

# THE CITY OF GOD AGAINST THE PAGANS

By Saint Aurelius Augustine

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BOOK FIFTEENTH.

[continues]

16. Of marriage between blood-relations, in regard to which the present law could not bind the men of the earliest ages. As, therefore, the human race, subsequently to the first marriage of the man who was made of dust, and his wife who was made out of his side, required the union of males and females in order that it might multiply, and as there were no human beings except those who had been born of these two, men took their sisters for wives,—an act which was as certainly dictated by necessity in these ancient days as afterwards it was condemned by the prohibitions of religion. For it is very reasonable and just that men, among whom concord is honourable and useful, should be bound together by various relationships; and that one man should not himself sustain many relationships, but that the various relationships should be distributed among several, and should thus serve to bind together the greatest number in the same social interests. “Father” and “father-in-law” are the names of two relationships. When, therefore, a man has one person for his father, another for his father-in-law, friendship

extends itself to a larger number. But Adam in his single person was obliged to hold both relations to his sons and daughters, for brothers and sisters were united in marriage. So too Eve his wife was both mother and mother-in-law to her children of both sexes; while, had there been two women, one the mother, the other the mother-in-law, the family affection would have had a wider field. Then the sister herself by becoming a wife sustained in her single person two relationships, which, had they been distributed among individuals, one being sister, and another being wife, the family tie would have embraced a greater number of persons. But there was then no material for effecting this, since there were no human beings but the brothers and sisters born of those two first parents. Therefore, when an abundant population made it possible, men ought to choose for wives women who were not already their sisters; for not only would there then be no necessity for marrying sisters, but, were it done, it would be most abominable. For if the grandchildren of the first pair, being now able to choose their cousins for wives, married their sisters, then it would no longer be only two but three relationships that were held by one man, while each of these relationships ought to have been held by a separate individual, so as to bind together by family affection a larger number. For one man would in that case be both father, and father-in-law, and uncle to his own children (brother and sister now man and wife); and his wife would be mother, aunt, and mother-in-law to them; and they themselves would be not only brother and sister, and man and wife, but cousins also, being the children of brother and sister. Now, all these relationships, which combined three men into one, would have embraced nine persons had each relationship been held by one individual, so that a man

had one person for his sister, another his wife, another his cousin, another his father, another his uncle, another his father-in-law, another his mother, another his aunt, another his mother-in-law; and thus the social bond would not have been tightened to bind a few, but loosened to embrace a larger number of relations. And we see that, since the human race has increased and multiplied, this is so strictly observed even among the profane worshippers of many and false gods, that though their laws perversely allow a brother to marry his sister, yet custom, with a finer morality, prefers to forego this licence; and though it was quite allowable in the earliest ages of the human race to marry one's sister, it is now abhorred as a thing which no circumstances could justify. For custom has very great power either to attract or to shock human feeling. And in this matter, while it restrains concupiscence within due bounds, the man who neglects and disobeys it is justly branded as abominable. For if it is iniquitous to plough beyond our own boundaries through the greed of gain, is it not much more iniquitous to transgress the recognised boundaries of morals through sexual lust? And with regard to marriage in the next degree of consanguinity, marriage between cousins, we have observed that in our own time the customary morality has prevented this from being frequent, though the law allows it. It was not prohibited by divine law, nor as yet had human law prohibited it; nevertheless, though legitimate, people shrank from it, because it lay so close to what was illegitimate, and in marrying a cousin seemed almost to marry a sister,—for cousins are so closely related that they are called brothers and sisters, and are almost really so. But the ancient fathers, fearing that near relationship might gradually in the course of generations diverge, and become distant relationship, or cease to be relationship at all,

