, more exalted than man; although he might nevertheless have excluded this and every other distinction, and have admitted, *The Father is greater than I*.¹⁰ But preferring to speculate upon a plurality of separate beings, he fell into most abominable error.

19. Again, let not the word, *God*, deceive you, for you do not and can not understand its meaning until you know what *Elohim* means, which, if you know Hebrew, I will make quite clear to you below. For you must bear in mind that all things

¹ Luke ix, 20.

² I. Cor. xi, 3.

³ John xvii, 3.

⁴ Col. i, 15; I. Tim. i, 17.

⁵ John xiv, 28.

² Eph. i, 3.

⁴ Matt. xxvii, 46.

⁶ I. John v, 21.

⁸ Matt. xix, 17 (Pagn.).

¹⁰ John xiv, 28.

God is not
the name
of a Nature.

that are written of CHRIST took place in Judaea, and in the Hebrew tongue; and in all other tongues but this there is a poverty of divine names. So we, not knowing how to distinguish between God [in one sense] and God [in another], fall into error. And that CHRIST became our God in the sense of the word, Elohim, is no more than to say that he became our Lord, our judge, and our king, after he was given by the Father a kingdom, all judgment, and all power. And Thomas shows this well enough when he says, *My Lord, my God*; ¹ and Isaiah says, He shall be called Mighty God.² Hear also how Scripture calls Cyrus the King, who was a type of the real CHRIST, Elohim, the God of Israel: *I will give thee, it saith, hidden treasures . . . that thou mayest know that I am the Lord who call thy name the God of Israel*.³ Likewise, if we admit that Moses was made Pharaoh's God,⁴ why do we deny it concerning the real CHRIST? for CHRIST far surpasses Moses.⁵ These are very poor comparisons by which to prove the exalted nature of CHRIST; but you force me to resort to them so long as you hold so unworthy a view of human nature, and do not keep in mind that God can exalt man more than can be declared, and place him at his right hand above every exalted being. But this is thus far but a slight thing, that you should hold a sound view about CHRIST, until you have learned the mysteries of the Word, and know that this CHRIST himself is, and from everlasting has been, God.

20. Again, this kind of Deity in CHRIST you may learn from the Old Testament, if you observe carefully what Hebrew word is used when CHRIST is called God. And along with this, mark the difference between יהוה,⁶ the proper name of God, and אל, אלהים,⁷ and other similar names applied to God. And that Thomas spoke of CHRIST⁸ not as *Jehovah*, but as *Elohim* and *Adonai*, I shall prove below.⁹ Likewise the Apostle said *Elohim*.¹⁰ But their ignorance of this matter strangely deceived the Greek philosophers. Indeed, as a matter of history, Solomon is here

¹ John xx, 28.

³ Isa. xlv, 3 (Vulg.).

⁶ Heb. iii, 3.

⁷ El, Adonai, Elohim.

⁹ Book V, par. 2.

² Isa. ix, 6.

⁴ Ex. vii, 1.

⁵ Jehovah.

⁸ John xx, 28.

¹⁰ Heb. i, 8; cf. Ps. xlv, 6.

called *Elohim*, for this passage is from the forty-fifth Psalm. Nor does the Apostle rest all the force of his proof on the word *Elohim*, but also on the fact that it says, His throne and kingdom are forever and ever.¹ For from the word *Elohim* alone he would not have proved CHRIST greater than the angels, nor greater than other princes who by the same prophet are called gods. On the contrary, by the same Apostle, and in the same passage, Angels are called *Elohim*, when he says, Worship him, all ye angels,² and, *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels*;³ for in both passages *Elohim* is used. Nor shall I omit to mention here (although it seems to tell against me) that their idea is false who would have him said to be made lower than God, and not, than the angels; for they are far from the intention of the prophet, and from the Apostle's train of thought, which is wholly concerned with the angels. Nor do I care here to inquire concerning their Natures, but shall hold to this Hebrew expression; because with the Hebrews great beings are called by the name of Gods and of angels, and they use one common name when speaking of angels and of distinguished men. And Peter calls angels those who in Genesis are called *Elohim*, or, *sons of Elohim*.⁴ And as of those, so of the angels in heaven, it says, *sons of Elohim*.⁵ Likewise, it also says אֱלֹהִים⁶ of angels and mighty men.⁷ This comparison serves to make the letter subordinate to the spirit. As I shall say below, does David, in his adversities, from which he was freed, bear the type of the passion and resurrection of CHRIST, and is he said to have been made lower than gods, because he suffers some calamities which gods and potentates are not wont to suffer? And just this is the meaning with regard to CHRIST, so far as concerns the time of his passion. For if you have with due care examined the saying of Paul, it contains nothing else than a translation of the Psalmist; so that this "making lower" is understood of the torment of death, and he was made lower than the angels when, being stripped of his angelic glory, he suffered a shameful death. And

¹ Heb. i, 8.² Heb. i, 6; cf. Ps. xcvii, 7.³ Heb. ii, 7; Ps. viii, 5.⁴ Gen. vi, 2, 4.⁵ Job i, 6; xxxviii, 7.⁶ *Elohim*.⁷ Ps. lxxxix, 6; Job xli, 25.

these homely phrases the Apostles (following, as I suppose, the Greek version) ¹ are wont to indicate by the names of angels; as when, wishing to indicate some great thing, it says, *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels*; ² *If we shall judge angels* ³ (that is, those things which are greater); and, *angels' food* ⁴ (that is, splendid food); *in the presence of the angels* ⁵ (that is, in the presence of princes). And the Chaldee version ⁶ also follows this in places. And in the Psalm quoted above, ⁷ both in the Greek and in the Chaldee, *angels* is used to render *Elohim*. And it is the Greek version that was usually quoted by the Apostles, where there is no difference in the sense. And from this also Peter's saying about the angels is clear, for the Septuagint called them angels. ⁸ And when a deed is related, reference should be had to the scripture narrative. And Peter, in the Clementine Recognitions, ⁹ says that there were men who lived the life of angels. And the Epistle of Jude calls *angels* those notable beasts that had left their proper habitation and were roving about on the face of the earth. ¹⁰ And it is these that are called pilgrims. ¹¹ For Cain with his offspring (whom the Hebrews call great Demons) was a wanderer on the face of the earth. ¹² But of these sayings of Peter I shall treat more at large in Book III. ¹³ Let it suffice for the present to have explained the word *Elohim*, lest some one attempt to build some argument against me out of those passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews. For I not only do not reject those divine names, but I say that they apply to CHRIST *par excellence*. Thus, in order to mark a difference from other gods, it adds, the God of all the earth, a God great, terrible, mighty, wonderful, and over all blessed. ¹⁴ But because of the poverty of the Greek in divine names, the Apostles could not ex-

The Aldine edition is not that of the Septuagint.

¹ The Septuagint.

² I. Cor. xiii, 1.

³ I. Cor. vi, 3.

⁴ Ps. lxxviii, 25 (Vulg.).

⁵ Rev. xiv, 10; Ps. cxxxviii, 1 (Vulg.).

⁶ i. e., the Targums.

⁷ Ps. viii, 5, as quoted above from Heb. ii, 7.

⁸ Gen. vi, 2, 4; II. Pet. ii, 4.

⁹ I. xxix. (MPG. i, 1223; ANF. viii, 85; ANCL. iii, 163).

¹⁰ Jude 6.

¹¹ Eccclus. xvi, 15 (Vulg.).

¹² Gen. iv, 14.

¹³ Book III, par. 6.

¹⁴ Gen. xviii, 25; Deut. x, 17; Ps. lxxviii, 35; Rom. ix, 5.

press this matter to the Greeks otherwise than by the word *θεός*; ¹ although they rarely use it. All which things should be carefully weighed; nor would they have caused us so much trouble had the Greeks learned Hebrew.

All their arguments are turned the other way.

21. The argument made about a plurality of gods ² can be turned the other way, for according to CHRIST's answer they are driven to admit that the three beings are Gods, and Gods by Nature. Either CHRIST is not God by Nature, or he did not reply to the point; for the question there was concerning his deity. Hence the argument runs against them, if they are gods in the sense in which the Son is God. And let them invent for themselves as many gods by Nature as ever they please; because to us, as to Paul, one God is enough, who is the Father, and one Lord JESUS CHRIST, who is the Son. ³ Add also to the refutation of their argument, that although CHRIST is God, yet he is one with the Father. Thus no plurality is shown as they suppose, for he is God, a kind of deity being shared by him with the Father.

The second argument of the Pharisees.

22. You will insist, moreover, upon asking how CHRIST is said to have come down from heaven, and to have been sent by the Father and come into the world. I have already said in the preceding argument ⁴ that those who rely upon arguments of this sort seem to be resorting to the weapons of the Pharisees, and to use the same carnal sense as they. For the Pharisees prated, *Is not this the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how then doth he say, I am come down out of heaven?* ⁵ And the Master would not explain the truth to them; but afterwards, in explaining the matter to his disciples, he said, *What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before? It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: these words are spirit and life.* ⁶ Again, CHRIST, speaking not of the second being but of himself, says, *I am come down from heaven.* ⁷ Thus the reasoning turns out against you. I say, then, that that which came down from heaven, is the Word of God, as is said in Wisdom,

¹ *Theos*, God.

³ I. Cor. viii, 6.

⁵ John vi, 42.

⁷ John vi, 38.

² In paragraph 16.

⁴ Paragraph 16.

⁶ John vi, 62, 63.

*Thine all-powerful word, O Lord, leaped from heaven;*¹ because
 16b God thundered from on high, and gave his voice from heaven,
 and this word on earth became the Son. And CHRIST, pausing
 to discourse on the bread out of heaven, explains himself. For
 what is *the bread which cometh down from heaven*² but the Word
 of God, by which man lives, rather than by material bread
 alone.³ And this word, this bread, as he himself bears witness, is
 CHRIST his very self, the very flesh itself, the very body itself, of
 CHRIST.⁴ But since these things presuppose the mystery of the
 Word, let them be postponed to the following Books.⁵ Yet you
 might meanwhile have understood *down from heaven*, that is,
 down from above, because, as he himself bears witness, *ye are*
*from beneath; I am from above.*⁶ Also you might have understood
 the words of CHRIST thus spiritually; for CHRIST was in the
 spirit of God before all time, and was in heaven, just as he also
 remains with us, even unto the end of the world.⁷ And for this
 reason alone, that his words were heavenly, you ought to have
 admitted that he himself was from heaven; for the baptism of
 John was from heaven, and *the second man is of heaven, heavenly.*⁸
 With regard to what you say, that he was sent by the Father,
 there seems to be no great difficulty. For John also is said to
 have been sent from God: *There was a man sent from God, whose*
*name was John.*⁹ Likewise Moses and the Prophets are said to
 have been sent by God.¹⁰ And CHRIST, speaking to the Father
 about the Apostles, says, *As thou didst send me into the world, so*
 17a *send I them into the world.*¹¹ And, *As the Father hath sent me, even*
*so send I you.*¹²

23. I am forced to light upon these illustrations, not because
 they furnish a complete analogy, but in order to persuade you
 that a man was sent; which you, led astray by your philosophy,
 undertake to deny. For it is a great mistake to say that the
 second being is said to be passively sent, when it is the very Na-

¹ Wisdom xviii, 15.

² Deut. viii, 3; Matt. iv, 4.

³ Books II and III.

⁴ Matt. xxviii, 20.

⁵ John i, 6.

⁶ John xvii, 18.

⁷ John vi, 33.

⁸ John vi, 53-56.

⁹ John viii, 23.

¹⁰ I. Cor. xv, 47.

¹¹ Matt. xxiii, 34; Luke xi, 49.

¹² John xx, 21.

ture of God. It is true that this unique sending of CHRIST, and his coming forth from the Father, has its roots fixed in God, as we shall explain when the mystery of the Word is disclosed.¹ Likewise, as for your saying that CHRIST came into the world, what wonder is it, when this is also true of others: *Every man coming into this world.*² Again, of what kind do you understand this passage: *Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord.*³ Again, observe that those that are led by the spirit of God are not of the world;⁴ and they are said to come into the world even as into the houses of publicans. And they are said to come into this earthly tabernacle of our body, and are said to put on flesh, even as when one puts on a garment. And he that speaks by the spirit observes that he is above the world. And Peter said that he was bound in this tabernacle as in something put upon him, speaking, that is, after the inward man.⁵

24. Moreover, you can prove in what way CHRIST *thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*⁶ These words of Paul are so obscurely and variously interpreted by them that they can clearly convince no one by the words themselves; and that the more, since it is perfectly plain that Paul is simply speaking of CHRIST JESUS. In the first place, some interpret it as meaning that the second Person, apart from robbery, thought itself to be equal with the first. And again, they warp this ignorant explanation and make it refer to philosophical Natures, saying that he did not think that to be a matter of robbery which belonged to his Nature. Others say, He did not think it robbery that he should be equal with God; that is, he did not think it a robbery of the equality with God, did not care to seize for himself equality with God. This meaning is more plausible than the first, because Paul never thought of the Natures, and it is counter to Paul's purpose, who is treating of nothing but CHRIST's modesty and humility. Also the force of the word, *but,*⁷ is clearly opposed to them, which, as the Lawyers say, is taken adversatively; and of necessity the meaning is bound to be this: He did not exalt him-

The third
argument
of the
Pharisees.

¹ Book III.

² Luke xix, 38.

³ II. Pet. i, 13, 14.

⁴ Phil. ii, 7.

⁵ John i, 9 (Vulg.).

⁶ John xvii, 14; I. John ii, 18.

⁷ Phil. ii, 6 (Vulg.).

self, *but* he humbled himself; he did not think it [robbery], *but* abased, emptied, submitted himself. But in vain do I waste my labor on these things (which are all false), when the true solution lies in the words of the Master. For the objection of the Pharisees, who assailed CHRIST, is that he made himself equal with God; and CHRIST, in reply, did not deny this equality, but said, *What things soever the Father did, these the Son also will do in like manner*; and, *As the Father raiseth the dead, giveth them life, cleanseth lepers, giveth sight to the blind, healeth the deaf, the paralytics, the demoniacs, and others, even so doth the Son*; and finally, *The Father hath given all judgment, all power, unto the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father*.¹ Behold how CHRIST was made equal with God, because all things whatsoever the Father hath are his.² Behold how the *μορφή*,³ that is, the appearance of Deity, shone forth in him when he wrought such great miracles; and this is what Paul says, that he existed in the *form* and appearance of God.⁴ From this let us observe the humility of CHRIST, which Paul cites to us as a model of all humility; for the greater the power he is endowed with, the greater is his humility, the more he submits and abases himself. For there are many good men who, if they are made magistrates, or have reached a higher estate, prove tyrants. But not so with CHRIST; for CHRIST did not think that this great equality which he had with God constituted robbery, and would not use it in the way of robbery. Firstly, because he did not accept the robbery when he perceived that they were about to take him by force, to make him king;⁵ but he bore himself in humble fashion, and would that his kingdom should not be of this world.⁶ And it is this discourse⁷ that Paul has in mind. Secondly, he thought it not robbery to seize for himself twelve legions of angels⁸ and defend himself by force against the Jews, but chose humbly to suffer.

25. This, then, is the equality which he had while existing in

¹ John v, 19, 21-23, loosely conflated with Matt. xi, 5.

² Matt. xi, 27; John iii, 35; xiii, 3.

³ *Morphe*, form.

⁴ Phil. ii, 6.

⁵ John vi, 15.

⁶ John xviii, 36.

⁷ i. e., in John v, vi.

⁸ Matt. xxvi, 53.

the form of God: he had in himself an equal power with God by reason of the authority that was given him in equal measure with God.¹ Because he was found to be God by his power, just as he was man by his flesh. And all things that the Father hath are his;² and through him all things are done that are performed by the Word of God, since he himself is the Word of God.³ And he spoke thus of an equality of power because, *The Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.*⁴ And Stephen saw him at the right hand of the power of God.⁵ And this equality and exaltation at the right hand of God Paul proclaims saying, not of the *being*, but of CHRIST, that he was placed *above all rule, authority, power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*;⁶ finally, that all things were put in subjection under his feet, and that he was given to be head over all things to the Church itself, who filleth all in all.⁷ Likewise equality in him with the power of God is noted in Daniel: *Behold, there came . . . a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days*, and there was given him all kingly power.⁸ And wonder at him is expressed in Jeremiah: Who is he that thus approacheth and hath been caused to draw near to God?⁹ so that he even comes near being equal to [God] himself. And this is the mere truth, so that Joseph was made equal to Pharaoh, although strictly speaking he says, Pharaoh is greater than I.

26. Again, Paul did not say that there are two beings and one Nature, or that the second Person is of equal Essence with the first. For had Paul understood that the second Person thought it not robbery to be of equal Nature with the first, wherefore did he not say that it was equal with the first Person, and not, with God? for the word of God is living,¹⁰ and there denotes something distinct from God. Why should he also have dragged in the saying about robbery? What suspicion of robbery could there be in one who is the same being, the same Nature: for Paul would

Their argument is turned the other way in many ways.

¹ John v, 27.

² John i, 1, 3.

³ Acts vii, 55, 56.

⁴ Eph. i, 22, 23.

⁵ Jer. xxx, 21.

⁶ John iii, 35; xiii, 3.

⁷ Luke xxii, 69.

⁸ Eph. i, 21.

⁹ Dan. vii, 13, 14.

¹⁰ Heb. iv, 12.

have been speaking foolishly. Again, who does not see that the word, *thought*,¹ is altogether human? Who does not see that it is blasphemy for the sentence of robbery to be passed on the *beings*? Again, hear how he says, existing *in the form of God*.² How could he have said that the second Person had the appearance of Deity if it is itself a deity, and that by Nature, if it is God quite as properly, and as much by Nature, as the first Person? Paul spoke absurdly. He who said that the Father was greater than himself spoke falsely; for, to speak without caviling, the *being greater* is there spoken of with regard to the Son, as is evident from the word, *Father*, and from the related word, *I*. You ought
 19b also, if there is a Metaphysical equality, as readily and as properly to admit that the first Person is the Father of God, and is equal to the Son, as you would the reverse, which, however, the Scripture shrinks from saying. Again, consider the words of Paul which follow: *Wherefore God highly exalted him*; ³ for the reference is to the one who "thought." Was the second Person, then, so greatly exalted because it humbled itself? For I deem it ridiculous to say that the Nature of God humbles itself. Again, as I have said, taking into account Paul's aim, the blindness of Theophylact ⁴ is mitigated; for Paul is here treating not of CHRIST's Nature, but of his appearance. How, then, can the equality of his Nature be inferred from this passage? Again, take here the word *ἴσα*,⁵ used in the Greek in place of the adverb, *equally*; for the expression, *equally*, denotes not his nature but ⁶ his station; and he could pronounce himself on an equality with God in power, who promises that he can do all things soever that the Father does.⁶

27. The unmistakable explanation of the truth is this: that though existing in the likeness of God, having the power of God, he did not deem it robbery to be on an equality with God, did not think that he should use this power of God by way of robbery. For it really would have been robbery, had he violently

¹ Phil. ii, 6, "thought it not robbery."

² Phil. ii, 6.

³ Phil. ii, 9.

⁴ Comment. in Ep. ad Phil. ii, 9 (MPG. cxxiv, 1166).

⁵ *Isa.*, equal.

⁶ Matt. xi, 27; John iii, 35; v, 19; xiii, 3.

withdrawn from the work to which the Father had appointed him, or had he seized for himself a kingly tyranny over this world. And this is the proper meaning of the word *ἁρπαγμός*.¹ For CHRIST never cared to plunder, never violently robbed any one of anything. This idea is made clear by the Greek article, *τό*,² as if to say, the very fact that he was on an equality with God. As to this equality with God in him, he did not think that it constituted robbery. Nor does Paul, as some most groundlessly suppose, treat the word, *on an equality*, as of capital importance. But he brings this in by way of a consequence from his likeness to deity, for he says that he existed in the likeness of God. He did not think that *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ*³ — did not think that that was a question of equality, did not think that the equality (which, that is to say, he had when existing in the form of God) constituted robbery. And this meaning is clear from the passage above quoted,⁴ nor can any other equality be treated of here than is treated of there. For when his equality with God was being treated of there, CHRIST did not deny it. Indeed, he showed that it was actually in him, although he did not use it, as a tyrant or a giant, by way of robbery, but bore himself humbly, in the servile fashion of man, becoming obedient even unto death.⁵ When it is said that he took the form or appearance of a servant, he says this in order to mark a distinction from the form of God of which he had been speaking; for the word *μορφή*⁶ is used in both clauses, and he spoke on purpose to express greater humility. For though he possessed both appearances, he used the humbler; not the appearance and might of God, but as one among men. And he is said to have been *found in fashion as a man*;⁷ even as the Psalmist says, Ye shall die as men, though ye be gods.⁸ And Sampson, because he was very strong, as though he were not a man, but more than a man, said, I shall then be weak, as men are.⁹ These are all the passages of

¹ *Harpagmos*, robbery.

² In the Greek quoted just below.

³ *To einai isa theo*, the being on an equality with God.

⁴ John v, 19-23, in paragraph 23.

⁵ Phil. ii, 7, 8.

⁶ Phil. ii, 8.

⁷ Judges xvi, 7.

⁶ *Morphe*, form.

⁸ Ps. lxxxii, 6, 7.

Scripture that speak of equality, far removed from the disputes of our age; and the question as to equality or inequality of Nature was unknown to the Apostles.

28. Yet some reason out an equality of Nature, because it says, using the same word, *The Lord said unto my Lord*.¹ But they should be pardoned, for not knowing the original language of Holy Scripture they know not their own selves. Yet you, if you know Hebrew, will find the prophet saying, *נאם ייחא לאדני*.² It obviously also says of CHRIST *Adon*.³ And this prophecy about sitting on the right hand is fulfilled in CHRIST, as is shown in the tenth of Hebrews.⁴ Nevertheless the philosophers invent other sittings in the eternities of the ages. Again, this is known of itself from the words of CHRIST, nor does he make a point of applying the name *ייחא* to himself; for in that case it would have been easy for the Jews to reply to him.

Ignorance of the divine names deceives the philosophers.

21a 29. To sum up, that you may know the trend of my thought: I say that with the single exception of the passage in John,⁵ all the Scriptures from first to last speak of the man CHRIST himself; and the passage in John speaks not of what is but of what was; and the mistake lies in not understanding *what* that was, and how it became flesh. And let not your fancies lead you astray, but lay this up in your inmost hearts: that in all the Scriptures the man CHRIST himself is speaking, and let your thoughts be ever directed to him. Pray God to grant you a cheerful mind to hear, and I will (without any pettifogging, hair-splitting, or equivocation) render the Scriptures as plain to you as day, and will place God himself before your eyes, provided that you always look upon the face of CHRIST.

There is in the Gospel not one letter which speaks of the Mathematical Son.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

30. The philosophers have invented besides a third separate being, truly and really distinct from the other two, which they call the third Person, or the Holy Spirit; and thus they have contrived an imaginary Trinity, three beings in one Nature. But in

¹ Ps. cx, 1.

² *ibid.*, *Naam Jehovah leadonai*, Jehovah said unto my Lord.

³ Heb., Lord; Mal. iii, 1.

⁴ Heb. x, 12; cf. Mark xvi, 19.

⁵ Jehovah.

⁶ John i, 1.

reality three beings, three Gods, or one threefold God, are foisted upon us under the pretense and with the names of a unity. On this matter hear the view of recent writers which John Major states in his *Sentences*.¹ For with them it is very easy, taking the words in their strict sense, for three beings to exist which they say are strictly, simply, truly and really so different or distinct that one is born of another, and one is breathed out by the others, and all these three are shut up in one jar. I, however, since I am unwilling to misuse the word Persons, shall call them the first *being*, the second being, the third being;² for in the Scriptures I find no other name for them, and what is properly to be thought of the Persons I shall say later on.³ Admitting, therefore, these three, which after their own fashion they call Persons, by reasoning from the lower to the higher they freely admit a plurality of beings, a plurality of entities, a plurality of Essences, a plurality of *Ousias*,⁴ and in consequence, taking the word, *God*, strictly, they will have a plurality of Gods. 21b

31. If this is so, why are the Tritoitcs⁵ blamed, who say that there are three Gods? For they also contrive three Gods, or one threefold one. These three Gods of theirs form one composite *Ousia*; and although some will not use a word implying that the three have been put together,⁶ yet they do use a word implying that they are constituted together,⁶ and that God is constituted out of the three beings. It is clear, therefore, that we are Tritoitcs, and we have a threefold God: we have become Atheists, that is, men without any God. For as soon as we try to think

¹ Book I, dist. v, solution of the 6th argument.

² See note 12, par. 3.

³ Paragraph 51.

⁴ Greek for Latin *essentia*.

⁵ The word *Tritoitcs* has been the occasion of much discussion. The counterfeit reprint of this work uniformly replaces it by *Tritheitcs*, as though a misprint; but that Servetus used the term deliberately is shown by the fact that it repeatedly occurs, both in this work (above, and in paragraphs 50, 55) and in his *Christianismi Restitutio* (pp. 30, 108, 394, 406). It has generally been inferred from the context that it means tritheists; and a precisely contemporary work, Sebastian Franck's *Chronica*, Argentorati, 1531, p. ccccxviiib, defines it thus: Tritoitc oder Tricolite, die gleich wie sy drey person in der Trifeltigkeyt zulassen, also auch drey götter. But if etymology has any bearing (Greek *tritos*, third), it should mean worshipers of the third Person. The term with this meaning would involve tritheism, though not expressly charging it. Servetus seriously objected to the worship of the Holy Spirit, as this part of his work shows.

⁶ *Compositionis verbo . . . constitutionis verbo*. cf. paragraph 57.

22a about God, we are turned aside to three phantoms, so that no kind of unity remains in our conception. But what else is being without God but being unable to think about God, when there is always presented to our understanding a haunting kind of confusion of three beings, by which we are forever deluded into supposing that we are thinking about God. And see how manfully they defend the one God. For even if they admitted a downright and absolute plurality of Beings and Entities, and consequently a plurality of absolute Gods, yet they have one connotative God. For they say (to refer to the passage cited above) ¹ that these words, as they use, or rather misuse, them, are not taken in the strict sense, but in a sort of artificial, sophistical, and connotative way. They seem to be living in another world while they dream of such things; for the kingdom of heaven knows none of this nonsense, and it is in another way, unknown to them, that Scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit.

32. But since this matter requires more thorough investigation, let it be reserved for the following books.² For indeed Scripture treats strangely and almost incomprehensibly of this matter, especially for those who are not acquainted with its peculiar habit of speaking. For by Holy Spirit it means now God himself, now an angel, now the spirit of a man, a sort of instinct or divine inspiration of the mind, a mental impulse, or a breath; although sometimes a difference is marked between breath and Spirit. And some would have the Holy Spirit mean nothing other than the right understanding and reason of man.

22b And with the Hebrews רוח ³ means nothing other than breath, or breathing, which is expressed indifferently as wind and spirit; and with the Greeks πνεῦμα ⁴ is taken for any spirit or mental impulse whatsoever. Nor is it any objection that a spirit is called holy; for all these operations of the mind, when they concern the religion of CHRIST, are called holy, and sacred to God, since *no man can say, JESUS is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.*⁵

33. It remains to reply to certain passages of Scripture from which the Moderns suppose that the three beings can be de-

¹ i. e., from John Major, in paragraph 29.

² Books IV and VII.

³ *Ruach*, spirit.

⁴ *Pneuma*, spirit.

⁵ I. Cor. xii, 3.

duced: as, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.*¹ But in order to give this a more satisfactory answer, I shall reply first to two other passages of Scripture, which they also bring forward to prove this matter: *I and the Father are one*, and, *The Father is in me, and I in the Father.*² The first passage Augustine brings forward against Arius, because he said, *one*; and against Sabellius, because he said, *are*.³ And from this he argues the two beings as against Sabellius, and one Nature as against Arius. Yet I think that the words make simpler sense, for CHRIST is speaking, and he said, *are*; because, being God and man, he said, *one* in the neuter, as Tertullian says,⁴ and he did not say, *one* in the masculine. For the meaning of *one* in the masculine singular seems to be as if it denoted the singleness of one and the same being. But *one* in the neuter has reference not to singleness, but to oneness of mind, and harmony, so that the two might be credited with one power. And this is what the earlier writers rightly called one *ousia*, because there is one authority given by the Father to the Son. But later writers made a most wicked jest of the word *homousion*,⁵ as well as of *hypostasis*,⁶ and Persons, making Nature out of *ousia*, not only contrary to the proper meaning of the word, but contrary to all passages of Scripture in which that word is found. For in John and Matthew,⁷ and wherever Christ speaks of the authority given him of the Father, the expression *ousia* is used, which to the Greeks signifies not Nature, but wealth, treasures, possessions, riches, and power, which are all in CHRIST in rich measure; and he has one authority, one sympathy and will, with the Father. And both *unum* ⁸ for the Latins and *ἓν* ⁹ for the Greeks include those that are of one mind, are alike, and all mind the same

¹ I. John v, 7 (Vulg.).

² John x, 30; xiv, 10, 11.

³ In Joannis Evang., Tract. lxxi (MPL. xxxv, 182; NPNF. ser. i, vii, 328; Dods, xi, 261).

⁴ Adv. Praxean xxv (MPL. ii, 188; ANF. iii, 621; ANCL. xv, 391).

⁵ Of the same substance.

⁶ Substance, also Person.

⁷ John xvii, 2; Matt. xxviii, 18 (the word actually used in these passages is not *οὐσία*, but *ἰξουσία*).

⁸ One (n.).

⁹ One (n.).

23b thing; and to take *unum* in the Scriptures for one Nature is more Metaphysical than Christian; nay, it is foreign to the Scriptures. Greece never knew of *év* being taken for one Nature. Should you say, Why, then, do the Greek doctors take it so? let Basil the Great reply to this, where he says ¹ that this is not in accordance with the proper meaning of the word, but is philosophical reasoning. We ought therefore to get at the interpretation of the word either from its proper meaning, or from other passages of Scripture. But you will nowhere find that *unum* in the Scriptures means the Metaphysical unity of nature; indeed, quite the contrary, as appears from the words of CHRIST his own self, who like a faithful teacher explains himself where he prays the Father for the Apostles, *that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us . . . and that they may be one, even as we also are one.*² Repeating the word again and again, he prays that they may be one (*unum*). Does it then follow that we, who are one in the same way as they, constitute one Nature? Of course we are one, since we are of one mind, *keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*³ Again, *I will give them one heart and one way;*⁴ and, *The multitude of them that believed had one heart and one soul.*⁵ And along with understanding this saying, Origen would have another saying expressly understood: The Father and the Son, he says, are one, for it is evident that they are two beings in Substance, but one in sympathy and harmony, and in identity of will.⁶

34. There seems to be a similar thought in Cyprian;⁸ and Paul concludes from our unity of faith that we are one;⁹ and, 24a *He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit* with him.¹⁰ Yet he never thought of one Nature. Nay, even had he said, I and the Father are not two, but one, you would draw no conclusion from it; for Man and Woman are *not two, but one flesh;*¹¹ yet one does

Erasmus also explains it thus in his Notes.⁷

¹ Adv. Eunomium, IV (MPG. xxix, 679).

² John xvii, 21, 22.

³ Eph. iv, 3.

⁴ Jer. xxxii, 39.

⁵ Acts iv, 32.

⁶ Contra Celsum, VIII. xii (MPG. xi, 1534; ANF. iv, 643 f.; ANCL. xxiii, 500), where he explains John x, 30 in the light of these texts.

⁷ Paraphrases in N. T., ad loc.

⁸ Ep. ad Magnum, v (MPL. iii, 1141; ANF. v, 398; ANCL. viii, 306).

⁹ Gal. iii, 26, 28.

¹⁰ I. Cor. vi, 17.

¹¹ Matt. xix, 6.

not reason from this that they have one Nature. If you say it is not necessary that in that passage ¹ there be all manner of likeness, because the Apostles are as properly said to be one as the Son and the Father are one; in this you say well that there is not *all manner*, but you assume that there is *none*, whereas there is *some*. And that there is not all manner of likeness is undoubted, for he alone is in the bosom of the Father, he has one power together with the Father, has the same deity and authority. Hence he is said to be one with the Father in a far higher way, especially in those writers who understand the mystery of the Word; yet it does not therefore follow that you may argue from this the mathematical unity of nature, for that is a philosophical fancy, standing much by itself, and it is not set forth in the sacred records. Moreover, in that case, CHRIST's comparison would be inappropriate and irrelevant [if he meant] that we may be one Nature, and that we may be harmonious, when he says, *May be One, even as we are one*. Again, you will grasp CHRIST's meaning from another angle, if you do not take the words raw and undigested, but note the order and cause of what he says; for CHRIST added that he was one with the Father for the purpose of proving that no one can snatch his sheep out of his hand, because the Father hath given them to him.² And if no one can snatch them out of the hand of the Father, it follows that no one will be able to snatch them out of his own hand; since he and the Father are one power, and he holds them by the Father's consent. 24b

35. As a result of this, another passage is explained: The Father is in me, and I in the Father,³ and yet they are deluded about this. For Hilary says ⁴ that the nature of the human intelligence does not grasp the reason of this saying, and he concludes proportionably that some beings exist in other beings, that single beings exist in single beings, the first in the third, and the third in the second, and conversely. But one must wonder why he permits himself to be set at odds with his own good sense, and

¹ John xvii, 21.

² John x, 28, 29.

³ John xiv, 11.

⁴ Hilary of Poitiers, De Trinitate, III (Servetus says IV), 1 (MPL. x, 76; NPNF., Ser. ii, ix, 62).

pays no regard to the Master's explanation. It is a sheer waste of breath to call CHRIST master, if we pay no attention to his explanations. For in the same chapter CHRIST says to the Apostles, *I am in my Father, ye in me, and I in you.*¹ Yet the Apostles are not with CHRIST in the sense of being crowded into one Nature. Again, what is more, in that and the following chapter CHRIST explains himself by saying that he is in us when we keep his words;² and he is in the Father because he keeps his commands and loves him.³ Again, what is yet more, in this chapter and the tenth he infers from the fact that he does the works of the Father that he is in the Father, saying, *Believe me*⁴ *for the very works' sake . . . that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.*⁵ Let Hilary consider what the Master's way of reasoning was, how from his works CHRIST infers the Metaphysics of the Natures, or the inherent existence of the beings in one Nature. Also in the chapter cited above CHRIST explains himself; and he is said to be in the Father in almost the same way in which he had said that he was one with the Father; for he says, *Even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us, and, That the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them.*⁶ And, CHRIST abideth in us, and we in him.⁷ And from faith and love the conclusion is that CHRIST is in us.⁸ And from love the inference is that we are in him;⁹ and, *He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him.*¹⁰

36. From this point on the main question is easily settled. In the first place, the Father testifies: *The Father that hath sent me, he beareth witness of me;*¹¹ for he testifies, saying, *This is my beloved Son.*¹² In the second place, the Word testifies; for the very language of CHRIST makes it plain enough that he is from God, as he witnesses concerning himself. From his words it is seen above all how great he is, although the world to-day makes

¹ John xiv, 20.

² John xv, 10.

³ John xvii, 21, 26.

⁴ Eph. iii, 17.

⁵ I. John iii, 24.

⁶ Matt. iii, 17.

⁷ John xiv, 23; xv, 7.

⁸ John xiv, 11; x, 38.

⁹ John vi, 56.

¹⁰ I. John ii, 24.

¹¹ John v, 37.

CHRIST's words trifling and ineffectual. But when the spirit is given they will be found to be full of life. In the third place, the Holy Spirit testifies; but as to what this is, I say nothing here, meaning to set it forth in the following Book.¹ You shall also 25b see what else can be understood by the Paraclete. For the present I say as CHRIST explains: For while I am present, the language that you have heard, or the words that I speak, bear testimony;² afterwards, when ye are clothed with power from on high, as Luke says,³ ye shall bear witness; and when this power had been received through the Spirit coming upon them, he commanded them to bear witness.⁴ And this is the witness of the Holy Spirit, even as Paul calls the witness of his conscience the witness of the Holy Spirit.⁵ And these three are one, as has been explained above.⁶ And the *Glossa Ordinaria* itself explains: *Are one*; that is, bearing witness of the same thing.⁷ For John's intention is to show the force of the truth from the agreement of the witnesses; because their testimonies do not waver or vary so that they can be objected to by some exception taken, as often happens in the case of different witnesses in law. Besides, a note on Matthew xvii, 3 says, You may see Moses and Elijah talking with JESUS; for the Law and the Prophets and JESUS say one thing and agree together.⁸ Thus three testify there to the Word itself: CHRIST himself, and Moses, that is, the Law given by the Father, and Elijah, that is, the spirit of the Prophets; because *the testimony of JESUS is the spirit of prophecy*.⁹ And these three are one, and between them there is the most complete harmony of thought. Again, an explanation is found in the words 26a of the Master, who cites three witnesses:¹⁰ firstly, the witness of the Spirit, for John bore witness when the Spirit descended; secondly, his own witness, for the works that he does bear wit-

¹ Book II, paragraph 21 ff.

² John xiv, 25, 26; xv, 26.

³ Luke xxiv, 49.

⁴ Acts i, 8.

⁵ Rom. ix, 1.

⁶ Paragraphs 33-35.

⁷ The *Glossa Ordinaria* of Walafrid Strabo served the West for five centuries as the chief source of biblical learning. (MPL. cxiv, 702 f.)

⁸ Strabo, op. cit. (MPL. cxiv, 144).

⁹ Rev. xix, 10.

¹⁰ John v, 33, 36, 37.

ness; thirdly, he adduces the witness of the Father who bears witness; and these three agree.

37. We can now turn their argument the other way, showing that the saying in John can not be taken in their sense, since it is counter to his whole design and intention; for it is evident that it is there a question not of the nature of the three beings, but of the credibility and agreement of the testimony. Again, see for what purpose he introduces these testimonies; observe in what direction John's proof tends. For he is not aiming to derive one Idea from another, or to prove that the second being is the offspring of the first. But he is proving that the JESUS of Nazareth whom his eyes have seen, and his hands have touched, is the Son of God, and not the son of Joseph. And he exhorts us to believe this, as we strictly hold it. And he that does not so believe is no Christian; he that does not so believe is not founded upon the rock: *Thou art the CHRIST, the Son of the living God.*¹ For this is the rock (*petra*) from which he was named Peter (*Petrus*), the rock on which Peter was the first to be founded. To believe that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God is the foundation of the Church.

Peter was the first stone, because he more firmly and earlier than the others believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

26b This is the corner-stone upon which the whole building groweth unto the building up of the body of CHRIST, which is the Church.² You will say, CHRIST himself is the corner-stone; but what, pray, is CHRIST in us, but to believe that he is the Son of God? For CHRIST dwells in our hearts through faith.³ It is an idle thing to say that CHRIST is of himself the rock, if you destroy that which builds us upon the rock.

38. A second authority which, according to Peter Lombard,⁴ very evidently supports the Trinity is, *Of him, through him, and in him are all things.*⁵ For Augustine⁶ explains this as referring to the three beings: *of him*, referring to the first; *through him*, to the second; *in him*, to the third. But I do not believe that Paul, had he been questioned about this, would philosophize thus; for this would be contrary to his wont; and it would be irrelevant for him to treat of these things in that connection. For he is

¹ Matt. xvi, 16.

² Eph. ii, 20, 21; iv, 12; Col. i, 24.

³ Eph. iii, 17.

⁴ Sent. I, dist. ii, cap. v.

⁵ Rom. xi, 36.

⁶ De Trinitate I (Servetus wrongly cites II), vi, 12 (MPL. xlii, 827; NPNF. ser. i. iii, 22; Dods, vii, 12).

merely exclaiming at the depth [of the riches] of God the Father; and all the philosophy that can there be inferred is in the phrase, *through him*. For when in another place he says, *through the Word*,¹ and here, *through him*, it implied that all things that God made through the Word he made through him; and of this Irenaeus also bears witness.² The following Book,³ therefore, will show that, according to him, this passage makes against them. And Paul here means nothing else than to commend the manifold *dispositions* ^{27a} of God, and the greatness of his power, as when he says he is over all, through all, and in all.⁵ And that the more because the Apostle is also, in this triple phrase, not including the third Person. *There is*, he says, *one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord JESUS CHRIST, through whom are all things, and we through him*.⁶ Here are the three phrases: *of him*, *through him*, and *in him*, whereas he makes no mention of a third Person. And again the Apostle says of the Son alone, *All things have been created through him, and in him*.⁷

39. Moreover, Jerome reasons to the three beings from the three measures of meal.⁸ But it is exceedingly silly, and savors somewhat of Plato, to reason to numbers in beings from parables and numbers of words. If such reasoning is allowed us, why are Marcus Calarbasus⁹ and his like blamed, who from parables, from the letters and numbers of the words of Holy Writ, reason to ternions, quaternions, and octonarions, and in like manner reason out a Demiurge, a Bythos, a Pleroma, and in fine the various Aeons? Only in name do the latter seem to differ from the former; and even as they declare that some beings arise from others as a result of the laughter and the tears of the

¹ Rom. x, 17.