religiously endeavoured to limit it by the bond of marriage before it became distant, and thus, as it were, to call it back when it was escaping them. And on this account, even when the world was full of people, though they did not choose wives from among their sisters or half-sisters, yet they preferred them to be of the same stock as themselves. But who doubts that the modern prohibition of the marriage even of cousins is the more seemly regulation,—not merely on account of the reason we have been urging, the multiplying of relationships, so that one person might not absorb two, which might be distributed to two persons, and so increase the number of people bound together as a family, but also because there is in human nature I know not what natural and praiseworthy shamefacedness which restrains us from desiring that connection which, though for propagation, is yet lustful, and which even conjugal modesty blushes over, with any one to whom consanguinity bids us render respect? The sexual intercourse of man and woman, then, is in the case of mortals a kind of seed-bed of the city; but while the earthly city needs for its population only generation, the heavenly needs also regeneration to rid it of the taint of generation. Whether before the deluge there was any bodily or visible sign of regeneration, such as was afterwards enjoined upon Abraham when he was circumcised, or what kind of sign it was, the sacred history does not inform us. But it does inform us that even these earliest of mankind sacrificed to God, as appeared also in the case of the two first brothers; Noah, too, is said to have offered sacrifices to God when he had come forth from the ark after the deluge. And concerning this subject we have already said in the foregoing books that the devils arrogate to themselves divinity, and require sacrifice that they may be esteemed gods, and delight in these

honours on no other account than this, because they know that true sacrifice is due to the true God.

17. Of the two fathers and leaders who sprang from one progenitor. Since, then, Adam was the father of both lines,—the father, that is to say, both of the line which belonged to the earthly, and of that which belonged to the heavenly city,—when Abel was slain, and by his death exhibited a marvellous mystery, there were henceforth two lines proceeding from two fathers, Cain and Seth, and in those sons of theirs, whom it behoved to register, the tokens of these two cities began to appear more distinctly. For Cain begat Enoch, in whose name he built a city, an earthly one, which was not from home in this world, but rested satisfied with its temporal peace and happiness. Cain, too, means “possession;” wherefore at his birth either his father or mother said, “I have gotten a man through God.” Then Enoch means “dedication;” for the earthly city is dedicated in this world in which it is built, for in this world it finds the end towards which it aims and aspires. Further, Seth signifies “resurrection,” and Enos his son signifies “man,” not as Adam, which also signifies man but is used in Hebrew indifferently for man and woman, as it is written, “Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam,” leaving no room to doubt that though the woman was distinctively called Eve, yet the name Adam, meaning man, was common to both. But Enos means man in so restricted a sense, that Hebrew linguists tell us it cannot be applied to woman: it is the equivalent of the “child of the resurrection,” when they neither marry nor are given in marriage. For there shall be no generation in that place to which regeneration shall have brought us. Wherefore I think it not immaterial to observe that in those generations which

are propagated from him who is called Seth, although daughters as well as sons are said to have been begotten, no woman is expressly registered by name; but in those which sprang from Cain at the very termination to which the line runs, the last person named as begotten is a woman. For we read, "Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of the shepherds that dwell in tents. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah." Here terminate all the generations of Cain, being eight in number, including Adam,—to wit, seven from Adam to Lamech, who married two wives, and whose children, among whom a woman also is named, form the eighth generation. Whereby it is elegantly signified that the earthly city shall to its termination have carnal generations proceeding from the intercourse of males and females. And therefore the wives themselves of the man who is the last named father of Cain's line are registered in their own names,—a practice nowhere followed before the deluge save in Eve's case. Now as Cain, signifying possession, the founder of the earthly city, and his son Enoch, meaning dedication, in whose name it was founded, indicate that this city is earthly both in its beginning and in its end,—a city in which nothing more is hoped for than can be seen in this world,—so Seth, meaning resurrection, and being the father of generations registered apart from the others, we must consider what this sacred history says of his son.

18. The significance of Abel, Seth, and Enos to Christ and His body the Church. "And to Seth," it is said, "there was born a son, and he called his name Enos: he hoped to call on the name of the Lord God." Here we have a loud testimony to the truth. Man, then, the son of the resurrection, lives in hope: he lives in hope as long as the city of God, which is begotten by faith in the resurrection, sojourns in this world. For in these two men, Abel, signifying "grief," and his brother Seth, signifying "resurrection," the death of Christ and His life from the dead are prefigured. And by faith in these is begotten in this world the city of God, that is to say, the man who has hoped to call on the name of the Lord. "For by hope," says the apostle, "we are saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Who can avoid referring this to a profound mystery? For did not Abel hope to call upon the name of the Lord God when his sacrifice is mentioned in Scripture as having been accepted by God? Did not Seth himself hope to call on the name of the Lord God, of whom it was said, "For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel?" Why then is this which is found to be common to all the godly specially attributed to Enos, unless because it was fit that in him, who is mentioned as the first-born of the father of those generations which were separated to the better part of the heavenly city, there should be a type of the man, or society of men, who live not according to man in contentment with earthly felicity, but according to God in hope of everlasting felicity? And it was not said, "He hoped in the Lord God," nor "He called on the name of the Lord God," but "He hoped to call on the name of the Lord God." And what does this "hoped to call" mean, unless it is a prophecy that a people should arise who, according to

the election of grace, would call on the name of the Lord God? It is this which has been said by another prophet, and which the apostle interprets of the people who belong to the grace of God: "And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." For these two expressions, "And he called his name Enos, which means man," and "He hoped to call on the name of the Lord God," are sufficient proof that man ought not to rest his hopes in himself; as it is elsewhere written, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man." Consequently no one ought to trust in himself that he shall become a citizen of that other city which is not dedicated in the name of Cain's son in this present time, that is to say, in the fleeting course of this mortal world, but in the immortality of perpetual blessedness.

19. The significance of Enoch's translation. For that line also of which Seth is the father has the name "Dedication" in the seventh generation from Adam, counting Adam. For the seventh from him is Enoch, that is, Dedication. But this is that man who was translated because he pleased God, and who held in the order of the generations a remarkable place, being the seventh from Adam, a number signaled by the consecration of the Sabbath. But, counting from the diverging point of the two lines, or from Seth, he was the sixth. Now it was on the sixth day God made man, and consummated His works. But the translation of Enoch prefigured our deferred dedication; for though it is indeed already accomplished in Christ our Head, who so rose again that He shall die no more, and who was Himself also translated, yet there remains another dedication of the whole house, of which Christ Himself is the foundation, and this dedication is deferred till the end, when all shall rise again to die no more. And whether it is the house of God, or the temple of God, or



the city of God, that is said to be dedicated, it is all the same, and equally in accordance with the usage of the Latin language. For Virgil himself calls the city of widest empire “the house of Assaracus,” meaning the Romans, who were descended through the Trojans from Assaracus. He also calls them the house of Æneas, because Rome was built by those Trojans who had come to Italy under Æneas. For that poet imitated the sacred writings, in which the Hebrew nation, though so numerous, is called the house of Jacob.

20. How it is that Cain’s line terminates in the eighth generation, while Noah, though descended from the same father, Adam, is found to be the tenth from him. Some one will say, If the writer of this history intended, in enumerating the generations from Adam through his son Seth, to descend through them to Noah, in whose time the deluge occurred, and from him again to trace the connected generations down to Abraham, with whom Matthew begins the pedigree of Christ the eternal King of the city of God, what did he intend by enumerating the generations from Cain, and to what terminus did he mean to trace them? We reply, To the deluge, by which the whole stock of the earthly city was destroyed, but repaired by the sons of Noah. For the earthly city and community of men who live after the flesh will never fail until the end of this world, of which our Lord says, “The children of this world generate, and are generated.” But the city of God, which sojourns in this world, is conducted by regeneration to the world to come, of which the children neither generate nor are generated. In this world generation is common to both cities; though even now the city of God has many thousand citizens who abstain from the act of generation; yet the other city also has some citizens who imitate these, though erroneously. For to that city