² Adv. Haereses, IV. xx, 4 (MPG. vii, 1034; ANF. i, 488; ANCL. v, 441).

³ Book II, paragraphs 5 and 7.

⁴ See note 2, paragraph 41.

⁵ Eph. iv, 6.

⁶ I. Cor. viii, 6.

⁷ Col. i, 16 (Vulg.).

⁸ Comment. in Matt. xiii, 33. (MPL. xxvi, 91.)

⁹ Colarbasus, or Colorbasus (Servetus spells, Calarbasus), is a supposed Valentinian Gnostic of the second century, referred to by Irenaeus, *Contra Haer.* I. xii. Marcus was his follower (ib. xiii-xvi). Unless a comma has dropped out from between the names, Servetus fuses the two, mistaking them for a single individual.

27b Aeons, so we say that the first being produces the second by being aware of itself, and that these two by loving each other breathe forth the third. Pray, where in the Scriptures did you read of these marvelous things? And beyond these, we add this the most dreadful thing of all: that these three beings, that so differ one from another, are yet one and the same being.

40. Furthermore, Lombard says ¹ that almost every separate syllable of the New Testament agrees in suggesting this Trinity. But to me not merely the syllables, but all the letters, and the mouths of babes and sucklings, nay the very stones, cry out, One God the Father, and his CHRIST the Lord JESUS; *for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man CHRIST JESUS*; ² and, *To us there is one God, who is the Father, . . . and one Lord, JESUS CHRIST*.³ John also, to whom the heavens were opened in the Apocalypse, saw only God the Father, and his CHRIST, and only God and the Lamb are there praised.⁴ Again, Stephen, when the heavens were opened, *saw the glory of God, and JESUS standing on his right hand*,⁵ yet he saw no third Person. And, *One is your Father*, and, *One is your Master, even the CHRIST*; ⁶ and, *I am not alone, but I and the Father*.⁷ These words of CHRIST, uttered with such emphasis, often pierce to my very vitals. *I am not alone*, he says, *because the Father is with me*; ⁸ and, *They have not known the Father, nor me*; ⁹ and *That they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send*,
28a *even JESUS CHRIST*.¹⁰ He did not also command us to worship a third being, but the Father and himself, and the Father in his name.¹¹ Likewise, when he said, *No one knoweth the Father, save the Son; nor the Son, save the Father*,¹² was the third being asleep, or had it no knowledge of these? And John desires us to have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, JESUS CHRIST; ¹³ yet of fellowship with the third being he does not speak. And Paul says, *I charge thee in the sight of God, and the Lord JESUS*

¹ Sent. I, dist. ii, cap. v.

² I. Cor. viii, 6.

³ Acts. vii, 55, 56.

⁴ John viii, 16.

⁵ John xvi, 3.

⁶ John xvi, 23.

⁷ I. John i, 3.

⁸ I. Tim. ii, 5.

⁹ Rev. xxi, 22; v, 12, 13; vii, 10.

¹⁰ Matt. xxiii, 9, 10.

¹¹ John xvi, 32.

¹² John xvii, 3.

¹³ Matt. xi, 27.

CHRIST, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice.¹ Mark that Paul's solemn protestation is made before God, CHRIST, and the angels, and not before the third being. Likewise, *I will confess his name*, says CHRIST, *before my Father, and before angels.*² Mark the grave affront to the third being, in that CHRIST says, *before angels*, and not, *before it*. Likewise he makes mention of himself alone, and the Father, and the angels;³ and John desires for us grace and peace from Almighty God, *and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne, and from JESUS CHRIST, who is the faithful witness*;⁴ yet from the third being he desires nothing for us. And Paul in all his epistles says, *God the Father, and the Lord JESUS CHRIST; from God the Father, and the Lord JESUS CHRIST.*⁵ And in the Scriptures there is frequent mention of the existence of God the Father, and of the Son, and of seeing and praying to them; but of the Holy Spirit no mention is made, except where it speaks about doing something, as by a sort of casual statement; which is noteworthy, as though the Holy Spirit denoted not a separate being, but an activity of God, a kind of in-working or in-breathing of the power of God. 28b

41. Lombard, following others, establishes his triad of beings by the passage: *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob.*⁶ If they were speaking of the Trinity in the proper sense, it might be let pass, even if this passage does not prove it. But it is proved by the passage, *Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*⁷ In the name of the Father, because he is the prime, true, and original source of every gift.⁸ In the name of JESUS CHRIST, because through him we have the reconciliation of this gift, *neither is there any other name under heaven wherein we must be saved.*⁹ And in the name of the Holy

¹ I. Tim. (Servetus says I. John) v, 21.

² Rev. iii, 5.

³ Mark viii, 38; Luke ix, 26; xii, 8, 9.

⁴ Rev. i, 4, 5.

⁵ So in the greeting prefixed to each epistle, from Romans to Philemon.

⁶ Ex. iii, 6. cf. Lombard, Sent. I, dist. xxxiv, cap. ii.

⁷ Matt. xxviii, 19.

⁸ James i, 17.

⁹ Acts iv, 12.

29a

Spirit, because all that are baptized in that name receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Just as we say, in the name of his Imperial Majesty, in the name of the glory of God. And Peter, in the Clementine Recognitions,¹ speaks not of three equal beings, but of a threefold invocation of the divine name. Because there are three wonderful *dispositions*² of God, in each of which his divinity shines forth; and from this you might very well understand a Trinity. For the Father is the whole substance and the one God from whom these degrees and personations proceed. And they are three, not by virtue of some distinction of beings in God, but through an *οικονομία*³ of God in various forms of Deity; for the same divinity which is in the Father is communicated to the Son, JESUS CHRIST, and to our spirits, which are the temples of the living God; for the Son and our sanctified spirits are sharers with us in the Substance of the Father, are its members, pledges, and instruments; although the kind of deity in them is varying, and this is why they are called distinct Persons, that is, manifold aspects, diverse forms and kinds, of deity. Nor are the older traditions of the Apostles at variance with his view; on the contrary, they agree with it. Now as for the reason: that the three beings are not denoted in it is proved by the fact that when God spoke to Jacob he said, *I am the God of thy father Abraham and Isaac*.⁴ Yet you can not from this infer two phil-

They say that to-day the Essence is communicable to the three beings.

¹ II. xlii (MPG. i, 1268 f.; ANF. viii, 108 f.; ANCL. iii, 220).

² *Dispositiones*. This term gives the key to Servetus's explanation of the Trinity. It is taken as the equivalent of the Greek *οικονομία* (*oikonomia*), and may be variously translated economy, management, disposition, dispensation, distribution, division, arrangement, modification; though perhaps aspects suggests the author's thought as well as anything. The idea is that God disposes or manages himself in three different ways for three different forms of his activity. Servetus has evidently taken his view from Tertullian, Adv. Praxean, ii, iii (MPL. ii, 156-159; ANF. iii, 598 f.; ANCL. xv, 335-339). The annotator of the Latin version of Irenaeus, Adv. Haer., I. vi (MPG. vii, 503) remarks: "*A dispositione*." So the translator is wont to render the Greek word *οικονομία*, . . . but I could wish that he had agreed with the other Latin writers in translating it *dispensatio*; for this word denotes what the Savior did upon earth to procure the salvation of the human race, of which the incarnation is the source and beginning, which the Greeks express by the one word *οικονομία*, and the Latins by *dispensatio*." Cf. Book II, paragraph 5.

³ *Oikonomia*, disposition, or dispensation.

⁴ Gen. xxviii, 13; cf. xxxii, 9.

osophical terms. And when he spoke to Isaac, he said, *I am the God of thy father Abraham.*¹ Again, if the three beings are understood there, how will the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob be called the Father of JESUS CHRIST? ² Is the imaginary Trinity called the Father of JESUS CHRIST? For as the first Person begot this man, so also did the second; and thus we shall be admitting that the Son of God is the Father of JESUS CHRIST! 29b

42. Rejecting these things, then, let us understand that God is here seeking to keep the Jews from believing in more than one God, for to this belief they were prone (even as we ourselves also to-day); and the Jews were wont to multiply their gods in proportion to the number of their cities: *According to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah.*³ And God, taking care lest they multiply their gods in proportion to the number of the ages or generations of men, in the belief that there had been one God of Abraham, another God of Isaac, another God of Jacob, declared that he was the same God of them all, as he shows by the words which he spoke before, saying, *I am the God of thy fathers.*⁴ And so he is wont to say, *I am the God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of Ur of the Chaldees.*⁵ And he says that it is he that appeared to the others: *I am God,* he says, *who appeared unto Abraham himself, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob.*⁶ And, *I am he, I am the first, I am the last.*⁷

43. The second explanation, which is gathered from the words of the Master,⁸ is also agreeable to the first; because he said that he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in this respect: that he shows himself the God not only of present men, but also of those that have passed away. For from this saying CHRIST proves the resurrection; for if he is the God of those that have passed away, it follows that they are all living.⁹ And in view of this, consider what deep meaning lies hid in the words of 30a

¹ Gen. xxvi, 24.

² Jer. ii, 28; xi, 13.

³ Gen. xv, 7; Lev. xix, 36, etc.

⁴ Ex. vi, 3.

⁵ i. e., Peter Lombard. cf. paragraph 41.

⁶ Luke xx, 37, 38.

⁷ Acts iii, 13.

⁸ Acts vii, 32.

⁹ Isa. xlviii, 12.

the law, even though the literal sense seem to be plain. Here the Master gives us a wonderful doctrine, to which if you give heed, I will below clearly prove CHRIST to you from the law. Besides, the argument, according to their interpretations, can, if you weigh it quite correctly, be turned the other way; nor does the nature of the Holy Spirit denote a third being, for there it is an appearance of fire, which they say belongs to the nature of the Holy Spirit, as does also the appearance of a dove.¹ Yet hear the voice: *Thou art my beloved Son*; ² *I am the God of thy fathers*.³ These words are not suited to a third distinct being. Likewise, just as it is written, *The Holy Spirit spoke*,⁴ so also, God spake by the mouth of his saints and prophets.⁵ Not, therefore, to a distinct being, but to God himself, can those things which belong to the nature of the Holy Spirit be ascribed as accidents;⁶ for God is a spirit,⁷ and, *I, who sanctify you, am holy*.⁸ Nor is the term *paraclete* a special name of the third being, for Christ himself is called a paraclete.⁹ And when it speaks of another paraclete¹⁰ than CHRIST, CHRIST himself is also indicated there as a paraclete; and he said, *another*, for the reason that then, while hearing him daily, they were being comforted by the Word itself, by CHRIST himself, and he himself was protecting them. But afterwards they will have protection not from the very presence of the Word, but of the Spirit; and they will be comforted by the Spirit through the truth revealed to them. Besides, it is not the third being, but God, that anointed us.¹¹ And that the Spirit of God abides in you¹² means nothing else than that the anointing which you received from him abides in you, and is that which teaches you concerning all things.¹³ And to receive the Holy Spirit means nothing else than that when the heavenly messenger comes upon you, you shall receive power from on high.¹⁴ And that this power is not a separate being is proved by

¹ Matt. iii, 16; Luke iii, 22.² Mark i, 11.³ Acts vii, 32.⁴ Acts xxviii, 25.⁵ Acts iii, 21; cf. Heb. i, 1.⁶ i. e., in the logical sense of the term.⁷ John iv, 24.⁸ Lev. xxi, 8.⁹ Advocate. I. John ii, 1.¹⁰ John xiv, 16.¹¹ II. Cor. i, 21.¹² Rom. viii, 9; I. Cor. iii, 16.¹³ I. Cor. ii, 10, 13; John xiv, 26.¹⁴ Luke xxiv, 49; Acts i, 8.

the texts in which JESUS perceived in himself that power had gone out of him.¹ Say, if you can, what is the entity, or being, which is said to have gone forth from him; for in like manner I shall speak of another heavenly power. Again, that the Holy Spirit can not absolutely denote a third being, but that it is spoken of by way of an accident,² is proved by the fact that the Holy Spirit is said to be increased or diminished: *The Lord said unto Moses, I will take away from thy spirit*; and again, *Taking away from the spirit that was upon Moses, and putting it upon the seventy men*.³ And, *Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me*.⁴ Again, because *God giveth not the Spirit by measure*; ⁵ and, *The spirit of God was in Daniel in fuller measure than in the others*.⁶ Again, what does it mean that the Apostles were so often filled with the Holy Spirit? ⁷ Did the third being come to them many times, uniting itself to them in the flesh? Verily, it means nothing else than that the Apostles, as they listened, grew fervent, and reasoned with and exhorted the Pharisees with the utmost warmth of faith and love. And that John was filled with the Holy Spirit, even from the womb,⁸ means nothing else than that the babe leaped in the mother's womb ⁹ by divine power. Nor can you infer that the third being was in that way united with him; for this is worse than carnal and profane; and by parity of reasoning you would conclude that the spirit of Elijah was united with him, because it says that he came with the spirit and power of Elijah.¹⁰ Again, what does it mean, pray tell, to grieve the Holy Spirit;¹¹ and, *The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*?¹² Does the third being suffer grief? Again, to give the Spirit shows that this means just what it says: I will give them a new heart and a new spirit,¹³ and he giveth us understanding.¹⁴ And, as John says, *He hath given us a mind, that we may know him*;¹⁵ even as also to Solomon there was given a wise

31a

¹ Mark v, 30; Luke viii, 46.² Num. xi, 16, 17, 25 (Vulg.).³ John iii, 34.⁴ Acts ii, 4; iv, 8.⁵ Luke i, 41.⁶ Eph. iv, 30.⁷ Ezek. xviii, 31; xxxvi, 26.⁸ I. John v, 20.⁹ In the logical sense of the term.¹⁰ II. Kings ii, 9.¹¹ Dan. vi, 3 (Vulg.).¹² Luke i, 15.¹³ Luke i, 17.¹⁴ I. Cor. xiv, 32.¹⁵ Ps. xxxii, 8 (Vulg.).

heart,¹ and there is given *the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of knowledge, and of piety.*² But why, as a result of this, the holy Spirit of God is said to be in us, I shall say in what follows. For the present, observe that it belongs to God, and by antonomasia³ it becomes him to be wise, just as it does to be powerful, just, and merciful. Hence God, by sharing those gifts with us, is said to give us his Spirit; for those virtues are often
 31b called copies, because just as their *idēa*⁴ shines forth in God, so when they shine forth in us, a copy of God, or his Holy Spirit, is said to be in us. And not only when such gifts are given, but for the mere reason that he gives the breath of life, he is said to give us his Spirit.⁵ Again, that the Holy Spirit is not a distinct being is proved by the fact that it is called the Spirit of CHRIST,⁶ and the Spirit of the Son.⁷ Likewise, *The Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of his. . . . But if the Spirit of him (that is, of the Father) that raised up JESUS,*⁸ etc. And because of these words Hilary says that by the Holy Spirit is meant now the Father, now the Son, now a third being,⁹ and consequently these names of three beings are confused among them.

44. There are other grounds on which many say that the Trinity is also established by logical proof, or by demonstration. Thus from the very nature of love Richard by an evident demonstration draws the conclusion that there can not but be a plurality in God.¹⁰ For if there is affection, it is directed toward another, that is, toward the Son. And if there is affection, then the affection itself is something, hence there is a third Person. Like-
 32a wise Henry of Ghent, reasoning by analogy,¹¹ draws the conclusion from any begetting whatever here below that there must needs be begettings among divine beings; because in the Father

¹ I. Kings iii, 12.² Isa. xi, 2.³ In Rhetoric, the substitution of an epithet for a name.⁴ *Idea*, archetype, pattern.⁵ Ezek. xxxvii, 14.⁶ I. Pet. i, 11.⁷ Gal. iv, 6.⁸ Rom. viii, 9, 11.⁹ Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, viii, 25 (Servetus says vii, 3). (MPL. x, 254; NPNF. ser. ii, ix, 144.)¹⁰ Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate*, III, ii (MPL. cxcvi, 916).¹¹ *Per medium intrinsecum.*

there is only speculative knowledge, and in the Son practical knowledge, and in them there is no impulsive love as there is in the third Person, and consequently one can do nothing without the other unless they copulate together and beget.¹ Countless other arguments of this sort I deliberately pass by; and instead of solving all the things that might be brought up by philosophers at this point, you may observe this rule, which is that of the lawyer; namely, that those things which deserve special mention are, unless they are specially mentioned, understood to be disregarded.² But whether this article does deserve special mention, when it is the prime foundation of all faith, on which depends knowledge of both God and Christ, you must judge for yourself; and whether it is expressly mentioned, is learned from the reading of the Scriptures, although not one word is found in the whole Bible about the Trinity, nor about its Persons, nor about an Essence, nor about a unity of the Substance, nor about one Nature of the several beings, nor about their other babblings and disputes of words, which Paul says belong to the knowledge which is falsely so called.³

45. It remains for us to show by some reasons and authorities that these three beings can not exist in one God. In the first place I might attack this imaginary triad with the sixteen reasons which Robert Holkot states,⁴ to none of which he makes a good reply, nor can he reply save by sophistry. On the contrary, he admits that this article is opposed to all natural reason. See also the *Preludes* of Pierre d'Ailly;⁵ but for the present I set forth my theme in another way, and prove not only that the three beings can not exist in one God, but that they can not even be imagined, and that it is wholly impossible to have any notion of them. For one having a notion of the Trinity would have distinct notions of the three beings; and this would amount to having a notion of one by not having a notion of another, which all deny. You will say that one has a notion of the Trinity because

¹ Quodlibet vi, q. 2.

² Corpus Juris Civilis, Digest xlvii, De Injuriis, x, 15, 26, § *Hoc edictum* (Servetus wrongly cites, § *Aut Praetor*).

³ I. Tim. vi, 4, 20.

⁴ Super quatuor libros Sententiarum, I. quaest. 5.

⁵ Lib. I, quaest. 5.

he has a notion of God by conceiving that he is the three beings. O firm pillar of the Sophists! Why, pray, would you have us bound by faith to that of which your own Aristotle was never sure? Is it right that we should have so certain a faith depending upon such uncertain conceptions? How do you know? Who has revealed these conceptions to you? Indeed, as I shall show very clearly elsewhere,¹ there is no such difference in meaning, although those Nicanders² are found in words. Or, at least, since this is not altogether certain, no faith can be founded on these. Again, according to your philosophy, how can something be connoted by the term, *white*, without its being able to be absolutely imported by another abstract term, *whiteness*? And so
 33a of other concrete terms connoting a certain being; or will you say that here only a *disposition*³ is connoted? There is also the rule of Porphyry, that from any essential term agreed upon, a concept may be derived having an absolute and simple meaning.⁴ Again, according to their rules, I should ask whether the Trinity is unknown to CHRIST and the angels; whether they assume three notions of three beings in the soul of CHRIST and in the angels, and thus distinctly recognize three Gods. For CHRIST says that the angels behold the face of his Father,⁵ but other forms they see none. Likewise CHRIST saw in himself nothing other than the Father, nor does he to-day see anything else in heaven. Dream as much as ever you will, fix your eyes on the mental images,⁶ and you will find that the Trinity is not to be understood without three such images; because it is necessary for one who thinks to observe these images.⁷ Indeed, you cherish a Quaternity in your mind, though you deny it in words. For you have four ideas,⁸ and the fourth is a mental image with re-

¹ Book IV, par. 1.

² Nicander, a Greek poet and grammarian of the second century, B. C., who was given to hair-splitting and sophistical distinctions, for which his name therefore became a synonym.

³ *Dispositio*, see note 2, paragraph 41.

⁴ *A quacunque convenientia essentiali abstrahibilis est conceptus absolute et incomplete significans.* Porphyry, a third-century commentator on the Logic of Aristotle.

⁵ Matt. xviii, 10.

⁶ *Phantasmata.*

⁷ See Aristotle, *De Anima*, III. vii, viii.

⁸ *Simulachra.*

spect to an Essence, because it is necessary in understanding the Essence to observe the mental images; and when you have seen these, you will comprehend clearly what I shall say elsewhere¹ as to the formation of the notion. And even now, if you give heed, you can realize that your Trinity is nothing else than a kind of moving of forms in your imagination, which holds you deluded.

46. If you say, All cry with one voice that it is enough to believe, though the matter be beyond one's understanding, you expose your foolishness even in the fact that you accept a matter beyond your understanding, without sufficient warrant of Scripture; as it says, *Though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm*,² and rail in those matters whereof they are ignorant.³ And that the more, because you yourself confess that the knowing is itself an object of faith; only, if you have faith, tell me what is the understanding of your own capacity? What is it that you believe in as known by yourself? Are you perhaps reflecting upon a mere disorder of your brain as a sufficient object of faith? Again, there can be nothing in the mind that was not first in the senses, either in itself or in something similar or corresponding.⁴ But of three beings constituting one Nature, you have never had any sensation, either from near or from far; nor can you compare some degrees to others, since neither two beings, nor three, nor more, are found meeting together in one Nature. And consequently there is discovered no foundation perceived by the senses, from which the mind derives such a conception by logical reasoning. On the contrary, it is wearied and confused by the very fact that it tries to speculate about this, as though building upon the wind without foundation in the senses. Again, let us imagine the only Person to be that of the Father, as our opponents readily admit when they formally distinguish Persons from Essence: then the question arises, Since it is proper for any being to have an Essence of its own, and a Nature of its own, how shall I be able to imagine a multiplication of beings without a multiplication of Essence,

¹ Book V, par. 9.

² I. Tim. i, 7.

³ II. Pet. ii, 12.

⁴ Aristotle, De Anima, III. viii; Anal. Poster., I. xviii.

and that a new being is added, but no new Essence? Did you ever perceive these or like things by the senses? Certainly not; then do not expect to perceive such things by the mind.

47. We are taught, not only by reasons but by numberless authorities, to avoid this plurality; and unless indeed I seemed out of my mind, I should bring into the discussion all the testimonies of the Gentiles, philosophers, poets, and Sybils cited by Firmianus Lactantius,¹ that from them you might realize what a laughing-stock you would be if you tried to sell them your three beings in place of one God. But let us prove the matter from Holy Writ, from the Old Testament as well as the New. *One is good, even God.*² *None is good save one, even God.*³ Are those not content, then, with the mere name of unity, who do not acknowledge the One in very deed, and turn aside from their artificial, verbal Essence to a plurality of beings? And lest you permit any one here to misrepresent the matter, note that it is the Son that is speaking; from which it is evident that every sort of unity of God abides in the Father alone. And there is a weighty text to the effect that there is only God the Father and the Son,

34b JESUS CHRIST: *There is one God*, it says, *who is the Father*, . . . *and one Lord*, JESUS CHRIST; ⁴ and, *There is one God and Father.*⁵ I know not what madness it is in men that does not see that in the Scriptures every sort of unity of God is always referred to the Father. And, *For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, the man*, CHRIST JESUS.⁶ Again, when the Apostle speaks so many times of one God and his CHRIST, and says that this God is the Father of JESUS CHRIST,⁷ and that CHRIST JESUS is mediator,⁸ and that through him we have access to God,⁹ do you suppose it is to be understood that the first being is Father of the second, and that through the second being we have access to the first?

48. Again, when Ignatius, Irenaeus, and other early writers

¹ Divin. Instit. I. iv-vii (MPL. vi, 127-153; ANF. vii, 13-17; ANCL. xxi, 10-20).

² Matt. xix, 17 (Vulg.).

³ Mark x, 18.

⁴ I. Cor. viii, 6.

⁵ Eph. iv, 6.

⁶ I. Tim. ii, 5.

⁷ Rom. xv, 6; II. Cor. i, 3; xi, 31; Eph. i, 3; Col. i, 3; I. Pet. i, 3.

⁸ I. Tim. ii, 5.

⁹ Eph. ii, 18.

dispute against heretics, saying that the Almighty God, who was the God of the Old Testament, the God of the Law and the Prophets, is also the God of the New Testament, and that the same one is the Father of JESUS CHRIST,¹ do you suppose it is to be understood that they were proclaiming the three separate beings? Likewise Tertullian, though he seems not to be self-consistent, nevertheless proclaims many of the plainest truths in accordance with the Apostolic tradition. Again, while it is an apocryphal book, still it is an ancient one, namely the Clementine Recognitions, in which CHRIST is very clearly proclaimed even to the ignorant; and in it you will find the odor of the ancient simplicity widely diffused. But, not to build on uncertain foundations, I pass that by, but will refer to the words of Ignatius to the Philippians.² If one, he says, has proclaimed the God of the Law and the Prophets as one, but has denied that CHRIST is his Son, he is a liar. Also if one confesses CHRIST JESUS, yet denies that the God of the Law and the Prophets is the Father of CHRIST, he does not stand fast in the truth.³ And in the Epistle to the Tarsians, he says plainly of CHRIST that he is not the one who is God over all, but he is his Son.⁴ Indeed, as Justin, the disciple of the Apostles, says, no faith would have been had in CHRIST himself had he said that another being than the Maker, Creator, and Father of all was God.⁵ You have it also in Irenaeus that it was the heresy of Céredo⁶ that the יהוה⁷ who was proclaimed in the Law and the Prophets to be God is not the Father of JESUS CHRIST.⁸ Look in that and the following chapter and find out what is the reason why those ways of speaking are not found among our Trinitarians.⁹ This reason alone is

¹ Ignatius, Epist. ad Magn., viii; Irenaeus, Adv. Haeres., IV. ii, v. (MPG. v, 670; vii, 976-986; ANF. i, 62, 463-467; ANCL. i, 180; v, 378-388).

² A wrong citation. It should read, Philadelphians.

³ Ep. ad Philad., vi (MPG. v, 702; ANF. i, 82; ANCL. i, 230-232).

⁴ Ep. ad Tarsenses, v (MPG. v, 891; ANF. i, 108; ANCL. i, 457).

⁵ Quoted by Irenaeus, Adv. Haeres., IV. vi, 2 (MPG. vii, 987; ANF. i, 468; ANCL. v, 390).

⁶ A Syrian Gnostic of the second century, teacher of Marcion.

⁷ *Jehovah*.

⁸ Adv. Haeres., I. xxvii, 1 (MPG. vii, 687-689; ANF. i, 352; ANCL. v, 98).

⁹ So far as has yet been discovered, this is the first use of the word *trinitarius* as a term of theology, although it had been used since the twelfth century for the

very strong, if you consider well that there is a whole book of Irenaeus on this subject, and yet he never mentions their nonsense.

35b 49. Again, in the Old Testament we are commanded, and that more than once, not to acknowledge many gods, but only one.¹ *I am thy God, and, Thou shalt have no other gods besides me.*² And, *Hear, O Israel, that Jehovah is our God, and Jehovah is one.*³ This he [I?] wished to translate thus, because those that know not the proper meaning of the word are here most horribly deceived. And, *Know therefore this day, and ponder it in thy heart, that God is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath, and there is none else besides him.*⁴ And in countless other passages he is said to be the God of Israel, the only God, even he alone.

Yet they are unwilling that he be called the only one, but instead they wish him to have three associates.

50. To these things they think that they can easily reply; but they make a show of words, and do not get the sense when they say that several beings are one Essence, as if each being did not have its own existence. Indeed, as I shall show below,⁵ it is more fit that one being have several Essences than that several beings have one Essence. Although I have often enough sought to learn from them the difference between the beings and the Natures, I have never been able to find out any other reason than

title of a monastic order. It was one of the items in Calvin's indictment of Servetus that the latter had applied this term to orthodox believers in the Trinity. It was thus resented, and had doubtless been intended, as a term of reproach. Servetus seems to have used it to suggest that orthodox believers had substituted belief in a Trio for belief in the one and only true God. In the second half of the sixteenth century Catholic writers adopted the term, singularly enough, to designate deniers of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity in Poland and Transylvania, and to denote what they regarded as practically a form of tritheism; since the Unitarians of that period, while more or less admitting a divinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, considered separately, did not properly admit the unity of the three in one Substance. *Trinitarii* are thus among the heretics named in the bull of excommunication (*In coena Domini*) published annually from Gregory XIII. in 1583 to Clement XIV. in 1770. Those so called never admitted this designation, but came toward the end of the century to call themselves by the opposed term, *Unitarii*, apparently coined at this time in contradistinction to the objectionable term, *Trinitarii*. The Catholic connotation of *Trinitarii* at length became obsolete, and the term became the accepted designation of those holding the orthodox doctrine of God. cf. Book VII, paragraph 3.

¹ *Pluralitatem . . . unitatem.*

² Ex. xx, 2, 3.

³ Deut. vi, 4.

⁴ Deut. iv, 39.

⁵ Book V, paragraph 9.

that רַל¹ had this usage. Again, their defense may seem artificial, without the witness of the Scriptures; for of the one God there is no question, but of the three beings which they call Persons I find no mention, nor does Scripture speak of an Essence, nor of all their other doctrines, disputes of words, and profane babblings. *O Timothy, turn away from novelties of words, which some professing have erred concerning the faith.*² And elsewhere, *Be not carried away by diverse and strange questions.*³ Again, Paul 36a forbids us to be led astray by disputes about words.⁴ But that their defense is merely verbal is now plain from what has been said; for admitting that there are three beings, which they call Persons, by reasoning from a substitution of terms,⁵ they admit three entities, and consequently three Substances. If *God*, therefore, has an absolute meaning, it plainly follows that they are real Tritotes,⁶ and in consequence are really opposed to the Scriptures and to the unity of God, and that they are sophistically defending one connotative God, wherefore they are hateful to God.⁷ Pray look at another foundation: for while admitting that there are three beings, they deny that there are three entities and three Substances, for the reason that these nouns end in *-tia*,⁸ hence relate to an Essence.⁹ O monsters of the world, that God should be a jest to us because the ending of words requires it; and that we should confess a plurality in God because one word requires it, and not because another does; as though Hebrews, Greeks, and Barbarians ought to have nouns ending in *-tia*, so that all languages may have a fixed rule for making sport of God. Are these the verbal disputations which Paul abhors? And if you ask them why they utter those utterly meaningless

¹ In both the original and the counterfeit reprint, the second of these three Hebrew characters is not the *l* here printed, although that this was in the printer's font is shown from its use elsewhere in the text; nor is it clear what the character is. But if it be taken as a misprint for a *l*, the enigmatical word in the text is (so Buxtorf, *De Abbreviaturis Hebraicis*, s. v.) an abbreviation for a phrase common in rabbinical Hebrew, רבוהינו וכרונם לברכה, meaning, Our Masters, of blessed memory; which fits perfectly with the context at the end of this paragraph.

² I. Tim. vi, 4, 20 (Vulg.).

³ Heb. xiii, 9.

⁴ II. Tim. ii, 14.

⁵ *A convertibilibus arguendo.*

⁶ cf. note 5, paragraph 31.

⁷ Ecclus. xxxvii, 23 (Vulg.). *Qui sophistice loquitur, odibilis est.*

⁸ *Entia, substantia.*

⁹ *Sunt essentialia.*

things as fundamental truths, they will reply that they learned so by the usage of their masters. It is no concern of theirs if they make void the word of God, provided they preserve the leaven of their tradition.¹

36b 51. Again, hear what view Scripture holds about Persons, that you may understand that their usage is mightily like that of Scripture! For in Scripture the outward form and appearance of a man is called his *person*, as when we say, He has a beautiful person; and it is so taken when it is said that God is no respecter of persons,² because he has no respect to those outward differences, as to whether one is male or female, bond or free, Jew or Greek.³ And it is so taken when it says that we are not to respect the person of the poor, or the countenance of the mighty.⁴ And so the Greek word *πρόσωπον*⁵ is used, which in Latin is rendered *vultus*, *persona*, *aspectus*, and *facies*.⁶ But, apart from the Scriptures, the meaning of the word *persona* is in itself so well known to the Latins that some devil must have suggested to them to invent mathematical Persons, and to thrust their imaginary and metaphysical beings upon us as Persons. For in CHRIST shone forth one Person of the Deity; and in the appearances or utterances of God the Father, another; and in the sending of the Spirit, another; and thus in the Gospel we know three Persons, that is to say, by a divine manifestation. And it says, another Comforter⁷ according to Tertullian,⁸ not as representing the Substance, but the Person; because there was another aspect, and another form and *disposition* of Deity. For Scrip-
37a ture considers the manners of the appearances, and not the metaphysical Natures of the beings. Here investigate the causes from the beginning, what view tradition formerly held of Persons, and how all things have been corrupted by the damage of

¹ Mark vii, 13; Matt. xvi, 6, 12.

² Rom. ii, 11; Eph. vi, 9; Col. iii, 25; Acts x, 34; I. Pet. i, 17.

³ Gal. iii, 28.

⁴ Lev. xix, 15. cf. I. Sam. xvi, 7; Jas. ii, 9; Deut. i, 17.

⁵ *Prosopon*.

⁶ Countenance, person, looks, face. II. Cor. i, 11; ii, 10; iii, 7, 13, 18; iv, 6; viii, 24; x, 1, 7; xi, 20.

⁷ John xiv, 16.

⁸ Adv. Praxeas, ix (MPL. ii, 164; ANF. iii, 604; ANCL. xv, 350).

the times. What a monster they have also made of the *hypostasis* I shall say later on, when we speak of the Word.¹

52. Again, referring to what is proclaimed in Mark; *Hear, O Israel, thy God is one . . . and there is none other but him*; ² and the second commandment is about one's neighbor, on which two commandments it says that the whole law hangeth, and the prophets.³ Thus among all the commandments of the Law there is no command to believe in an imaginary Trinity. But there is one alone who said, *I am, I am, and besides me there is no saviour*; ⁴ and, *I am the Lord, and there is none else besides me, there is no God apart from me, there is no Lord: I am the Lord, and there is none else*.⁵

53. The Hebrews are supported by so many authorities that they naturally wonder at the great division of Gods introduced by the New Testament, and they deem our Testament schismatical when they see us hold their God in such abhorrence. But if we have to dispute against them, we ought to follow the example of the Apostles, namely, say to them plainly that this JESUS is the CHRIST,⁶ and the Son of God: which the Master also teaches us, who in this way sought to persuade the Jews, saying, The *יהוה* ⁷ of whom ye say that he is your God, he is my Father.⁸ ^{37b} See how plainly and intelligibly he addressed their minds concerning his God; *and for this cause they sought to kill him, because he had said that God was his own Father*.⁹ And, *He is worthy of death, because he made himself the Son of God*.¹⁰ Why not consider in what sense they said these things? Nor does CHRIST deny this sense; on the contrary, he confirms it, replying, *Ye say that I am the Son of God*.¹¹ Again, if Paul were in Damascus to-day, trying to persuade the Jews that *this* is the Son of God,¹² what do you think he would be referring to by the pronoun? What sort of reasoning should you rely upon in order that such Jews might be persuaded as you see expecting the Messiah to-day, even as

¹ Book III.

² Matt. xxii, 40.

³ Isa. xlv, 5, 6 (Vulg.).

⁷ Jehovah.

⁹ John v, 18.

¹¹ Luke xxii, 70.

² Mark xii, 29, 32 (Vulg.).

⁴ Isa. xliii, 11 (Vulg.).

⁶ Acts xvii, 3.

⁸ John viii, 54.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvi, 66; John xix, 7.

¹² Acts ix, 20.

the woman who expected the Messiah was persuaded by the word of CHRIST? ¹ Nevertheless, some seem to themselves so grand that they do not deign to turn their eyes to look at the man, and deem it something improper and absurd for a man to be called the Son of God. But it is something else, more exalted, that they make the Son of God; and as for the Son, they say that it is necessary that he be of the same Nature, or, as they say, of precisely the same kind ² with the Father; and so from the very start they reject this sonship of the man as blasphemy. But let the Master himself answer for me, who shows himself the Son of God by comparison with other men: For if he called other men
 38a gods, say ye that I blaspheme because I said, I am the Son of God, when the Father has sanctified me beyond all my fellows? ³ See plainly that he who was sanctified is called the Son of God; this is he that *shall be called holy, the Son of God*; ⁴ this is he of whom the Apostles say, *Thy holy child JESUS*.⁵ That precisely his kind is unknown also in dumb beasts is evident; and they supply that lack by inventing something out of their own heads. I would that they might get a little nearer to God, for they judge of him too much from afar.

54. Again, let them bring the Old Testament into harmony with the New. Why is it that with the Hebrews it is so often said of the Messiah-king, He glorified, adorned, crowned him; glorious, comely, renowned, noble; glory, praise, comeliness, beauty, majesty, honor — which things in the New Testament also are very often attributed to JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God? But they attribute none of these things to the man, nor do they care about the Old Testament Messiah. They ascribe everything to the second being by the *communicatio idiomatum*; for they say there are not two kings, nor two glorified ones.

55. Let us now hear the monstrosities which this Trinity controversy has brought forth, for it will be a sufficient confutation of all the philosophers to drag them out into the light. The Trinites, since this philosophy about three beings entered into the
 38b world, have said that there are three Gods; because, although

¹ John iv, 25, 29.

² John x, 35, 36; Heb. i, 9.

³ Acts iv, 27, 30 (Vulg.).

⁴ *Eiusdem speciei specialissimae*.

⁵ Luke i, 35, margin.

they deny it with the mouth, our brethren confess it in fact. The Arians divide the second being from the Substance of the first, as being less than it. Macedonius ¹ denies that the third being is God, but says that it is subject to the Father and the Son. Behold how, when a wrong foundation is once laid, men are driven out to sea utterly lost, adding a greater matter to a less; and any one who pleases thinks up a new God and forever joins blasphemies to it. Moreover, the Aetians and the Eunomians ² say that these beings are unlike. The followers of Origen rave that the Son can not see the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the Son. Maximinus ³ said that the Father is a part of God, and that whichever Person you please is a third part of the Trinity. The Metangismonites ⁴ said that the second being is in the first, just as a smaller vessel is contained in a larger one. The Nestorians say that Jesus is one Son of God, and another son of man; and this in fact our brethren confess. For, as appears in the disputations of Maxentius ⁵ of Constantinople, Nestorius never admitted that there were two Sons, but defended himself by certain sophistical tricks, quite in the manner of men to-day. Read what is said there, and you shall clearly see that these are Nestorians. The Eutychians asserted that the only nature in CHRIST is a divine one, as though it were a phantom fallen from heaven, as the Marcionites said. The Monarchians, such as Praxeas and Victorinus, ⁶ said that JESUS CHRIST was God the Father almighty, and that he sat at his own right hand. And after them the Sabellians confuse the person and the names of

39a

¹ A heresiarch Bishop of Constantinople about the middle of the fourth century; cf. Sozomen, *Eccl. Hist.* IV, xxvii (MPG. lxxvii, 1199; NPNF. ser. ii, ii, 322).

² Aetius, a deacon of Antioch, reviving Arianism a generation after the Council of Nicaea, and his pupil Eunomius, Bishop of Cyzicus in Mysia, taught that the Son was of different Substance from the Father; cf. Epiphanius, *Adv. Haeres.*, lib. iii, tom. i, haeres. lxxvi (MPG. xlii, 515-550); Basil. Magn., *Liber Eunomii Apolog.* (MPG. xxx, 835-868).

³ Arian Bishop of Hippo, contemporary of St. Augustine; cf. Augustine, *Coll. cum Maximino* (MPL. xlii, 709 ff.).

⁴ cf. Augustine, *De Haeres.*, lviii (MPL. xlii, 41).

⁵ *Dialogi contra Nestorianos* (MPG. lxxvxi, 124 f.).

⁶ Praxeas, a heretic at Carthage and Rome late in the second century, against whom Tertullian wrote his *Adv. Praxeas* (MPL. ii, 153 ff.; ANF. iii, 597 ff.; ANCL. xv, 333 ff.). Victorinus Afer, a Roman rhetorician and theologian of the fourth century; cf. MPL. viii, 993 ff.

CHRIST and the Father, and are also called Patripassians, since they believe that the Father suffered. The Alogi, not understanding the mystery of the Word, say that John lied when he said that the Word was God. Very recently, as the Decretal relates,¹ Joachim was arguing against the Master² that there is a Quaternity in the divine beings, for the reason that the Essence, according to Master Lombard, is a kind of Nature, not begetting like the Father, nor begotten like the Son, nor proceeding like the Holy Spirit; but it is a kind of supreme being, and according to this it seems to be a kind of fourth appearance.³ Hence Joachim admitted that the three beings are not a Substance, nor an Essence, nor a Nature; but they are said to be one in a collective sense, just as many men are one people. He was certainly right in arguing for a fourth appearance, though he drew his conclusion stupidly. A good many others spew out errors in other ways, because, according to them, when one inconsistency occurs more follow, and the last error is worse than the first.

The Essence is a fourth appearance.

39b 56. Not only among heretics, but in our own Church, countless monstrosities have arisen, countless questions have arisen, not only doubtful, insoluble, and knotty, but also most absurd, confirming what the Master says, *He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth*.⁴ The first of these questions to arise is, What is the difference between *proceeding* and *being begotten*, and why is the third being not called Son, and not said to be begotten like the second? Of this [Peter Lombard speaks in the passage⁵] where Gregory⁶ says that it is not possible for him to know, although he confesses that he believes; but God knows what sort of faith he had, when placed in such a difficult situa-

¹ Joachim of Flora (c. 1132-1202), a Calabrian monk, held heretical views on the Trinity, and also attacked Peter Lombard, for which he was condemned by Innocent III; cf. Innocent's Decretal in *Corpus Juris Canonici*, Lib. I, tit. i, *De summa Trinitate*, cap. ii, *Damnamus*.

² i. e., Peter Lombard, called "Master of Sentences."

³ *Simulachrum*.

⁴ John xii, 35.

⁵ Sent. I, dist. xiii, cap. iii.

⁶ A mistake in citation for Augustine, *Contra Maximum*, II. xiv, 1 (MPL. xlii, 770).

tion. Likewise Augustine,¹ John of Damascus,² and all the rest have a great horror of this question. But I dispatch the matter in a very few words, and say that the flesh is begotten in the natural way, but the Spirit is not begotten at all; for to say that the Word is begotten is a mere dream, and a great misuse of words. This will come out very clearly when I have said how the Holy Spirit is said to proceed.³ Moreover, they say that one Essence is derived from another; yet the Essence does not beget, while the Demiurge does beget. They ought therefore to have said that he had a kind of spiritual wife, or that he alone was masculo-feminine or hermaphrodite, was at once father and mother; for the meaning of the word does not allow that one be called a father apart from a mother. And so they surpass Ptolemy,⁴ the Valentinian, in this, that they tacitly condemn their own dreams, which are included in their very notion of God, as he explicitly and separately states. They also say that the first being is continually begetting, not from another, nor from nothing, but from itself, one who is identical with itself. Not that it begot but once, as Valentinus⁵ said, but by abusing its spiritual wife is forever breathing forth, is forever in travail; nor can he cease from this intercourse, for he is continually bound to it, and the spiritual Bythos is said to be brought forth daily, though it is the same in nature with the eternal Demiurge (I use Valentinus's own words), because between these and those there is only a verbal distinction. Besides, they say that by these two Aeons a third Pleroma is naturally brought forth; and this third one in *proceeding*, like the second one in *being born*, receives the fact that it is an Essence. And you must forever insist upon the conclusion that these three spirits, or these three beings, with origins so different and unlike one another,

40a

¹ De Trinitate, XV. xxv, 45 (MPL. xlii, 1092; NPNF. ser. i. iii, 223; Dods, vii, 430).

² De fide orthodoxa, I. viii (MPG. xciv, 819, 823; NPNF. ser. ii. ix, 8, 9).

³ Book II, paragraph 27.

⁴ A second-century Gnostic; cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haeres., I. xii (MPG. vii, 569 ff.; ANF. i, 333 ff.; ANCL. v, 49-51).

⁵ A second-century Gnostic; cf. Tertullian, Adv. Valent.; Irenaeus, Adv. Haeres. (MPG. vii, 433 ff.; MPL. ii, 525 ff.; ANF. iii, 503 ff.; i, 315 ff.; ANCL. xv, 119 ff., v, 1 ff.).

are one and the same being; and this one is not that one, and that one is not the other one, and all are one — which is something so monstrous that I had rather, like Valentinus, break in pieces a hundred octonarians of demons than thus to despise and break up the nature of the supremely Good and Great God, and to cut it up in various ways into three unlike beings. Try as they may to cloak this division under various kinds of names, yet unless you were used to speaking of these beings with great reverence, you will easily decide, if you open your eyes, that to make God out so unlike is of all blasphemies the greatest. Moreover, 40b notwithstanding these derivations, they say, in opposition to Donatus, that the three beings are equal and of the same power; so that, according to Augustine,¹ the Son is able to utter a son for himself, and a grandson for the Father; and consequently the third Spirit is able to impregnate a Chimaera, and to breathe forth offspring; yet he says that the Son did not beget because it was not necessary. Moreover, they say that the third being is ours, but the second is not ours but the Father's; and they say that the second being is united with the human nature hypostatically, that is, asswise,² and that the other two are not in Christ. But I should like to know why when the Master himself spoke he did not say, The Son, or the second Person, that abideth in me, instead of, The Father that abideth in me, The Father is in me.³ Likewise, when it says that the Spirit of God is in him, why did it not say that he had not the third, but the second, being included within himself? Nor can I see whence come so many profane babblings,⁴ to the effect that only the second Person sustains, cries out, takes up into the unity of the Substance,⁵ limits its dependence; especially since they so glue the Persons together that they act without division. For they say that the works of the Trinity are outwardly undivided, and they themselves can neither say nor understand how the human nature depends upon the second being alone, and not substantially⁶ upon the others; and that only the second being is there united

¹ De Trinitate, XV. xiv (NPL. xlii, 1076; NPNF. ser. i. iii, 213; Dods, vii, 407).

² *Asinaliter*; cf. paragraph 16, note 5.

³ John xiv, 10.

⁴ I. Tim. vi, 20; II. Tim. ii, 16.

⁵ *Suppositum*.

⁶ *Suppositaliter*.

with the flesh, for here God is manifestly divided. Or it is necessary to reason like Scotus; and the Realists say that Occam,¹ when he was devising relations on this subject, was forced to confess the truth. But God is truth, and they are both liars: he that speaketh from himself, says CHRIST, is a liar.² 41a

All things
that pertain
to God, if
they are
not proved
by the
Scriptures,
are lies,
because
every man
is a liar.

57. Moreover, if the second Person assumes Mary as it assumed CHRIST, then the Sophists admit that Mary is CHRIST, CHRIST bore the Son of God, CHRIST is his own mother, CHRIST is man and woman (pray restrain your laughter, if you can); and with all this they keep a brazen front so that they know not how to blush. Moreover, they say there is a great difference between constitution and composition;³ for they assume a constitution in divine beings, because the Son is constituted of an Essence, but is not composed. Moreover, just as they assume two births of the two beings in CHRIST, and different ones, so also they assume two inbreathings in the third being. In the first place, it flows from within the first two by a kind of chimerical⁴ and monstrous branching off. In the second place, they say that by another mutation it is breathed in from without, and in time, by the other two. Furthermore, they say that this and the second being are being daily made or produced. These are clearly the artificial emissions of aeons which are being daily produced, begotten, born, and made; and at this point, strangely enough, they would have the fourth appearance a very simple one, so that notwithstanding these deformities in its womb, the two 41b beings when brought forth, together with the other being begetting but not begotten, constitute one inactive Nature, not begotten nor begetting, nor breathed upon nor breathing. Moreover, there is great controversy as to what names belong to the human nature and what to the second being; for at first they apply the title of Son not to the man but to the second being. And in consequence of this, when JESUS CHRIST is called the Son of God, the words JESUS and CHRIST both flocked together to

¹ Johannes Duns Scotus, c. 1265-1308; William of Occam, c. 1280-1349, distinguished scholastic theologians.

² John v, 31; viii, 44.

³ cf. paragraph 31.

⁴ The Chimaera of classical mythology was part lion, part goat, and part dragon.

that. Finally, they maintain that he is called Son of man not from a man but from this being. Nay more, they deny that the man himself is a man, and so his human nature has remained nameless. Moreover, Basil the Great ¹ maintains with singular mistakenness that he is called *begotten*, and not a *created being*; a *Son*, and not *born*. And the great theologian Nazianzen, in his Theology ² holds that the third Spirit was neither begotten nor unbegotten, a view which Augustine ³ and others follow. And whether the third Person proceeds from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only, as the Greeks say, is a very bitterly debated, vain, and ancient problem, which I shall later ⁴ solve with ease. In fact, I wonder why they do not also debate whether the second proceeds from the third, just as the third does from the second, so that each in turn may be the cause of the other. For it is written, *And now the Lord hath sent me, and his Spirit.*⁵

42a Hence the Son is sent by the Spirit, and is said to have been conceived of the Holy Spirit,⁶ and the Spirit of the Lord is said to be upon him.⁷

58. Again, whether the Father and the Son are called one breather collectively, or are called one beginning because they are one Essence; and thus, whether the Essence is the beginning of the inbreathing, is an intelligible question. For they would have the fourth appearance, which they call Essence, be inactive in all respects — at least the Moderns would. Furthermore, it is of great importance whether the notions are the common ones, or are those of Persons by [technical] definition. Likewise, it makes a great difference whether a thing is said to be a Substance ⁸ or not; it even makes so great a difference that the whole kingdom of heaven depends on it. For they deny that the man JESUS CHRIST is a Substance. And there is a long discus-

¹ Adv. Eunomium, ii (MPG. xxix, 615-618).

² Gregory Nazianzen, Fifth Theological Oration, de Spiritu Sancto, viii (MPG. xxxvi, 142; NPNF. ser. ii. vii, 320).

³ De Trinitate, V. vi, vii (MPL. xlii, 914-916; NPNF. ser. i. iii, 89-91; Dods, vii, 150-154).

⁴ See Book II, par. 27.

⁵ Isa. xlviii, 16.

⁶ Matt. i, 20.

⁷ Matt. iii, 16; Mark i, 10; John i, 32.

⁸ *Suppositum*.

The Soph-
ists,
rejecting
Christ,
chose this
master for
them-
selves.

sion, from the 25th to the 35th distinction, in which Occam¹ strongly insists, while they lay the foundations of our faith upon certain notions, relations, formalities, quiddities, and filiations of which Paul never thought. They are founded upon the sand, and not upon the solid rock; and regarding the majesty of the faith as not firm, they seem to make game of it. Pray hear the sound reasoning of the Lombard Rabbi² in his *Sentences*,³ where he treats of the very subtle question, as to what befits the truest majesty of God; that is, what is the reason of the difference, that the Father is said to love with the love which proceeds from him, and is not called wise with the wisdom which proceeds from him; and being wholly and thoroughly terrified by the difficulty, he wavers, and knows not whither he goes. Likewise in another chapter⁴ is a question which, though difficult, is yet ridiculous: namely, What is the reason of the difference, that properties can not be in the Persons without limiting them, and yet they are in the Essence without limiting it? Pray what Turk, Scythian, Barbarian could bear these disputes of words, as Paul calls them,⁵ without laughter? But it would be superfluous here to follow them through one by one, although there are among them many other horrible inventions on the subject of the incarnation, both far removed from the terms of the law, and foreign to them. Reflect only upon this: whether these questions savor at all of the Apostolic mind. See whether this is the teaching of our Master, CHRIST. At present we have grown accustomed to them, but future generations will judge these things amazing. Verily they are amazing, more so than the things that Irenaeus relates of Valentinus;⁶ nor is there in the whole Bible one letter which leads to these fancies.

59. Furthermore, and worse than all this, how much this tradition of the Trinity has, alas! been a laughing-stock to the

¹ *Quaestiones et Decisiones*, dist. 26.

² *Longobardus Rabinus*. Servetus here employs the Hebrew title as an equivalent for the title *Magister* commonly applied to Peter Lombard as the "Master of *Sentences*."

³ Lib. I, dist. xxxii, cap. vi.

⁴ Lib. I, dist. xxxiii, cap. ii.

⁵ I. Tim. vi, 4.

⁶ *Adv. Haeres.* I. i (MPG. vii, 445-452; ANF. i, 316 f.; ANCL. v, 4-6).

43a Mohammedans, only God knows. The Jews also shrink from giving adherence to this fancy of ours, and laugh at our foolishness about the Trinity; and on account of its blasphemies they do not believe that this is the Messiah who was promised in their law. And not only Mohammedans and Hebrews, but the very beasts of the field, would make fun of us did they grasp our fantastical notion, for all the works of the Lord bless the one God.¹ Hear also what Mohammed says; for more reliance is to be given to one truth which an enemy confesses than to a hundred lies on our side. For he says in his Alcoran ² that CHRIST was the greatest of the prophets, the spirit of God, the power of God, the breath of God, the very soul of God, the Word born of a perpetual virgin by God's breathing upon her; and that it is because of the wickedness of the Jews toward him that they are in their present wretchedness and misfortune. He says, moreover, that the Apostles and Evangelists and the first Christians were the best of men, and wrote what is true, and did not hold the Trinity, or three Persons in the Divine Being, but men in later times added this.

60. This most burning plague, therefore, was added and superimposed, as were the new gods which have recently come, which our fathers did not worship. And this plague of philosophy was brought upon us by the Greeks, for they above all other men are most given to philosophy; and we, hanging upon their lips, have also become philosophers. Perhaps some will deem it a slight fault if I admit that they may have erred. But I prove this in no other way than by showing that they never understood the passages of the Scriptures which they adduce 43b with regard to this matter. If they distinguished the brightness that then was from their own darkness so utterly confused, they might realize that Paul well said that the Church of God is the ground and pillar of the truth;³ which is no more than to say that the word of the Gospel is true; and the word of the Gospel is this, namely, that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God. For, as I

¹ Dan. iii, 57 (Vulg.).

² The statements following are apparently not quoted, but only loosely based on Surahs iii, iv, v, and xix *passim*.

³ I. Tim. iii, 15.

have said, and shall say more at large below,¹ the most solid support and foundation of the truth on which the Church is founded is to believe that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God; and it was on account of this foundation that Paul said, *pillar of the truth*. Therefore our Church is not said to be founded without a foundation, for its observation of this firm truth gives it the name of rock, pillar, and Church of God. For a church can remain without remaining the Church of God; Peter² can remain in it, though no rock³ remains. These are matters too small to deserve mention, were there not some who have teeth of iron, so that if they bite hold of but a single passage of Scripture, they are content. But I would that they might as diligently observe other passages of Scripture.

61. Again, what good, pray, does it do them, that CHRIST said to the Apostles, *I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?*⁴ For CHRIST remained with the Apostles, and with all who were of their number, and is to remain, unto the end of the world. But we are not of their number; for had we been of their number, we should have abode in their teaching.⁵ Again, mark what follows and you shall understand the condition. *Preach the Gospel*, he says, *teach them to observe all things which I commanded you; and lo, I am with you.*⁶ Where, pray, are those who are preaching Christ; where are those who are keeping his commandment, namely, about believing that he is the Son of God, that Christ may be with them? I will show you at the end of Book III,⁷ something that you do not know: what this Gospel is that is committed to them to be preached. Nay more, I will prove to you that you are no Christian. They believe that a congregation is a kind of mathematical body, holding the Spirit of God bound by the hair, even though none of them knows Christ nor his spirit. As often, he says, as you are gathered together in my name.⁷ But how are those gathered together in the name of

44a

All the promises of the Law are made on this condition. The same is clear from Matt. x and xv and Psalm lxxxix.

¹ Paragraph 37; also Book III, paragraphs 20-22.

² *Petrus . . . petra.*

³ Matt. xxviii, 20.

⁴ I. John ii, 19.

⁵ Mark xvi, 15; Matt. xxviii, 19, 20.

⁶ Book III, par. 21.

⁷ *Congregati.* Matt. xviii, 20.

Christ who know not who the Christ is? Besides, how will the Holy Spirit be in the congregation, if in individuals of it there be a spirit full of fornication and robbery? Beware, then, lest by mere persistence in saying, The Church can not err, you oppose knowledge of Christ, and defend the error of ignorance of him. May the Lord grant you understanding, that you may conform to the simplicity of the Scriptures. If you have sought after CHRIST with your whole heart, he will without fail be gracious to you.

BOOK II

Argument

CHRIST, the Son of man, who descended from heaven, was the Word by uttering which God created the world. He became flesh as God's firstborn, and was the Son of God. He was both human and divine. God's Spirit, moving all things, operates within us as the Holy Spirit, which is a person of the Godhead. It proceeds from the Son, not as a separate being but as a ministering spirit. It is holy, one of three persons in the Godhead, and sanctifies us by dwelling within us.

Synopsis

1. Christ, the Son of man, ascended into heaven; and we are in heaven when we believe that he is the Son of God. 2. Christ, the Son of man, came down from heaven. 3. One who sees Christ sees the Father through him. 4. The Word which was in the beginning was simply the utterance which God gave when first creating the world. 5. Christ was thus the voice of God become flesh, and intrusted with the function of speaking for God. 6. It was the Word originally with God, not a second being, that became flesh. 7. All things were made through the Word, not through a being. 8. It is Christ, not a being, that was firstborn, 9. and born of the flesh, as Christ and the ante-Nicene writers taught. 10. The expression, firstborn, has no reference to time, since to God all time is one, 11. who uttered his begetting Word at the beginning of the world, thus making him firstborn. 12. Jesus is proved to be the Son of God by his resurrection, 13. through which he was born again, as we shall be. 14. Being begotten also expresses escape from perils. 15. The passage must be taken in both its literal and its spiritual meaning. 16. Christ was a prophet, though the whole of God was in him. 17. Christ is not merely human, but the Word of God, both human and divine; 18. both man and God; though a man, yet inseparable from God. 19. God's Spirit animates all men and things, 20. moves all things, and fills the earth. 21. When acting within us it is known as the Holy Spirit. 22. It is sometimes represented as an angel, 23. but not when the angel acts from without. 24. Holy Spirit denotes a closer

personal relation than Spirit of God. 25. It is a Person of the Godhead. 26. Spirit originally means a breathing, but here has a restricted meaning. 27. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, being sent by Christ. 28. It is not a separate metaphysical being, but a ministering spirit. 29. It is properly called holy, 30. and is distinct from Christ. 31. There is one Godhead in the three Persons, but not in three beings. 32. The Holy Spirit is not spoken of in the Old Testament, which is concerned with outward sanctifications, whereas in the New Testament it relates to inward sanctification. The difference between the two is complete. 33. The Comforter was the Spirit sent for a special purpose. 34. The Spirit is given by God, filling all things with divine power, and dwelling in us.

BOOK THE SECOND

44b 1. *No one hath ascended into heaven, but him that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.*¹ Some wonder as to this: Who is this Son of man who was then in heaven? and they do not observe that heaven is wherever CHRIST is. In other circumstances they would also wonder, if CHRIST said to them, *The kingdom of heaven is within you.*² Nor would they believe Paul when he says, *Our citizenship is in heaven;*³ and, *God raised us up with CHRIST, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places.*⁴ We are in heaven when we lay up treasures in heaven.⁵ Likewise, when it says, *He that is but little in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than John the Baptist,*⁶ it means nothing else than that any one of those that are under the Gospel is greater than one that was wholly under the Law. Therefore we too are least in the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, CHRIST said that he that was not far from knowledge of the Gospel was not far from the kingdom of heaven.⁷ And the Apostle said, *Say not in thy heart, who shall ascend into heaven?* for this is the same as if thou didst ask, *Who shall bring CHRIST down from heaven?*⁸ as though he said, *In vain dost thou excuse thyself from the diffi-*

¹ John iii, 13.² Phil. iii, 20.³ Matt. vi, 20.⁴ Mark xii, 34.⁵ Luke xvii, 21.⁶ Eph. ii, 6.⁷ Matt. xi, 11.⁸ Rom. x, 6.

culty of the thing, in vain dost thou ask for what thou hast within, for all this difficulty has been overcome through CHRIST; he has been brought down from above, and brought back from the dead, so that heaven is now within us. Lo, heaven is here. *The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth.*¹ But if thou believest that CHRIST is the Son of God, thou hast ascended into heaven. The spiritual sense, therefore, in John iii. is gathered from the literal order; and as CHRIST there bears witness, those words are not earthly, but heavenly. Hence we ought not to understand them, like Nicodemus, in a carnal sense. And the sense is, Unless one has been born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God; that is, come to knowledge of the Gospel, through which we are made heavenly, having cast off the shadow of the law of those that are earthly. And most of all is he wholly in heaven who brings heaven with himself. And the kingdom of heaven is at hand when CHRIST is at hand; and no one had ascended thither as yet but the Son of man himself, who is in heaven; because *he that cometh from above is above all.*² CHRIST means to say that the kingdom of the Gospel, which is heavenly, was as yet known to none but himself alone; nor can it be made known save to those that believe that he is the Son of God. And note that he says that he has already ascended into heaven; for *ἀναβέβηκεν*³ here is in a past tense, and this can not be understood of another heaven. Nor could the second being then be understood to have ascended. But it was right for him then to say of himself that he had already ascended into heaven, which ascent of the Son of man you will understand in Book IV.⁴ For the present, you may say that he had already ascended to the bosom of the Father; heaven was to him the light unapproachable in which the Father dwells,⁵ and that he ascended into heaven, and is in heaven, means nothing else there than that he is treating of spiritual things in the fulness of the Spirit, and thus was in heaven while he was speaking of heavenly things. And unless you understand it in this way, you will not understand why Paul said, *even to the third heaven.*⁶ And with regard to this you ought to know that

¹ Rom. x, 8.² *Anabebeken*, hath ascended.³ I. Tim. vi, 16.⁴ John iii, 13, 31.⁵ Book IV, paragraph 8.⁶ II. Cor. xii, 2.

for the Hebrews nouns in the dual number have a dual meaning. Hence to them שמים¹ means the two heavens beyond which they do not ascend, because they are flesh. One heaven is that of the air; as, the birds of the heaven, the clouds of heaven, the waters of heaven. The second is that of the ether, the region of the stars. But the spirit, not content with these, ascends further, though I do not mean in a local sense. And thus the spirit of Paul penetrated the third heaven, and this very one is within us. If these heavens are open to any one, as to John and Stephen, he will see CHRIST where he is, will see what it means to say, God created *hashamayim*,² that is, the spiritual dwelling-places of God; and, the light unapproachable³ with which God covers himself as with a garment;⁴ and just what this is, I shall say below.⁵

2. If you do not receive this heavenly teaching of the Master, tell me, why did CHRIST say that he was the Son of man, who had ascended into heaven?⁶ What do you understand by Son of man? For it is a great misuse of language to say that Son of man is the name of a *hypostasis*; and that the more, because this
 46a could not be proved of the *hypostasis*. Hence, speaking against you, he said in plain terms, *the Son of man*; nor could he have spoken more clearly unless perchance you would have had him say, after your own fashion, this human nature, this body, this flesh is in a definite place above the expanse there on high. Again, CHRIST also asks you one thing: *The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?*⁷ And you must reason, along with the Pharisees, whether you admit that it was from heaven. They thought better of heaven than you, since they dared not deny that the baptism of John was from heaven, while you deny that the Son of man, or what you call his human nature, is from heaven. Note also CHRIST's argument from a sufficient enumeration of parts, *from heaven or from men*, as much as to say, that which is not according to man is from heaven. Hence CHRIST is from heaven, because *the second man is from heaven, heavenly*;⁸

¹ *Shamayim*, heavens.

² I. Tim. vi, 16.

³ In paragraph 2.

⁷ Matt. xxi, 25.

² Heb., the heavens.

⁴ Ps. civ, 2.

⁶ John iii, 13.

⁸ I. Cor. xv, 47 (Vulg.).

whatever is above flesh and blood is both from heaven and in heaven.

3. The second question is as to the meaning of the words, *He that seeth me seeth the Father*.¹ If you understand how the Father was in him, and how he was in the Father to such an extent that he did nothing but those things that are the Father's, you will easily understand that in seeing the Father's glory one sees the Father, even as one sees the sun through its radiance. For after he said, *He that seeth me seeth the Father*, he at once added, *Believest thou not that the Father is in me, and I in the Father?*² And consequently he that considers the unsearchable riches of CHRIST,³ and his divinity, will easily arrive at knowledge of the Father; for his very Son, JESUS CHRIST, is called the Word of the Father, because he declares the Father's mind, and gives knowledge of it. This interpretation is confirmed by the text, *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*.⁴ And, *Ye have neither heard his voice, nor seen his form . . . for whom he sent, him ye believe not*.⁵ And, *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also*.⁶ He that has known the power of Holofernes⁷ easily knows how great Nebuchadnezzar was who sent him; for he that sees one sent by another, and receives him, sees also him that sent him.⁸ When the Son is glorified, God is glorified in him.⁹ But neither the Apostles, nor the angels of heaven, have seen any other glorification than the glorification of the Son of man. In fine, to see CHRIST is to know that he is the Word of the Father, and to know what power is in him, and to know whence he came forth, even as he himself said, *Ye both know me, and know whence I am*.¹⁰ Only it is not possible to know these things without knowing the Father. Again, the argument is controverted, for it is impossible that the saying should be understood as referring to the metaphysical being, and to seeing it. For CHRIST says that we are led to knowledge of the Father through him; but how is

¹ John xiv, 9 (Vulg.).

² Eph. iii, 8.

³ John v, 37, 38.

⁴ Judith ii, 4.

⁵ John xiii, 31.

⁶ John xiv, 10.

⁷ John i, 18.

⁸ John viii, 19 (Pagn.); cf. xiv, 17.

⁹ John xii, 45; xiii, 20.

¹⁰ John vii, 28.

that being which is more unknown than the Father himself to lead us to knowledge of the Father?

4. *In the beginning was the Word*; ¹ that is, the utterance or voice of God; because *In the beginning God said, Let there be light: and there was light*; ² and this Word became the true light, when he said, *Let there be light*. And this same Word, this same light, is the man CHRIST, who is the light of the world, ³ *the true light, which lighteth every man, coming into this world*. ⁴ See how the words correspond to one another. Paul makes this very thing clear by the word *εἶπεν*, ⁵ that is, *said*. ⁶ Likewise also Irenaeus; ⁷ for who will bear to wrest Scripture to another sense than that which the proper meaning of the word bears? For *λόγος* ⁸ means not a philosophical being, but an oracle, a saying, a speech, a discourse, a declaration of God; for it is derived from the verb *λέγω*, ⁹ which means *say*; and that the more because the very Genesis of the world indicates the meaning, since God even from the beginning was speaking of CHRIST, and was acting by speaking this Word, so that thus all things are said to exist through CHRIST himself. Origen also says, ¹⁰ What is the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah or to Isaiah or to any prophet you please? I know, he says, of no other word than that of which John said, *In the beginning was the Word*. ¹¹ For in order to
 47b seek the meaning of a word, the passages must be sought in which the Holy Spirit has employed that word; and there is not in the whole Bible a single letter which supports their imaginary meaning of the word. Hence they are rash, and it is far more rash to make out of a word a Son. How, pray, does their doctrine differ from the fictions of the Gentiles, who have the tradition that Mercury means the word through which instruction is conveyed to the understanding, that Paris means feeling, and Minerva bravery? For in like manner they say that the third being means love, and the second knowledge. They take great

¹ John i, 1.

² Gen. i, 1, 3.

³ John ix, 5.

⁴ John i, 9 (Vulg.).

⁵ *Eipon*, said.

⁶ II. Cor. iv, 6, Seeing it is God that *said*, Light shall shine out of darkness, etc.

⁷ Adv. Haeres., III. xi, 8 (MPG. vii, 887; ANF. i, 428; ANCL. v, 293).

⁸ *Logos*, word.

⁹ *Lego*.

¹⁰ Homilia ix (Servetus says vi) super Jeremiam (MPG. xiii, 347).

¹¹ John i, 1.

pride in Platonizing, by multiplying separate beings. To sow disagreements and inconsistencies in the Scriptures is their delight. They explain, *In the beginning*¹ as meaning, in the Father; and, *In the beginning*² as meaning, in the Son. What am I to understand? Do you suppose that the son of Zebedee³ would have been acquainted with such subtle philosophy? I would rather be ignorant of this inharmonious harmony of the Scriptures than know it. But assuming with Tertullian⁴ that each word had its proper meaning, I say that *principium* means beginning, and was thus an appropriate word to be used for things commencing to be made; for nothing that has to be made is without a beginning. And thus the Word is the commencement or beginning of an undertaking, and not the name of any Substance; as though we said, In the end God will do this or that. And when we mean the order of a work, we say, In the beginning a potter made a basin or an urn. Without controversy, 48a then, explain *in the beginning* as meaning, before all things; and wisdom is said to have been made before all things;⁵ because before a man speaks, a meditation of the mind is first required; and because the speech of God is itself wisdom, for God can not speak foolishly. And so Ecclesiasticus explains himself; for after he said, *Wisdom hath been created before all things*,⁶ he at once added, *The word of God is the source of wisdom*;⁷ and, *I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, firstborn before every creature*.⁸ But, that which comes forth from the mouth is speech.

5. Before I proceed further, in order fully to get at John's aim we must know that the older tradition of the Apostles understands by the mystery of the Word a kind of *disposition*⁹ or dispensation in God, by which it pleased him to reveal to us the secret of his will. And this Tertullian very often calls *οικε-*

¹ John i, 1.

² Gen. i, 1.

³ John, as author of the Fourth Gospel.

⁴ Adv. Hermogenem, xx (MPL. ii, 215; ANF. iii, 488; ANCL. xv, 83).

⁵ Prov. viii, 23-31.

⁶ Ecclus. i, 4.

⁷ Ecclus. i, 5 (Vulg.).

⁸ Ecclus. xxiv, 5 (Vulg.).

⁹ cf. the note on these words, Book I, paragraph 41.

48b *νομία*,¹ and Irenaeus calls it *dispositio*.² And just as the speech³ was God, so also according to Irenaeus⁴ the Father himself when he speaks is said to be a *logos*; ⁵ that they may be distinguished from each other just as a being and the *disposition* of the being; as though the being itself were unseen, but were made evident through the sound of words.⁶ For we shall prove below that here is an explanation of this saying.⁷ Hence the Word, in God when he utters it, is God himself speaking. After the utterance is the flesh itself, or the Word of God. Before the speech became flesh the very oracle of God was understood to be within the darkness of the clouds, not being yet manifested; for the speech was God. And after the Word became man, we understand by the Word, CHRIST himself, who is the Word of God, and the voice of God; for, like a voice, it is uttered from the mouth of God. And there is a clear text to prove that he is now the Word of God, for it is he that John saw sitting upon a white horse, whose name is the Word of God.⁸ When, therefore, the change has been made from Word to flesh, the Word is called flesh. For of what use would it be to us that the Word became flesh, if the Word is not now called flesh? For John saw the Word of life, and handled it with his hands.⁹ And Irenaeus especially derides all those that say that the Word of God is a kind of philosophical being; but he declares that JESUS of Nazareth, the very one who was born of Mary, was the Word of God after the Word became flesh. And he says that those who do not acknowledge that this JESUS is the Word of God have no sense.¹⁰ Moreover, who is the bread, what is the flesh from heaven? ¹¹ Surely it is the Word of God, which is the very body of Christ,

Those that admit that the Word of God is a man because the Word became man, must needs admit that the Word of God is flesh, because the Word became flesh; or else flesh will be the name of a *hypostasis*.

¹ *Oikonomia*. Adv. Praxean, ii, iii (MPL. ii, 156-159; ANF. iii, 598 f.; ANCL. xv, 335-339).

² Adv. Haeres., I. vi (MPG. vii, 503; ANF. i, 324; ANCL. v, 25).

³ *Sermo*.

⁴ Adv. Haer., IV. v, xx (MPG. vii, 983 f., 1031 ff.; ANF. i, 467, 487 ff.; ANCL. v, 387, 439 ff.).

⁵ Word.

⁶ Deut. iv, 12; Ex. xx, 18.

⁷ See paragraph 6.

⁸ Rev. xix, 11, 13.

⁹ I. John i, 1.

¹⁰ Adv. Haeres., I. i, 3; III. xxi, 10; xvi, 6; (MPG. vii, 450, 955, 926; ANF. i, 317, 454, 442; ANCL. v, 6, 358 f., 329).

¹¹ John vi, 50, 51.

the very flesh of CHRIST. For whatever is in him has been uttered from the mouth of God, is the Word of God. And the eating of which it there speaks¹ is the food and drink of the Word. And this is just the word of the Gospel, namely, that 49a JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, without which there is no eating of his body, as the Master there clearly explains himself. Come, he says, and believe in me, and ye shall never hunger nor thirst.² I always speak of the flesh, after the manner of John, instead of the man CHRIST himself; and John used this word on purpose to express the man CHRIST more and more, lest perchance one say that CHRIST is a phantom. Into the error which he had once condemned we have slipped in the same way; for it makes no difference whether one says that what appeared to be flesh is a phantom fallen from heaven, or whether we say that a like phantom fallen from heaven is in the flesh, and is united to the flesh in the common and carnal way; since John does not say that the Word was united with, but became, flesh. For quite in the same way Valentinus said that the Savior put on an animal body.³ Let us therefore understand the meaning of John as to how the Word of God became flesh; because God determined his own *dispositions* to be manifested in the flesh, and all those things which God hitherto wrought by his Word, or by his own voice, are now wrought by the flesh, CHRIST, to whom has been committed the rule and all power, who reconciles, renews, sums up all things in himself. It is also understood in very truth that 49b the Word which was in the beginning became flesh, because this flesh was begotten by a voice uttered from the beginning, not otherwise than as if I, uttering a word from my mouth, produced gold or pearls; for then it might be said, properly speaking, that my voice became gold. For the almighty Word of God was able, without the bond of material things,⁴ to change into fleshly substance; and therefore CHRIST himself is now called, the Word become man, the Word become flesh. The Word may also be understood to have become flesh in fulfilment of what is said of CHRIST, *I will put my words in his mouth, and . . . he shall speak*

¹ John vi, 50-58.

² John vi, 35.

³ Adv. Valent., xvi-xviii (MPL. ii, 569-573; ANF. iii, 512 f.; ANCL. xv, 142-145).

⁴ *Rerum coagulum.*

in my name.¹ And CHRIST himself says, *I speak not of myself, but as the Father has taught me, so I speak.*² He is said to be the speech of the Father for the reason that he declares the Father's will, and gives knowledge of him. In the fourth place, the oracle from the darkness of the cloud became flesh, and the answers from God which Moses then received we now receive from the mouth of CHRIST; indeed, the former was a shadow of the latter, and herein is concealed the true meaning which the ancients favor, the deeper mysteries which lie here concealed, of which below.

50a 6. John, therefore, contrary to the Ebionites who denied that Christ was divinely begotten, when about to make known his ineffable birth, shows how he was first of all made CHRIST by the Word of God, saying that he who is now flesh was formerly the *logos*; ³ and that the *logos* was even from the beginning; and the *Word was with God*,⁴ that is, the second being was with the first. What flavor, pray, have these most insipid words: the second being was with the first? For the sound teaching of Christ takes it in another sense, that the Word was with God, since this was a mystery hidden from the beginning in the mind of God, until the fulness of time came, and it was then manifested when the Word became flesh. And so the same John says in his Epistle that the Word of life, which was from the beginning with the Father, was afterwards manifested.⁵ And so Tertullian says, He held discourse with, and in, the very reason within himself, secretly meditating and determining with himself what he was presently to express in speech.⁶ And that speech was God. John foresaw the philosophers who reason thus: *The Word was with God*, hence it was a kind of distinct being; and to make null their misrepresentation he at once added, *And the Word was God*;⁷ that is, as Irenaeus says, the Father himself, when speaking, is said to be the *logos*.⁸ Again, the philosophers ought to have rea-

¹ Deut. xviii, 18, 19.

² John viii, 28.

³ Word.

⁴ John i, 1.

⁵ I. John i, 1, 2.

⁶ Adv. Praxean, v (MPL. ii, 160; ANF. iii, 600; ANCL. xv, 342).

⁷ John i, 1.

⁸ Adv. Haeres., V. xviii, 2 (MPG. vii, 1173-1174; ANF. i, 546; ANCL. ix, 104-105).

soned thus: The Word was with God, therefore it was a kind of being distinct from God; and in that way they might fairly have deduced a plurality of Gods. They will not have it that the Word was with the third being, nor even with the divine Essence, but only with the Father; and thus the divine Essence is something else than God, or else John did not do well to say that the Word was with God. 50b

7. *All things were made through him.*¹ God made all things by his Word: that is, the first being through the second. The first being wrought through the second, took it in his hand as a beast, or as an axe, and therewith cleft and brought wood. Pray search the Scriptures, bring them into harmony, and see whether it could have been more clearly said that all things were made by the Word of God, unless in accordance with what Genesis declares, that God said, let it be made, and it was made.² And the Psalmist says, *By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, . . . for he spake and they were made.*³ And thus Irenaeus distinctly explains.⁴ And in this sense Hebrews xi, 3 and Wisdom ix, 1 are taken.⁵ Nor would John ever have imagined that we should make an utterance of God the proper name of some particular being, especially since he himself refers to that speech which God spoke in the beginning, when he made the world. Also from other passages of Scripture let it be evident that this speaking or utterance of the Word is a naming of CHRIST, by which in Isaiah CHRIST is named under the figure of Abraham; for it says, *Calling a bird from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country; I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass.*⁶ And, *From the rising of the sun he called upon my name.*⁷ And because of this naming or calling it says, *Before the sun* 51a

¹ John i, 3.

² Gen. i, 3.

³ Ps. xxxiii, 6, 9 (Vulg.).

⁴ Adv. Haeres., II. ii, 5; I. xxii, 1; IV. xxxii, 1 (Servetus wrongly cites the last two as I. xix and IV. lii) (MPG. vii, 715, 669, 1071; ANF. i, 362, 347, 506; ANCL. v, 123, 85; ix, 5).

⁵ *The worlds have been framed by the Word of God. Who madest all things by thy Word.*

⁶ Isa. xlv, 11.

⁷ Isa. xli, 25. Servetus has *vocavit* in place of the Vulgate's *vocabit*, perhaps through a Spaniard's natural confusion of *v* with *b*.

יְיָ שֶׁמוֹ,¹ that is, Before the sun will his name be brought forth; for, looking into the future, he said, *He shall be as a son*; ² yet the plan of this sonship is *before the sun*, and this is called, *the dew of his birth: From the womb, from the morning, thou hast the dew of thy birth*.³ Likewise in Isaiah, *The Lord hath called me from the womb*; and, *He hath caused my name to be remembered*.⁴ Read there from chapter xl. to the end, and you shall discover this naming, and how the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.

8. It remains to ask with regard to his generation in what way he is said to be, as the Apostle says, *the firstborn of creatures*.⁵ This primogeniture the Philosophers attribute to the second being, saying, *Who shall declare his generation?* ⁶ But the words of Isaiah are forcibly and perversely wrested with respect to his generation; for he says, *He was rejected among men, a man of sorrows . . . he will be led as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before its shearers he will be dumb . . . who hath declared his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was the stroke given him*.⁷ And so Philip explains to the Eunuch that the man CHRIST is referred to.⁸ For it is he that is the Melchizedek of unknown race, as to whom no
 51b one knew whence he was.⁹ For indeed the mere thought is absurd to utter, that one angel is the son of another, is born of another, or is begotten by another, or that another being is said to be begotten without a body; for that is an affair of the flesh. Nor does one ever read in the Scripture of a begetting of the Word, or of a begetting of the second being, which by a misuse of language they call the *logos*. But properly speaking it is called an utterance of the Word, upon which the begetting of the flesh follows.

9. Again, note this: that when CHRIST is called the firstborn among creatures, he is also noted as being himself the creature

¹ *Yinnin shemo*, his name shall be continued. Ps. lxxii, 17 (Vulg.).

² *Filiabitur*. Ps. lxxii, 17. Servetus here follows a Hebrew text represented in the marginal reading of the English R.V.

³ Ps. cx, 3.

⁴ Isa. xlix, 1 (Pagn.).

⁵ Col. i, 15.

⁶ Isa. liii, 8 (Vulg.).

⁷ Servetus's quotation here (of Isa. liii, 7, 8) conflates Vulg. with Pagn., and by another confusion of *v* with *b* (as above) he makes *enarrabit* read *enarravit*.

⁸ Acts viii, 35.

⁹ Heb. vii, 1-3; cf. John vii, 27.

of God, as well as the firstborn from the dead;¹ because he also was dead. Again, Wisdom says that she was created, and, *He that created me*, and, *I the Lord have created him*.² Paul also, and John, say that he *was made*, nay, *was made out of a woman*.³ Also it is said that he *was made of the seed of David*, and it adds, *according to the flesh*,⁴ in order to distinguish the begetting of the flesh, which is from his mother, from the begetting by his father, which through the Spirit and power of God is from everlasting. And this is the meaning of the very saying of Paul, *according to the flesh*, as appears from Ephesians vi, 5 and Colossians iii, 22, where those having servants are called *masters according to the flesh*; for the reason that through the Spirit of God in CHRIST JESUS there is neither bond nor free, but we are all one.⁵ Likewise they are called *kinsmen according to the flesh*,⁶ because, through the spirit of CHRIST, those that do the will of his Father are his brother and sister.⁷ And all these things are explained 52a according to the thought of John, whose aim was to confound Ebion and Cerinthus,⁸ who asserted that in CHRIST there was only a begetting of the flesh, since from his mother he is born physically, but from his Father he is born from everlasting. Nor is there more than one son born and begotten. Nor could the Philosophers, even had they expressly meant to jest, have spoken more absurdly than by saying that one of the two was begotten and born of a father without a mother, but the other of a mother without a father, all of which they make up out of their own heads. Who ever heard of a begetting without a father, and of being born without a mother? They are so fascinated by their own Ideas that they wonder that I say that flesh is born. But what, pray, can be born but flesh? Nevertheless it is not born from the father; for it is one thing for flesh to be born, another to be physically born. Again, if the Son was the *logos*, born of his

¹ Col. i, 15, 18.

² Eccles. i, 4; xxiv, 8; Isa. xlv, 8 (Vulg.).