belong also those who have erred from the faith, and introduced divers heresies; for they live according to man, not according to God. And the Indian gymnosophists, who are said to philosophize in the solitudes of India in a state of nudity, are its citizens; and they abstain from marriage. For continence is not a good thing, except when it is practised in the faith of the highest good, that is, God. Yet no one is found to have practised it before the deluge; for indeed even Enoch himself, the seventh from Adam, who is said to have been translated without dying, begat sons and daughters before he was translated, and among these was Methuselah, by whom the succession of the recorded generations is maintained. Why, then, is so small a number of Cain's generations registered, if it was proper to trace them to the deluge, and if there was no such delay of the date of puberty as to preclude the hope of offspring for a hundred or more years? For if the author of this book had not in view some one to whom he might rigidly trace the series of generations, as he designed in those which sprang from Seth's seed to descend to Noah, and thence to start again by a rigid order, what need was there of omitting the first-born sons for the sake of descending to Lamech, in whose sons that line terminates,—that is to say, in the eighth generation from Adam, or the seventh from Cain,—as if from this point he had wished to pass on to another series, by which he might reach either the Israelitish people, among whom the earthly Jerusalem presented a prophetic figure of the heavenly city, or to Jesus Christ, "according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever," the Maker and Ruler of the heavenly city? What, I say, was the need of this, seeing that the whole of Cain's posterity were destroyed in the deluge? From this it is manifest that they are the first-born sons who are registered in this genealogy. Why, then, are there

so few of them? Their numbers in the period before the deluge must have been greater, if the date of puberty bore no proportion to their longevity, and they had children before they were a hundred years old. For supposing they were on an average thirty years old when they began to beget children, then, as there are eight generations, including Adam and Lamech's children, 8 times 30 gives 240 years; did they then produce no more children in all the rest of the time before the deluge? With what intention, then, did he who wrote this record make no mention of subsequent generations? For from Adam to the deluge there are reckoned, according to our copies of Scripture, 2262 years, and according to the Hebrew text, 1656 years. Supposing, then, the smaller number to be the true one, and subtracting from 1656 years 240, is it credible that during the remaining 1400 and odd years until the deluge the posterity of Cain begat no children? But let any one who is moved by this call to mind that when I discussed the question, how it is credible that those primitive men could abstain for so many years from begetting children, two modes of solution were found,—either a puberty late in proportion to their longevity, or that the sons registered in the genealogies were not the first-born, but those through whom the author of the book intended to reach the point aimed at, as he intended to reach Noah by the generations of Seth. So that, if in the generations of Cain there occurs no one whom the writer could make it his object to reach by omitting the first-borns and inserting those who would serve such a purpose, then we must have recourse to the supposition of late puberty, and say that only at some age beyond a hundred years they became capable of begetting children, so that the order of the generations ran through the first-borns, and filled up even the whole period before the deluge, long though it

was. It is, however, possible that, for some more secret reason which escapes me, this city, which we say is earthly, is exhibited in all its generations down to Lamech and his sons, and that then the writer withholds from recording the rest which may have existed before the deluge. And without supposing so late a puberty in these men, there might be another reason for tracing the generations by sons who were not first-borns, viz. that the same city which Cain built, and named after his son Enoch, may have had a widely extended dominion and many kings, not reigning simultaneously, but successively, the reigning king begetting always his successor. Cain himself would be the first of these kings; his son Enoch, in whose name the city in which he reigned was built, would be the second; the third Irad, whom Enoch begat; the fourth Mehujael, whom Irad begat; the fifth Methusael, whom Mehujael begat; the sixth Lamech, whom Methusael begat, and who is the seventh from Adam through Cain. But it was not necessary that the first-born should succeed their fathers in the kingdom, but those would succeed who were recommended by the possession of some virtue useful to the earthly city, or who were chosen by lot, or the son who was best liked by his father would succeed by a kind of hereditary right to the throne. And the deluge may have happened during the lifetime and reign of Lamech, and may have destroyed him along with all other men, save those who were in the ark. For we cannot be surprised that, during so long a period from Adam to the deluge, and with the ages of individuals varying as they did, there should not be an equal number of generations in both lines, but seven in Cain's, and ten in Seth's; for as I have already said, Lamech is the seventh from Adam, Noah the tenth; and in Lamech's case not one son only is registered, as in the former instances, but more,