³ John i, 14; Gal. iv, 4 (Vulg.).

⁴ Rom. i, 3 (Vulg.).

⁵ Gal. iii, 28.

⁶ Rom. ix, 3.

⁷ Matt. xii, 50.

⁸ Ebion, supposed founder of the Jewish Christian sect of Ebionites; Cerinthus, Gnostic of Asia Minor; both of whom about the end of the first century denied the virgin birth, and taught that Jesus was mere man.

52b Father without a mother, tell me, how did he bear him; through a womb, or through his side? Nor will I permit you here to make up various reasons to suit yourself. For you have learned such errors not from the Scriptures but from the Philosophers. For the begetting of the Son of God was made like the begetting of ourselves. Nor does the Scripture attribute to God either speech, or sonship, or other accidents, save in so far as they are adapted to the usage of men. Whence, then, is this great foolishness that we thus abuse God to suit ourselves? I would rather speak after the manner of common men and not go beyond Scripture, than philosophize foolishly. This manner of speaking the Master taught me; and not only he but all the Scriptures exhibit this manner of speaking. For the words of CHRIST are so familiar that it is utter madness to outrage them by such monstrosities. Again, with regard to what has been said above, the earlier writers admit that the Son is God's creature, and hence created. Thus they do not speak of the metaphysical Nature; and as touching this, I remember having read a quotation of the testimony of Clement,¹ the disciple of Peter whom Paul mentions. Likewise the testimony of the other Clement, of Alexandria,² and of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria,³ whose writings, as well as those of all the others that wrote before the Arian schism, I would that I had seen.

10. Now as to the question why he is called firstborn, Irenaeus says⁴ that neither the Prophets nor the angels in heaven know, nor do I know, how to explain this kind of begetting; yet I will try to argue for it a little. And you should know first that our chief cause of error is that we judge after the flesh about a before or an after in time, regarding actions of God which are not subject to time. With him we do not find *was*, but always find *is*, even as he said, *He that is hath sent me to you; . . . I am that I am:*⁵ Nothing is past to him, all things are present to

¹ The allusion is perhaps to Clementine Homily, XVI. xv (MPG. ii, 378; ANF. viii, 316; ANCL. xvii, 252).

² Perhaps referring to Paedagog., I. ii, viii, or Strom., VII. ii (MPG. viii, 251 ff., 326 ff.; ix, 407 ff.; ANF. ii, 209, 227 f., 524; ANCL. iv, 115 ff., 155 ff.; xii, 409).

³ Ep. ad Dionysium (MPL. v, 125; ANF. vi, 92 ff.; ANCL. xx, 189 ff.). Dionysius in fact here denies this inference from what he had said.

⁴ Passage not identified.

⁵ Ex. iii, 14 (Vulg.).

him, all live unto God;¹ all things are naked and plain in his eyes;² *he calleth the things that are not as those that are*;³ with him a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years;⁴ and it was said, *This day have I begotten thee*,⁵ for the reason that from the beginning of the world even to CHRIST is one day in which the begetting of CHRIST is accomplished. Besides, that there is no difference of times in God is argued by the proper meaning or the usage of the utterances of the Prophets; for they relate future things as past, and then again contrariwise.⁶ And one tense is often used for another, signifying not only the constancy of the matter, but also that in God there are not the three distinctions of time, namely present, past, and future; for the things that are seen are already constant, and are perpetual, to him who sees them. Again, consider how it was before the creation of the world; for the order of the seasons arose as necessary not to God but to man; and to mark these, the lights in the heavens were set in their places. *They shall be*, he says, *for seasons and for days and years*.⁷ Thus neither did he who made time have any time before time began, nor did he who fixed the beginning have any beginning before there was a beginning. And this is in the sight of God a strong reason; nor did God submit himself to time by creating the world.

11. If you now, having drawn back the veil of the intervening time, observe that the hour of the nativity or begetting of Christ is, or was, present to God at the very beginning of the world, you will readily admit that God then uttered his word, spoke, and in uttering begot the Son, namely, him who was manifested in the latter days. But that middle wall of partition⁸ hinders sensual flesh from this sort of knowledge. This is what Isaiah says in great astonishment, *Before she travailed, she brought forth, before the time for her delivery came, she was de-* 53b

¹ Luke xx, 38.

² Heb. iv, 13.

³ Rom. iv, 17 (Vulg.).

⁴ II. Pet. iii, 8.

⁵ Heb. i, 5; v, 5.

⁶ The reference is to the peculiarity of the Hebrew verb, which has only two tenses, representing actions as either finished or unfinished; hence the latter may refer to either future or past time.

⁷ Gen. i, 14.

⁸ Eph. ii, 14.

livered of a man child;¹ for the time of travailing is the very hour of delivery and of birth, only before these things took place, even from the beginning, he called, conceived, and brought him forth before the dawn.² Behold, how gloriously God brought forth the Son whom he decided to beget as his only begotten. It was meet that he be so gloriously begotten, who had been ordained to be the judge of the living and the dead.³ At the very lifting of my eyes to see him at the right hand of the Father in heaven, I tremble when I hear him called *the human nature* by you. Do you not see that it is he that governs all things? This alone, if you look on high, is sufficient reason for his being called not only Son of God, but God and Lord of the world. Hence by reason of the utterance made at the beginning, he himself is said to be the beginning, and for the same reason must be said to be
 54a the firstborn, for he must be said to have been born in the beginning; for the utterance made in the beginning is its very self the begetting of the flesh, as the wisdom which is the mystery of Christ makes clear to us; for it calls itself the firstborn among creatures⁴ for the reason that from the beginning, as I have said, it was made together with speech. And Paul, noting this mystery, calls CHRIST the firstborn, who he says is the wisdom of God.⁵ Moreover, Paul also confirms this view, for he says that God foreordained the elect, whom he also called *to become conformed to the image of his Son, that he himself may be the firstborn among many brethren*.⁶ For the elect are said to be called after his likeness, and to follow the image of his begetting; because he himself was elect first, and was called and brought forth first of all as a pattern of every calling, and thus is called the firstborn among the elect in a more exceptional way than among other creatures.

12. I had said in the discussion why it was said, *This day have I begotten thee*, in order not only to overthrow the proof which they draw from this, but also to show that their philosophy is vain who from this saying conclude that the second being is begotten, is produced, and emanates from the first daily and by

¹ Isa. lxvi, 7.

² Acts x, 42.

³ I. Cor. i, 24.

⁴ Ps. cix, 3 (Vulg.).

⁵ Col. i, 15.

⁶ Rom. viii, 29 (Vulg.).

continuous succession. Nor do they blush to fasten upon God a transient action so imperfect and changeable, as though the Son were a kind of something left over, brought forth in the same way in which they dream of time and motion; and what is more, I have explained from Scriptures not understood by them, therefore in view of their comparative foolishness, on what day of the world it could have been said, *This day have I begotten thee*. But now let us look further into the meaning of this saying, so that they may realize that they can not go astray, as to why Paul said Jesus was raised, *as it is written in the Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*.¹ For although Paul seem to have spoken foolishness, yet is his wisdom profound. And the meaning of this matter is found where Paul also says that JESUS CHRIST *was through the spirit ἁγιωσύνης*² (which was in David himself) *determined to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead*.³ And this determination or declaration of David is found in Psalm ii, 7, and in II. Samuel xxii, 51; xxiii, 1. And this determination from the fact that he rose again is made for the reason that by his resurrection CHRIST is glorified. All authority, inheritance, and rule were then given to him, even as he himself testifies, *All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth*.⁴ Paul therefore said, *in power*; and those that rise in his likeness will rise in power,⁵ as CHRIST declares against the Sadducees.⁶ For it is sown in weakness, and it will rise in power.⁵ And with respect to this power of the resurrection of CHRIST, David said, in the Psalm cited above, *Ask of me, I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, and thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron*.⁷ And what is there spoken of as a *potter's vessel*, it elsewhere calls *the mire of the streets*.⁸ This I say that you may not despise history. Of the same *rod of iron* and fulness of power which CHRIST received through his resurrection, John makes mention.⁹ Referring to this day, CHRIST said, Hence-

The passage in Rom. i. was never understood.

This declaration of sonship furnishes the strongest proof that the Son is not the being, but a man.

¹ Acts xiii, 33.

² Rom. i, 4.

³ I. Cor. xv, 43.

⁴ Ps. ii, 8, 9.

⁵ Rev. ii, 27; xix, 15.

² *Hagiosunes*, of holiness.

⁴ Matt. xxviii, 18.

⁶ Matt. xxii, 29.

⁸ II. Sam. xxii, 43.

forth the Son of man will be sitting at the right hand of the power of God.¹ Then also, The kingdom of God cometh with power,² even as the Son of God also comes with power.³ For here, as also in Romans i, 4, it says *ἐν δυνάμει*,⁴ that is, with power, or in strength. And it not only says, with power, and because of the special power of CHRIST himself and his kingdom, but also because *with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of CHRIST*; ⁵ and because God employed his great power, strength, force, and might in CHRIST when he raised him from the dead.⁶ And so Paul is wont to employ the saying of the Psalmist for no other purpose than that in a new way he may show CHRIST's glorious power after his resurrection; how seated above angels at the right hand of the Father he abides there a priest forever.⁷

55b 13. David, therefore, considering that he was then to be born again, and that salvation was then being procured for us, proclaims that he, as it were a new-born man, was made the mighty Son, for on that day will be manifested the great power with which *I have begotten thee*; on that day it will be manifested that *thou art my Son*,⁸ as if I had then begotten thee. And so the Chaldaean paraphrast ⁹ reads, *as if I had created thee on that day*; for unless he had risen from the dead it would not have been meet that he be believed to be the Son of God, nor would the Apostles have believed it, for they had all lost hope. So in every way, with respect to both himself and us, he is called to-day the Son of God, he is born to-day who now is, and before was not; he has passed over to-day from the birth of a mortal body to an incorruptible birth. Hence he is understood to have been then born, because he was born again, and born as it were with full authority, a new man newly created king; and so CHRIST said, new in his Father's kingdom.¹⁰ Others explain it as meaning, This day have I begotten thee as king. Paul begets new men;¹¹

¹ Matt. xxvi, 64.

² Mark ix, 1.

³ Matt. xxiv, 30; Mark xiii, 26; Luke xxi, 27.

⁴ *En dunamei*.

⁵ Acts. iv, 33.

⁶ Eph. i, 19, 20; Phil. iii, 21.

⁷ Heb. i, 3, 4; v, 6.

⁸ Ps. ii, 7; Heb. i, 5.

⁹ i. e., the Targums.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvi, 29.

¹¹ I. Cor. iv, 15.

for all these things relating to his image apply to us, that we may become conformed to the image of the Son of God.¹ And after the likeness of him that was born again, we say that we are born again, since, when the flesh has been buried through baptism, we rise again through the power of the Spirit and are born again; and he that is born again is said to be born. And we are all said to be born and begotten in Zion, and Zion is called our mother,² and he is said then to be born in a new way, because in a new way he is the firstborn from the dead.³ 56a

14. Again, this meaning is rendered indubitable from history, for that Psalm as well as the following one was written when the princes of the Jews had conspired with Absalom against David, as was also done against CHRIST.⁴ For they raged, and with Ahithophel they imagined vain things against David his CHRIST;⁵ and there, as also in the Psalm following, mention is made of his resurrection, namely, that he was rescued from perils; and then he says, To-day have I been begotten. And this we, too, when we escape from great peril, are wont to say: To-day I have been born. And the most correct explanation is this: This day have I begotten thee as king, as clearly appears where David says of the same day, *I know that I have this day been made king over Israel*;⁶ and to this meaning he adds his escape from the hand of Saul;⁷ which things all speak of the resurrection of CHRIST. And in II. Samuel xxiii, as well as in Psalm ii, according to Paul,⁸ he proclaims CHRIST as the Son of God through the Holy Spirit, applying to him from this day all the explanations concerning the resurrection. This, saith he, has been ordained concerning me, so that this day I have been born to God as Son and king; Son, I say, exalted and with power, even as he said, I will give thee an inheritance, and a rod of iron.⁹ Marvelous Paul, and marvelous explanation! for in the words, *This day have I begotten thee*, lies the explanation of his sonship; and the prophet at a single stroke includes the two things as following from the resurrection. 56b

¹ Rom. viii, 29.⁴ Acts iv, 26.⁶ II. Sam. xix, 22 (Vulg.).⁸ I. Cor. xii, 3.² Gal. iv, 26.⁵ i. e., anointed.⁷ II. Sam. xxii, 1, 49; Ps. xviii, 50.⁹ Ps. ii, 8, 9.³ Col. i, 18.

15. I can not here refrain from sighing, when I see the replies that Rabbi Kimchi made against the Christians on this point.¹ I find the reasons with which they sought to convince him so obscure that I can not but weep. They said it was understood as speaking of the mathematical Son: *this day*, that is, before all worlds, *have I begotten thee*. They most foolishly make an aeon out of *this day*, although in the Hebrew the demonstrative pronoun is used, indicating *this day*. While leaving the literal meaning, neither he nor they knew to what the spiritual meaning refers. They argued against him that the literal meaning did not refer to David; he argued against them that the spiritual meaning of the prophet did not refer to CHRIST. Yet since the one reasoning can not stand without the other, it would else be idle to say that David is a type of CHRIST. Moreover, what blinder thing can be said than to deny that it was said of Solomon, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son*?² There is a clear text referring to him in I. Chronicles.³ It speaks of them, but in a higher sense than can be appropriate to them, so that from this it easily appears that the spirit refers to something else, especially since there are words intermingled which can by no means be appropriate to them, as of the eternity of his throne and kingdom. For this is said to Solomon himself; but it is not
 57a said of him on his own account, but only in so far as he is a representative of CHRIST. Here you clearly see that it is under the type of a man that the man is called Son. This reason is very strong, if you have an understanding of history; or else you will say, with the Jews, that here is only sonship in a parabolic sense; for the true sonship, which is in JESUS CHRIST, was under a shadow in Solomon and David. These words are not parabolic, but they have very great force; yet to infer the sonship of the second being from the type of a man is a blind fancy; neither a kind of type nor any form of representation can be applied here.

¹ cf. The Longer Commentary of R. David Kimchi on the First Book of Psalms, tr. R. G. Finch, London, 1919, p. 15, com. on Ps. ii, 7: "Every one who is obedient to the voice of God he calls his son." So Deut. xiv, 1; II. Sam. vii, 14; Hos. ii, 1 . . . "On this day there was born in him the spirit of God." So I. Sam. xvi, 13.

² II. Sam. vii, 14; Heb. i, 5.

³ I. Chron. xxii, 11; xxviii, 6.

16. Some are scandalized that I call CHRIST a prophet, for inasmuch as they have not this custom themselves, it seems to them to be Judaism or Mohammedanism if CHRIST is called a prophet. Nor do they care whether Scripture and the earlier writers call him a prophet. They ask me whether I assume two Natures as hypostatically united in CHRIST. But how far they are off the track in this matter by taking the name of the Word as meaning a Nature, and how great is their profane abuse of this hypostatic union, will appear below.¹ For the present, I say, to satisfy the purpose of their question, that the whole Nature and Essence of God is in CHRIST, though they would have one part in him represent the Nature of God. Just as the Ebionites make JESUS a mere man of the seed of David, not the same as the Son of God, so it seems to them that we call CHRIST simply a kind of prophet, or purely a man, even as any of us; nor can they otherwise see any difference except they bring in a kind of incarnate being, which they declare is by a carnal and more than profane union joined to his whole human nature, both flesh and bones and sinews, so that from this there arise as many and as foolish questions as possible. And the words which CHRIST spoke they do not understand as referring to him that spoke them, but all the glory is referred to the being, as Valentinus ascribed it to his aeons; as though CHRIST lied, or spoke of the separate being under a sort of deceitful disguise. And do not speak to me of one Substance, or one Person, after you clearly see that these inventions are not derived from the Scriptures; and in what follows you will realize that you have been deceived by these misuses of terms. Can there be a greater insult than for you, while I am speaking, to deny that I exist, or to deny that what I ascribe to myself belongs to me? CHRIST was not speaking to philosophers, who were already learned with regard to the *hypostasis*, but to the common people, to children and women.

17. That you may therefore have knowledge of the true CHRIST apart from the imaginations of the philosophers, give heed how these more than Ebionites despoil the true Christ of all but his bare human nature, nor raise their eyes to regard his

¹ Book IV, paragraph 12.

ineffable generation which took place from the beginning from the Substance of God; nor regard him, all full of the divinity of the Father, all radiant with divine light. Oh, that you had beheld his glory on the mount, when his raiment was white as the light, and his face shone as the sun,¹ and you would say with John, *We beheld his glory.*² But if no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father,³ why am I here tormented? Knowledge of him is wisdom hidden in a mystery, which had they known they would by no means have crucified the Lord of glory.⁴ And if you would understand the mystery, he is himself the ineffable voice of God which spoke to Abraham, Moses, and the rest; he himself is the Word which gave commandments to Adam himself, and that same Word against which Adam sinned gives remission, after sins, to them that believe. Nor shall you marvel that he is the Son of man. *Greater works than these will God show him, that ye may marvel.*⁵ For *who is this*, think you, *that the wind and the sea obey him,*⁶ to whom *all authority hath been given in heaven and on earth,*⁷ and *all things whatsoever the Father hath are his,*⁸ and whom the Father *made to sit at his right hand*⁹ on an equality with himself? And the Son himself, and the *hypostasis* of the Creator, since he is God in spirit, is able to lay down his life, and to take it again,¹⁰ because the Word of God does not die. For since God *giveth not the Spirit by measure,*¹¹ so great is the power of his spirit that all things that are said of him are more than human; and although they say that this being died and suffered even as a man, and that thus two died and were crucified, yet I maintain with the earlier writers that he was God and man — in one respect born, in another not born; in one respect flesh, in another spirit; in one respect weak, in another very strong; in one respect dying, in another living — and in fact the earlier writers admit that man was mingled with God, since God was born as a man, Emanuel. Yet it is not God that dies, but man; it is not the soul that dies, but the flesh. Who can but

These words are warped and twisted by them to bear another meaning, and yet they evidently prove our case.

¹ Luke ix, 29.

² I. Cor. ii, 7, 8.

³ Mark iv, 41.

⁴ John xvi, 15.

⁵ John x, 18.

⁶ John i, 14.

⁷ John v, 20.

⁸ Matt. xxviii, 18.

⁹ Eph. i, 20.

¹⁰ John iii, 34.

¹¹ Matt. xi, 27.

laugh at the *communicatio idiomatum*, which bids me believe that angels of God can die?

This they admit: that if angels put on an ass's body, then angels too will be asses.

They speak of man as if of pure flesh.

18. And note this one teaching of the Master: that all words soever that are from CHRIST are spirit and life. Hence it is spiritually to be understood that CHRIST is God; for as he is not called man without having flesh, so he is not called God without having the Spirit of God. And thus if you regard the spirit you should no more deny that one who shares both Substances is God than you deny that he is man; because *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*,¹ and *God is a spirit*;² and since his spirit was wholly God, he himself is called God, even as from his flesh he is called man. And do not marvel that I adore as God him whom you call the human nature; for you are wont to treat the human nature as though it had no part in the Spirit; you regard the flesh, and judging after the flesh you can not comprehend what the spirit of CHRIST is like, which gives the matter its being, and is that which giveth life, when the flesh profiteth nothing.³ All this is, as it were, only a prelude to arriving at the ineffable divinity of CHRIST (of which we shall speak below).⁴ Let this suffice for the present, that you may know those to be the true Ebionites who make him out a man, or a mere human nature, and take from him all that should be ascribed to the true CHRIST, that they may philosophize at their own pleasure. Their magisterial metaphysics knows only this: that CHRIST, or the Son, must not be separated from the Nature of God. To which, though it be their invention, I shall reply, and in replying I ask of what CHRIST or Son they are speaking; for the one whom they portray, whether as the Son or as CHRIST, I do not so separate, because he is nothing. For the Word of John once existed, but now there is no such Word, as I shall show below;⁵ and this John clearly indicates, always saying of this being, *was*, though it never says, *is*. To declare that, therefore, to be null which is nothing is no blasphemy in them, yet it is a great and evident blasphemy; for that he whom I call CHRIST is really something, they can not deny; yet once fallen to disputing about

59a

6

59b

¹ John iii, 6.

² John iv, 24.

³ John vi, 63.

⁴ Book VII, paragraph 4, 5.

⁵ Book IV, paragraph 8.

Christ, they deny that he is the CHRIST, and they reject a mere man as being far removed from the Father. Hence I do not separate him from God any more than a voice from him that utters it, or a ray from the sun; for CHRIST is in the Father as the voice is in him that utters it, and he and the Father are one, as the ray and the sun are one light. For it is a wonderful mystery that thus joins God to man and man to God, and wonderfully has God made the body of CHRIST his own, that it might be his own tabernacle for him to dwell in.

19. Of the Holy Spirit I have already said that God gives us his Spirit only in this way, that he gives us the breath of life.¹ For life is not derived from us, nor from our nature, but is given according to the grace of God; and by the breath of God upon a mass of clay man is made a living soul.² Yet the philosophers believe thus: that God bestowed his power upon elements and stars, as though he despoiled himself of it; they believe that we are kept in being by breathing the very air, as though by a property of nature, no account being taken of the grace of God; which is a most ungrateful falsehood. Nay, it must be said that the energy and life-giving spirit of the Godhead are in that substance which is breathed in and out; for he by his spirit keeps the breath of life in us, giving breath unto the people that are upon earth, and spirit to them that walk therein;³ he alone shaketh the heavens,⁴ bringeth forth the winds out of his treasures,⁵ bindeth up the water in the clouds of heaven,⁶ giveth rain in its season;⁷ he alone doing all these things, always doing marvelous things alone.

20. To come bluntly to the Holy Spirit, we begin with the Spirit of God; for the philosophers, not knowing this energy of the Deity, have been unable to understand why the blowing of the wind could be called the Spirit of God.⁸ Nor do they care whether God sends it to us out of his treasures and flows into us through it. Therefore let them know henceforth that God his

¹ cf. Book I, paragraph 43. Ezek. xxxvii, 5, 6, 14.

² Gen. ii, 7.

³ Isa. xlii, 5.

⁴ Hag. ii, 21.

⁵ Jer. x, 13.

⁶ Job xxvi, 8.

⁷ Jer. v, 24.

⁸ Gen. i, 2.

very self is acting in the wind's very substance. Lo, God himself is as present in thy mouth, in thy breath, within and without thee, as though thou shouldst touch him with thy hand.¹ By the moving of his Spirit are the powers of the heavens moved.² The matter of which the world is made is a lifeless thing unless it were kept in motion by the Spirit of God. All this the philosophers admit, yet forthwith, because they are speaking of the Spirit of God, they forget what I by myself have well enough learned from their teachings, speaking of meeting God as though his dwelling-place were above and not near at hand. In speaking of the Spirit of God it was enough for me if I understood that the third being was in a sort of corner. But now I know, what he himself said: *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off*;³ now I know that God's universal Spirit fills the earth, encompasses 606 all things, and produces the power in every man. With the prophet I would cry out, *O Lord, whither shall I go from thy spirit?*⁴ since neither above nor below is there any place without the Spirit of God.

The difference between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God.

21. This about the Spirit of God is a prelude to [what I have to say of] the Holy Spirit; for the kind of holiness which is joined to the action of the Spirit of God means nothing philosophical; for the Spirit of God acts within and without, but it is what is within that is sanctified. Hence let us note the difference between breath and spirit, for it is called breath when it comes from without; but when acting within it illuminates and sanctifies the spirit of man. The Spirit is called Holy; for we are not said to receive a breath; but when the breath comes, we receive the Spirit, so that when he has breathed on them with his mouth, CHRIST says, *Receive ye the Holy Spirit*.⁵ Wind also differs from spirit, because properly speaking a spirit is said to be in the wind as in a substance, in so far as it is a life-giving power; and wind is taken as an evil, as when it is called a pestilent and consuming wind. But when he sends his Spirit, he acts kindly. Spirit is also a more general term than wind. From this, the subject of the Spirit, so far as concerns the Old Testament,

¹ Acts xvii, 28.

² Jer. xxiii, 23.

⁵ John xx, 22.

² Matt. xxiv, 29; Luke xxi, 26.

⁴ Ps. cxxxix, 7.

is much cleared up; for the Spirit of the power of God can not be understood without the instruments with which its action is bound up.

61a 22. I have said above ¹ what else can be understood by the paraclete, and this is also drawn from their words; for they say that appearances of fire are something proper to the Holy Spirit, though these occur by means of angels, as when the Lord appeared to Moses in the bush; ² and through an angel the voice of the Lord there came to Moses.³ Hence, according to this, the voice of God uttered through the mouth of the angel is called the voice of the Holy Spirit. And after the Holy Spirit descended upon JESUS, he said, *Verily I say unto you, ye shall see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*⁴ And Isidore, from the fact that it says, *He shall declare unto you the things that are to come,*⁵ infers that it was an angel, because angel bears the meaning of messenger.⁶ Add to this the fact that all angels are called *ministering spirits, sent forth to do service,*⁷ and, *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.*⁸ And this is the flame of fire which appeared in Acts ii, 3. Again, just as an angel is called a lying spirit,⁹ so in a contrary passage an angel is to be called the spirit of truth and the Holy Spirit, even as it also says, *Spirits of God.*¹⁰

61b 23. It is true that in the Scriptures separate mention is made of angel and spirit, for what is done by outward understanding, speech, or revelation is said to be done by an angel, as though it were done by some man; but what is done inwardly, or so to speak by way of a breath, or of a dove, as it were a winged breath, is said to be from the Spirit. In consequence of this, note that neither the appearance of fire in the bush, nor the appearance of a cloud, is ever called the Holy Spirit, although the service of the angel was there quite as well. The reason of the dif-

Scripture observes the manners of the appearances.

¹ Book I, paragraph 43.

² Ex. iii, 2.

³ Acts vii, 30.

⁴ John i, 51.

⁵ John xvi, 13.

⁶ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, VII. iii, 3 (MPL. lxxxii, 268).

⁷ Heb. i, 14.

⁸ Heb. i, 7.

⁹ I. Kings xxii, 22, 23; II. Chron. xviii, 21, 22.

¹⁰ Rev. iv, 5; v, 6.

ference is that there he did not appear by way of a breath; only that which is not spirit can not be called the Holy Spirit.

24. Likewise there is a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God, because it is called Holy when it is sent to make our spirits holy, as I shall say below;¹ but it is called the Spirit of God when it is sent into all the earth.²

25. Again, note that it is a Person of the Godhead; that when the angel speaks he says, *I am the God of thy fathers*; ³ as also the angel said to Jacob, *I am the God of Beth-el*; ⁴ for the name of God is said to be in him; ⁵ and, *In hearing his voice*, it says, *thou shalt hear the things that I speak*.⁶ Wherefore Origen says, I think that just as the Lord was found among us men in form as a man, so among angels he was found in form as an angel;⁷ and although this saying be false in its intention, yet how far it has regard for the truth I shall say below.⁸

26. These things contribute to our purpose in this respect, that we understand that the *dispositions* of God which are performed by angels are marvelous; nor let any one's feelings be provoked if I call the Holy Spirit an angel, as well as an outward breath; since he calls himself God. Nor is Holy Spirit the natural name for him any more than for a breath of air. Besides, an angel is nothing else than a breath of God.⁹ And this very thing is by the Hebrews called a blowing and a breathing. In its original sense, therefore, it is appropriate to God alone, as an affair of one who breathes, and of holiness. But in an instrumental sense it is applied to a breath which he uses as his messenger; and however many discussions about the Holy Spirit there are in the Scriptures, they would all be easy if we understood how those spirits are in God, and what name and power of God is in them, of which below.

27. That we may define the Holy Spirit more clearly, let us see how the Spirit also *proceeds* from the Son; for he gives us the Spirit, saying, *The words which thou gavest me, I have given unto*

They all
speak so-
phistically
of this
procession.

¹ In paragraph 29.

³ Ex. iii, 6; Acts vii, 32.

⁵ Ex. xxiii, 21.

⁷ In Genesim, Hom. viii, ad Gen. xxii, 10 ff. (MPG. xii, 208).

⁸ In Book IV, paragraph 6.

² Rev. iv, 5; v, 6.

⁴ Gen. xxxi, 13.

⁶ Ex. xxiii, 22.

⁹ Ps. civ, 4.

them.¹ For the Spirit is derived from the Word, and if his words abide in us, the Spirit flows from us as rivers of living water.² See also the reasoning of the Master: *He shall take of mine, saith he, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine.*³ And when it says, *proceeds*, the Greek is ἐκπορεύεται, which some would have mean, *sets out*, rather than *proceeds*; likewise it also means to *go out*; ⁴ and as many as are sent by God, as messengers, are all said to go out from his face, and also to proceed and to set out, as I could prove from many other passages of Scripture where the same Greek word is used. Indeed, when a man sets out anywhere, it is expressed by this word. But investigate for yourself, for Scripture interprets itself clearly if you rightly compare passage with passage.

As for the interpretation, they seek it not from other passages of Scripture, but by metaphysics.

28. Nor will other passages of Scripture suggest to you those metaphysical and inner emissions of beings; but setting out in visible character from the Father, sent by CHRIST, it came to the Apostles. And CHRIST sent it, just as if I, drawing something forth from the bowels of my father, imparted it to my brethren. And this is what CHRIST says: Whom I will send unto you from the Father; ⁵ and it is sent by God through JESUS CHRIST.⁶ For all things are given us by the Father, yet through JESUS CHRIST. And Peter, proclaiming this very thing, says, *Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this gift, which ye see.*⁷ And in this the Psalmist agrees with Paul: *When he ascended on high, he received and gave gifts* — received them from the Father, and gave them *unto men.*⁸ For in the saying of Peter there is a clear agreement, and CHRIST said that he was from the Father, as much as to intimate that the Spirit would not be a deceiver, but would be from God; as John says, *Prove the spirits, whether they are of God.*⁹ For the words of the Master present a teaching rather than philosophical disputes.

63a CHRIST suggests here nothing metaphysical except what is often

¹ John xvii, 8.

² John xvi, 14, 15.

³ John xv, 26.

⁴ Acts ii, 33.

⁵ I. John iv, 1.

² John xv, 7; vii, 38.

⁴ *Proficiscitur . . . procedit . . . egredi.*

⁶ Tit. iii, 6.

⁸ Eph. iv, 8; Ps. lxxviii, 18.

said in the Hebrew: I will put my Spirit within you, He sent his Spirit, A Spirit went forth from God.¹ Yet nothing else had gone forth but some outward breath. Of these Hebrew expressions, which led them astray as to the Word, I shall speak in Book VII.² For as the Word sets out from God, when he speaks, in order that a thing may be done anywhere, so his Spirit sets out from him anywhither when he intends some result anywhere. In fine, expound it thus: He who sets out from the Father, that is, whom the Father gives. The Master there teaches us to ask the Father for the Spirit, since he is himself the Father of spirits; and unless he himself has given us the Spirit, there is no light at all in us. And CHRIST teaches that the Spirit is from the Father, saying that he gives the good Spirit to them that ask him;³ for he pours it out plentifully and liberally.⁴ Again, if you read with clear sight, all the words of Christ are concerning the Spirit which he was going to send upon the Apostles.⁵ It is something altogether silly to infer from these words eternal processions of aeons, and to be mad with this Cabalistic⁶ metaphysics. But this matter is settled on other grounds. First, that the *disposition*⁷ is a power and gift from God. Second, that the being that comes is itself a messenger, or a ministering spirit sent by CHRIST. Third, that in this messenger is the *hypostasis* itself, or the very image of the Godhead, as I shall show below.⁸ Fourth, that all these things aim at the sanctification of our spirits. Yet the one who thus visibly sets out, who shall not speak from himself,⁹ who shall take of Christ,¹⁰ is truly a ministering spirit, or else there is no ministering spirit in heaven. 63b

29. And he is also called the Spirit of truth, and the Holy Spirit; and consequently, as we have spoken of an external breath, much more may we speak of a ministering Spirit. It is not to be wondered at if, being separated by God for a certain

¹ Ezek. xxxvi, 27; Judith xvi, 14; Ps. civ, 30; Wisdom ix, 17.

² Paragraph 12.

³ Luke xi, 13 (Vulg.).

⁴ Joel ii, 28; Tit. iii, 6.

⁵ Acts ii, 1-4.

⁶ The Cabala was a mystical system of interpretation of the Scriptures, current in the Middle Ages among both Jews and Christians, and assigning an occult meaning to the letters and numbers of Scripture.

⁷ cf. note to paragraph 41, Book I.

⁸ Book VI, paragraph 4.

⁹ John xvi, 13.

¹⁰ John xvi, 14.

work, he is called Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God; for they set out from the profounder treasures of God, and in a far more remarkable way God makes them his own by his own acts. CHRIST also often calls the holy ones angels.¹ If, then, what God employs is a spirit, and a sort of holiness is appropriate to it, why shall it not be called the Holy Spirit? And, to make few words of it, every breath, every breathing and impulse of the mind through which God breathes, is called holy, and accordingly the Holy Spirit, or a holy spirit, or the Spirit of God. Nor is there any other briefer explanation of this word; and it is not a single expression, but two: holy, and spirit. And in Greek it is written now the Holy Spirit, now a holy spirit;² indeed, in Hebrew it is expressed, Spirit of holiness. This at least is a good point against those who
 64a hold to their usage so strictly that they are scandalized if one little word be changed. And I would that they might give up their metaphysical habit of speaking, because they would then consider the heavenly spirits not in accordance with the Nature of a being (for of this Scripture never makes mention), but as to how far the very image of the Godhead shines forth in them, that all things may at length tend to the glory of God. For for this reason they are called the souls of God, and the spirits of God; and the very names of the angels indicate this, since nothing else about them is perceived by us save the power of God, the healing of God, which are God, as it were, and manifest nothing else than the brightness of the *hypostasis* of God, although they are appointed for our service.

Scripture
never
takes
Natures
into ac-
count.

30. After this, it is for me very easy to say, another Comforter; and I speak truly of an otherness of the being, for he said of a distinct being without qualification, *He shall take of mine.*³ And he is said by CHRIST to be another, and something other, unless perchance you take *other* as marking a lack of harmony; for in that case I shall not admit that the comforting Spirit is something other than CHRIST. On the contrary, they are one.

31. In this sense the Holy Spirit testifies as to what I refrained from mentioning above: that when the Spirit descended

¹ Matt. xiii, 39, 41, 49; xxvi, 53; Mark xiii, 27; Luke xvi, 22.

² *Sanctus spiritus . . . spiritus sanctus.*

³ John xvi, 14.

upon CHRIST in the Jordan, he bore distinct witness to John, distinctly witnessed that this JESUS is the Son of God,¹ whom you deny to be the Son of God. And to prove this, John appealed to his witness; and these three are one because they agree, and they are one because they are distinguished by marks of one and the same divinity. Behold the singular, *one*, which you were seeking; and in a most singular way are they said to be one, because in the three there is one and the same Godhead. And so I admit one Person of the Father, another Person of the Son, another Person of the Holy Spirit; and I admit Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three Persons in one Godhead; and this is the true Trinity. But I should prefer not to use a word foreign to the Scriptures, lest perchance in future the philosophers have occasion to go astray. And I have no controversy with the earlier writers, because they employed this word sensibly. But may this blasphemous and philosophical distinction of three *beings* in one God be rooted out from the minds of men.

32. By this means another account is settled, of which many stand in dread, namely, why the term Holy Spirit is more frequently employed in the New Testament than in the Old. For from this it seems to them that the new being is revealed anew, just because, by the addition of a single note, CHRIST said, *the Comforter, even the Spirit*.² To the first it is replied that this is not for the reason that in the New Testament God has just arrived; for there is no other God than the God of our fathers, יהוה,³ and he is the Father of JESUS CHRIST. And the reason of the difference, which you are seeking, is this: that the Jews were not concerned, as we are, with making the Spirit holy. Therefore they neither knew the Holy Spirit, nor had they heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.⁴ For with them the question was only about a certain material sanctification, which is effected by outward anointings and touchings, so that a thing that one has touched is called sanctified.⁵ But now our ointments and spiritual sacrifices have a greater odor of sweetness than their fatted sacrifices or the whole burnt offerings which God then smelt.

¹ Matt. iii, 17.

² John xiv, 16, 17, 26; xv, 26.

³ Jehovah.

⁴ Acts xix, 2 (Vulg.).

⁵ Ex. xxix, 37; Lev. vi, 18, 27.

And the latter differ from the former as the spirit from the letter, the truth from the shadow. For we have to do with an inward anointing and sanctification, which is effected in the spirit and by the Spirit; therefore we call the Spirit holy, and we are all holy. And we are baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit for the reason that, being dead to the law¹ and buried in the flesh, we may always be mindful only of the sanctification of the spirit. And although they, when the question is about the Spirit, are content with the outward breathing, yet in the New Testament the consideration about the Holy Spirit is different; because since we are always dealing with an inward sanctification, we consider the Holy Spirit as it is in us, and not as it comes from without. But in the Old Testament the breathing coming from without is called a holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God.² And
 65b when the spirit is prayed for, they could understand it as an outward spirit. But we, when we pray for that, understand an enlightening of the mind. Hence in these matters the usage and intention of Scripture is to be heeded. And mark these differences; for they always treated of things in an outward fashion. They called upon the Spirit of God, whereas we always call upon the Holy Spirit for the different reason which I have mentioned, that a kind of sanctity was not yet ascribed to the Spirit. Neither the word spirit, nor the word holy, is new. But formerly spirit was regarded otherwise, and there was another kind of holiness, than now. Then the flesh was made holy; but now the spirit is holy. And this is indicated when the words are joined together, and a kind of holiness is ascribed to the Spirit. From this it is evident that it is not a separate being; but every holiness of spirit is referred to man; and, excepting the messenger who when he descends is called the Holy Spirit, I say that nothing else outside of man is called the Holy Spirit. And John well said, *The Spirit was not yet*,³ though they are unwilling to have the words stand as God uttered them, as though God were in need of their lying. For in the very act of giving it says, Holy Spirit; nor is it said to be before it is given. And now I say that

¹ Rom. vii, 4.

² Ps. li, 12; Wisdom ix, 17; Gen. i, 2; Ex. xxxi, 3; Num. xxiv, 2; II. Chron. xxiv, 20.

³ John vii, 39.

there is no longer a Holy Spirit, it is nowhere, because no one believes that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God; for in the same passage this proof is conclusive.

33. Nor let it vex you that CHRIST, adding the article, said *the Comforter*; for, if I have decided to send one of my messengers to you at a certain time, I shall say to you, The messenger whom I send from my father's house will be a truthful man, or he will do thus and so. Again, if you refer to what was said above, the sense of the words of CHRIST is very clear. For he says, The messenger (he, that is, who I said is to be sent to you), *he shall teach you*.¹ And this sense is so appropriate that it can be understood by a mere grammarian. For after CHRIST had said that they should have another true Comforter in place of him, he added to it, *The Comforter*, that is, the one of whom I spoke, is not any man, but is *the Spirit*, separated by the Father, to be sent to *teach you all things*. Add to this that the Greek article has not so much force as a relative pronoun, so that you may suppose that a being is there indicated. Again, the office of the messenger was there a single one, and the appearance, or person, of the divinity was single. Thus it could be represented by the singular article, and by a special mark, because the like was never seen either in the Prophets or in other men.

34. Finally, if we wish to compare the Spirit with the Word, let us say that as the Word is said to come forth from the womb and the heart, so our spirit should be said to have been given us by God from the inner chambers of his heart. And God is said to give us his Spirit, as if I said, I give you my bowels, which expresses the highest degree of his love toward us.² Moreover, as the whole Word is God, so is the whole Spirit; and as he speaks by thinking, so he breathes by speaking, and commands by the authority of his power. And therefore it is said that all things were made by his Word³ and his Spirit, because he spoke, and ordered them to be made by the power of his Spirit. As he created them by his Word, so he adorned and strengthened them by his Spirit; and just as no plurality of beings is proved by bringing forth things by his Word, but he speaks and they

¹ John xiv, 26; xvi, 13 (Vulg.).

² Rom. v, 5; I. John iii, 1.

³ John i, 3.

are made; so it is not to be proved by adorning, fortifying, and quickening things by his Spirit. For those things which he speaks by a word he commands by the power of his Spirit; and as by the very fact that he spoke, a thing is at hand, so by the very fact that he commanded by the power of his Spirit, the thing stands completed. For it is the property of the Spirit of God to quicken and strengthen; and as no thing is made without his Word, so there is no thing, nor stone, nor plant, which has any power without the Spirit of God. Again, all that is made by the power of God is said to be made by his breath¹ and inspiration; for there can be no uttering of a word without a breathing of the spirit, just as we can not utter speech without exhaling; and therefore it says, *the breath of his mouth*,¹ and, *the breath of his lips*.² From this it is sufficiently shown that the Spirit of God in us is not the created being, as Eunomius held,³ nor is it the metaphysically distinct being which we imagine. And that you may understand this more in detail, note that although in the
 67a time of the Law an angel was said to go in and go out of a man, and to be in the Prophets,⁴ yet God himself dwells in us through Emanuel, as it is written: *I will dwell in them*.⁵ Through CHRIST we have become heaven. Again, to the Jews angels were in the place of God, so that according to the letter of the law God speaks indifferently of himself and of angels: *Behold, Adam is become as one of us; Let us make; and, Our*.⁶ Moreover the angel, speaking to them, said, *I am God*,⁷ because the invisible God, who is manifested to us through Christ, was manifested to them through angels; or rather, was concealed, was covered by an angel's skin, as by a curtain; and there is now no angel who says to us, I am God. Indeed, all are ministers of CHRIST; nay, under the type of Christ, as I shall prove below,⁸ they were called gods. For CHRIST is very God, of whose Godhead the shadow, and not the truth, was in the angels. I say, therefore, that our spirit

This prophecy indicates a new dwelling of God in us.

¹ Ps. xxxiii, 6.

² Isa. xi, 4.

³ v. Eunomius, *Liber apologeticus*; and Basilius Magnus, *Adv. Eunomium*, III, in Thilo, *Bibliotheca Patrorum Graecorum*, ii, 78, 124, 596, 598, etc.; cf. MPG. xxix, 654 ff.

⁴ Ezek. ii, 2; iii, 24; Zech. i, 9, 13, 14, 19 (Vulg.).

⁵ II. Cor. vi, 16.

⁶ Gen. iii, 22; i, 26.

⁷ Gen. xxxi, 13.

⁸ Book IV, paragraph 6.

Scripture
takes the
Holy Spirit
as it is per-
ceived, and
not meta-
physically.

dwelling in us is God his very self; and that this is the Holy Spirit in us, according to the saying of the prophet, is shown by the Apostle, saying, *The Spirit of God in us*,¹ because God said, *I will dwell in them*.² And he who contemns us contemns God, because he put his Spirit in us; and he who lies to the Holy Spirit lies not to men but to God.³ And herein we bear witness that there is in our spirit a certain powerful and hidden energy, a certain heavenly feeling, and a hidden divine something, for when it bloweth where it will, I hear the voice thereof, but know not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; and so is every one that is born of the Spirit.⁴

¹ Rom. viii, 9; I. Cor. iii, 16.

² II. Cor. vi, 16.

³ Acts v, 3, 4.

⁴ John iii, 8.

BOOK III

Argument

THE pre-existent Word, first uttered by God in creation, was afterwards incarnate in Jesus as the Son of God. Christ's spirit manifested the power of God's Word in creation and in the world, and he deserves our holy service; yet the Father did not suffer in Christ's body. High praise is ascribed to Christ as the wisdom of God. The Word was not the Son, but a disposition of God, who is above all distinctions of time. Belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is the essence of Christian faith, and the foundation of the Church.

Synopsis

1. The Word, existing before creation, was begotten when first uttered by God, and was afterwards incarnate in the flesh of Christ. 2. The witness of John the Baptist shows the pre-existence of Christ, begotten as Jesus, the divine Son of God. 3. Jesus' statement that he is from the beginning also shows his pre-existence. 4. Christ's spirit was the eternal power of the Word of God. 5. The various actions of God in the world are the actions of Christ in God. 6. "Spirits in prison" means the minds of men imprisoned in darkness. 7. God works in the spirits of those asleep, as men are now; but not forever. 8. The creative power of the Word of God dwelt in Christ, 9. through whom, as the Word, all things were made. 10. He had the power to rise from the dead, though the Father raised him. 11. Free-will offerings are to be made to Christ as sovereign, even of ourselves in holiness. 12. The teaching that the Father is in the Son does not justify the inference that the Father suffered, or that he became flesh. 13. The titles applied to Christ do not mean that he was an abstract being, but are used to ascribe high praise to him. 14. He is the wisdom of God, 15. and came forth from God. 16. The Word was never the Son, 17. but was a disposition of God at the beginning of the world. 18. Past, present, and future are indifferent to God, who is above distinctions of time. 19. God and the Word existed before the world not by temporal sequence, but only causally. 20. Belief that Jesus is the Christ, the

Son of God, ensures our salvation, and makes us sons of God. 21. Gospels and Epistles teach that this belief is the test of one's being a Christian. 22. Some hold only a blind, or a nominal, or a partial belief; but the complete belief is the foundation of the Church.

BOOK THE THIRD

1. *The Word became flesh* ¹ is John's clear proclamation which 67b must always be premised when we investigate the mysteries of CHRIST; and from this we easily understand the saying, *Before Abraham was born, I am.*² For I am the oracle of God which was uttered and manifested before Abraham, was heard and seen by Abraham himself, uttered with a voice visible indeed before Abraham, nay, before Adam. Even from the beginning CHRIST goes forth from the mouth of God, of which going forth from everlasting Micah speaks: *Out of thee shall a leader come forth unto me; his goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*³ He that was born in the beginning can be said to have been born before Abraham, indeed must be said to have been born before the dawn.⁴ And note always the commanding words of the Master, note the actually present way of his being, be not deceived by distinct differences of times in God; for he did not say, *Before Abraham was born, I was, or I had been, flesh, as it were; but, I am.* It is as if he said, My existence began to be before Abraham; because his existence depends essentially upon his Father's utterance, which took place in the beginning. And so John says that he is from the beginning;⁵ and he is before all men,⁶ because his existence is from the beginning. And in that way he says that he came out from the Father, and was come into the world;⁷ because his existence and his going forth from 68a the bosom of the Father has an eternal beginning. Just as in writers on Law one is said to be dead from the day of the infliction of the wound that caused his death, so JESUS the Son of God is said to have been born and begotten from the day of the

¹ John i, 14.

² Micah v, 2.

³ I. John ii, 14.

⁷ John xvi, 28.

² John viii, 58 (Pagn.).

⁴ Ps. cx, 3 (Vulg.).

⁶ Col. i, 17 (Vulg.).

uttering of the word from which he essentially has every kind of existence; and the son of God became the son of man because, though eternally born of God, he is afterwards born of man in time, although he is only one being. Moreover, what if I admit that the Son of God put on the flesh, or, if you please, was incarnate; for Paul also, speaking of his earthly tabernacle, says that he is unclothed, and clothed upon,¹ because Paul speaks in the power of the Spirit, hence according to the inward man, as if it were some other being that puts the flesh on and off like a garment. Likewise Job says, *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh.*² Therefore far more clearly, and incomparably more easily, is this proved clear about CHRIST; for it is the Spirit that speaks, who is in CHRIST without measure. Take this as an illustration: if power were given me to beget a son in a woman by the breath of my mouth instead of by the seed of a man, then if I withdrew after the breath was emitted I could say to the woman, I have begotten a son, I leave a son in you who, when the fulness of time comes and he has become a man, will be born of you. And although that is absurd to say, my breath is a son, nay, my word will be a son to me; yet we say that a son was then begotten by reason of the power of seed, not because there was a real begetting of the breath or of the word uttered by God, but the begetting of the flesh took place in the outward uttering of the word. These illustrations will perhaps seem to you crude; but be not amazed. Those that are not very strong must drink milk; moreover, in what follows you shall have solid food.

2. From this is understood what his forerunner the Baptist said: *This is he of whom I said, He who followed with me is become before me; for he was before me; and of his fulness we all received.*³ And so *ἔτι*⁴ is used to begin the following clause; and the sense can not be, He is become before me *because* he was previous to me; but the sense is, This is he of whom I said, He that cometh after me was already made long before me. And again, as if recapitulating⁵ and explaining this, he adds, *For he was before me,*

¹ II. Cor. v, 4.

² Job x, 11.

³ John i, 15, 16.

⁴ *Hoti*, that; used in introducing quotations; also, since, because.

⁵ *Repilogans*, a baffling word, which has escaped the dictionaries. *Repilogare* = *re* + *epilogare* (Gr. *ἐπιλογος*); to recapitulate, summarize, epitomize, repeat.

and, *Of his grace we all received*.¹ Nor does the word *ἔτι* in John make so crude a conjunction, and his whole gospel is full of this usage; and he does not usually take it in another sense. On the contrary, in the same chapter he several times repeats it, saying *Hoti* he was before me, *Hoti* the law was given through Moses, *Hoti* I am not he, *Hoti* he was before me, *Hoti* I have beheld the Spirit, *Hoti* this is the Son of God.² And John's meaning would be sufficiently explained by saying, Surely he was before me, since indeed, if indeed, he was before me, and I knew him not; 69a although the best reading is also by the expression, *since*. Again, the conjunction does not express the cause of the statement, as he shows below, repeating the statement without the conjunction; and he repeats this again farther down, saying, I bore witness that after me will come a man who was already made long before me; and giving reason for this afterwards he adds, for he was before me, and was not known; and therefore the Spirit bore witness to me that he should be made manifest to Israel.³ In consequence of this witness of John, plain as it is, I have often exhorted you not to deny that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God. Weigh also this strong evidence, that they may tell you who he is that was already made long ago; for the controversy of the Arians and others about this statement is altogether groundless, and the rest, who speculate about other beings, confound their very selves. I should have liked to ask them all this one thing: whether this begetting of CHRIST which I have mentioned as taking place from the beginning seems to them to be divine, or rather human. If, then, it is truly divine, for what are those seeking who speculate about other begettings among the gods? If JESUS the Nazarene, whom Scripture foretells, was so admirably born through this begetting, he who was born will be called a son. Hence there is no use in speculating about another son. For here you see clearly that this is that Melchizedek whose origin was unknown to men.⁴ And from the manner of 69b his begetting it is known who the Son is. See what the language of Matthew leads to: *Now the birth of CHRIST was on this wise*.⁵

Note these
two words,
made, and
long ago.

¹ John i, 15, 16.

² John i, 30, 31.

⁶ Matt. i, 18.

² John i, 15, 17, 20, 30, 32, 34.

⁴ Heb. vii, 3.

Is he speaking of the birth of a second being, or is he rather disclosing to us the birth of a man, which had been kept secret? Therefore he who was born will be called a son; nor will you read in Scripture of the birth of another being. You see clearly that he was born, and from God alone; and you deny that he is the Son of God.

They have this distinction in readiness, but they do not prove the other part of the birth.

3. Hereby is rendered more clear the difficult passage in which the Master had said that he was, and, *Except ye have believed that I am he, ye shall die*; ¹ and the Jews, wishing to understand this being of his, ask, *Who art thou . . . whom makest thou thyself*; ² who sayest that thou art he? JESUS answered, *Τὴν ἀρχὴν*, that is, I am from the beginning, *ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν*; ³ as if he said, I am from the beginning, however I also speak unto you; and the word *ὅτι* is sometimes employed pleonastically: I am from the beginning, and I speak unto you; or, he there shows an occasion of wondering, as if he said, How can this be; for however I speak unto you, yet I am from the beginning; and this is his way of speaking in order that we may observe more carefully how this is. And so CHRIST speaks to them commandingly, that he might arouse their dull minds. Be astonished, therefore, and wonder, that he who speaks is from the beginning. And this is the most reasonable way of understanding the words of CHRIST, 70a who speaks consistently, always declaring that he is, is before all, is from above, is sent from the Father; and in addition to this, he repeats below, *Before Abraham was born, I am*.⁴ And although there is in Latin no word which fully brings out what is meant by the expression *ὅτι*, yet the sense is, I am surely from the beginning, and I speak unto you; I am from the beginning, however I also speak unto you. And so he himself was wont to say, *I that speak unto thee am he*.⁵ So clearly and intelligibly does he bear witness of himself that one is more than blind who does not see; and this is marvelous in our eyes, so that being blinded along with the Pharisees we do not understand him who says that he is that Melchizedek who hath *neither beginning of*

¹ John viii, 24.

² John viii, 25, 53.

³ *Ten archen hoti kai lalo humin*, from the beginning what I also say to you.

⁴ John viii, 58 (Pagn.).

⁵ John iv, 26.

days nor end of life;¹ for CHRIST there clearly intimates that he has no beginning of days, nay, that he is from the beginning before all days. If, with the Pharisees, you object to this: *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?*² you make him a liar; for see who it is that was speaking. It is clear that he was speaking of himself, and not of the second being. See how you admit that Abraham saw the days of CHRIST, apart from the fact that you assume some being hypostatically united in Abraham himself. For if you say that he saw in spirit, you could have said correspondingly that CHRIST was in the Spirit of God earlier than Abraham; for having also a pure spirit he 70b could have said, Before Abraham was born, I am, as though not a man but the spirit itself spoke. Hence much more strongly could this hold true of CHRIST, for CHRIST in the Spirit of God came before all time.

4. This spirit of CHRIST is the eternal power of the Word of God, as it says, *Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself*.³ In the same manner Peter speaks of the eternal spirit of Christ when he says, *Being made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits that were in prison*.⁴ Which passage I shall here explain, because it contributes much to the knowledge of CHRIST. Some understand it in one way, others in another; but I should never venture to declare what is in my own opinion the proper meaning, save after comparing other Scriptures, especially since Peter is here obviously referring to something said in Genesis.⁵ And Rabbi Moses, the Egyptian,⁶ in his *Liber Perplexorum*, agrees with Peter, relating how the generation rebelled in the time of the flood. And in Wisdom it says, *When the nations had exalted themselves*.⁷ It is just these that Peter calls disobedient and rebellious; and Peter here shows CHRIST's spirit as an eternal power, and that CHRIST was formerly a Saviour through water, as he now is through baptism.⁸

¹ Heb. vii, 3.

² John viii, 57.

³ Heb. ix, 14.

⁴ I. Pet. iii, 18, 19.

⁵ Gen. vii, viii.

⁶ Moses Maimonides, in his *Moreh Nebukhim*, or Guide for the Perplexed, a religio-philosophical work published 1190. English translation by M. Friedländer, 1885. The reference here is to I. 29 (Servetus wrongly says 28).

⁷ Wisdom x, 5 (Pagn.).

⁸ I. Pet. iii, 20, 21.

71a For the Master also, from whom Peter received this, in the Gospel compares the days of Noah to himself;¹ and the preaching of the Apostles does not go beyond the limits of the Master's words, for so they are truly called disciples. Yet we shamelessly go beyond both at our own pleasure, nor have we anything that savors of the disciples of CHRIST.

5. Therefore, just as God went out into Egypt, went and passed through the midst of Egypt, slaying the firstborn; so in the time of Noah he passed through the midst of the world, and having thus set out he made his will known to them. Passed through, I say, by his declaration, by doing to them the evils which he had said. What our translator renders, *preached*, is in Greek *ἐκήρυξεν*,² which means, to herald abroad; that is, he published the decree, he made his power known to them as well as to Pharaoh. It tells in favor of this, that in the following epistle of the same Peter, speaking of the same matter, a word of the same meaning is repeated, saying, *Noah a herald of righteousness*; ³ for *κήρυκα*,⁴ which our translator has rendered *herald*, properly means an officer with a flag of truce in time of war. And thus CHRIST declared war upon them. Note also the word *righteousness*, for there was a judgment ⁵ there. *Πορευθεῖς*,⁶ that is, having set out when he had come, when he had ordered them to be punished, as he himself is wont to say: I will come, I will pass through, I will descend, I will speak about them, I will do

71b as I said. The sense therefore is that having set out he proclaimed, or pronounced, judgment upon them. And this is what *He condemned the world*⁷ means. Likewise, Against the Egyptians, the nation to which they have been in bondage, will I pass judgment, saith the Lord.⁸ And in this sense the expression, *to give judgment*⁹ is taken. You will note the wonderful interpretation of the spirit of Peter; for all the movements of יהוה,¹⁰ all

¹ Matt. xxiv, 37; Luke xvii, 26.

² *Ekeruzen*, proclaimed.

³ II. Pet. ii, 5 (Vulg.).

⁴ *Keruka*, herald.

⁵ The original reads *indicium*, a palpable misprint for *judicium*, as corrected in the counterfeit reprint.

⁶ *Poreutheis*, having set out.

⁷ Heb. xi, 7.

⁸ Acts vii, 7.

⁹ Jer. i, 16; xxxix, 5; II. Kings xxv, 6.

¹⁰ Jehovah.

his actions that you will ever find in the law, as when he says spoke, went, came, passed through, came down, and wrought, were movements of Elohim, were the personal actions of CHRIST in God, because CHRIST was then with God. This will serve for what needs to be said, and below you shall understand all these things more clearly. Already from of old Habakkuk ascribes them to CHRIST, saying, *God will come from the South, . . . he hath given the earth to other nations, he hath ground the eternal mountains in pieces, he hath made the everlasting hills to bow, his ways are everlasting ways*,¹ I say, because already from everlasting he makes his way, comes, and passes through all things; and to the word הליכו² well corresponds what Peter says, πορεύεις;³ for הלכ⁴ and πορεύομαι⁵ mean the same thing.

6. When Peter said, *to the spirits*, he indicates their thoughts, oppressed by evil spirits. God saw that every thought of his heart was intent upon evil;⁶ even as Paul, when the subject was about bringing the thoughts of men into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST,⁷ says that the warfare is against evil spirits, who hold captive the minds of the reprobate. And the sense is, To those spirits in prison, that is, who were held in a spiritual prison, or in whose spirits they were in prison; for he spoke in a figure, though not without great emphasis. And when he calls them spirits he is alluding to that which the angels were called. But there was a spiritual prison, and they were made disobedient by wicked spirits; for a wicked spirit, according to Paul, is *the spirit that worketh in the sons of disobedience*.⁸ For that is why they are said to have been rebellious and disobedient. Note also that the meaning of the word φυλακή⁹ is taken from the words of the Master, and we must always recur to what was said by him, for it is used in Matthew.¹⁰ It is the same word, and the same subject, of which mention is made here and there; and

¹ Apparently Servetus's independent translation or paraphrase of Hab. iii, 3, 6.

² Halikoth, ways.

³ Poreutheis, went; I. Pet. iii, 19.

⁴ Halak, to go.

⁵ Poreuomai, to go.

⁶ Gen. vi, 5 (Vulg.).

⁷ II. Cor. x, 5.

⁸ Eph. ii, 2.

⁹ Phulake, prison, also watch.

¹⁰ Matt. xxv (Servetus says xxiv), 36, 39, 43, 44.

as Valla¹ here observes, φυλακή² is the night-watch, when thieves come and men are asleep, and then the unclean spirits hold sway. And so mention is made both of spirits and of prison.³ Those wretched angels, therefore, were asleep in the dark night, and the day seized them suddenly, as a thief. CHRIST, and also Peter, suggests that a flood overwhelms them by night; for this very thing is the prison of our spirits, the hour and the power of darkness. Moreover, he slew the firstborn in Egypt in the silence of the night; and in the same passage φυλακή is taken for a watching in the night.⁴ Note how the discourse of CHRIST is interwoven with what he had said of Noah, and how the words of Peter answer to it.⁵ Hence he upbraids the spirits because they did not watch as CHRIST commanded; and when the spirits are asleep in the watches of the night, the sudden lighting, so to speak, gives them no time to awake. There are also other circumstances which were the cause of Peter's speaking of the spirits, namely, from Genesis' literal way of speaking, which Peter observes; for it says there, He smote every soul, he took away every spirit from their midst.⁶ Also God said in his heart, and being inwardly grieved at heart, seeing that their thoughts were intent upon evil,⁷ he expressed his purpose by his spirit, saying, I will take away their spirits. For strictly speaking, when a man is asleep his spirit is said to be taken away; and especially so when it happens by drowning, in which case the breath is cut off by the entrance of water. And so in the case of the spirits he put his purpose into execution. Just as also in the spirits there was a slumber of the night *phulax*;⁸ and both of these things Peter finely expressed.

Would that we took as much pains to observe Scripture ways of speaking.

7. From this we may learn that the almighty Ruler of the spirits of all flesh is working in our spirits when we are not thinking, or are sleeping; which is highly suitable to our times, for all

¹ Laurentius Valla, Italian humanist and critic, 1405-1457, one of the precursors of modern New Testament exegesis. The reference is to his *In Novum Testamentum Annotationes*, ad loc.

² *Phulake*, prison, also watch.

³ Rev. xviii, 2.

⁴ Ex. xii, 42 (cf. R.V. marg.).

⁵ Matt. xxiv, 37, 38; Luke xvii, 26, 27; I. Pet. iii, 20.

⁶ Apparent reference to Gen. vi, 7, 17; vii, 4, 21-23.

⁷ Gen. vi, 5.

⁸ Watch.

are sleeping in the night watch. Nor do CHRIST and Peter refresh 73a
our memories of this without reason. For what do we see to-day
on the face of the earth but sons of Elohim,¹ sons of the great,
adulterous pastors of the Church, all led astray by idle thoughts;
who eat, and drink, and devote themselves to luxury even as
did they. There is none that seeks after CHRIST; and they say,
We can not err. There seems to be a contradiction in what has
been said. Why did God say, My Spirit in man,² if they were
led by evil spirits? To this it must be said that the spirit of man
always has either the Spirit of God or the spirit of a devil resi-
dent in it; and over this a life-and-death struggle takes place.
For even if we are driven by a wicked spirit, yet the Spirit of
God always warns us at some time; and when it sees us incor-
rigible it says, *My Spirit shall not strive in man, for that he is*
*flesh.*³ And this reads here in the Hebrew, לֹא יִדֹן,⁴ that is, my
Spirit shall not judge, shall not dispute, in man, and forever.
But the sentence was then once for all, and final; and this is
what Peter's saying ἐκῆρπυξεν⁵ meant, for if you compare all,
they agree admirably.

8. Paul says that God created all things through JESUS
CHRIST his Son;⁶ and the meaning of this matter we ought to 73b
look into, for the interpretation of those who would have it un-
derstood that the worlds were made by the second being is al-
together perverse, for the whole language of Paul speaks of the
man JESUS CHRIST. It is to be understood, therefore, that when
the Word was made flesh, so great a mystery lies hid in this
matter that the same power of the oracle of God by which the
worlds were made, the same and as great as it then was, is now
in CHRIST, made his very own, so that CHRIST says it is his own,
as when he says, *All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine;*⁷
and the power of the Word became the power of the flesh as
clearly as the Word became flesh. Thus CHRIST can say that
the worlds were made by his power. And it means the same,

¹ Gen. vi, 2.² Gen. vi, 3.³ Gen. vi, 3.⁴ *Lo jadon*, shall not judge, or contend.⁵ *Ekeruxen*, preached, proclaimed.⁶ Eph. iii, 9; Col. i, 16; I. Cor. viii, 6; Heb. i, 2; ii, 10.⁷ John xvi, 15.

whether I say, Was made through me, or, Was made by my power. And note the *by him*; ¹ for it means one thing to say, CHRIST created, and another to say, Were created through CHRIST. And herein is the wisdom of Paul, for he alone mentions this matter. And it is not without significance that Paul so often repeats, *Through his Son, through CHRIST, through whom, through him*; that is, through the secret power of his word. For you can say that that was made through you which had once been made through your spirit, if the spirit had preceded the flesh. And observe that such a spirit as this is in you, and some such evil spirit was in Simon Magus, ² when he said
 74a that the worlds had been made by his power; for he had adopted that way of speaking from the discussions of the Apostles, so that the Apostles were no more believed when they said that the worlds were made through CHRIST, than was he when he boasted such things of himself. If then, in imagination, the power of the Word, and the eternal Spirit, were in you as they were in CHRIST, then if you speak by the Spirit you can say that you were there, because the flesh is nothing, and you would remember all those things, and would be observing the creation of things face to face, present to you within yourself; and you would say that the worlds were made through you, that is, by the word of that power which is within you. And this is what the Apostle means in the chapter cited; ³ for just as he spoke of the creation, so he continues about the government and direction, so that those things are said to be made and governed through CHRIST which are made and governed by the word of his power; ⁴ for God girded him with power and might, even because the Word which was in the beginning was the very power of CHRIST. Thus it says, *With thee is the beginning, in the day of thy power*; ⁵ and it is not without significance that Paul, among other things, calls CHRIST the power of God. ⁶

The cunning of a heretic teaches us.

9. In this same way the Apostle, in the chapter cited from Ephesians, declares that all things were made through CHRIST, exclaiming throughout the whole epistle at the exceeding great-

¹ John i, 3.

² Acts viii, 9 ff.

³ Heb. i.

⁴ Heb. i, 3.

⁵ Ps. cix, 3 (Vulg.).

⁶ I. Cor. i, 24.

ness of the power of God in Christ, and the working of the strength of his might, the surpassing wealth of his grace, the unsearchable riches, the breadth, length and height;¹ and so he indicates that in a mysterious way the worlds were made through CHRIST. The same thought is indicated in the chapter cited from Colossians: so that through CHRIST, that is, through all the fulness that is in him, working unto a mystery, God is said to have created and reconciled all things.² That this is the thought, John also indicates to us, being led by the same spirit with Paul, and in agreement with him; for what Paul says was made through CHRIST, John says was made by the Word itself, as if the power which was once that of the Word were to-day CHRIST'S. Just as CHRIST, therefore, felt within himself the majesty of the Father abiding in him (as when he said, *No one knoweth the Father, save the Son* ³), and just as he perceived in his spirit the reasonings of the Pharisees,⁴ so also when he was in the Spirit of God before all times, he uttered his words in the way in which he considered in his spirit that they had from eternity been with his Father; and he perceived that all things created by God were made by the power which is in himself. And so one who observes his spiritual power will admit that all things were created through CHRIST, and through his power. Through CHRIST, therefore, the worlds were made, because I say that all things which my hand has made have been made through me; and the power of the Word uttered from the beginning is that of CHRIST himself, and is his own, and is as appropriate to CHRIST as hand to body. And the demons cast out by the finger of God were said to be cast out by CHRIST; and this is itself the Word of God, and the Spirit of the power of God.⁵ Therefore the worlds were made through CHRIST, because they were made by his finger. 74b

10. Now that we realize the power of God in CHRIST, by which we say that the worlds were made through him, we shall verify what he said: that he has power to lay down his life, and to take it again;⁶ for since divinity is joined with man, all the 75a

¹ Eph. i, 19; iii, 8, 18.

² Col. i, 16, 20.

³ Matt. xi, 27; Luke x, 22.

⁴ Mark ii, 8.

⁵ Matt. viii, 28 ff.; xii, 22 ff.; Luke xi, 20.

⁶ John v, 26.

Father's authority is in me and is mine. Thus I have authority to do all things, and the power of divinity which will arouse me from the tomb is my own; thus I have power and authority to lay down my life and to take it again. *The Father gave to the Son to have life in himself*,¹ he has authority over life and death. But after I have died I do not raise myself up, but the Father raiseth me up. For you ought to notice that in Scripture it reads, not once or twice, but often and yet more often, that the Father raised him up.² Hence the statement, He raised himself up, is sophistical, and foreign to the Holy Scriptures. I keep within the limits of Scripture, and say that he had the power; but nevertheless after he died the Father raised him up.

75b 11. Following the Vulgate translation from the Greek I said, *With thee is the beginning*,³ lest any one say that I misrepresent, if I do not satisfy him to the very letter. But I suppose they derive *principium*⁴ from his *principatus*⁴ over the people; for ἀρχή⁵ is here taken for rule over the people, as we may show from the etymology of the Hebrew. In Exodus it is written that the rulers and the people offered gifts for building and adorning the sanctuary.⁶ It says the like in the passage under discussion; and as a matter of history David there speaks of a free-will offering of the people made in the time of Solomon to adorn the holy edifice.⁷ And under this figure of history David foretells a free-will offering to be made to CHRIST, and with a greater glory of holiness. In the Hebrew it runs thus: עֵמֶךְ נִדְבָה בְּיוֹם חֵילֶךְ;⁸ that is, Thy people are making free-will offerings in the day of thy warfare. He said *free-will* to distinguish it from נִדָּר.⁹ Of this free-will offering it speaks with the same word נִדְבָה.¹⁰ Nor

A misprint
can not be
interpreted
save by
conjecture.

¹ John v, 26.

² Acts ii, 24, 32; I. Cor. xv, 15; II. Cor. iv, 14, etc.

³ Ps. cix, 3 (Vulg.); cf. end of paragraph 8.

⁴ Beginning (also precedence) . . . sovereignty.

⁵ *Arche*, dominion.

⁶ Ex. xxv, 1-9; xxxv, 20-29; xxxvi, 3-7.

⁷ I. Chron. xxix, 6-9.

⁸ *'Ammeka nedaboth beyom cheleka*, Ps. cx, 3.

⁹ *Neder*, a vow; Lev. xxii, 18, 21, 23; Deut. xii, 6.

¹⁰ *Nedabah*, a free-will offering; Ps. liv, 6; Ez. i, 4. Similarly Ezek. xliv, 30; xlv, 1, etc.; xlviii, 8, etc.; and this is also spoken of in Isa. lxvi (Servetus says lxiv), 20; Ps. lxxii, 10.

is it any objection that we do not see gold from Arabia given to CHRIST; for the Prophets are wont to prophesy in terms of law or of history. Literal truth belongs to history; the Spirit, the offering, and spiritual sacrifices look toward CHRIST. It is enough that Solomon was given tribute and was offered of the gold of Arabia and Tarshish.¹ Again, that the prophet is speaking of this offering is proved by what he said, *in the splendors of holiness*; ^{76a} ² which saying is explained in another place,³ where the discussion is also about this offering and this splendor, or the glory of holiness; for the holy place, beautiful and glorious, they call the *beauty of holiness*. *Bow down to the Lord in the glory of holiness*, that is, in the holy temple.⁴ And this is expressed in the plural, *beauties*, to intensify the meaning, because the splendor of the glory is manifold. Hence the very same thing is said here as in Psalm lxviii.: *In thy temple at Jerusalem kings shall bring presents unto thee*.⁵ And just as we care not for the earthly Jerusalem, so we inquire to no purpose about the gold of Arabia; for CHRIST requires greater things, since in this discussion he is teaching us about the temple of his body; and speaking in this case of the Queen of Sheba he said, *Behold a greater than Solomon*.⁶ Here CHRIST is not seeking what things are ours, but us ourselves.

12. That the Father is in the man (as I positively maintain, being instructed from the words of the Master) some deny, as though this appeared to be patripassian.⁷ But I know not from what this most idle fancy follows. If the sophisticated *communicatio idiomatum* were effaced from the minds of men, this difficulty would easily vanish; for when I say Son, I refer to the flesh, and I do not say that he who was in the Son suffered, but that the Son suffered. Just as it is an affair of the flesh to be born, so it is an affair of the flesh to suffer, to be scourged, to be crucified, to die, and to rise again; nor do these things in any wise ^{76b}

¹ I. Kings iv, 21; x, 11, 22; II. Chron. ix, 10, 21.

² Ps. cx, 3 (Vulg.).

³ Ps. xcvi, 9 (Pagn.), cf. R.V., marg.; I. Chron. xvi, 29.

⁴ Ps. xxix, 2 (Pagn.).

⁵ Ps. lxviii, 29 (Pagn.).

⁶ Matt. xii, 42; Luke xi, 31.

⁷ A sect of heretics in the early Church who held that the Father suffered, as well as the Son.

pertain to the spirit. Moreover, it is not the soul that dies, but the flesh. Who would be so wicked as to admit that the angel existing in me is dead when I die; and who, unless bewitched, dare say that the second Nature of God is dead? How ridiculous the death of one who feels the torments of death no more than that stone! I call them Deipassians, because they admit that the Nature of God is dead, or that the being which they say is the Nature of God is dead. But I shall never admit that anything dies which does not suffer the pains of death. And the Sabellians were called Patripassians because, not understanding the dispensation ¹ of the Word, they admitted that another Son, who they said was also the Father, was crucified, dead, and buried, saying that the Father became flesh. But they were wretchedly mistaken, because they were speaking of the Word in a metaphysical way, inquiring as to its Nature, which is a misuse, as I shall show in the following book.² And the cause of all their error was that they were philosophers, and made one other a Son, besides CHRIST; and identifying him in all respects

77a with the Father they fell into this confusion. And, as Athanasius relates, they attributed to this imaginary Son every property and name of the Father. Thus they argued: The Word became flesh, and the Father is the Word, therefore the Father became flesh. But this paralogism ³ is plainly sophistical, and a fallacy of the accident, since for the Word to become flesh means nothing else than an act of the divine *disposition*. Nor can anything be inferred from this any more than it can be inferred from some change of accidents that you prove to be a stone. Nay, that the Father became flesh is far more absurd. And when you have seen the following Books, you will judge that these things are not worthy of mention. Again, to argue, The Word is the Father, is as absurd as to say, Flowing is drinking. Again, you may infer, The Word became flesh, and the Essence, the supreme being, is the Word; hence the Essence became flesh; and thus you will be an Essentiaepassian. Yet what I have said, that the Father is in CHRIST, the Master himself

¹ *Oeconomia*.

² v. Book IV, paragraph 12.

³ In Logic, an unconscious fallacy.

teaches me, saying once and again, *The Father is in me, . . . the Father abiding in me.*¹ And, *God was in CHRIST reconciling the world.*² And, *He that created me rested in my tabernacle.*³ Now what but the flesh itself is the tabernacle which was created?

13. It may be asked, Why is CHRIST called the wisdom of God, the power of God, and the effulgence of his glory?⁴ This question about abstract nouns will perhaps cause difficulty to Scotists,⁵ but it is none to Hebrews. With them there are numberless nouns ending in *-el*,⁶ and *-iah*,⁷ which have this meaning, although we translate them by abstract nouns. It is also a Hebraism that whenever any exceptional quality or *disposition* of God is appropriate to anything, it is itself called by the name of that *disposition*: for instance, a strong thing, the strength of God; a wise thing, the wisdom of God; the healing of God, the health of God; so also, a great mountain, the mount of God; and lofty cedars, cedars of God; a beautiful and holy thing, as I have said, is called the beauty of holiness, and the splendor of holiness, and the glory of holiness. We often call some other man the distinguished ornament and honor of his country; indeed, these things are appropriate to CHRIST *par excellence*. Is not the one whom he called *the effulgence of his glory* the same as he whom God appointed heir?⁸ Who can endure equivocation in so plain a matter? I ought therefore rather to introduce these passages against you, to prove that these are the accidents⁹ of a man; for it is absurd to exalt the nature of God by these titles. Moreover, what if I say that CHRIST is the justice of God? Shall you be able to make any speculation out of this? See how they said of Simon Magus, *This man is the power of God which is called great*:¹⁰ from which words we learn the usage of the language, so that we are not confused by this plain way of speaking, by saying that CHRIST is the power of God, he is our peace, our justice, and our sanctification. Now here are abstract

¹ John xiv, 10, 11.

² II. Cor. v, 19.

³ Eccles. xxiv, 8 (Vulg., 12).

⁴ Eph. iii, 10; I. Cor. i, 24; Heb. i, 3.

⁵ Scholastic philosophers, followers of Duns Scotus.

⁶ God.

⁷ Lord.

⁸ Heb. i, 2, 3.

⁹ In the logical sense of the term.

¹⁰ Acts viii, 10.

nouns. He is the soul of the world; nay, more than the soul, for through him we live not only a temporal life, but an eternal one. He has given us a temporal life in the Word, and has won an eternal one in the flesh. I would say more than, *the effulgence of his glory*; for Paul said that the Lord of glory was crucified.¹ He is the bright and morning star;² but they have conceived so great an error concerning the human nature that they can not think rightly of CHRIST. They are ashamed to call him, *the effulgence of his glory*, though he himself said, *I am the light of the world*.³ From what is to be said, you will see that far greater things are appropriate to him; for he is the light of God, the light of the Gentiles;⁴ the brightness of his countenance gives light to all the heaven, and will give light in the world to come.⁵ That he is the power of God, by which all things were created,⁶ has been sufficiently said above. Nevertheless, in the thought of the Apostle, this saying tends to this: that the preaching of CHRIST crucified, although to some it is foolishness, is yet to others the power of God;⁷ for by his marvelous power he subjected the world to his dominion, and will subject it, and without clash of arms he leads the minds of men captive.

78b 14. Concerning the wisdom of God, in which are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,⁸ you shall in what follows come to know the wisdom which passeth knowledge, hidden in a mystery, and manifested by the manifested Word. In this place alone learn wisdom, although with you its words be of little weight. In CHRIST is all the wisdom of the Father; in his mouth, the new law and the interpretation of the old law, the Word of God, which gives knowledge of the Father. Do you deem it absurd when the Master says that he repeats to us the words which he had heard from the Father? In the chapter just cited, therefore, the thought of Paul tends to this: he says of CHRIST, Who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification;⁹ was made wisdom from God, while

¹ I. Cor. ii, 8.

³ John viii, 12; ix, 5; xii, 46.

⁵ Rev. xxii, 5.

⁷ I. Cor. i, 23, 24.

⁹ cf. I. Cor. i, 18-25.

² Rev. xxii, 16.

⁴ Isa. xlii, 6.

⁶ Col. i, 16.

⁸ Col. ii, 3.

he manifests to us the wisdom of God, for the word of the cross is the wisdom and power of God, all of which Paul introduces in opposition to the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness in the sight of God. And he speaks expressly against Aristotle concerning the wisdom of the Greeks; and the wonder is that we seek wisdom from Aristotle rather than from God, and pay the more diligent attention that we may excuse his words. If he was in darkness, how can he give us light? Our Master gives a teaching which can not escape notice: namely, that the blind can not lead the blind.¹ If the book came down from heaven, think you that anything superfluous or not pertaining to learning can be contained in it? In the Bible I find all philosophy and wisdom. Do you not clearly see how Paul here says that the wisdom of the Greeks is false and worldly? Let it not mislead you that the sons of this world are wiser than the sons of the light.² Pray read the Bible a thousand times, for if you have no relish in reading it, it is for the reason that you have lost CHRIST, the key of knowledge, which you shall easily get again if you knock without ceasing. 79a

15. Furthermore, it is asked how CHRIST is said to have come forth from the Father. As to this, see how Isaac came forth from the bowels of Abraham;³ how the law, which is the shadow of the body of CHRIST⁴ came forth from God speaking from heaven; how the Gospel springs out of the spirits of the law, how the spark of fire comes forth from the stone, how the manna was given from heaven, how Moses made water come out of the rock, for that is properly the coming forth of JESUS CHRIST,⁵ who is the stone which came forth from the mountain, cut out without hands.⁶ Again, from the fact that, *Thou knowest all things*, . . . *we believe that thou camest forth from the Father*;⁷ and from the miracles which he did, he infers, *They knew of a truth that I came forth from thee*.⁸ But how was the metaphysical coming forth known from his miracles, when it can not even be properly called a coming forth? Again, he himself declares that

¹ Matt. xv, 14; Luke vi, 39.

² Gen. xv, 4.

³ I. Cor. x, 4.

⁷ John xvi, 30.

² Luke xvi, 8.

⁴ Heb. x, 1.

⁶ Dan. ii, 45.

⁸ John xvii, 8.

79b he came forth, because the Father sent him,¹ and this he declares again, saying, *For I am not come of myself, but he sent me.*² It also says, *There came forth a decree from Caesar Augustus;*³ and, *There came forth a wind from the Lord,*⁴ and messengers come forth from him.⁵ And if you desire to be more intimately acquainted with this coming forth, it will appear in what follows, if you observe that from the beginning CHRIST was personally in God, but now is really among men; and that is pre-eminently his coming forth from God.

16. Another question: whether we admit that the Word was ever the Son.⁶ This question will be fully cleared up in the last Book; but for now I say this, that in the Prophets the Son of God was always proclaimed as one that was to come; and if you wish here to represent something according to your own view, first hear the Prophets. *Unto you . . . shall the sun of righteousness arise.*⁷ And, *The earth shall open, and bring forth a Savior.*⁸ And, *There shall come forth a man out of the stock of Jesse.*⁹ And, *Its leader shall arise from it, and a Prince shall proceed from the midst of it.*¹⁰ And, *there shall arise a star out of Jacob.*¹¹ Split hairs as you please, for that which shall arise will be a son. And, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son.*¹² And, *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.*¹³ And the angel says, *He shall be called the Son of the Most High.*¹⁴ Again, do you think that John, speaking in a human sense, said Word rather than Son? And you can not produce one iota in which Scripture
80a called this Word the Son. Again, John says of this Word, both in his Gospel and in his Epistle, that it was in the past; but it never says of it, *It is*, which difference and way of speaking you do not notice. But later on I shall make this beyond doubt to you if you attentively note the scripture ways of speaking; but

¹ John vi, 39, 49, 57; vii, 16, 33, etc.

² John vii, 28.

⁴ Num. xi, 31.

⁶ Book VII, paragraph 1.

⁸ Isa. xlv, 8 (Vulg.)

⁹ Isa. xi, 1. Servetus here reads *vir*, man, instead of the correct *virga*, shoot.

¹⁰ Jer. xxx, 21 (Vulg.).

¹² Isa. vii, 14.

¹⁴ Luke i, 32.

³ Luke ii, 1.

⁵ Ezek. xxx, 9.

⁷ Mal. iv, 2.

¹¹ Num. xxiv, 17.

¹³ I. Chron. xvii, 13; II. Sam. vii, 14.

meanwhile I shall here inquire into the eternity and beginning of the Word.