because it was uncertain which of them would have succeeded when he died, if there had intervened any time to reign between his death and the deluge. But in whatever manner the generations of Cain's line are traced downwards, whether it be by first-born sons or by the heirs to the throne, it seems to me that I must by no means omit to notice that, when Lamech had been set down as the seventh from Adam, there were named, in addition, as many of his children as made up this number to eleven, which is the number signifying sin; for three sons and one daughter are added. The wives of Lamech have another signification, different from that which I am now pressing. For at present I am speaking of the children, and not of those by whom the children were begotten. Since, then, the law is symbolized by the number ten,—whence that memorable Decalogue,—there is no doubt that the number eleven, which goes beyond ten, symbolizes the transgression of the law, and consequently sin. For this reason, eleven veils of goat's skin were ordered to be hung in the tabernacle of the testimony, which served in the wanderings of God's people as an ambulatory temple. And in that haircloth there was a reminder of sins, because the goats were to be set on the left hand of the Judge; and therefore, when we confess our sins, we prostrate ourselves in haircloth, as if we were saying what is written in the psalm, "My sin is ever before me." The progeny of Adam, then, by Cain the murderer, is completed in the number eleven, which symbolizes sin; and this number itself is made up by a woman, as it was by the same sex that beginning was made of sin by which we all die. And it was committed that the pleasure of the flesh, which resists the spirit, might follow; and so Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, means "pleasure." But from Adam to Noah, in the line of Seth, there are ten generations. And to Noah three

sons are added, of whom, while one fell into sin, two were blessed by their father; so that, if you deduct the reprobate and add the gracious sons to the number, you get twelve,—a number signalized in the case of the patriarchs and of the apostles, and made up of the parts of the number seven multiplied into one another, —for three times four, or four times three, give twelve. These things being so, I see that I must consider and mention how these two lines, which by their separate genealogies depict the two cities, one of earth-born, the other of regenerated persons, became afterwards so mixed and confused, that the whole human race, with the exception of eight persons, deserved to perish in the deluge.

21. Why it is that, as soon as Cain's son Enoch has been named, the genealogy is forthwith continued as far as the deluge, while after the mention of Enos, Seth's son, the narrative returns again to the creation of man. We must first see why, in the enumeration of Cain's posterity, after Enoch, in whose name the city was built, has been first of all mentioned, the rest are at once enumerated down to that terminus of which I have spoken, and at which that race and the whole line was destroyed in the deluge; while, after Enos the son of Seth has been mentioned, the rest are not at once named down to the deluge, but a clause is inserted to the following effect: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." This seems to me to be inserted for this purpose, that here again the reckoning of the times may start from Adam himself,—a purpose which the writer had not in view in speaking of the earthly city, as if God mentioned it, but

did not take account of its duration. But why does he return to this recapitulation after mentioning the son of Seth, the man who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, unless because it was fit thus to present these two cities, the one beginning with a murderer and ending in a murderer (for Lamech, too, acknowledges to his two wives that he had committed murder), the other built up by him who hoped to call upon the name of the Lord God? For the highest and complete terrestrial duty of the city of God, which is a stranger in this world, is that which was exemplified in the individual who was begotten by him who typified the resurrection of the murdered Abel. That one man is the unity of the whole heavenly city, not yet indeed complete, but to be completed, as this prophetic figure foreshows. The son of Cain, therefore, that is, the son of possession (and of what but an earthly possession?), may have a name in the earthly city which was built in his name. It is of such the Psalmist says, "They call their lands after their own names." Wherefore they incur what is written in another psalm: "Thou, O Lord, in Thy city wilt despise their image." But as for the son of Seth, the son of the resurrection, let him hope to call on the name of the Lord God. For he prefigures that society of men which says, "But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I have trusted in the mercy of God." But let him not seek the empty honours of a famous name upon earth, for "Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and respecteth not vanities nor lying follies." After having presented the two cities, the one founded in the material good of this world, the other in hope in God, but both starting from a common gate opened in Adam into this mortal state, and both running on and running out to their proper and merited ends, Scripture begins to reckon the times, and in this reckoning includes other

generations, making a recapitulation from Adam, out of whose condemned seed, as out of one mass handed over to merited damnation, God made some vessels of wrath to dishonour and others vessels of mercy to honour; in punishment rendering to the former what is due, in grace giving to the latter what is not due: in order that by the very comparison of itself with the vessels of wrath, the heavenly city, which sojourns on earth, may learn not to put confidence in the liberty of its own will, but may hope to call on the name of the Lord God. For will, being a nature which was made good by the good God, but mutable by the immutable, because it was made out of nothing, can both decline from good to do evil, which takes place when it freely chooses, and can also escape the evil and do good, which takes place only by divine assistance.

22. Of the fall of the sons of God who were captivated by the daughters of men, whereby all, with the exception of eight persons, deservedly perished in the deluge. When the human race, in the exercise of this freedom of will, increased and advanced, there arose a mixture and confusion of the two cities by their participation in a common iniquity. And this calamity, as well as the first, was occasioned by woman, though not in the same way; for these women were not themselves betrayed, neither did they persuade the men to sin, but having belonged to the earthly city and society of the earthly, they had been of corrupt manners from the first, and were loved for their bodily beauty by the sons of God, or the citizens of the other city which sojourns in this world. Beauty is indeed a good gift of God; but that the good may not think it a great good, God dispenses it even to the wicked. And thus, when the good that is great and proper to the good was abandoned by the sons of God, they fell to a paltry good which is not



peculiar to the good, but common to the good and the evil; and when they were captivated by the daughters of men, they adopted the manners of the earthly to win them as their brides, and forsook the godly ways they had followed in their own holy society. And thus beauty, which is indeed God's handiwork, but only a temporal, carnal, and lower kind of good, is not fitly loved in preference to God, the eternal, spiritual, and unchangeable good. When the miser prefers his gold to justice, it is through no fault of the gold, but of the man; and so with every created thing. For though it be good, it may be loved with an evil as well as with a good love: it is loved rightly when it is loved ordinally; evilly, when inordinately. It is this which some one has briefly said in these verses in praise of the Creator: "These are Thine, they are good, because Thou art good who didst create them. There is in them nothing of ours, unless the sin we commit when we forget the order of things, and instead of Thee love that which Thou hast made." But if the Creator is truly loved, that is, if He Himself is loved and not another thing in His stead, He cannot be evilly loved; for love itself is to be ordinally loved, because we do well to love that which, when we love it, makes us live well and virtuously. So that it seems to me that it is a brief but true definition of virtue to say, it is the order of love; and on this account, in the Canticles, the bride of Christ, the city of God, sings, "Order love within me." It was the order of this love, then, this charity or attachment, which the sons of God disturbed when they forsook God, and were enamoured of the daughters of men. And by these two names (sons of God and daughters of men) the two cities are sufficiently distinguished. For though the former were by nature children of men, they had come into possession of another name by grace. For in the same Scripture in which the sons of God are said to

have loved the daughters of men, they are also called angels of God; whence many suppose that they were not men but angels.

23. Whether we are to believe that angels, who are of a spiritual substance, fell in love with the beauty of women, and sought them in marriage, and that from this connection giants were born. In the third book of this work [c. 5] we made a passing reference to this question, but did not decide whether angels, inasmuch as they are spirits, could have bodily intercourse with women. For it is written, "Who maketh His angels spirits," that is, He makes those who are by nature spirits His angels by appointing them to the duty of bearing His messages. For the Greek word ἄγγελος, which in Latin appears as "angelus," means a messenger. But whether the Psalmist speaks of their bodies when he adds, "and His ministers a flaming fire," or means that God's ministers ought to blaze with love as with a spiritual fire, is doubtful. However, the same trustworthy Scripture testifies that angels have appeared to men in such bodies as could not only be seen, but also touched. There is, too, a very general rumour, which many have verified by their own experience, or which trustworthy persons who have heard the experience of others corroborate, that sylphs and fauns, who are commonly called "incubi," had often made wicked assaults upon women, and satisfied their lust upon them; and that certain devils, called Duses by the Gauls, are constantly attempting and effecting this impurity is so generally affirmed, that it were impudent to deny it. From these assertions, indeed, I dare not determine whether there be some spirits embodied in an aerial substance (for this element, even when agitated by a fan, is sensibly felt by the body), and who are capable of lust and of mingling