17. From what has been said above in the second Book, it is well enough known that the going-forth of the Word is from the beginning of the world; for before that (if one may say, before that), one could not speak of a *logos*, which is a kind of speaking; and it is against the nature of the term to say that it meant an inner knowledge as to what is within the mind; for that this is a mistaken invention, I shall show below. And had there been another world, perhaps there had been no mention of either speech or spirit; but God might have employed new arguments,¹ for this *disposition* of the Word is a dispensation² of the world, and is like a mustard seed in proportion to the mouth of an elephant. You ought to bring the world back to its proper meaning as an utterance of the mouth of God. They themselves say that the three beings ought to have remained even in spite of God; for they say that this is by the requirement of their nature. But Tertullian³ expressly contradicts them, saying that God, of his mere good pleasure, employed as many *dispositions* as he wished — that is, for the government of the world. And this the founding of CHRIST's kingdom anticipates, as I shall presently say. And had God created other worlds, he might, in place of our speech, spirit, and reason, have made new creations, with other powers, quite different from ours, and have employed *dispositions* according to what they required for themselves; and then the philosophers of that world would have said that those *dispositions* were distinct beings. And so any world would worship new beings as God in its new Trinity; and some would have a Trinity, others a Quaternity, if God ever employed four *dispositions*; and in that way, according to the number of thy worlds would thy Gods be multiplied, O Judah.⁴ 80b

18. Some here invent imaginary questions about the eternity of the aeons, and do not pay attention to the sense in which

¹ *Disputationibus*; but this would seem to be a slip for *dispensationibus*, as in the next clause. The thought would then run: The *disposition* of the Word is intended for this world; but for other worlds God might have made some other *dispositions*.

² *Oeconomia*.

³ Adv. Praxean, iv, (MPL. ii, 159; ANF. iii, 599 f.; ANCL. xv, 339 ff.).

⁴ cf. Jer. ii, 28.

Scripture speaks of eternity; which comes of their ignorance of the Hebrew tongue. They ask whether God was alone and idle before he created the world; and they say, No; but he was walking about with the three beings. Thus they speak of *before* as though in God there were found a before and an after. Moreover, they argue that there was in God a change, according to the time; because before this being was, he wished it as future, and afterwards he did not wish it as future; and the object in this proposition being thus fixed, as they say, this being is future, they admit positively that God first had to wish with regard to that being, and afterwards had to be unwilling with regard to the same being in the same sense. But to all this I reply

81a that in God predestination is not distinguished from that which is; nor are wished, wishes, future, past, found in God; but he wishes this being to be made thus and so, and such to be its limit. Nor do I therefore say that there is no foreknowledge in God; for Scripture speaks to men, and to us who are subject to time it really means something, nor is it possible for the depth of the wisdom of God to be made clear to us otherwise; lest perchance one think God ignorant of future events, since after all nothing is future to him. I do not on that account detract anything from God, for that which I say with regard to God is more than foreknowledge, nay, is the supreme presence¹ of all things. And note this, for some, judging of this foreknowledge of God in terms of time,² make God bound by necessity with regard to all things in future; for they say that all things come to pass of necessity (are necessary even in the sight of God), so that after all the will of God concerning future events is not free,³ and since all things that will be are indicated, God can neither prevent nor change any of them, which is a most horrible thing to say; and they are built on a false foundation. Their roots being set, that is, in the past knowledge of God (though nevertheless nothing is past to him, his knowledge has neither time nor num-

Of the will of God as free and not free, according to the Lutherans.

¹ The text actually reads *praesentia*; but this may perhaps be a misprint for *praescientia* (foreknowledge), which occurs just before and just after; although in the counterfeit reprint the latter occurrence also reads *praesentia*.

² *Temporaliter*.

³ *Servum arbitrium*.

ber), they say that they consider that thing follows thing even to God, and they do not consider that God is above time, and that the *dispositions* of God are above their consideration.

19. I say therefore that neither God nor his Word existed 81b before the world by any interval of time, nor does Scripture speak of an eternity of the Word in the way that you imagine; for all eternity is, in Hebrew, עולם,¹ which means nothing else than world, and the days of the age; and, from the beginning, from everlasting, from the days of old, from everlasting days, are expressions taken in Scripture for the same thing, as is also shown by the adding of the word *days*, for that is eternal which is not limited to a certain number of days; nor can it be understood how with its eternities of aeons a being is said to have begun to be, and how the Son is said to be begotten and brought forth from everlasting; for these are figments of the imagination, which go beyond the limits of Scripture. For when John said, *He was made before me*,² he is referring to the beginning of the world, just as when he said, *In the beginning was the Word*.³ Again, CHRIST's kingdom is called eternal a thousand times, yet at the end he will deliver it up to God the Father;⁴ not that anything will be detracted from CHRIST's glory, indeed it will be his supreme glory to have ruled all things well even to the end, and to have made them subject to the Father as he intended. And this will be to deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, just as the general of the whole army offers the Emperor the palm of victory. Again, inasmuch as then all manner of ruling will cease, all authority and power will be abolished, 82a all ministry of the Holy Spirit will cease, we shall need no advocate nor reconciler, but God will be all in all. And thus the dispensation⁵ of the Trinity will then cease. Tertullian also says⁶ that the Trinity will cease, which note, just as even now the Trinity is otherwise than it once was, as I shall show in what follows. God and his Word therefore were before the world in another sense than by priority in time, namely, just as cause is

¹ 'Olam, age, world.

² John i, 15 (Vulg.).

³ John i, 1.

⁴ I. Cor. xv, 24; Acts iii, 21.

⁵ *Oeconomia*.

⁶ Adv. Praxean. iv. (MPL. ii, 159; ANF. iii, 600; ANCL. xv, 341 ff.).

before effect, and this is a natural, true priority, and one more appropriate to God than priority in time, since with him there is no time. Again, as Tertullian says,¹ the manifestation of speech, which led to the begetting of the Son, was from the beginning made before the beginning; and in the very beginning, because the first beginning was the utterance of the Word, *God said, Let there be*;² and upon this follows the creation of the world, and it was done; nor could speech be expressed before, because speech is not expressed save when it is manifested by utterance.

20. Finally, I would exhort you here to tremble when you deny JESUS CHRIST; and consider with what power, what emphasis of words, John said, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, abideth in him, and he in him*;³ and, *Whosoever shall believe that JESUS is the CHRIST is begotten of God*.⁴ And, *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that JESUS is the Son of God?*⁵ And, believing that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, ye shall have eternal life in his name.⁶ What shall I say more? All the words of CHRIST tend to this end: that they might all believe that he is the Son of God, might trust in his salvation. And this is to me the chief foundation, for CHRIST is to me the sole Master, CHRIST first preached the Gospel, and in his words I see the whole teaching of the Apostles shining forth. All the preaching of the Apostles in the Acts aims at this very point: that they might persuade men that this JESUS visibly shown to them is the CHRIST, the Son of God, the Saviour. For us that believe this, CHRIST prays the Father. *For them*, he says, *that are to believe in me through the word of the Apostles*.⁷ All Paul's teachings about justification⁸ have regard to this faith in CHRIST. The Lutherans, departing from this foundation of faith, have never been able to understand what justification is. Paul says that his Apostleship was appointed *unto this obedience of faith* in CHRIST.⁹ For verily it is obedience, and in the highest

To this end was the Holy Spirit given, that he might teach them the meaning of the words of Christ. John xiv, 26.

¹ Adv. Praxean, v. (MPL. ii, 160; ANF. iii, 600; ANCL. xv, 339 ff.).

² Gen. i, 3.

³ I. John iv, 15.

⁴ I. John v, 1.

⁵ I. John v, 5.

⁶ John xx, 31.

⁷ John xvii, 20.

⁸ *Omnes Pauli justificationes.*

⁹ Rom. i, 5; xvi, 26.

degree acceptable to God, when we thus bring our thoughts into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST;¹ that so we may persuade ourselves, may believe, and trust. Indeed, God so loved his own Son that this sole command concerning faith in Christ was substituted in place of the whole law; and there is far greater profit in the keeping of it. Again, from the fact that we believe that he is the Son of God, we too are made sons of God.² Again, from this faith in CHRIST comes the giving of the Holy Spirit: He that hath believed in me, out of his belly shall flow living waters; for this, John explains, he spake of the Holy Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive.³ The same thing is shown in Ephesians i, 5; Galatians iii, 26; Acts xi, 17; xix, 6, which passages see, and say what it means where it says, *after we believed*, and, *after you believed*. Believe therefore that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, and immediately you shall feel the Holy Spirit given to you, which will make you understand all things.⁴

21. I would now know whether you are a Christian. Tell me, What is the law of Christians? What do you understand by *a new testament*, or covenant?⁵ What is the *covenant of peace*?⁶ What do you understand by the Gospel of CHRIST? What does it mean where CHRIST said, *Believe in the Gospel*?⁷ What is the Gospel committed to the Apostles,⁸ that they might preach it? Nor do you satisfy me when you show that this book was composed by four Evangelists; for this is nothing else than the relation of a story, aiming at this end alone, that we may believe that CHRIST is the Son of God. And for this there is a clear text: *These are written that ye may believe that JESUS is the CHRIST, the Son of God.*⁹ The Epistles of Paul likewise are nothing but documents for building upon this foundation of CHRIST; for he had already preached face to face to those to whom he was writing, that JESUS is the CHRIST, and the Son of God. Again, before the Apostles wrote, the Gospel had already been preached by

¹ II. Cor. x, 5.

² John vii, 38, 39.

³ Jer. xxxi, 31.

⁴ Mark i, 15.

⁵ John xx, 31.

⁶ John i, 12; Gal. iii, 26.

⁷ John xvi, 13.

⁸ Ezek. xxxvii, 26.

⁹ Gal. ii, 7; I. Thes. ii, 4; Tit. i, 3.

CHRIST, when he proclaimed the good tidings, and the kingdom of God, to those that believed that he was the Son of God. The Church was already founded on this point. He died on this point, because he said that he was the Son of God. On this point a voice from heaven once and again bears witness. The law of faith was already given by him, and the covenant confirmed by his blood, as once before.¹ Compare the one covenant with the other, and you shall find yourself without a covenant. For if you know not that the religion of Christians is to believe that this JESUS is the CHRIST and the Son of God, the Saviour, I say to you that you are no Christian, you have no covenant with CHRIST, and no peace. This is the covenant of our salvation, and the Spirit is given for a sign, and as a pledge of this covenant. Of this it was said, *He that disbelieveth shall be condemned.*² This is *the Word of the Gospel, . . . cleansing their hearts.*³ This is what was committed to the Apostles to preach. *He charged* 84a *us, says Peter, to preach, and to testify that this is he.*⁴ And to those that believe these things good tidings are proclaimed, and this is the Gospel of the kingdom. From that time the kingdom of God alone is preached to us; and he that does not believe that he is the Son of God, knows not what the Gospel is, nor does he understand what the kingdom of God is like, which we that believe have already obtained, because it is within us,⁵ although the world knows not the fruit of this kingdom.

22. Note also the order of the Apostolic preaching in their Acts; for first they visibly show JESUS the man from Nazareth; and our faith does not rest upon him. But afterwards they urge us to believe that this JESUS is the CHRIST, and is the Son of God. Yet we turn the whole order around; we are content if we say that we believe on JESUS CHRIST, not who he is. Nor do we take the trouble to inquire, with the blind man who had received his sight,⁶ who the Son of God is; yet we believe on the Son of God. Nor is it any wonder if it was unto Gentile philosophers foolishness⁷ to preach that JESUS is the Son of God,

¹ Ex. xxiv, 8.² Mark xvi, 16.³ Acts xv, 7, 9.⁴ Acts x, 42.⁵ Luke xvii, 21.⁶ John ix, 36.⁷ I. Cor. i, 23.

since even to-day they think this to be most foolish; indeed, they will neither hear nor acknowledge that he is the Son of God, and they cry out with Caiaphas, *He hath spoken blasphemy*, because he said, I am the Son of God.¹ For very evidently, if no consideration is herein paid to the Word, he proclaimed full circle that he was the Son of God; as you will most clearly discern from the very first preaching of Paul.² Some only admit in words that he is called the Son of God, since they add that he is called Son in a dependent sense, and conjointly with another invisible Son; and all this is one aggregate, and one Son. Others confess that JESUS CHRIST is the name of his human nature, yet they refuse the man the relation of a son. But what else is this than to deny that CHRIST is the Son of God; for they say that there is one Nature of the Son, there is another Nature of JESUS CHRIST, and the Son of God united himself with CHRIST, as Valentinus³ said. I therefore simply and candidly admit and believe that this JESUS is the CHRIST, and is the Son of God; and he that does not thus believe hath been judged already.⁴ Against this rock, said CHRIST most truly, the gates of hell shall not prevail;⁵ nevertheless, we are in marvelous ways finding out that they have prevailed over us, and we heed not that the rock is gone. From this *rock*⁶ he is called *Peter*,⁶ because he was ahead of the rest in his firm faith in CHRIST. On account of this faith CHRIST made supplication for Peter, that his faith might not fail,⁷ by which, that is to say, he had confessed that he was the Son of God. Ponder the four Gospels, because you will not find one letter which does not speak of this faith.

¹ Matt. xxvi, 63-65.

² Acts ix, 20.

³ A Gnostic of the second century. cf. Tertullian, Adv. Valentin. xxvii (MPL ii, 581 f.; ANF iii, 516; ANCL xv, 152).

⁴ John iii, 18.

⁵ Matt. xvi, 18.

⁶ *Petra, Petrus.*

⁷ Luke xxii, 32.

BOOK IV

Argument

GOD has manifested himself in three different dispositions. Of these, the Holy Spirit is his activity in the spirit of man, and is the minister of the Word. God is seen in the Person of Christ, represented in Scripture under the imagery of angels; but the real image of God is Christ. The term Nature is appropriate only to God; the Word no longer exists; Person means a representation of another being; Christ, incarnated, is the image of the Substance, but not of the Nature, of God.

Synopsis

1. God has manifested himself in three different Persons, or dispositions. 2. The Holy Spirit is God's activity in the spirit of man, acting upon his heart and mind. 3. The Holy Spirit is to be distinguished from the Word, as its minister. 4. The invisible God is seen through the person of Christ, as is shown in many passages of Scripture which speak of God's face, etc. 5. Christ is repeatedly represented in scripture imagery by angels and cherubim, who herald his glory. In his face God's glory is seen, and in him God fully dwells. 6. The real image of God is Christ, who was one in Person with the Father, but was represented in angels. 7. The term Nature should be applied only to God. 8. The Word ceased to exist when it became flesh in Christ. 9. Person means not an aggregate of two beings, but a representative of another being. 10. Christ, who had pre-existed in God, came down to earth and took flesh. 11. He is the very image of the Substance, or Essence, of God, 12. which has no reference to the divine Nature.

BOOK THE FOURTH

- 85a 1. God, in assuming a person in time past,¹ showed us that the Trinity was to be manifold. The Scripture describes his acts now under the appearance of a breath, now under the Person of the Word. The Persons of the Deity also appeared after-

¹ *Seipsum olim personando.*

wards in various ways, as under the form of a man, and under the form of a spirit. And God, when he began to employ in himself those *dispositions* which he was afterwards to manifest to us in various ways, *by his Word created the heavens, and all the powers of them by the breath of his mouth.*¹ Yet they all then existed only by a *disposition*, but now in very fact; and the appearance of the Persons which then in some secret way were *dispositions* with God, has now really taken place in diverse beings, and thus a real distinction of Persons has been made; one Person, that is, with the aspect of Deity, appearing in the Son, another in the Holy Spirit. And the absolute and distinct beings in which the Persons have appeared are, God the Father, a man the Son, and an angel the Holy Spirit. And just as the JESUS of Nazareth who preached in Judaea is the CHRIST, the Son of God, so the flame of fire which appeared² was an angel and a sanctifying Spirit. And just as when I speak of the man CHRIST JESUS, I do not separate from him the divinity of the Father; so when I speak of a messenger or a ministering spirit, I do not separate from it the character of divinity, that there may be in the Persons one divinity of the Father. For the difference between the Persons is to be judged in their ways of appearing, not just in a metaphysical plurality of beings of one Nature; in which matter all the philosophers have gone astray; for Scripture never pays attention to Natures, but to appearances and *dispositions*. 85b

2. With regard to the Holy Spirit, I speak of an appearance in bodily form, in consequence of the Spirit's descending; but I speak of a *disposition* in us, and the former is limited to the latter. Hence I always say that the Holy Spirit is the activity of God in the spirit of man; and that outside of man it is not properly called the Holy Spirit. Here it should be noted that when it says, *The Lord is spirit*,³ many suppose that it means nothing else than to say that the nature of God is incorporeal. But Scripture cares for nothing less than for these philosophies. For according to this, when it says, God is a fire,⁴ you would infer, following the view of the Chaldaeans, that the nature of

Outside of
man the
Holy Spirit
is nothing.

¹ Ps. xxxiii, 6 (Vulg.).

² Acts ii, 3.

³ II. Cor. iii, 17.

⁴ Heb. xii, 29.

86a God is fiery. When therefore it says, *God is a Spirit*,¹ a spiritual disposition of God is denoted; for from the fact that God is a Spirit it is inferred that he is to be worshiped in spirit. And from the fact that the Lord is a spirit, Paul infers that *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*.² Similar is the conclusion of John: *He that loveth not is without God; for God is love*.³ With equal reason it may be inferred that the spiritual movement of God in the heart of man is his Spirit in us, because God is a Spirit; and this is more proper than to call God a Spirit because he is incorporeal. Indeed, no being is called a spirit from its own nature, but in so far as its action is spiritual; and it means another thing to say, God is in him or with him, than to say, The Spirit of God is in him, or upon him; for the latter signifies a spiritual illumination of the mind, but the former both protection of the body and direction of every act.

3. Moreover, it should be known that the eternal disposition of the Spirit of God is said to have been distinguished from the Word in this way: that God both began to act and determined that he would act by his own Spirit, by an action distinct from the Word. Nor do I ever call an angel of God by itself the Holy Spirit; but it is so called on account of a *disposition* of the Spirit of God inseparable from the ministry of angels. Nor does Scripture call any more spirits holy, although more are ministers; for all sanctification is wrought by one, there is one Spirit of God who works these things in us. Nor does any Macedonian⁵ subjection of the third being prevent me from calling angels ministers. Nor can any subjection be argued from the fact that God particularly wishes to employ one *disposition* of himself for the administration of those things that he accomplishes through another one. Or, if he distinctly separates the Person of his Spirit for the sole administration of the Word (since for this purpose angels were made spirits for him, who are ministers, fulfilling his word, in order that obedience might be given to the

It said,
The Spirit
of God, but
not the
Holy
Spirit.

¹ John iv, 24.

² II. Cor. iii, 17.

³ I. John iv, 8.

⁴ Gen. i, 2.

⁵ The Macedonians, a heretical sect of the fourth century, followers of Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople, held that the Holy Spirit is a mere creature or divine energy.

voice of his word ¹), even the Spirit is, with regard to the Word, as are the angels with regard to CHRIST; hence I call the Holy Spirit, as Ignatius does, ² a minister of the Word, just as angels are ministers of CHRIST, so that the sacred terms agree very well with the facts. And to inquire here concerning an equality or inequality of Nature is to feed upon wind; since there is only one being, and neither Scripture nor the ancient writers ever mentioned equality or inequality in this being, nor indeed thought of it. But Eunomius first devised this theory with regard to the Spirit, just as Aetius did with regard to the Word. ³

4. In connection with the Person of the Word, the Person of CHRIST must be investigated. But before this, I say (and to this the preaching of John leads) that the Word was from the beginning already uttered, prepared, and appointed to the end that it might become flesh; and it was already in him, with God, as the representation and likeness of the man that was to be. And τὸ πρόσωπον, ⁴ this mask, this countenance, this face, this representation of man in God, is mysteriously hidden in all the passages of Scripture which speak of image, face, person, and countenance. In the first place, Wisdom ⁵ shows the likeness of a 87a man, and represents the Person of CHRIST, when it says that it was born and created. Again, the Prophets, when they saw, saw CHRIST, for no other reason than that they saw a representation of the man that was to be. Of this likeness, figure, and image in God Moses speaks: ⁶ for the people saw voices, ⁷ but in confusion, because they did not see the true image of CHRIST. ⁸ And in that passage תמונה ⁹ denotes the form, figure, likeness, and image of JESUS CHRIST, as appears in the sixteenth Psalm, which the Hebrews call the seventeenth. ¹⁰ Balaam also sees this

¹ Ps. ciii, 20, 21.

² Ep. ad Philad. ix (MPG. v, 703-706; ANF. i, 84; ANCL. i, 235).

³ Eunomius and Aetius, heretics of the fourth century, taught that the Son was of a different substance from the Father, and unlike him.

⁴ *To prosopon*, the face or mask, hence person; equivalent of the Latin *persona*, in both senses.

⁵ The Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, i. e., Ecclus. i, 4, 9; xxiv, 8, 9.

⁶ Deut. iv, 12.

⁷ Ex. xx, 18.

⁸ Deut. iv, 15.

⁹ *Temunah*.

¹⁰ Ps. xvi in the Vulgate, but xvii in the Hebrew and the English version. See Ps. xvii, 15. This and many other instances show Servetus's independent use of the Hebrew in preference to the current Latin version.

image from afar: *I shall see him*, he says, *and not now: I shall behold him, and not nigh*.¹ Habakkuk saw the same thing.² Again, observe in how many passages David desires to see this glorious face: *Shine, O Elohim, show thy face, and we shall be saved*.³ It says the same thing of his countenance in the fourth and the forty-fourth Psalms; ⁴ likewise in the above-quoted sixteenth Psalm: *When justice reigns, I shall behold thy face; and I shall be satisfied when thy image is spread abroad*.⁵ In the same way in the eighty-eighth Psalm ⁶ he watches for the face and countenance of CHRIST in God. Again, see how clearly Isaiah saw this countenance sitting high upon a throne, yet his face was covered with wings of fire.⁷ The same thing is evident from Ezekiel.⁸ And this very thing John saw, though without a covering.⁹ This image of the son of man Daniel saw, though
 87b beneath a covering and a cloud.¹⁰ This is just what Zechariah saw in the darkness of the night.¹¹ This presence, this face, as CHRIST says, many desired to see.¹² And this desire appears in the twenty-fourth, twenty-seventh, sixty-seventh, and eightieth Psalms, and in II. Chronicles.¹³ Indeed, it was commanded in the law that when they wished to bless one they should say, *The Lord show thee his face*.¹⁴ This face Isaiah and Habakkuk looked for.¹⁵ Seeing this countenance of the divine face, they cried out, *Oh, that thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down*.¹⁶ To the same purport Isaiah speaks again.¹⁷ These and other things, as John witnesses,¹⁸ Isaiah said when he saw the glory of Christ; for of such glory and brightness Isaiah is there speaking, and he proves CHRIST himself to be the brightness of glory.¹⁹ *And his brightness will be as the light*.²⁰ The glittering brightness of the

It was always seen dimly before, but now clearly.

¹ Num. xxiv, 17 (Pagn.).

² Hab. ii, 1.

³ Ps. lxxx, 3, 7, 19.

⁴ Ps. iv, 6; xlv, 3.

⁵ Ps. xvii, 15; Servetus's own rendering of the Hebrew.

⁶ Ps. lxxxviii, 14.

⁷ Isa. vi, 1, 2.

⁸ Ezek. i, 1. 26-28; x, 4.

⁹ Rev. iv, 2, 3.

¹⁰ Dan. vii, 13.

¹¹ Zech. i, 8.

¹² Matt. xiii, 17; Luke x, 24.

¹³ Ps. xxiv, 6; xxvii, 8, 9; lxvii, 1; lxxx, 3, 7, 19; II. Chron. ix, 23.

¹⁴ Num. vi, 25.

¹⁵ Isa. viii, 17; Hab. ii, 1; iii, 3, 4.

¹⁶ Isa. lxiv, 1.

¹⁷ Isa. lx, 2; lxii, 2.

¹⁸ John xii, 41.

¹⁹ Isa. lx, 3; lxii, 2.

²⁰ Hab. iii, 4.

face of CHRIST appeared to Paul above the brightness of the sun.¹ Again, when it is said that they saw the Lord face to face,² we have it made clear in the Gospel that it was the countenance of CHRIST, for introducing this as something understood of CHRIST, they say that God neither had been nor could have been seen.³ As though, it says, he had seen him who was invisible.⁴ And Jacob says that he has seen Elohim face to face.⁵ 88a But that Elohim was CHRIST will be shown by what follows. Even Jacob himself clearly declares that this was the face of a man, by the comparison which he makes in the following chapter, when he says to his brother, *I have seen thy face as if I saw the countenance of Elohim.*⁶ CHRIST also confirms this by a verb in the past tense, saying, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*⁷ John also says of CHRIST, *He hath declared him,*⁸ as if he said, Knowledge of God was had through CHRIST not only by us but also by them of old. Again, what does it mean to say that the grace which has now been made open to all was *given to us through JESUS CHRIST before times eternal?*⁹ Verily, it was given by God through the JESUS CHRIST that then was, when he established a pattern of JESUS CHRIST in his Word; and this was before times eternal. This is just what Peter said, He called us unto his eternal glory through JESUS CHRIST.¹⁰ Some say that this likeness of the Word is denoted by the word *πρὸς*,¹¹ *the Word was with God*, *πρὸς τὸν θεόν*,¹² as if it said, in the sight, in the face, of God; and the meaning here is that the Word was the *εἰκὼν*¹³ of the Father, because it was nothing else than the likeness of a man. Again, let us understand the veil on the face of Moses,¹⁴ and we shall understand the glory of the Lord of which Paul speaks;¹⁵ and there he is watching for this glorious face and 88b image of CHRIST, which from everlasting shone out in God.

¹ Acts xxvi, 13.² Gen. xxxii, 30.³ John i, 18; Heb. xi, 27; I. John iv, 12; I. Tim. vi, 16.⁴ Heb. xi, 27.⁵ Gen. xxxii, 30.⁶ Gen. xxxiii, 10 (Vulg.).⁷ John xiv, 9.⁸ John i, 18.⁹ II. Tim. i, 9.¹⁰ I. Pet. v, 10. (Servetus says iii.)¹¹ *Pros*, with.¹² *Pros ton theon*, with God, John i, 1.¹³ *Eikon*, image.¹⁴ Ex. xxxiv, 33; II. Cor. iii, 13.¹⁵ II. Cor. iii, 18; viii, 19.

And upon this depends what he says, that CHRIST is the *εἰκὼν of the invisible God*.¹ And he states the substance of the matter when he says that the glory of God is seen in the face of JESUS CHRIST.² Nor can this be proved true in any other sense than that the glorious face of CHRIST already shone out in God from the beginning. O wondrous glory! This, he says, is *the glory which I had with thee before the world was made*.³ And *παρὰ σοὶ*⁴ here denotes a person. Moses therefore desired to see his face; he saw some things and rejoiced, he saw his back, but he saw not his face.⁵ For they feared when they turned their eyes upon this face, and they feared lest they die.⁶ And the veil signifies that the glory of God was not yet revealed to them.⁷ Nevertheless we, now that the veil of the temple has been rent in twain, are permitted to look into the Holy of holies, that is, into the face of CHRIST, which was veiled from them. To us there is no other veil, except the flesh of CHRIST itself, with which the divinity of the Father is covered.⁸ Moses therefore saw the countenance of his face, but not his face; he saw the representation, but not the thing itself. *They desired, says CHRIST, to see the things which ye see, and saw them not*.⁹ Hence John points out that, because that glorious face was concealed from them, they were all in darkness, when he says, *And the darkness apprehended it not*.¹⁰ And, *To shine upon them that are in darkness*.¹¹ What Habakkuk says leads to the same thing: *There was the hiding of his power*.¹² With which agrees Deuteronomy;¹³ for on Mount Sinai, at the time when the law was given, although his power was great and terrible, yet *הבין*,¹⁴ there was a hiding, when the countenance of him who spoke was not seen, who nevertheless is distinctly manifested to us; hence he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than they all.

¹ Col. i, 15.² John xvii, 5.³ Ex. xxxiii, 23.⁴ Ex. iii, 6; xx, 18, 19; Judges xiii, 22.⁵ Heb. ix, 3.⁶ Matt. xiii, 17.⁷ Luke i, 79.⁸ Deut. xxxii, 20. (Servetus says xxxiii.)⁹ Hebyon, a hiding.¹⁰ II. Cor. iv, 6.¹¹ *Para soi*, with thee.¹² Heb. x, 20.¹³ John i, 5.¹⁴ Hab. iii, 4.

5. Again, if you wish to understand the glory of CHRIST, mount up to the cherubin, consider the wheels and animals of Ezekiel; for in them all the image of the man Jesus Christ is represented in the glory of God. And above the wheels and animals Ezekiel saw CHRIST, and this he calls *the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord*.¹ And this itself is the CHRIST whom John saw.² And *the voice of many waters* there is the same that Ezekiel heard.³ Again, *cherub*, according to the Hebrews, is interpreted as painted, or fashioned, or a picture, or a figure; and the angels with the image of a man represent CHRIST; and both cherubim and seraphim are angels, heralds of the glory of CHRIST.⁴ And he described all these things as an image and pattern of CHRIST, which Moses had seen in God.⁵ For the pattern of which Exodus speaks⁶ is that of which mention is made in the preceding chapter; that is, Elohim, the CHRIST, whom he had there seen.⁷ And David saw this image of CHRIST above the cherubin,⁸ and he gave the pattern and likeness of it to Solomon his son;⁹ the *pattern*, I say, and likeness of all that he had seen by the spirit; and he says, He made me understand all the works of the pattern; moreover, all things, he says, were written by the hand of the Lord.¹⁰ But what can be said to have been written by the hand of the Lord more properly than that very thing which had been expressly portrayed and fashioned in him, and had been fashioned for them, yet under a veil, with which the cherubim covered and overshadowed the oracle of God with their wings?¹¹ In fine, all things that are in the law are a shadow of the body of CHRIST, and this is represented to them through the angels, since to them Gods are often literally called angels; though after all, properly speaking, what are called Gods are God the Father and the Lord JESUS CHRIST. And for the glory of God to be seated above the cherubim means for JESUS CHRIST to be superior to the angels; because he him-

¹ Ezek. i, 28.

² Rev. iv, 2, 3.

³ Rev. i, 15; Ezek. i, 24; xliii, 2.

⁴ Isa. vi, 2; Luke ii, 9-14; Rev. iv, 6-9.

⁵ Acts vii, 44; Heb. viii, 5.

⁶ Ex. xxv, 40.

⁷ Ex. xxiv, 10.

⁸ II. Sam. xxii, 11.

⁹ I. Chron. xxviii, 11.

¹⁰ I. Chron. xxviii, 12, 19.

¹¹ Ex. xxv, 20; Heb. ix, 5.

self is the Lord of glory, and sits upon the throne of his glory.¹ And he is to come with this brightness of his Father's glory.² And the glory of the Lord which so often appeared in the cloud above the cherubim has now been revealed;³ and, now that

90a CHRIST is known, we all with unveiled face (by the very fact that we turn our eyes upon him) see and know the glory of the Lord;⁴ for that, according to Paul, is seen in the face of JESUS CHRIST.⁵ You will say that it profits little to see the outward face; but I say that it profits much if you see by believing. But you look upon his face unworthily; yet after you have believed may you never turn your eyes away from it, and you will realize that it is useful; for the eyes of the flesh draw with them the eyes of the mind. Again, all the angels that once appeared to them were nothing else than the likeness of CHRIST represented by angels; and they said that in seeing this they had seen God, just as under this figure an angel also is said to be God to them. And the saying of Origen, which I have mentioned above,⁶ aims at this; for the name of God then dwelt among the angels, and his dwelling among the cherubim⁷ denotes this very thing. For the dwelling of God is in heaven, that he may nowhere dwell more truly than among spirits; for thus the spirits are open wide to God, just as tents are to us. And, as I declared above, this is the light unapproachable,⁸ this is heaven, and the dwelling-place of God. *He stretcheth out the heavens like a skin,*⁹ and *spreadeth them out as a curtain, and as a tent to dwell in.*¹⁰ He covereth himself with this light as with a garment.¹¹ These are the curtains of his tabernacle.¹² This light of God means his

90b Essence, and the heavenly creatures, as I shall say below. For all these were angels, foreshadowing CHRIST as the dwelling-place of God. For the name of God, which according to the letter of the law dwelt in the midst of the angels, now dwells in CHRIST; and angels manifested the light when God said, *Let*

¹ Matt. xxv, 31.

³ Isa. xl, 5; xlvi, 13.

⁵ II. Cor. iv, 6.

⁷ II. Sam. vi, 2.

⁹ Ps. civ, 2 (Vulg.).

¹¹ Ps. civ, 2.

² Mark viii, 38; Matt. xvi, 27.

⁴ Isa. lxvi, 18; Hab. ii, 14.

⁶ Book II, paragraph 25.

⁸ I. Tim. vi, 16.

¹⁰ Isa. xl, 22.

¹² Ex. xxvi, 1 ff.

there be light,¹ and yet this light is really JESUS CHRIST. I call all the heavenly creatures spirits and angels, although angels and spirits are spoken of only when they are sent; and we call them so in general because we do not perceive them in any other way. Yet neither angel nor spirit is the name of a Nature. Again, just as the angels, in hearing a voice, heard the voice of God, quite so is it with regard to CHRIST. Indeed, that was a shadow of this truth; and in hearing the voice of CHRIST, Paul heard the voice of God, as Ananias witnesses;² for in CHRIST alone does the name of God now wholly dwell. And even as in seeing him, just so in hearing him is the Father heard; and on account of his blood it is said that we are redeemed by the blood of God.³ God is in him entirely, and to such a degree that all things that are in him are God's; and the things that are done through CHRIST are not man's works but God's. *All things*, he says, *that are mine are thine*;⁴ and, *The Father abiding in me, he doeth the works*;⁵ and, *We are justified through CHRIST*;⁶ we have become the righteousness of God,⁷ and have become the body and members of CHRIST.⁸ We are the congregation of 91a God.

6. Again, you will not find that man is directly called the image of the invisible God *תה*;⁹ but it says, *Let us make man in our image and likeness*;¹⁰ and, *He was made in the image and after the likeness of Elohim*.¹¹ Or it says, *Made in the image of the likeness of God*,¹² because the real and chief likeness is the representation of man in God, which is CHRIST JESUS himself, in whose image we are made, being conformed, as Paul says, to the image of the Son of God.¹³ And although when it says, *Let us make . . . after our*, it is literally understood of angels, just as when it said, *Adam . . . as one of us*;¹⁴ yet the real spirit of it refers to CHRIST. Just as wisdom also was not said to be created,

¹ Gen. i, 3.² Acts. xxii, 14.³ Acts xx, 28.⁴ John xvii, 10.⁵ John xiv, 10.⁶ Rom. iii, 24; v, 9; I. Cor. vi, 11; Gal. ii, 17.⁸ I. Cor. xii, 27.⁷ II. Cor. v, 21.⁹ Jehovah.¹⁰ Gen. i, 26.¹¹ Eccles. xvii, 3.¹² Wisdom ii, 23 (Vulg.).¹³ Rom. viii, 29.¹⁴ Gen. iii, 22.

except from the person of CHRIST; even as also of Solomon and David more things are said, and more excellently, than can be appropriate to them. They are said of them, but not on account of them. Moreover, of an angel it is literally said, *My face shall go before thee*,¹ although nevertheless the true face is CHRIST. It is he that attended the children of Israel on their journey.² Nor does God number the angels with himself so that he says, as though they were one of *us*, *our*, and let *us* make. But because
 91b the person of the Son is foreshadowed in them, this is indeed correctly understood of the Son, who is one with the Father; for hitherto the Son was one with him, in one Nature, that is, personally; but now he is one with him in power and authority. And he said, *our*, for the reason that the same likeness of CHRIST belonged to each. Hence many of the Jews, as though dreaming of CHRIST, imagined that there are bodily forms in God, because צֶלֶם³ and דְּמוּת⁴ are attributed to him in Scripture; and Rabbi Moses undertakes to oppose this view in his *Director Neutorum*, Book I, chapter i;⁵ saying that it is a metaphorical use of Scripture. But I deem that in such figures of speech mysteries lie hidden, and that nothing was said by the divine oracles without a meaning. And this whole difficulty is easily solved by CHRIST, for it must be borne in mind that the Scriptures employ various ways of speaking. It is not without mystery that Scripture attributes such things to God in the Old Testament rather than in the New; it is not without significance that in the Old Testament you so often read of his hands, fingers, eyes, face, and feet, and that none of these is found in the New Testament, but quite the contrary: *God is a Spirit*.⁷ For the reason is clear; because CHRIST was then with God. And that same pattern after which man was made is the דְּמוּת⁸ which Ezekiel saw,⁹ that is, CHRIST, whose face did shine as the fire.¹⁰
 92a Through an angel, therefore, the countenance of CHRIST was

I will open
my mouth
in parables,
I will utter
things
hidden, etc.⁶

¹ Ex. xxxiii, 14 (Vulg.).

² I. Cor. x, 4.

³ *Tselem*, image.

⁴ *Demuth*, likeness.

⁵ The same work cited in Book III, paragraph 4, as *Liber Perplexorum*.

⁶ Matt. xiii, 35; Ps. lxxviii, 2.

⁷ John iv, 24.

⁸ *Demuth*, likeness.

⁹ Ezek. viii, 2.

¹⁰ Matt. xvii, 2.

represented as shining forth in God;¹ for, as Cyprian says,² he is at once angel, and God, and CHRIST; he is here covered by a wonderful tabernacle.³ The same thing is proved in Exodus.⁴ Paul notes the same thing in Galatians: The law, he says, *was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator*.⁵ For there already existed a mediator in God; and notwithstanding this, God was one, although (in view of the fact that no sort of mediator can here be asserted of one only) Paul here acutely assumes, indeed, an inconsistency, so that by resolving it you conclude that CHRIST was with God. For so great is the glory of CHRIST that the person of CHRIST was figured in God, in angels, in men, in rocks and other things. These things are the ineffable mysteries of CHRIST which, had they been understood by the ancient heretics, they would never have said that angels created the world, and were the gods of the Old Testament. From the same ignorance of CHRIST it resulted that others conceived that above the angels there were yet more Gods as creators of the world, because in Genesis *Elohim* is used in the plural; which nevertheless clearly proves our case, as what follows will indicate. And explain *Elohim*, that is, God and his Word, God and CHRIST, and God through CHRIST. Nor does it say that *they* created, but *he* created, because God created by the Word; yet it was the Person of Christ that was creating.

7. From this is discovered the truth of the common opinion 92b by which they say that two Natures united in CHRIST make one Person, and one Son, because there is one Nature of the Word, another Nature of the flesh; and these two are one Person, because the Word became flesh. In which opinion there are as many errors as there are words; and they do not understand what *Person* means; and they misuse the term when in this metaphysical fashion they speak of the Nature of the Word. But properly speaking one says, the Nature of God, and not, the Nature of the Word; because the being of the Word is a

¹ Gen. xxii, 11, 15; Jud. vi, 22.

² Testim. adv. Judaeos, ii, 5 (MPL. iv, 728; ANF. v, 517; ANCL. xiii, 102 f.).

³ *Caelatura*.

⁴ Ex. iii, 2-6.

⁵ Gal. iii, 19.

⁶ Paulus Burgensis, or de Sancta Maria, formerly R. Salomon Levita; Dialogus qui vocatur Scrutinium, 1434.

This was formerly the view of certain Hebrews, against whom Paul of Burgos wrote in his *Scrutinium*.⁶

Person assumed in the Nature of God. Indeed, hitherto it ill suggests the Nature of God, which we know not how to call into court; and we transgress the limits of Scripture. And I shall never take the Nature except for the being itself, which is God.

8. Moreover, John did not say, the Word was united to the flesh, but, *The Word became flesh*,¹ because a change was made from the Word into flesh; a change was made from a Person into a being,² as if the Person of the Word, when it became flesh, withdrew from God and came to man. Yet it did not really withdraw from God, but CHRIST ascended to God, and CHRIST is now just as really in God as the Word was with God before.³ And this is the Son of man who had already ascended into heaven, and was in heaven,⁴ as I said in Book II.⁵ That which before was the Person of the Son, now that the Word has become flesh is JESUS CHRIST himself, who is the true, real and natural Son of God. Nor is there now in God any other *hypostasis* or form but the man Christ himself, for when the being itself comes, its personal representation ceases. Reflect upon this continually; for I say that the Word was in the law as a prefiguring of CHRIST; the Word was the shadow, and CHRIST is the truth. John, both in his Gospel and in his Epistle, says of the Word, *was*;⁶ but now, after its being manifested, there is no such Word, but the very being itself of which the Word was a type. For we never read of the Word, *is*, but, *was*. But now there is the Son, JESUS CHRIST, because what was in the Word exists as flesh, and the Word became flesh; that is, the Person became a being, the shadow became light, as Paul says, *Our glorying became truth*;⁷ that is, just as we gloried in the Word, so it was in fact. The Word, which was in the law as a shadow, became the truth. Even as he adds, *The law, that is the shadow, was given through Moses; truth came through Christ*.⁸ There was

¹ John i, 14.