sensibly with women; but certainly I could by no means believe that God's holy angels could at that time have so fallen, nor can I think that it is of them the Apostle Peter said, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." I think he rather speaks of those who first apostatized from God, along with their chief the devil, who enviously deceived the first man under the form of a serpent. But the same holy Scripture affords the most ample testimony that even godly men have been called angels; for of John it is written: "Behold, I send my messenger (angel) before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way." And the prophet Malachi, by a peculiar grace specially communicated to him, was called an angel. But some are moved by the fact that we have read that the fruit of the connection between those who are called angels of God and the women they loved were not men like our own breed, but giants; just as if there were not born even in our own time (as I have mentioned above) men of much greater size than the ordinary stature. Was there not at Rome a few years ago, when the destruction of the city now accomplished by the Goths was drawing near, a woman, with her father and mother, who by her gigantic size overtopped all others? Surprising crowds from all quarters came to see her, and that which struck them most was the circumstance that neither of her parents were quite up to the tallest ordinary stature. Giants therefore might well be born, even before the sons of God, who are also called angels of God, formed a connection with the daughters of men, or of those living according to men, that is to say, before the sons of Seth formed a connection with the daughters of Cain. For thus speaks even the canonical Scripture itself in the book in which we read of this; its words are: "And it came to pass,

when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair [good]; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the giants, men of renown." These words of the divine book sufficiently indicate that already there were giants in the earth in those days, in which the sons of God took wives of the children of men, when they loved them because they were good, that is, fair. For it is the custom of this Scripture to call those who are beautiful in appearance "good." But after this connection had been formed, then too were giants born. For the words are: "There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men." Therefore there were giants both before, "in those days," and "also after that." And the words, "they bare children to them," show plainly enough that before the sons of God fell in this fashion they begat children to God, not to themselves,—that is to say, not moved by the lust of sexual intercourse, but discharging the duty of propagation, intending to produce not a family to gratify their own pride, but citizens to people the city of God; and to these they as God's angels would bear the message, that they should place their hope in God, like him who was born of Seth the son of resurrection, and who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, in which hope they and their offspring would be co-heirs of eternal blessings, and brethren in the family of which God is the Father.

But that those angels were not angels in the sense of not being men, as some suppose, Scripture itself decides, which unambiguously declares that they were men. For when it had first been stated that “the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose,” it was immediately added, “And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh.” For by the Spirit of God they had been made angels of God, and sons of God; but declining towards lower things, they are called men, a name of nature, not of grace; and they are called flesh, as deserters of the Spirit, and by their desertion deserted [by Him]. The Septuagint indeed calls them both angels of God and sons of God, though all the copies do not show this, some having only the name “sons of God.” And Aquila, whom the Jews prefer to the other interpreters, has translated neither angels of God nor sons of God, but sons of gods. But both are correct. For they were both sons of God, and thus brothers of their own fathers, who were children of the same God; and they were sons of gods, because begotten by gods, together with whom they themselves also were gods, according to that expression of the psalm: “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.” For the Septuagint translators are justly believed to have received the Spirit of prophecy; so that, if they made any alterations under His authority, and did not adhere to a strict translation, we could not doubt that this was divinely dictated. However, the Hebrew word may be said to be ambiguous, and to be susceptible of either translation, “sons of God,” or “sons of gods.” Let us omit, then, the fables of those scriptures which are called apocryphal, because their obscure origin was unknown to the fathers from whom the authority of the true Scriptures has been transmitted to us by a most certain and well-ascertained succession. For though there is some truth in these apocryphal writings, yet they contain

so many false statements, that they have no canonical authority. We cannot deny that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, left some divine writings, for this is asserted by the Apostle Jude in his canonical epistle. But it is not without reason that these writings have no place in that canon of Scripture which was preserved in the temple of the Hebrew people by the diligence of successive priests; for their antiquity brought them under suspicion, and it was impossible to ascertain whether these were his genuine writings, and they were not brought forward as genuine by the persons who were found to have carefully preserved the canonical books by a successive transmission. So that the writings which are produced under his name, and which contain these fables about the giants, saying that their fathers were not men, are properly judged by prudent men to be not genuine; just as many writings are produced by heretics under the names both of other prophets, and, more recently, under the names of the apostles, all of which, after careful examination, have been set apart from canonical authority under the title of Apocrypha. There is therefore no doubt that, according to the Hebrew and Christian canonical Scriptures, there were many giants before the deluge, and that these were citizens of the earthly society of men, and that the sons of God, who were according to the flesh the sons of Seth, sunk into this community when they forsook righteousness. Nor need we wonder that giants should be born even from these. For all of their children were not giants; but there were more than in the remaining periods since the deluge. And it pleased the Creator to produce them, that it might thus be demonstrated that neither beauty, nor yet size and strength, are of much moment to the wise man, whose blessedness lies in spiritual and immortal blessings, in far better and more enduring gifts, in the good things that are the peculiar property of the good, and are not shared by good and bad alike. It is this which another prophet