² *De persona ad rem*; from the mask of a being into the being itself.

³ John i, 1.

⁴ John iii, 13.

⁵ Book II, paragraph 1.

⁶ John i, 1; I. John i, 1.

⁷ II. Cor. vii, 14 (Vulg.).

⁸ John i, 17.

The separate words of John have reference to the face of Christ.

then a Word concerning the being which now is; that is, the being itself did not exist, but there was a Word concerning it, like a conversation about an absent being, which was then being represented by the Word. The very thing which was the *πρόσωπον*¹ of the Word, and the light shining in darkness,² is now in heaven, the face of JESUS CHRIST which on the mount did shine as the sun.³ For the Person of the Word was prepared to this end, 93b that the glory of CHRIST might be manifested, which was also done, *and we beheld his glory*; ⁴ and at this the preaching of John very clearly aims. We ought now, therefore, with clear and simple contemplation, to attend solely to JESUS CHRIST and God the Father. Nor does any other Word now remain, nor has one ever been heard, either in Paul's mouth or in his preaching, except God the Father and his Son JESUS CHRIST; which differences and modes of speaking I would have you note, how, that is, it means one thing to say the Word, means another to say the Son; means one thing to say, was once, means another to say, is now. Reflect on this, for you have fallen short in the chief foundation. If you show me one iota by which the Word is called the Son, or mention is made of the begetting of the Word, I will confess myself as one beaten, though he has kept my language to the very letter, as Christ says; who when Scripture says the Word will himself also say the Word; when it says the Son, will say the Son; that is, once the Word, but now the Son.

9. As for what they say of *Person*, it is a gross misuse of the term to say that one Person is an aggregate of two beings, or of two Natures united into one mass. But properly speaking, one being is called the person of another, as Job's friends, assuming the person of God, wished to speak and to judge as though they were themselves Gods;⁵ and the false apostles speak in the person of the apostles, and Satan speaks in the person of a good 94a angel, when he fashioneth himself into an angel of light.⁶ And wisdom speaks in the person of CHRIST, David and the Prophets often speak in the person of CHRIST, and CHRIST in the person of the Church; which things were all hidden types or signs of the

¹ *Prosopon*, face.

² Matt. xvii, 2.

³ Job xiii, 7, 8.

⁴ John i, 5.

⁵ John i, 14.

⁶ II. Cor. xi, 14.

Word. For in a way altogether similar we say that the Word in the Person of CHRIST was once the Son, and that CHRIST was with the Father from the beginning in the Person of the Word; and CHRIST is the Person of the Word, and the Word is the Person of CHRIST, and there is but one Person and one aspect, because the very thing that shone forth in the Word is CHRIST himself; so that if I have a mirror, although you see me face to face, and also in the mirror, yet you see but one person. And thus it amounts to the same thing when, having mentioned Christ, or having mentioned the eternal Word, you say this: He was the Son from the beginning; because, whatever you may mention, he was from the beginning the Son in Person, not in reality. Indeed, Persons are spoken of because of the absence of beings, and Persons are incompatible with beings. Therefore it is not argued from this that there was any real begetting up there among the Gods, for this speculation is very beastly and harmful, and deserves such great derision that it needs no recommendation.

All things that are in the law are signs of the hidden Word.

- 94b 10. From this, if you understand what has been said, you will have an answer to all the arguments in the world. Indeed, there will be no argument against you, but you will very plainly admit that the Son of God was with the Father from everlasting, came forth from the Father, came down from the highest heaven, came into the world, entered the world, and put on flesh. Let those now keep silence who say that the Son was sent by the Father in no other way than one of the Prophets; for one was sent and manifested who aforetime was the hidden God of Israel, while his countenance lay concealed within the shadow of the Father;¹ for he dwelt in the secret place of the Most High, and in the shadow of the Almighty.² There was his power placed and hidden.³ And John says that not the Son alone, as they say, but JESUS CHRIST himself came in the flesh.⁴ And this is itself the appearing of our Savior CHRIST; though to what purpose is his appearing, unless that he too formerly was hidden in secret? To such a degree did the Prophets see CHRIST in God, that he says that in the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth.⁵

¹ Isa. xlv, 15.

² Ps. xci, 1.

³ Hab. iii, 4.

⁴ I. John iv, 2; II. John 7.

⁵ Ps. cii, 25.

And although many think that these words are forcibly made to apply to CHRIST, yet that is their proper sense, as the Apostle teaches.¹ For after the Prophet spoke of God as יהוה,² and said, His name is to be declared in Zion, that all may be obedient to him through CHRIST,³ he afterwards speaks of the affliction of Zion, that is, of the people of Christ. And in addition to this he calls upon אל⁴ Christ, and adds a consolation, proclaiming the power and eternity of CHRIST. He it is of whom the whole sixty-eighth Psalm speaks, whom he desires to arise. He is EL; the heavens declare his glory; that is, the spiritual creatures, and also literally the superior powers and the worlds which he created.⁵ But more about this in what follows,⁶ for there is also a similar opinion about other Psalms, although they explain them otherwise if they have no knowledge of Christ. It is he that formerly was hidden in wisdom, and afterwards *did appear upon earth, and was conversant with men.*⁷ From this is solved the question as to how he took the seed of Abraham, to which a reply has already been given.⁸ For he, coming from heaven, enters the world, takes⁹ and puts on flesh. But this meaning, although it be true in itself, yet seems to me in this passage to bear some other meaning along with this. Nor does the Apostle compare the seed of Abraham to a single angel whom he had been on the point of taking as a human nature, but to the whole company of angels; as though he were saying, he came to set free not angels but men. He is said therefore to take the seed of Abraham, which we are, thus: *Moreover, I will take thee;*¹⁰ and, *He took me, and drew me out of many waters.*¹¹ Quite so our merciful and faithful High Priest, when he set us free from bondage to the Devil, drew and took us from death to life, from the power of Satan to his own bosom. *I will take you,* he says;¹² and, *Take ye one another, even as Christ took us to the*

¹ Heb. i, 10.² Jehovah.³ Ps. cii, 21, 22.⁴ El, God.⁵ Ps. xix, 4.⁶ In Book VII, paragraphs 4, 5.⁷ Bar. iii, 37.⁸ Book III, paragraphs 1 ff.⁹ *Assumit*, and so in the following quotations, following Pagnini's rendering, except the last, which follows the Vulgate.¹⁰ I. Kings xi, 37.¹¹ II. Sam, xxii, 17.¹² John xiv, 3.

glory of God.¹ And, *He will take thee, will gather thee, and will bring thee*² into his rest, that is, into the land of Canaan, into which rest we have already been brought, although just what this is the world knows not; but it will know when it is known that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

11. There remains to be explained the passage in Hebrews,³ how the Son is called the very image of the Substance, or *hypostasis*, of God. In order to get at the meaning of this, let us see what the Apostle means by Substance. In the first place, the *substance* of a lawsuit is spoken of, its theme, its marrow, or that in which the knot of the question chiefly consists. And in this way the same Apostle takes it in the same epistle; for he wishes us particularly to consider the beginning of the *substance* of Christ unto the end;⁴ that is, that with a living spirit we consider the marrow of the matter, whose *hypostasis* is to bring the whole order of the law back to Christ, as to its very goal. And we thus bring straight to Christ that part which speaks of rest, knowing that now at the end of the ages is the seventh day on which God rested from the works of the law. And into that rest
 96a into which they did not enter because of unbelief, we that believe in Christ enter to-day; and we observe a perpetual, true, and spiritual keeping of the sabbath, even sabbath after sabbath, now that our eternal high priest is forever within the tabernacle.⁵ Moreover, he says that faith is the *substance* of those things which are hoped for;⁶ for that which is hoped for is eternal salvation, and the chief root, marrow, and infallible way of attaining to this salvation consists in faith. Hence faith is said to be the *substance* of this matter, just as we say that the wealth on which human progress is founded is our *substance*. I am always speaking not of the Lutheran faith, but of the faith of CHRIST, which alone justifies. That is the door entering through which we are purified; and being thus cleansed, laboring worthily in the Lord's field, we earn our talent. The whole faith of the Gospel has regard to the Person of Christ; that is, that we believe him; and in him is all our trust. For he himself al-

¹ Rom. xv 7.

² Heb. i, 3.

³ Heb. iii, 19-iv, 4.

⁴ Deut. xxx, 4, 5.

⁵ Heb. iii, 14 (Vulg.).

⁶ Heb. xi, 1.

ways cries, Be of good cheer, and, Believe in me; and as a result of this preaching of Christ the Gospel of the kingdom of God is alone proclaimed to us; and the *hypostasis* of eternal salvation is to believe that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God. Therefore *hypostasis* is properly subsistence: that which chiefly subsists in anything is its essence and *hypostasis*.

12. From this it is plain what the Apostle means by *hypostasis* in the chapter quoted from.¹ And they are deceived who 96b explain it as meaning the Nature of the Father; for Scripture has nothing to do with Natures, nor does the proper meaning of the term allow that sense. And the *substance* of things to be hoped for is not the thing itself that is to be hoped for, or the *nature* of things to be hoped for; but by *substance* of the Father the Apostle means his way of subsisting, and the *being* of the Father. And this is what the expression ὑπόστασις² means; for the *hypostasis* of the Father shines forth in the Word, and the likeness of the Word is the man CHRIST JESUS himself, who is the very image of this being, of which very image I shall speak more at large below.³

¹ Heb. i, 3, where the Greek *hypostasis* is translated substance, its etymological equivalent.

² *Hypostasis*.

³ In Book VI, paragraph 4.

BOOK V

Argument

EXAMINATION of the Old Testament usage of the words for God — *Elohim* and *Jehovah* — shows that both refer to Christ, as centre of all, and essence of all things.

Synopsis

1. *Elohim*, plural in form, means God and his Word; 2. but is singular in construction because the Word was God; and Christ is indifferently called *Elohim* or *Jehovah*, *Jehovah* in the Law, and *Elohim* in the Prophets. 3. The word for salvation, or Christ, is used not with *Jehovah* but with *Elohim*. 4. Usage of Scripture shows that Christ is *Elohim*. 5. Our justification through Christ is for those that believe that he is the Son of God. 6. The meaning of the name *Jehovah* also points to Christ. 7. He is the creator of all things, 8. as John also shows. 9. God is the source of light, and the Essence of all things.

BOOK THE FIFTH

- 96b 1. The more notable names of Divinity are *Elohim*, and *Jehovah*; the one the name of Christ, the other that of the Father, and of these we have now to speak with a view to a fuller knowledge of Christ. I have interpreted *Elohim* as meaning God and his Word; and I say more plainly that *Elohim* was in Person man, and in Nature God. And by this analogy they call great men and distinguished persons *elohim*, be they of men or of angels. Moreover, the Hebrews attribute this plural number to the usage of their language, but as usual they quench the Spirit. Yet of us greater things must be required, since we know that the testimony of JESUS CHRIST is the spirit of prophecy.¹ For this
- 97a usage was established before there was any other usage; and that it was thus established in this sacred language by God is not without mystery. I say the same of *Adonai*, or *Adonim*;²

¹ Rev. xix, 10.

² Heb., Lord, Lords.

For there
are many
Elohim or
Adonim,
whether in
heaven or
on earth.
I. Cor.
viii, 5.

for it might reasonably have been established for this being, and it can also be employed for other lords, just as *elohim* is also employed. Again, that a plural is indicated in *elohim* is proved in Joshua, where it not only says *elohim* of God, but אֱלֹהִים קְדוֹשִׁים,¹ as though it said, holy Gods. It therefore can not be denied that some plural is here indicated. Likewise in Jeremiah, אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים,² that is, live Gods, living Gods; and in the Psalms, אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפְטִים,³ that is, Gods that judge. This plural, as I have said, was indicated by Paul in Galatians, saying, *Now a mediator is not of one.*⁴ And there is this plural because Elohim was then in Person man, and in Nature God; so now Elohim is Christ, man according to the flesh, God in spirit and in power.

2. It is in the highest degree appropriate to this matter that, although *elohim* is interpreted in the plural, that is, God and his Word, yet it is placed in the singular construction, because the Word was God. In the same way Christ, as he was with God, is, upon consideration, indifferently called Jehovah or Elohim; for in the Law the name Jehovah is not separated from Elohim. Therefore he who was then Elohim was Jehovah, because the Word was God; and, as it frequently reads, no one was Elohim except Jehovah, and Christ himself was Elohim, the source of being, from whom emanated all things in the world. 97b But when a prophecy is directed to the Christ that is to come, the name Jehovah is never applied to him. Evidence in support of this matter is in the fact that though the same words are repeated in the Law and the Prophets, in the Law *Jehovah* is used, and in the prophecy which refers to Christ *Elohim* is used.⁵ Likewise, Jehovah is thy Maker, and thy Redeemer shall be called the Elohim of the whole earth.⁶ And in many other passages this usage is found: And Jehovah said, I will be *Elohim* to you.⁷ For the sovereign rule⁸ of Jehovah comes to us through the dispensation⁹ of Elohim, just as God reigns through Christ,

¹ *Elohim kedoshim*, Josh. xxiv, 19.

² *Elohim chayyim*, Jer. x, 10; xxiii, 36.

³ *Elohim shophetim*, Ps. lviii, 11.

⁴ Gal. iii, 20. cf. Book IV, paragraph 6.

⁵ Deut. xxxiii, 2; Hab. iii, 18.

⁶ Isa. liv, 5.

⁷ Lev. xxvi, 12; II. Cor. vi, 16; Heb. viii, 10.

⁸ *Monarchia*.

⁹ *Oeconomia*.

for otherwise Jehovah is a separate name by itself. Again, the reason that chiefly moves me is that the word *Elohim* has reference to Christ; for all the Psalms which the Holy Spirit has in the gospel records interpreted as relating to Christ, and any other passages of Scripture that attribute to Christ a divine name, employ the word *EL*, *Elohim*, or *Adonai*, especially *Elohim*. And this Christ himself clearly shows: *Be still*, he says, *and see that I am Elohim*.¹ And the Apostle explained that in the preceding Psalm Christ is said to be *Elohim*.² And in the one before that he is said to be *Elohim* and *Adonai*.³ Likewise other Psalms before and after all declare that he is *Elohim*, thus:
 98a *Elohim* is greatly exalted; ⁴ This is *Elohim*, he will rule us forever; ⁵ Out of Zion will *Elohim* come with glorious beauty.⁶ For that this *Elohim* here is Christ, who rejects the ceremonies of the law, is plain from the argument of Paul in I. Corinthians x, and Hebrews x. Again, who that has even a moderate knowledge of Hebrew or Chaldee will fail to know that Thomas did not call on Jehovah when he said, My Lord, my God.⁷ Did you ever see this affix, *my*, added to the name Jehovah? Search, then, and let him be ignorant who will.

3. Again in another way, and it is a mystery worth noting; for *ישיע* ⁸ (which means saved, and salvation, Christ) is never joined to the name Jehovah, but to the name *Elohim*,⁹ as in very many passages where, besides the name Jehovah, something about *אלהי ישיעי*¹⁰ is usually added, which means judge, prince, our Savior, saved and salvation, Christ; and the Gospel interprets this salvation as meaning Christ.¹¹ In the same way the angel interpreted the name Jesus as meaning Savior.¹² To the same purport spoke Mary, following a saying of Habakkuk, *My spirit will rejoice in God my salvation*; ¹³ for Habakkuk had said, *In Elohim is my salvation*.¹⁴ And although Jehovah is said

¹ Ps. xlv, 10 (Vulg.).

² Ps. xlv, 21, 23.

³ Ps. xlviii, 14 (Vulg.).

⁴ John xx, 28.

⁵ Hab. iii, 18; Ps. xviii, 46; xxiv, 5; Isa. xii, 2; Micah vii, 7.

⁶ *Elohei jesha'y*.

⁷ Luke ii, 11.

⁸ Hab. iii, 18.

⁹ Ps. xlv, 6; cf. Heb. i, 8.

¹⁰ Ps. xlvii, 9.

¹¹ Ps. i, 2.

¹² *Jesha'*.

¹³ Luke ii, 30; iii, 6; Acts xxviii, 28.

¹⁴ Luke i, 47.

to save because he saves through Christ, yet they are never joined together, it never reads ישעיהו.¹ But, what is also worth noting, there is generally an addition about ישועה,² that is, about his salvation, Christ.³ And so Simeon said, *Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*⁴ Isaiah shows me this difference plainly. For in composing the history the spirit often suddenly intermingles sublimer things; in composing the history the Prophet is all at once caught up into heaven to gaze upon the glory of the world to come, where they shall see Christ and the Father eye to eye, and shall say, This is Elohim, Christ the Savior. Likewise, when the Father is pointed out, This is Jehovah, and we will rejoice in *Jesuato*, that is, in his Jesus, in his salvation, Christ.⁵ For his name is ישועה, Jeshuah, which is also used in the Psalms.⁶ 98b

4. Again, the name Elohim is never put before the name Jehovah, but on the contrary it always says, Jehovah Elohim; so that it not only is noted there that the Word was God, but it can also be explained in accordance with what is to be said, that is, one who forms the Essence, or will give the Essence to Elohim Christ himself. Again, Christ is clearly proved in another way to be Elohim; for, since Christ is the Word, no mention is ever made of the Word of Elohim, nor does Elohim send or set in motion his Word, because he does not set in motion nor send himself. But, since the Father is Jehovah, he is rightly called the Word of Jehovah himself, and mention is always made of his own Word, and of his Word. And although mention is never made of the Word of Elohim, yet mention is properly made of the spirit of Elohim, for this very thing was the breath of Christ,⁷ just as also to-day Christ sends the Spirit 99a from the Father. Again, the fact that Elohim is Christ confirms what I said above,⁸ that man was not made in the image of Jehovah, but in the image of Elohim.

Note the mystery: that it says, the spirit of Elohim, and not, the Word of Elohim.

¹ *Jehovah jeshu'.*

² *Jeshu'atho.*

³ Ps. xcvi, 2; xcvi, 2.

⁴ Luke ii, 30.

⁵ Isa. xxv, 9.

⁶ Ps. ix, 14; xiii, 5; xx, 5; xxi, 1, 5; cvi, 4, and in a great many other passages.

⁷ Gen. i, 2.

⁸ In Book I, paragraph 20.

5. To some what is said of the name Jehovah in Jeremiah ¹ will cause difficulty. But even if Jerusalem is there called, Our righteous Jehovah, they could infer little from it. For names are often given to things with these additions. Yet I suppose that there is here another sense; for in the one passage the relative masculine is used, which refers to the tribe of Judah; in the other passage the feminine, which refers to Jerusalem; for in both passages it had made mention of them just before. And afterwards it adds *וזה שמו אשר יקראו יהוה צדקו*,² that is, And this name of him who called him, namely Judah, is, Our righteous Jehovah. And in the other passage it says likewise, He who will call her, namely Jerusalem, is our righteous Jehovah; just as if you said, The God of peace called us, that is, he called us in peace. It means to say that they will be called under the name of righteousness, he will be our righteousness, we shall all be righteous, after he has freely justified us. I have pointed out above ³ that this righteousness is not according to the Lutheran faith, but is for those that believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. For we were acknowledged by God, and justified from our sins, when we believed in Christ.⁴ For though we were dead through sins, he made us alive and made us heavenly.⁵ It is not needful that we seek righteousness and the friendship of God through works of the law; indeed, this would be to distrust Christ, as though he had not sufficiently and freely justified us once and for all. They sought this in the law, although they were unable to obtain it; but we have been justified, purified, and sanctified by Christ.⁶ The enmity between God and the world which could not be removed through the law has been removed through Christ. God has become to us a merciful Father, and we his sons. And not only this, but he has given us the pledge of the Spirit, that we may be already partakers of the glory to come.⁷ O wonderful *χαρις* ⁸ of God, that we most wicked men should have been made righteous in the sight of

Made righteous by this alone, that we have believed in Christ.

¹ Jer. xxiii, 6; xxxiii, 16 (Vulg.).

² *Wezeh shemo asher yikre'u Jehovah tsidkenu*, Jer. xxiii, 6.

³ Book III, paragraph 20.

⁴ Acts xiii, 38, 39; Rom. iii, 21-28.

⁵ Eph. ii, 1, 5, 6.

⁶ Heb. viii, 10; x, 10, 14.

⁷ Eph. i, 13, 14.

⁸ *Charis*, grace.

Justified
like Abra-
ham, who
by the fact
that he be-
lieved one
Word was
made the
friend of
God.

God! We are reconciled to God through Christ, by his not imputing our sins to us; and thus without works we have been made the righteousness of God, and friends of God,¹ in which grace already gained we now firmly stand, as follows in the same passage.² But what now remains to be done, now that we have believed in Christ and have been justified? Let the Lutherans inquire. If they do not find out, let them sleep with their faith. It was not enough for them to be without faith in Christ, unless they also robbed the people of the reward of love, and of every act of virtue. They keep men suspended in the mere wind of faith, and make an exhibition of themselves. They say they have faith; but I have never been able to understand what it is that they have, which they call faith. I would that they might take the Scriptures more freely, and without doing them violence, also casting off their most unfortunate prejudice. For Christ did not speak falsely when he said that by love, fasting, and prayers we lay up treasure in the kingdom of heaven, and prepare for ourselves an abundant reward in the world to come. Indeed, without this, justification is in vain, and we have received the grace of God in vain. Yet they think to bring the people forcibly to do these things. Have love, they say, but it will profit you nothing. Thus their imagining makes men slothful, so that they neglect everything, they pay no heed to prayer; to give alms is useless; if you speak of continence, mortification of the flesh, or fasting, they will laugh with a great guffaw. I will speak of this more at large elsewhere;³ for it was necessary for the present to touch upon these things, in order thereby to show my purpose, namely, what that Evangelical faith is which they are seeking. For this foolishness is our faith and salvation, namely, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour, because he died for us, and rose again. By this foolishness of preaching it is God's good pleasure that they that believe should be saved; foolishness, I say with Paul,⁴ in the judgment of the philosophers, which is nevertheless the wisdom of God.

6. The other name, most holy of all, *יהוה*,⁵ some say means

¹ II. Cor. v, 21; Rom. iv, 13.

² Rom. v, 2; II. Cor. vi, 1.

³ This promise was fulfilled in the *Dialogues*.

⁴ I. Cor. i, 21-25.

⁵ Jehovah.

100b Essence; others, begetting. Yet it includes both, and can be interpreted thus: *יהוה*, that is, source of being, parent of beings, one who causes to be, gives being, cause of being. I leave to the Cabalists¹ their own secrets; and I simply say that (as the *Jod* with the *Sheva*² shows us) it is the future *Piel*,³ which has an active meaning, formed from the root *יה*,⁴ or rather *יהה*,⁵ by changing the *Jod* to a *Vav*, and small words to great, as frequently happens; and it is interpreted *יהיה*,⁶ that is, he will give being, or will cause to be; which applies rather well to Christ, as much as to say, He will cause Christ to be. Note the greatness of the mysteries, that even in the very name of God, there was a sign, an indication, or a prophecy of the Christ to come. Christ is he whom Jehovah caused to be from the beginning; and not only caused him to be, but all things to be through him. The change of points⁷ was made for the sake of likeness to those of the word *אדני*,⁸ even as it also sometimes has the points of the word *Elohim*, as though it also included in itself the meaning of those words.⁹

7. We can settle this meaning of the word by a passage where he was about to do great deeds and lay Egypt waste; hence he says that his name Jehovah, which is the name of the one that does these great deeds, was not known to the patriarchs.¹⁰ For God appeared to the patriarchs, and was known under the name *EL Shaddai*;¹¹ and from the meaning of these names in this passage it is ascertained that far more is conveyed through the name Jehovah; for *יהוה*¹² comes from *יה*,¹³ which means deso-

¹ The Cabalists devoted themselves to the esoteric doctrines of Judaism, and gave Scripture mystical interpretations.

² *Jod* is the Hebrew J; the *Sheva* is a half-vowel, equivalent to an unaccented *e*. The reference is to the *Je* in Jehovah.

³ The *Piel* is a form of the Hebrew verb denoting intensity or repetition.

⁴ *Havah*.

⁵ *Hajah*.

⁶ *Jihveh*.

⁷ The Hebrew vowel signs, written under the consonants.

⁸ *Adonaj*.

⁹ The true vowels were never written with the sacred name whose consonants were *Jhvh*, lest it be profanely pronounced; and those of *Adonaj* (Lord) were substituted, thus giving the artificial name, Jehovah.

¹⁰ Ex. vi, 2, 3.

¹¹ God Almighty; Gen. xvii, 1; xxviii, 3; xxxv, 11.

¹² *Shaddai*.

¹³ *Shod*.

lation, as though he were a desolator, or one able to lay all waste. And so it is explained in Joel,¹ and in Isaiah;² כֶּשֶׁד מְשִׁי, ^{101a} that is, like desolation from a desolator. Likewise אֵל ⁴ means strong, and powerful; whence EL Shaddai, as though he were a mighty desolator; and under this name he was first manifested to Abraham;⁵ and that for this reason, that Abraham might be mightier in not fearing others, then also that he might walk more perfectly before him in the fear of the Lord, as it says, *I am a jealous God,⁶ a consuming and terrible fire.⁷* Therefore, although I have appeared to them with this name, although they have realized that I laid waste Sodom and Gomorrah, yet they have not fully known hitherto that I am omniscient, have not known me under the name of Jehovah, which is a more complete name of one that causes to be, that does so great and so many things, as you shall see in the things that I am now about to do against Pharaoh. And this preface concerning the things that he was about to do God premised before he went on to the explanation of his name. So also he afterwards said, The Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah ⁸ that cause all things to be. The conclusion is valid, that we are to know by such great plagues and desolations of Christendom that he is EL Shaddai and Jehovah. But we have no eyes; the heart of Pharaoh is hardened. The Prophets, when they prophesy some great thing to come, are wont to make the same inference.⁹ For us to know that he is Jehovah who does such great things against us, it is not enough for you to say, Now we know that it is the ^{101b} finger of God, for Pharaoh's magicians also said this;¹⁰ but they did not inquire what he demanded who wrought such great evils. Nor are we willing to take warning from it. The priests of the Philistines gave more earnest heed to this.¹¹ And shall we not blush for shame that the Gentiles surpass us in regard for the Scriptures? Moreover, this name of one who creates, or causes

¹ Joel i, 15.² Isa. xiii, 6.³ *Keshod mishshaddi*, Joel i, 15.⁴ *El*.⁵ Gen. xvii, 1. Modern scholarship does not support these etymologies.⁶ Ex. xx, 5.⁷ Heb. xii, 29.⁸ Ex. vii, 5; xiv, 4, 18.⁹ Ezek. xxv, 7, 11, 17; xxix, 6, 9, 16, 21; xxx, 8, 19, 25, 26; I. Kings xx, 13, 28.¹⁰ Ex. viii, 19.¹¹ I. Sam. vi, 1-9.

to be, is made plain from the creation of the world, and from the first passage in which the voice began to be uttered by the Holy Spirit; for during the six days God was never called by that name, because the creation was not yet completed. But on the seventh day, when the creation was completed, he first began to be called by this name, the names of the generation and creation being repeated. *These, it says, are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day on which Jehovah made them.*¹ Hence he is there called the creator of things and of beings; he himself is the father of the rain, because he hath begotten the drops of dew from the womb, whose outgoing is the frost, and he hath begotten the hoar-frost of heaven.²

102a 8. Again, according to the Gospel of John, this name of God is explained by the mere fact that he said, *was*;³ for this *was* is the *hypostasis* of the Word, as I shall say in Book VII.⁴ Again, by way of the Word John explains that Jehovah himself is the one who gives being and causes to be, saying, *All things were made through him, and without him was nothing.*⁵ Moreover, he is explained to be one who begets through the Word or Christ, because he was begetting the Son from everlasting and always by a word; and through Christ that name best fitted him, because he first of all gave the Son being by the uttering of a word, through which he also caused other things to be. For, as I said, Christ is before all. And he himself, by saying, *I am, I am from the beginning,*⁶ shows the name of the Father, because the Son has eternal being from the Father.

9. Just as God is called the source of being, so is he also called the source of light, the Father of Spirits,⁷ the Father of lights;⁸ nor do I understand light as meaning here the assertion of a quality. But inasmuch as the rays of being, and shining angels, flow from God, the breath of being comes out of his storehouse, from the Father's breast, as sons from a father's bosom; manifold rays of divinity proceed, which are all Essences of God,

¹ Gen. ii, 4.

² Job xxxviii, 28, 29.

³ John i, 1: In the beginning *was* the Word.

⁴ Book VII, paragraph 8.

⁵ John i, 3.

⁶ John viii, 58.

⁷ Heb. xii, 9.

⁸ James i, 17.

and he is in them. Nor is there anything in the world that can more truly be called Essence than that which God disposes to exist in his own character. For his Accidents are more essential than our Quiddities; and no celestial messenger is ever sent to us in whom his Essence is not. He sends his light to us, and this itself is God his very self. He sends his Spirit to us, and this itself is God his very self. For the express image of the *hypostasis* of God is always there; and for this reason Jehovah is called Sabaoth, that is, of hosts; because his Essence fights in the number of the multitude. He arms all the hosts and armies of heaven with the splendor of his Essence. And Jehovah of Sabaoth, as I have said, can be called Jehovah Elohim, as much as to say, he that gives being to the hosts. And hence it comes to pass that the name of divinity is mingled with the names of angels, because his Essence is mingled with them. You see here that God has several Essences; for there can not be said to be several beings in one Essence, but quite the contrary. Indeed, I say that God himself is the Essences of all things, and all things are in him. 102b

BOOK VI

Argument

THE incomprehensible God is known through Christ, by faith, rather than by philosophical speculations. He manifests God to us, being the expression of his very being; and through him alone God can be known. The Scriptures reveal him to those who have faith; and thus we come to know the Holy Spirit as the divine impulse working in us.

Synopsis

1. God, incomprehensible in himself, is known through Christ, who was an aspect of him; while abstract philosophical conceptions of him are meaningless, and such are the phantasms of the philosophers. God is manifested through his Word in the face of Christ. 2. The vision of God is given to those who see Christ, for God is in him. 3. The Word, or oracle, originally with God, through which he spoke in the Old Testament, is now seen in Christ. 4. Christ is not the mere image of God, but the character, or expression, of his very being. 5. The philosophers do not understand what the character of God's hypostasis can mean. 6. Christ is so called because in him alone God exists or can be known; the disposition of God which wrought everything in the world. 7. The Scriptures give us a revelation of the invisible God, if we have faith in Christ. 8. My conception of God comes by faith in Christ, through whom we approach him; but abstract philosophical conceptions are a delusion. 9. Knowledge of Christ leads to knowledge of the Holy Spirit, which is also invisible, and known by inner experience, 10. and illuminates us, as the divine impulse within us.

BOOK THE SIXTH

- 102b 1. You will (if you have examined your capacity with the sober judgment of reason) easily recognize the knowledge of God which we obtain through CHRIST. For in himself God is incomprehensible; he can be neither imagined, nor understood, nor

discovered by thinking, unless you contemplate some aspect¹ in him. And the likeness of Christ and the Person of the Word are just this. For the impersonated oracle of God, the Person of Christ, as I have said above,² which was with God, was God himself; nor was there in him any other aspect than that. And the face of Jesus Christ is just this. And the other conceptions which the Sophists boast of having concerning indivisible beings mean nothing. It is foolishness in the sight of God; they are bewitched by their own phantasms and phantoms, as I shall, please God, show elsewhere.³ For this is the most certain truth, and evident to any man of sense, that we can have no conception of anything in the world, unless we observe some aspect or appearance in it. And if you force me to come down to fine points, a conception is not said to alter a thing by representing it in living form, except in so far as the image of that thing is presented to the mind by the phantasm itself. Again, every one knows that it is necessary for a thinking man to examine his phantasms. Let them tell me, then, what sort of figure it is, or what resemblance that phantasm has, which they examine when they have a conception of God. For it is quite certain that the phantasm, whatever it is, manifests a visible likeness, because there is no phantasm in the world which is not limited to a visible thing, just as they are also produced in us by visible things. Nor do they grasp how, by means of these visible things, things invisible are said to be understood in a mirror, darkly. As by means of a visible likeness of the Word we understand God, so from effects we argue that there is one first cause, from movements we reason that there is a prime mover, although of this Aristotle never had any real conception. These, says Paul, are things that can be known about God,⁴ yet not that God himself is therefore known. Indeed, the whole discussion is nothing else than a shifting about of visible phantasms. But, waiving these matters, this becomes quite clear to us from the Scriptures alone; that God is manifested to us through his Word. And you ought to acknowledge this face in God, that you may know the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,⁵ and may now know

¹ *Vultus*.² Book IV, paragraph 6.³ Paragraph 8.⁴ I. Cor. ii, 11, 12.⁵ II. Cor. iv, 6.

God, whom you never knew before, nor ever saw his form. And *εἶδος*¹ here means the outward appearance and form and face of God, so that Christ here says that God can not be known save in his face. But in the face of Jesus Christ he is known, as though God manifested himself to me without a veil, with that visible countenance with which he appeared to Moses face to face. And if he plainly manifested to me that face which Moses did not see, I should see nothing else than the face of Jesus Christ. And this itself was the likeness of the Word, and in this way the invisible God manifests himself to us through the visible Word. And for this reason Christ is called the face of God, for that is called the face of anything through which that thing is seen and known. And, consideration of the Word apart, God is entirely invisible and unimaginable; nor would all the philosophers in the world be enough to form any conception of him; and all that they say about these things are blasphemies against Christ. For it ought to be found simply and frankly true, that God is seen through his Word, and, *He that seeth me seeth the Father*; and, no man hath seen him but through the Son.²

104a 2. But just as the accursed philosophers would have *God is a Spirit*³ understood in a metaphysical sense, so they suppose that when it says, *No man hath seen God at any time*,⁴ it is understood only of the vision of God with the bodily eye. Nor can they grasp the fact that the meaning of the Gospel aims at anything else when mention is so often made of the vision of God, who is seen through JESUS CHRIST, and who was never before either seen or heard. Do not wrest the meaning of the words in the raw way of the sophists, but always keep the order of the process. Bear in mind that the Apostles were as yet untaught men; and Christ says that they had already seen the Father. It says the same in I. John,⁵ yet he had seen nothing else than the face of CHRIST. Notice in what sense they were asking these things, and the reply of Christ to the question they had put. And when it says, *He that seeth me seeth the Father*, note the expression, *seeth the Father*, and call this mental vision a con-

¹ *Eidos*, form.

² John i, 18; v, 37; vi, 46; viii, 19; xii, 45; xiv, 9.

³ John iv, 24.

⁴ John i, 18.

⁵ I. John i, 1-3.

ception, a knowledge, or an understanding, or whatever you will; and in a corresponding sense admit to me that God was never seen before. Otherwise CHRIST would have brought us nothing new, would claim in vain that the Father was seen through him. If, then, God is seen in a new way through CHRIST (indeed, a complete vision of God was never had before through God himself), what can this vision be but the person of Elohim, which now shines forth in the face of JESUS CHRIST? And he expressly said he was *seen*, in order to disapprove the imaginary conceptions of the philosophers. Would that God might give them a mind that they might know him, and might say with John, We have seen his glory whom no man hath seen at any time.¹ Nor did John ever see anything else than this Person that was with God, and was himself God. And through the contrivance of God this reasoning is sound; by visibly looking into his face, God was seen, because God was just this, and the face of CHRIST is now just this; therefore God is seen in the face of CHRIST; and so, strictly speaking, JESUS CHRIST is now in God, just as that Word which was God himself was with God. And for this reason CHRIST proves that the Father is seen through him, because the Father is in him, and he is in the Father.² For you ought always to reflect upon what the looking at the oracle of God once was, and you should compare it with the face of CHRIST. And now say that God is seen more clearly, never forget, hear him still crying from heaven to-day, In seeing me you see God, in seeing me you see the Father. 104b

3. From this it appears that the Word impersonated in such a countenance was not an articulate voice, and that it has no actual existence.³ For John would not have said of it in itself, *The Word was*; but he said, *Was*, for the reason that it appeared to be self-existent.⁴ Indeed, nothing else than the oracle seemed to exist, as though the invisible God lay concealed in it. And agreeably to the thought of John I would rather say *oracle* than *word* or *speech*;⁵ and the thought of John is this: In the beginning there was a certain oracle with God, and this itself was the 105a

¹ John i, 14, 18.

² John xiv, 11.

³ *Subsistentia*.

⁴ *Per se subsistens*.

⁵ *Oraculum, verbum, sermo*.

light that could not be comprehended by those that were in darkness. But we saw him after he became flesh, because this itself is to-day the shining countenance of CHRIST. Moreover, the word oracle is appropriate to this subject, for this itself was the oracle which was covered and overshadowed by angels' wings,¹ the oracle through which God made answer to Moses;² and so this oracle was in the secret place of the house, just as CHRIST was hidden in the shadow of the Almighty. Again, the Hebrew word confirms this interpretation of the mystery; for from דבר,³ which means *logos*, comes דביר,⁴ which means the oracle of the temple.⁵ For Christ is the true oracle, through which we receive God's answers, even as he is also called the propitiatory, that is, the propitiation for our sins;⁶ a covering, on whose account blessed are they whose sins are covered.⁷ And just as CHRIST is now the oracle, so once not only in the temple, but before that in the tabernacle, and even before the construction of the tabernacle, his person was the oracle whence Moses within the cloud received answers. There, moreover, was the light which according to John shone within the darkness of the cloud,⁸ which ought to elicit all things from the law, though we care little for it.

105b

4. In consequence of this, notice that CHRIST is improperly called the image of God. Indeed, he is more than an image; for an image is when two things are formed in a similar way, and either one is called the image of the other. But in the case of CHRIST and God it is not just as if the angel Gabriel came to me in the form of a flying eagle. Should I say, This is the image of Gabriel? Even if it be truly called an image, it is more than an image, that is, a likeness or character representing, nay containing, his *hypostasis*. And the oracle could not properly be called the image of the Father, but more than an image; for it was its very self the face of God, and God himself was the likeness or a

¹ Ex. xxv, 20; xxxvii, 6-9 (Vulg.).

² Num. vii, 89 (Vulg.).

³ *Dabar*, word.

⁴ *Debir*, sanctuary (Vulg., *oraculum*).

⁵ Ps. xxviii, 2; II. Chron. v, 7, 9; I. Kings vi, 5, 19-22.

⁶ I. John ii, 2; iv, 10.

⁷ Ps. xxxii, 1 (Vulg.); Rom. iv, 7.

⁸ John i, 5.

kind of form containing the very being of God. Likewise CHRIST is more than an image, though words fail me in which I can explain this with my slow tongue. Nor can I say more clearly than Paul did, the *character*¹ of the *hypostasis* of God; that is, the carving in which the very being itself shines forth as if with its own face. David and Moses call it חֲמוּץ.² And mark well in what sense it is there called an image, when it says, *Ye saw no image*;³ for if you take image here in that sense, you will judge rightly. For the image was there the very form of the face, with no regard to its resemblance to another imagined thing. And in this sense CHRIST will be called the εἰκών,⁴ that is, the image of God, because he is the likeness, is a kind of representation of his *hypostasis*, or the very exhibition of a being by its outward appearance.⁵ CHRIST is therefore properly called the εἰκών, that is the likeness, or a kind of carving-in, exhibiting the very being of God.⁶ In like manner he is called the χαρακτήρ,⁷ that is, the especial mark, of the *hypostasis*, that is, of the existence, of God, by seeing which I am said to see God, just as in seeing the Eagle I should be said to see Gabriel. Otherwise God would not be able to reveal himself to us in visible form. For if this could have been done, it has been done through a veiled view of the oracle, and at length through the unveiled face of JESUS CHRIST. For the very vision of his face is a vision of God, just as to Tobias himself the vision of the youth was the vision of an angel;⁸ and when the dove was seen John said, *I have seen the Spirit of God descending*.⁹ 106a

5. From this it is plain that the philosophers are far astray in their investigation about this *character*. This argument, which they supposed was an Achillean¹⁰ one against me, has become a sword of Goliath¹¹ for them; nor were they ever able to prove why the Son is called the *character* of the *hypostasis* of God. They are strangely deceived when they speak of the

¹ Heb. i, 3, in the Greek.

² *Temunah*, image, form; Ps. xvii, 15; Deut. iv, 12, 15.

³ Deut. iv, 12.

⁴ *Eikon*, image.

⁵ John v, 37.

⁶ II. Cor. iv, 4; Col. i, 15.

⁷ *Charakter*, an engraved or stamped figure; Heb. i, 3.

⁸ Tobit v, 4.

⁹ John i, 32.

¹⁰ i. e., unanswerable.

¹¹ I. Sam. xvii, 51.

106b *hypostasis* of the Father, and not of the *hypostasis* of God; as if they were speaking of a metaphysical likeness of another being, and not of an image of God, although this is nevertheless the Gospel way of speaking, and even that of the Old Testament. Yet they avoid scripture ways of speaking by deriding everything. Nor is an image of the Father spoken of in their sense of the word, but a likeness of God, a *character* of God; indeed, Paul adds significantly, *the likeness of the invisible God*,¹ as though he said that in a visible man there was an εἰκών of the invisible God. And all this tends to explain the words of the Master, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*; ² and, *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also*.³ And to these sayings the Old Testament also gives the fullest testimony in the passages quoted above, in which mention is made of this image. And God calls this image *ours*,⁴ because the one and the same face of CHRIST is that of both, and the very person of the oracle was the face and countenance of God.

We ought to imagine some face in him who is called the image.

107a 6. CHRIST, therefore, is called an aspect, a face, a likeness, a sign, a character, a seal, a distinguishing mark, a kind of engraving, of the *hypostasis*, that is, of the being, of God; because in him alone God exists, nor can God be known through any one else. And just as the face of the sun appears in the midst of immensity and of light unapproachable, so in the midst of the heights and depths of God has appeared his oracle, the Person of JESUS CHRIST. This itself was God, this itself is now the vision of God, this has been appointed to us for a sign, and in none other is there salvation,⁵ nor is there any other vision of God, nor did John see anything else when he said, ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν.⁶ This is the height and depth of the knowledge of CHRIST. This is the power, *disposition*, and *economy*, of God which wrought everything in the world, even as John also said, *All things were made through him*.⁷ And to this end CHRIST ascended, was made the power and might of God, as the Master himself well taught us, saying, *Without me ye can do nothing*;⁸ even as

¹ Col. i, 15.

² John xiv, 7.

³ *En pros ton theon*, was with God, John i, 1.

⁷ John i, 3.

⁴ Gen. i, 26.

² John xiv, 9.

⁵ Acts iv, 12.

⁸ John xv, 5.

without God we can do nothing. For all the might of God is through him, all things were made through CHRIST in power, all things were made through CHRIST in the Word, all things were made through CHRIST in Person — not only made, that is, created from the beginning, but the whole process and order of the world was carried on through his *economy*. His own glorious face, which was once covered by a cloud in the midst of light unapproachable, to-day shines forth revealed. And with equal propriety [it may be said that] CHRIST is now in God, even in reality, just as he was formerly with him in Person. And the energy flowing from that oracle, as it were the breath of his mouth, was called the Spirit of God; for it was the breath of Elohim CHRIST,¹ since to-day it is holy to us, flowing from the mouth of CHRIST.² And in the same book ³ he gave a natural spirit of life, even as also to-day by his own inspiration he has given us a supernatural one. And more mysteries yet lie concealed here; for after the likeness of this oracle, the Holy Spirit proceeds in us from the oracles of Scripture, as rivers of living water. For it is the same spirit of his mouth, from the eternal oracle, and from the mouth of CHRIST, and from the oracles of Scripture; and this very energy and power of the oracle is the eternal spirit of CHRIST, of which I have spoken above.⁴ 107b

7. If you ask why we speak of God, and say so much about him, if we do not know him, nor have any conception of him, Paul replies to this that *the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*;⁵ and those things which are invisible God reveals unto us through his Spirit,⁶ which is hidden in the sacred Scriptures. For I endeavor to learn those things which are contained in the Bible concerning God. But the things that I have acquired through philosophical conceptions are of no value for instructing us. A book has been given us from heaven, so that in it we may search after God, faith assisting us to this end, which is not the superficial assent of the sophists, but an emotion of the heart; as the Scripture says, *With the heart man believeth*,⁷ and, *If thou believest with all thy heart*.⁸ And for the

¹ Gen. i, 2.² John xx, 22.³ Gen. ii, 7.⁴ Paragraph 3.⁵ I. Cor. ii, 10.⁶ I. Cor. ii, 7-10.⁷ Rom. x, 10.⁸ Acts viii, 37 (Vulg.; cf. R. V. marg.).

He hath
made the
darkness
his hiding-
place.

108a object of this faith any outward manifestation of God suffices, without the philosophical conception of God. This consideration alone destroys the philosophical conception, because any man has his own imagination of God, and one different from any other man. Again, faith in CHRIST helps wonderfully toward this end, because through it we receive the Spirit; and unless you have first believed that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, you will never understand yourself. This is the foolishness, or rather, the heavenly philosophy, which is derived not from Aristotle, but most fully and clearly from divine sources, if we follow the scripture manner of speaking. For in the words themselves lie hidden the Spirit and wisdom, as well as the style of wisdom; for every word, every Scripture inspired of God, is profitable for teaching, correction, and instruction.¹

Nor are we capable of understanding a single letter, except he reveal it by his Spirit.

8. And I reply to the question,² that I have a conception of God, and this conception is the vision of his oracle; and it is the vision itself by which, when I see it, the Father is seen in a mirror, darkly. And here is learned the Christians' true faith in CHRIST, which is therefore called an indication of things not seen.³ Yet the Philosophers, who know everything, who have conceptions of everything, have no need of faith. Indeed, CHRIST has really become superfluous for them, because they do not know God now otherwise than before. But we know that a visible manifestation of the mystery has been made; we know that God is seen through CHRIST. God determined thus, and wished to regard himself in that mirror, as he had before done through the sight of the oracle. And for Christians this vision of God suffices to the fullest degree, so that through it we enjoy the invisible Spirit of God. For CHRIST is the way, and we ought to approach God in the spirit through him, and not through these conceptions; which is quite the opposite of what they have done. They have seemed to themselves to touch the three mathematical beings with their own senses, although there is nothing of which they had less knowledge than of these. They say that a conception is a sort of quality abstracted from phantasms, and

108b

¹ II. Tim. iii, 16.

² i. e., raised in the previous paragraph.

³ Heb. xi, 1.

also located in their heels. But God will sometime put an end to this nonsense. It distresses me that it is not only a mathematical delusion of the imagination, but also a horrible slander against the teaching of Christ. Let it suffice for them to pretend to have imaginations in their heads, without seeking for conceptions in their heels. Other than those through CHRIST, let them not trifle with visions about God. For even if they saw all the angels in heaven with open eye, yet God is still more deeply hidden, clad in angelic raiment, like a skin spread out. Nor let the philosophers here assail me regarding the nature of the angels, as to which I have no knowledge; for I do not say *spread out* in a local sense, for the skill of God is superior to place. Most foolish of men, they reduce to a kind of point all that is outside their bodies. They have reached such folly as to say that God himself is, as it were, a point many times repeated in the same plane. Is this the conception of God of which they boast? I pray God that his Spirit may touch them when they read these things, lest perchance they be to them a savor of death unto death.¹ 109a

All the heresies in the world have arisen from ignorance of Christ.

9. If they admit this very plain way of seeing God, they will better understand what the Spirit of God, and the Holy Spirit, is; for it all depends upon knowledge of CHRIST, and if we are ignorant of this, we are ignorant of everything. And it should be known that although three *hypostases* are commonly admitted, yet more properly speaking I say that in God there were two *dispositions*, namely, an oracle and a Spirit; and the visible *hypostasis* was in the oracle alone. For no kind of seeing is properly attributed to that which is in its nature a spirit, nor is there in it the face of a permanent being as there is in an oracle; nor is the Spirit said to have been made any such thing as the oracle was made flesh. But we know it not by the sole fact that we see a breath, but because we perceive it within;² and, as it were, by hearing, as CHRIST says.³ And so there appeared, as it were, tongues of fire; and a mighty sound was heard;⁴ and it pleased God that the Spirit be poured upon them in a visible Person that we might have the greater certainty concerning

There was but one *hypostasis*, namely, the Person of the Word.

¹ II. Cor. ii, 16.

² John iii, 8.

² John xiv, 17.

⁴ Acts ii, 2, 3.

109b this divine *disposition*. And though that vision does not remain for us, yet we know by experience that it is in us.¹ Hereby we know, as John says, that we abide in him, because we perceive the working of the Spirit in us.² Give heed, I beseech you, to CHRIST, and you shall know his Spirit; for the glorious advent of JESUS CHRIST has wrought such great things that all things have been changed, a new heaven, a new earth.³ He has made us to ascend into heaven, heaven has been opened, and his oracle having been made visible, God has disclosed himself to us. We have entered the gates of God, seeing the things that lay hidden in him, and touching his Word with our hands, and perceiving his Spirit within ourselves. I have already at the beginning⁴ said of the oracle that there is no other Person of the oracle in God except Christ JESUS himself, as though the oracle had withdrawn from God when it became flesh; yet it did not really withdraw, but CHRIST ascended to God, and thence he brought heaven with himself to us.

We perceive all these things by faith in Christ, for want of which the Lutherans know not what the kingdom of Christ is, nor his Gospel.

09a 10. Correspondingly I say of the Spirit, that the Spirit of God, as it were, withdrew from God when it was sent to the Apostles.⁵ Yet it did not really withdraw, but we ascended to God, and he has made us to sit with CHRIST in the heavenly places. Nor is the Holy Spirit to us a being placed on high. But by the wonderful contrivance of God a dark being is made bright because of his presence, just as the face of JESUS CHRIST became bright on the mount, apart from union with any being coming upon him; and this comparison you will find in Scripture.⁶ Say, then, that the Holy Spirit is a divine impulse in the spirit of man. Thus what God illuminates by impelling, he also
110a sanctifies by illuminating. Nor is any quidditative⁷ definition required here; for the word *spirit* is used of a kind of movement, like the motion of an impulse and of a breath; and because God, by thus moving them, sanctifies those that believe in CHRIST, therefore the Spirit in man is called Holy, and that because of faith in CHRIST.

Explanation about the Holy Spirit.

¹ John xiv, 17; II. Cor. xiii, 3, 5.

² I. John iv, 13.

³ Rev. xxi, 1, 5.

⁴ Paragraph 1.

⁵ Acts ii, 3, 4.

⁶ Matt. xvii, 2; II. Cor. iii, 18.

⁷ Constituting the essence of the thing.

BOOK VII

Argument

THE eternally begotten Son was a spoken word by which God made himself known. The Hebrew shows that the whole nature of God abode in Christ as Elohim, man being blended with God. The Word was a disposition of God, who begot the Son, a visible being. The Holy Spirit also is a real being, as Christ was. The Word was an actual being, creating all things, manifesting God in bodily form.

Synopsis

1. The Word was the Son, eternally begotten, not by way of emanation, but as a spoken word. 2. God used the Word to make himself known, though unseen, and this we know as the Son. 3. The Monarchian heresies as to the deity of Christ came of ignorance of the Hebrew. 4. Christ was Elohim, really the Father. 5. The Father abides in him, the whole Nature and glory of God are in him. In Christ man was blended, rather than united, with God. 6. The Word is a disposition of God, and shares all his qualities, as a statue shares those of the stone from which it was carved. 7. God especially begot the Son, and thus gave us life through him. 8. The hypostasis was a visible being, hence called a Person. 9. The Holy Spirit also is audible to the senses, hence is a real being and not a mere philosophical abstraction. 10. David speaks of Christ by the name, Jah, thus indicating an actual being, which Simon Magus tried to counterfeit. 11. The Logos, then, had actual existence in the body of Christ, as Irenaeus and Ignatius clearly show. 12. This is confirmed by the Hebrew use of the term, word, as applied to any objective existence or act. 13. Every event is thus a word of God. 14. All things came into being through Christ, the creative Word. 15. The transcendent God has been manifested to us in the law, in the Prophets, and in Christ. 16. John teaches that God had no bodily form, but that he became flesh in Christ.

BOOK THE SEVENTH

110a 1. With regard to filiation among divine beings, and the divinity of CHRIST, and the *hypostasis* of the Word, questions are usually asked which I shall clear up with a few words. I say that from the beginning there was among the divine beings a filiation, not real but personal. The Son was the Word; the Son was not real but personal, in so far as it was the Person of CHRIST. Nor is he in Scripture ever called Son, but an eternal kind of generation is attributed to CHRIST, and the things that were in the law were a shadow of the body of Christ. Yet some dream here of an emanation of a conception, or of a Word, from the divine mind, by means of an emanating filiation. But their dreams carry little conviction unless they prove by Scripture that the Word was a real Son; and these emanations are remains left over from the emissions of the Valentinians;¹ these emissions or emanations from within are mathematical, and unknown to the Scriptures. Even the word emanation smacks somewhat of the philosophical, which can not be included in the Nature of God. For that which has emanated from God is CHRIST himself, who came forth from the Father. But in God, within, there are no goings forth, nor emanations; but CHRIST was formed beforehand in the divine mind. There was a certain way of keeping himself which God arranged in himself in order that he might manifest himself to us; namely, by representing in himself the likeness of JESUS CHRIST, for all this was fore-ordained for exhibiting the glory of CHRIST. And John did not say that the Word emanated from God, but it was in God, and, *the Word was God*.² And *logos* does not signify reason, that is an inner and philosophical conception of the understanding, or a mental concept, as some fancifully say; but the *logos* is called a sort of speaking, it means a vocal reason, as it were, an oral reasoning, corresponding to the nature of the word λέγω.³ Nor

110b

The *logos*,
a way of
speaking.

¹ A sect of second-century Gnostics. cf. Tertullian, adv. Valentin. (MPL. ii, 525 ff.; ANF. iii, 503 ff.; ANCL. xv, 119 ff.), and Irenaeus, adv. Haer. (MPG. vii, 433 ff.; ANF. i, 315 ff.; ANCL. v). ² John i, 1.

³ *Lego*, to speak, as etymologically related to *logos*.

is it otherwise ever found in place of reason among Greeks of approved speech; which you should note constantly. For the deception consists solely in the imaginary nature of the word *logos*. And consider well what the word λέγω properly signifies, and you shall see that it means oracle, of which I have made mention above.

The end of the disposition of the Word: that God may manifest himself.

2. Again, their false imagination is seen in consequence of the establishment of the divine *economy*; for God, of his mere good pleasure, employed this kind of word for the purpose of disclosing himself to us, just as he formerly disclosed himself (though dimly) through it. For the Word was visible; and to all this John has regard, adding at once, *No man hath seen God at any time*.² For he related the progress in the Old Testament, comparing Moses with CHRIST; and you, unless you have regard to the Old Testament, will never understand the New, because it is wholly derived from the Old. But why do I search for other proofs, when it has been shown in the preceding Book³ that these conceptions of the philosophers are nothing but imaginatively mathematical delusions; and to any man of sense this will be the strongest of reasons; so that it is necessary here to look upon the face of Elohim. There was, then, an oracle, a *hypostasis* of God, a Person of CHRIST, the divinity which was Son to God himself alone. Yet to us CHRIST alone is called Son. The being was future to us; but to God nothing is future. There was in God the very image of a being that to us was future; as if I now saw in a mirror a being that is not, but will be tomorrow. For this is the height and depth of the divine *economy*; and the Word, which formerly was with God, has to us become the Son. And it makes no difference, even if you say that the Son was with God; indeed, I say that CHRIST was with God, who afterwards came and was incarnated.

111a

According to Irenaeus the Word is visible.¹

3. Paul is forever trying to explain to us the deity in CHRIST, even with greater fulness than can be thought out; but not through the union with a metaphysical Son. For why should the Apostle exclaim at the great fulness and breadth, the unsearchable brightness of the Godhead, the riches, glory, etc.,

111b

As to the second question.

¹ Adv. Haer. IV, vi, 5 (MPG. vii, 989; ANF. i, 468; ANCL. v, 391).

² John i, 18.

³ Book VI, paragraph 8.

that are in CHRIST? What need would there have been of so many words, except to say that the second being was carnally united with CHRIST, although this was never heard of in the Scriptures? If therefore you consider well, an investigation of Paul condemns their metaphysics. But that I may the better explain this matter, I shall relate the origin of these fancies about the Godhead. Paul of Samosata, previous to the Arian and trinitarian¹ philosophers, being entirely ignorant of the mysteries of CHRIST which are hidden in the Hebrew, by maintaining that CHRIST was a mere man, not God, and that he first existed then and not previously, scandalized the Greek philosophers, who were also ignorant of Hebrew, and infected by the contagion of Aristotle, and forced them to ascend to heaven without wings, where any one who would began to hunt for divinities in his own sense; and immediately there arose a countless swarm of heretics. And I suppose it was a sentence of divine punishment that the Pope was made King at the same time at which the Trinity arose; even as God also raised up many adversaries against Solomon at just the time of his sin.²

Two very serious plagues, a leaven of Aristotle, and ignorance of the Hebrew language, deprived us of Christ. And then we lost Christ.

112a

4. Let us then, that we may avoid such labyrinths of error, speak of his divinity more soberly; and we have above in many ways searched into these riches in CHRIST, although I seem to myself to have said nothing in comparison with his worth; nor could Paul set this forth otherwise than by exclaiming, Length, breadth, treasures, mysteries!³ Nevertheless I shall recall to mind certain things that proclaim his divinity, of which the root is that you keep in memory that he was Elohim. And from this you will consider the depth of the mystery, how he was in the oracle with the Father from the beginning, and in what way he is really the Father now, as he was personally in him before. We have mentioned above the brightness of his face, from which the whole world is to be lighted; although the philosophers consider that the face of his human nature, like that of another man, is now in heaven, and superfluous. But the divine transfiguration on the mount, and the vision of Paul, confounds

Christ makes much of this light, for it was not the quality, but the natural splendor, of God.

¹ See Book I, paragraph 48, note 2.9

² I. Kings xi, 14, 23.

³ Eph. iii, 18; Col. i, 27.

them. They close their eyes, lest they see him shouting from heaven and saying, He that seeth me seeth the Father.¹ This vision alone, if you often enjoy it, will transport you quite to heaven, and cleanse you from all error.

There is no other face, nor person, nor *hypostasis* of God, save Christ.

Here are two Natures in Christ: the whole Nature and power of God are in the man.

5. Another proclamation of his divinity, which surpasses all these, is the Father abiding in him, who is seen by him alone. He himself is the face of the Father, nor is there any other Person of God but CHRIST; there is no other *hypostasis* of God but him. Christ is honored by the presence of the Father more than he can be honored through their metaphysics. They say that one portion, I say that the whole Nature, of God is in him. In him is the whole Deity of the Father, in so much that even the angels marvel at this. And not only is God present in him, but the whole authority of God has been given him. Although they ascribe none of these things to the man, yet I say that he is God and the Lord of the world. The glory of the Father is in his spirit to a much more exceptional degree than the light can appear in his face. It would then dim this manifold fuiness of Deity to be contented with a mere union with the second being; nor can this be done, unless you make the Son separate from the Father, or remove the Father from CHRIST; for there is in him nothing that can be called Son save the Father himself alone; therefore CHRIST is called the Son, and the Father is in the Son. If they speak to you of some ray² in the man, you may quote against them the words of the Master, namely: *The Father is in me; the Father abiding in me.*³ And in heeding these words no one can ever be deceived; nor have they been able to find out like words against you. And their error as to the mathematical ray arises from the Word of John not being understood. They believe that the ray was united with CHRIST through the Word become flesh; though it is one thing to be united, another to become flesh. Again, John did not say, The Word *became* flesh,⁴ as they take it; but, The Word *was* flesh, the Word *existed* as flesh; and this is the most proper meaning of *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ*

112b

113a

¹ John xiv, 9.

² As the ray to the sun, was one of the illustrations by which was explained the relation of the Son to the Father.

³ John x, 38; xiv, 10, 11; xvii, 21.

⁴ John i, 14.

ἐγένετο.¹ For that which was the Person of the Word is now Christ himself. Would that we had read, The Word *was* flesh; just as it says in the same place, There *was* a man sent from God;² for it is the same word in Greek.³ Likewise, all things *were* through him, and without him there *was* nothing;⁴ as also, He spake and they *were*;⁵ God said, Let there be light, and light *was*.⁶ For the Hebrew word here has this perfectly clear meaning; and John used the word which God used at the beginning of the world; and in place of הָיָה⁷ he used ἐγένετο, as the Greek translation also clearly shows; even as he also used λόγος⁸ in place of דָּבָר.⁹ The older writers say that man was blended, rather than united, with God. But even if you say that man was united with God, or God united with man, or that a kind of Deity was united with CHRIST, I shall not condemn you; this, however, is not by way of filiation, for this ἰδιότης¹⁰ or kind of filiation is in man alone, nor was this ἰδιότης naturally appropriate τῷ λόγῳ,¹¹ except in so far as it was a *figure*¹² of the man. And this is the view of Irenaeus,¹³ and also of Tertullian,¹⁴ who say that the change was made from the Word to flesh, and that along with this a kind of Deity was blended and united with the man, because God in CHRIST is just this.

113b

6. For there are two things to be considered, the being and the Person. God is the being itself, and the Word is the *disposition*, and the Word was God; and every quality in the Nature of the Word has passed over to the man, who is now in God in the same way in which the Word was formerly with God. And with this the being itself is altogether united and blended;¹⁵

Elohim, in Person man, and in Nature God; which you should keep perpetually in mind.

¹ *Ho logos sarx egeneto*, the Word became flesh.

² John i, 6.

³ ἐγένετο, became, or was; also in the three references following.

⁴ John i, 3.

⁵ Ps. xxxiii, 9.

⁶ Gen. i, 3.

⁷ *Hahyah*, was.

⁸ *Logos*, word.

⁹ *Dabar*, word.

¹⁰ *Idiotes*, peculiar quality.

¹¹ *To logo*, to the Word.

¹² *Caelatura*, a figure carved in relief; and so where the word is used below.

¹³ Adv. haer. V, i, 3 (MPG. vii, 1122 f.; ANF. i, 527; ANCL. ix, 58).

¹⁴ Adv. Praxean xxvii (MPL. ii, 190 ff.; ANF. iii, 623; ANCL. xv, 396).

¹⁵ Assuming that *innixa* in the text is a misprint for *immixta*, as used in the preceding paragraph.

because *God was in CHRIST, reconciling the world.*¹ Again, consider what the expression, *figure* means, and you shall see that you have been deceived by your mathematical fancy, for the very thing that *was*, was a *figure* of CHRIST. A text is clear which to former ages was unintelligible: I will carve, he says, his *figure*.² In the Hebrew this is what it says: *הבני מפתח פתחה*,³ that is, Behold I, carving, or laying bare, his figure or image, just as an artificer fashions a statue by carving a stone and laying it bare. For *פתח*⁴ means, as it were, to carve a stone by laying bare, and with a graving-tool to uncover a hidden form; and in this way, when the divine stone was cut out of the mountain,⁵ the form in it which formerly lay hidden in darkness was laid bare. With this the Chaldee interpreter⁶ agrees, who renders it, Who turns his face to be revealed; for thus the Targum of Jonathan has it, *הא אנא ללי הוייתרה*⁷ that is, Behold, I reveal, or open, his vision. And, to say it in a word, both the law and all the prophets very frequently mingle with their histories and prophecies of CHRIST the words *face, statue, hidden, concealed, habitation, shadow*, because the Spirit of the Lord has carved these words (which, as Christ says,⁸ were all written of him in the law and all the Prophets), that under the silver figure may be hidden the golden word which by the secret purpose of God is concealed in historic types as if under a kind of covering even as CHRIST himself was covered under figures; and to wish, apart from this consideration, to apply the prophecies to CHRIST is to be wanting in sense, in which matter the Jews accuse us with good reason. 114a

7. It is nothing to the prejudice of the *hypostasis* of the Word that I have said that it is the voice of God. For even Peter says that there was a foreknowledge of CHRIST, by which he was foreknown and foreordained before the foundation of the world, and was manifested afterwards.⁹ And this is just

¹ II. Cor. v, 19.

² Zech. iii, 9.

³ *Hinnenî mephatteach pittuchah*, Behold, I will engrave his engraving.

⁴ *Pathach*, to open, hence to carve.

⁵ Dan. ii, 45.

⁶ i. e., the Targum, the Aramaic version of the Old Testament.

⁷ Aram., *Ha ana laley hezyathaha* (the third word is a misprint for *ללי*).

⁸ Luke xxiv, 27; Matt. xi, 13.

⁹ I. Pet. i, 20.

114b what Jeremiah calls *the intents of his heart*.¹ Yet the Sophists here will hear of nothing else, generally speaking, than that CHRIST was predestined even as one of us. But far from me be such folly. They will not marvel at miracles of divine contrivance, so that they prefer to admit that God can not have especial regard to one particular being rather than another without any qualities. The Son was begotten of God by a distinct and special word, as truly begotten as the world was created. Indeed, by the same power of utterance by which he begot him, he created the world, made the light, and gave beings their life; and in no other way will he give us life than by the generation of the Son. Again, God made himself visible according to the likeness of CHRIST; and he governed the world by that oracle just as CHRIST now governs it. CHRIST was then with God in power, in the Word, and in Person. If all these things apply to them as well as to CHRIST let the Sophists say that they were predestined to be Christs.

Light and
life are
through
him. John
i, 4.

115a 8. This *hypostasis*, therefore, John commends to us by saying, *The Word was*,² and he shows that it was visible. For he declares to us a being that can be perceived, just as he, also, understood it by perception. Nor is it any objection if you say that he knew this by revelation of the Holy Spirit; for the revelation of the Holy Spirit is adapted to the capacity of man, otherwise it were delusion and not revelation. For John was a man, and had a common intelligence, even as we. Paul also appeals to visions and revelations;³ and so it always says, The vision of the Prophet, the vision of the Prophecy. Reflect and consider what it is that is representing itself to the mind of John when he begins to relate. For when we relate a deed we say that only that was which we perceive, and only the likeness of the oracle was in the mind of John; hence that was a divinity, he well said, which began to be called a Person by the older writers for the reason that a face was represented. And the Greek article helps somewhat here, as if pointing out visibly; and a like article is wont to be added in the Hebrew: in the beginning was *the* speech, *the* oracle. Lift up your eyes and see.

Consider
here why it
began to be
called a
Person.

¹ Jer. xxiii, 20; xxx, 24.

² John i, 1.

³ II. Cor. xii, 1.

9. Nor is the case different with the Holy Spirit; for he who feels that there is a spirit in himself speaks of it as distinctly as if he would point it out with his finger. But this being is unknown to the philosophers. Nevertheless, the power of the *dispositions* of God is in the highest degree admirable, so that they thus exhibit the *hypostasis* of a visible being. And Scripture speaks distinctly of those things that are distinctly perceived; attends rather to our capacity, or ways of perceiving, than to our philosophies. But we are mad, being unwilling to be instructed from that which adapts itself to us so closely, and bids us try and prove ourselves whether we perceive the Spirit in us, rather than inquire what being it is, or of what Nature. For I have often borne witness that in Scripture there is never any treatment of the Natures. Consider furthermore whether (if you were John the son of Zebedee, and not a philosopher), if you heard the voice of a being whom you do not see, having kept the thought of the voice, you would say, when about to tell of it afterwards, The voice was so and so, and it kept itself thus and so. Much more, then, could this be said of the Word that was visible and had existence. This is the *hypostasis* of the oracle which John and his elder disciples recommend by the word, *being*; for there was an existence there which could be perceived by itself, and a clear apprehension of the Person whose brightness, as John says, the darkness did not apprehend.¹ Indeed, nothing else than the oracle seemed to exist; hence it says of the Word alone, *It was*. 115b

That very
one whom
you see
before your
eyes moves
the spirit
within.

It never
says of the
third being,
It was.

10. This same *hypostasis* David recommends to us by the word, *Jah*. Speaking of Elohim CHRIST he bids us praise him by his name, which is π ,² that is, the existing Substance of a *hypostasis*. Exalt by his name Jah, he says, him that rideth through the deserts.³ Likewise, speaking of CHRIST, he says that a people which shall be created shall praise Jah,⁴ that is, him who exists, who is, CHRIST; just as he himself says, I am.⁵ Moses also in his song calls him Jesua, Jah, EL, and Elohim.⁶ And because he is called Jah, the Father is called Jehovah;

¹ John i, 5.

³ Ps. lxviii, 4.

⁶ Ex. iii, 14.

² Jah.

⁵ Ps. cii, 18.

⁶ Ex. xv, 2.

that is, he will give being to him that exists, or will make him to be CHRIST. Elohim CHRIST himself recommends the same *hypostasis* of himself, saying, *I shall be that I shall be*.¹ And after he became flesh, CHRIST himself said that he was, and was from the beginning,² because the Father caused him to be Jah, that is, a *hypostasis*, even from the beginning. And CHRIST is called יֵשׁוּב קִרָּם,³ that is, he that abideth of old, or remaineth from the beginning. Wonderfully well, then, did John, being instructed by the Master, say, *He was*; since Christ said before, *I shall be*; and David said, *being*. And once again the Master, I am from the beginning,⁴ and in the Apocalypse, *Who was, who is, who is to come*.⁵ And see the craftiness of the devilish spirit, by which the truth is nevertheless praised. Simon Magus, in order that he might throw the preaching of Christ into confusion, had himself called, *He that standeth*, and said that he was *He that standeth* from the beginning, so that those that did not believe him might not believe Christ either. Indeed, after the likeness of Christ he said that he was the one that had given the law to Moses on Mount Sinai; for all this is very truly said of Christ.⁶

11. Since, then, in consequence of this examination, things stand thus, reflect whether, if the Gospel by John had not yet been written, if no mention had ever in the world been made of the Trinity, but a question had arisen only about the Person of Christ, and Ebion and Cerinthus⁷ were appearing again, you could explain the matter in more suitable words. Nor do I think that a mind capable of reasoning can penetrate the subject so that so great a matter can be better related in few words,

¹ Ex. iii, 14 (Pagn.).

² John viii, 58.

³ *Josheb kedem*; Ps. lv, 19.

⁴ John viii, 58.

⁵ Rev. i, 4, 8; iv, 8.

⁶ cf. Acts viii, 9-24; Clementine Recognitions, I, lxxii; II, vii, xi; Homilies, II, xxiv (MPG. i, 1246, 1251, 1254; ii, 91; ANF. viii, 96, 99, 100, 233; ANCL. iii, 189, 196, 199; xvii, 43).

⁷ Ebion, erroneously supposed founder of the Ebionites, heretical Jewish Christians who denied the virgin birth of Christ. cf. Origen, *contra Celsum*, v, 61; Tertullian, *adv. omnes haeres.*, iii (MPG. xi, 1278; ANF. iv, 570; iii, 651; ANCL. xiii, 330 ff.; xviii, 265).

Cerinthus, a Gnostic teacher at the end of the first century, who taught that Jesus was the son of Joseph. cf. Irenaeus, *adv. haeres.* I, xxvi, 1, III, xi, 1 (MPG. vii, 686, 880; ANF. i, 351 f., 426; ANCL. v, 97, 287 f.).

and so agreeably to all other Scriptures of both the Old Testament and the New. For by just raising my eyes I see the oracle coming from everlasting in the vision of John,¹ see JESUS CHRIST coming on the clouds of heaven with Daniel watching him,² riding in the chariot of Ezekiel,³ and among the myrtle-trees of Zechariah,⁴ and seated upon the throne of Isaiah.⁵ And since this was a contrivance of the divine reason, I am bound to say that it was the Logos. Nor can I better explain this otherwise than by saying, It was; and for this reason Irenaeus,⁶ while never abandoning the words of John, even though he does not actually distinguish the Logos from the Father, yet never fails to magnify this *hypostasis* of the Word, always employing this distinct way of speaking. And along with this, he always had his aim fixed upon Christ; and if you have yours fixed likewise, you will admit far more concerning the Word or oracle, provided that when there has been mention of the Son you do not turn away from Christ, for the Word came to be flesh.⁷ Behold, I myself that spoke am here;⁸ and, They shall see eye to eye.⁹ What blind man even does not see this? I am he, the very one whom you perceive with your eyes and touch with your hands. The likeness of God is now a body. This was the same as God, and this is now the same as man, and remains God, and is in God as heretofore. It was hitherto a certain kind of divine reason, hence a *logos*; but it is now in form as a man, like unto us, the form of God shining forth in man; it has put on flesh, as it were, although this is the same as man mingled with divinity. Likewise, if you read Ignatius,¹⁰ the disciple of John the Evangelist, you will find the same expression as in Irenaeus; and I

116b

117a

Note that the said visions prove that it was the Logos.

¹ Rev. i, 7.

² Dan. vii, 13.

³ Ezek. i.

⁴ Zech. i, 8, 10, 11.

⁵ Isa. vi, 1.

⁶ Adv. haeres. II, ii, 4, 5; IV, vi, 1-6; xx, 1-4; V, xviii (MPG. vii, 714 f., 986-989, 1032-1034, 1172-1175; ANF. i, 361 f., 467-469, 487 f., 546 f.; ANCL. v, 122 f., 389-392, 439-441; ix, 103-106).

⁷ John i, 14.

⁸ Isa. lii, 6 (Vulg.).

⁹ Isa. lii, 8.

¹⁰ Ep. ad Ephes. vii, xviii, xx; ad Magnes. vi, viii, xi; ad Trall. x; ad Smyrn. i, ii; ad Polyc. iii (MPG. v, 650 f., 659, 662, 667, 670 f., 682, 707-710, 722; ANF. i, 52, 57, 61-63, 70, 86 f., 94; ANCL. i, 153 f., 165, 168, 177 f., 180, 184, 202, 240 f., 260).

beg you to observe this and not to depart from the ancient tradition in a single point, and then you will easily reject all the new inventions, blasphemies, and follies of our age.

12. The matter will turn out to be far more easy if we do not overlook the Hebraisms here, seeing that John was a Hebrew. For everything that exists, of whatever kind it is, and the doing of anything whatever, is called by the Hebrews a *word*; and in this sense the Word concerning the Christ to come was already from the beginning with God, since it was already being discussed in the secret counsels of God. And the Hebrews, when they have any business to do, say, I have a word for you; and, *He sent his word*,¹ when he spoke in order that anything might be done anywhere; and, *A word went forth from the face of the king*; ² *I will bring my word*; ³ *Thy word shall come*; ⁴ *When that comes which thou hast said*.⁴ And thus Manoah said to the angel, *When thy word comes*, and, *When thy word has come*,⁵ namely, that which thou hast spoken concerning Samuel. And, *Until there come word from you and ye tell me*; ⁶ and, *When the word of the prophet shall come*.⁷ And in this sense came the Word which was already with God from the beginning, until the matter went on so far that the mystery was revealed, and the Word came to be flesh. And thus these Hebraisms teach us not a little as to the *hypostasis* of the Word, as I said,⁸ without being at all prejudicial. By a like Hebraism is verified what the shepherds said: *Let us see this word that is come to pass*.⁹ And, *To you is the word of this salvation sent forth*; ¹⁰ and, *The word told to you through the Gospel*; ¹¹ and, *He committed unto us the word of reconciliation*.¹² But, passing by these things which are rather remote from our design, let us take others which are more to the purpose; and there is an example which manifestly pertains to this figure of the Word of CHRIST, where it says, when the Israelites were pining away in the desert, *He sent his word and healed*

¹ Ps. cvii, 20; cxlvii, 18.

² Dan. ii, 15 (Vulg.).

³ Jer. xxv, 13; xxxix, 16.

⁴ Apparently two different renderings of Jud. xiii, 17.

⁵ II. Sam. xv, 28 (Pagn.).

⁶ Jud. xiii, 12, 17 (Pagn.).

⁸ See paragraph 7.

⁷ Jer. xxviii, 9 (Pagn.).

⁹ Luke ii, 15.

¹⁰ I. Pet. i, 25.

¹¹ Acts xiii, 26 (Vulg.).

¹² II. Cor. v, 19.

them.¹ And Joseph, being sent by God into Egypt, was kept in fetters *until his word came*.² And, *The Lord sent a word into Jacob*,³ because he declared the overthrow of the ten tribes; and, *After seventy years are passed in Babel, I will arouse my word*.⁴ And he afterwards aroused the same word concerning CHRIST.⁵ Likewise it says, *Thine all-powerful word, leaping from heaven*,⁶ because he said that at midnight the firstborn should be slain. For this going forth is the interpretation of what the Lord had said, *I will go out in the midst of Egypt*.⁷ For Peter explained to us above that CHRIST was the author of all these things; for דבר⁸ went forth by his oracle; and thus the Chaldee version⁹ very often interprets these things through the noun, *word*. You 118a see, therefore, that the expression of the sacred language in which all these mysteries are laid down, constrains us to say that on account of the divine action and *disposition*, the Word went, came, and was sent; for CHRIST wrought all these things, and the oracle went to kill and to save them, just as afterwards it came to save us by the manifestation of itself.

13. If we would here add anything else in our sense, we can not but go astray, and in the end there will be a war of words. For these two rules are infallible: first, that we can not divide the Nature of God; second, that which is an accident of the Nature is a *disposition*. From the fact that דבר¹⁰ means *thing*,¹¹ some draw the conclusion that there are several beings. But this meaning of the word points in another direction; for when it says that God makes a good word, a bad word, it is a Hebraism, which is not free from mystery, but indicates a causal quality of the word. Just as *no word* means to them much the same as *nothing*; because in that case God did not speak. And the Prophets, when they prophesy some future thing, are wont to add that the Lord hath spoken it; for they intimate that the word of God belongs to everything, to every action. For he speaks, and they are done, and nothing is done unless he speaks;

¹ Ps. cvii, 20 (Vulg.).

² Isa. ix, 8.

³ Jer. xxxiii, 14.

⁴ Ex. xi, 4.

⁵ The Targums.

⁶ Res, thing, being.

⁷ Ps. cv, 17-19 (Vulg.).

⁸ Jer. xxix, 10 (Pagn.).

⁹ Wisdom xviii, 15.

¹⁰ Jehovah.

¹¹ *Dabar*, word, thing.

yet this is not to say that *dabar* is the absolute equivalent of *res*.

118b

14. In fine, you shall consider the divine purpose as though the world were to be created to-day, and in what way God determined to do it; and from this you will understand his *oeconomy*, both in the creation of the world and in the giving of the law, which things all lead to the glory of CHRIST. For all things take their rise from the personal existence of CHRIST in God. For CHRIST is Elohim our king, who even from the beginning is *working salvation in the midst of the earth*.¹ Even as according to the Apostle it also says of the same one, *Thou in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth*.² It is he whose voice shook the heaven and the earth.³ And he whom we saw ascending into heaven is the same who had first descended.⁴ The same one said in the Apocalypse and in Isaiah, *I am the first, I am the last*.⁵ He is the visible God who created the world, and appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God of the law and the Prophets. And with this we absolutely admit that the God of the law and the Prophets is the Father of JESUS CHRIST, which seems a contradiction. From this teaching of the Apostles, wrongly understood, some of the ancient Heretics said that above the God who created the world there was another invisible God. For they were dreaming about the mystery of CHRIST. They did not understand that it could take place without contradiction that this very oracle was with God, and was God himself; and that, although the oracle was God, yet it was the oracle, and not God himself, that came to be flesh. The spirit here settles wonderful oppositions. The very profound words of John not only explain the whole law concerning Jehovah and Elohim, but they also dispose of all the heresies. I am speaking of the ancient heresies, which were rather near the truth; for the absurdities of the Greeks arose afterwards. They do not approach the teaching of John, but are worthy of philosophers without sense.

119a

Nature and Person; for it is the *hypostasis* itself, or the Person made flesh; but by no means the being itself, and this is the Patripassian fallacy.

15. Finally, I describe to you visibly the practice and the

¹ Ps. lxxiv, 12.

² Heb. i, 10.

³ Heb. xii, 26; Ps. lxxvi, 8.

⁴ Eph. iv, 9.

⁵ Rev. i, 17; xxii, 13; Isa. xlv, 6; xlviii, 12.

way of coming to Christ, that by seeing him you may see the Father. It is first to be premised that God is in all ways incomprehensible, unimaginable; nor can we form any conception of God himself unless he adapts himself to us under some form which we are capable of perceiving; and this the Master shows us in John v, 37. Secondly: he, out of the mere good pleasure of his will, determined to manifest himself to the world through his oracle, as if I were to make my voice heard among those who do not see me; and thus, at the time of the law, he was manifested to all the people.¹ Thirdly: he manifested himself to the Prophets by his oracle more clearly, yet obscurely under the form of a kind of pattern, in whose likeness Adam was formed; since in his oracle there shone forth the original image, or the first figure of the world, namely, CHRIST. Fourthly: from what has been said above, learn what has been clearly and distinctly manifested to us; for the oracle has come to be flesh, and we have seen him. 119b

Questions
had then
arisen con-
cerning the
Person of
Christ.

16. Out of this two questions seem to arise, namely: that God was a body, or that Christ may be a phantasm, each of which John disposes of. Yet note how clearly the fancies of the ancient heresies about this dilemma teach us the truth. The Trinity had not yet come within the memory of man. From the time of the Arian philosophers the way for investigating the truth has been closed. John, therefore, that no one might fancy that there are bodily forms in God, explained that this was the *logos*; that is, that in the very reason of God there existed a *disposition* of this mystery. For in whatever way God had assumed a personal form, he must needs have been the *logos*. Secondly: that he might dispose of the phantasm, he called it flesh, saying that the divine being came to be flesh, and we have seen him, and he has given us a mind to know him, and the Father through him, to whom be glory and dominion forever, Amen, Amen, ever world without end. Selah.

¹ Ex. xix, 16.