confirms when he says, "These were the giants, famous from the beginning, that were of so great stature, and so expert in war. Those did not the Lord choose, neither gave He the way of knowledge unto them; but they were destroyed because they had no wisdom, and perished through their own foolishness." 24. How we are to understand this which the Lord said to those who were to perish in the flood: "Their days shall be 120 years." But that which God said, "Their days shall be an hundred and twenty years," is not to be understood as a prediction that henceforth men should not live longer than 120 years,—for even after the deluge we find that they lived more than 500 years,—but we are to understand that God said this when Noah had nearly completed his fifth century, that is, had lived 480 years, which Scripture, as it frequently uses the name of the whole for the largest part, calls 500 years. Now the deluge came in the 600th year of Noah's life, the second month; and thus 120 years were predicted as being the remaining span of those who were doomed, which years being spent, they should be destroyed by the deluge. And it is not unreasonably believed that the deluge came as it did, because already there were not found upon earth any who were not worthy of sharing a death so manifestly judicial,—not that a good man, who must die some time, would be a jot the worse of such a death after it was past. Nevertheless there died in the deluge none of those mentioned in the sacred Scripture as descended from Seth. But here is the divine account of the cause of the deluge: "The Lord God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for I am angry that I have made them." 25. Of the anger of God, which does not

inflame His mind, nor disturb His unchangeable tranquillity. The anger of God is not a disturbing emotion of His mind, but a judgment by which punishment is inflicted upon sin. His thought and reconsideration also are the unchangeable reason which changes things; for He does not, like man, repent of anything He has done, because in all matters His decision is as inflexible as His prescience is certain. But if Scripture were not to use such expressions as the above, it would not familiarly insinuate itself into the minds of all classes of men, whom it seeks access to for their good, that it may alarm the proud, arouse the careless, exercise the inquisitive, and satisfy the intelligent; and this it could not do, did it not first stoop, and in a manner descend, to them where they lie. But its denouncing death on all the animals of earth and air is a declaration of the vastness of the disaster that was approaching: not that it threatens destruction to the irrational animals as if they too had incurred it by sin. 26. That the ark which Noah was ordered to make figures in every respect Christ and the church. Moreover, inasmuch as God commanded Noah, a just man, and, as the truthful Scripture says, a man perfect in his generation,—not indeed with the perfection of the citizens of the city of God in that immortal condition in which they equal the angels, but in so far as they can be perfect in their sojourn in this world,—inasmuch as God commanded him, I say, to make an ark, in which he might be rescued from the destruction of the flood, along with his family, i.e. his wife, sons, and daughters-in-law, and along with the animals who, in obedience to God's command, came to him into the ark: is certainly a figure of the city of God sojourning in this world; that is to say, of the church, which is rescued by the wood on which hung the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus. For even its very dimensions, in length, breadth, and height, represent the human body in which He came, as it had been foretold. For the length of the human



body, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is six times its breadth from side to side, and ten times its depth or thickness, measuring from back to front: that is to say, if you measure a man as he lies on his back or on his face, he is six times as long from head to foot as he is broad from side to side, and ten times as long as he is high from the ground. And therefore the ark was made 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height. And its having a door made in the side of it certainly signified the wound which was made when the side of the Crucified was pierced with the spear: for by this those who come to Him enter; for thence flowed the sacraments by which those who believe are initiated. And the fact that it was ordered to be made of squared timbers, signifies the immoveable steadiness of the life of the saints; for however you turn a cube, it still stands. And the other peculiarities of the ark's construction are signs of features of the church. But we have not now time to pursue this subject; and, indeed, we have already dwelt upon it in the work we wrote against Faustus the Manichean, who denies that there is anything prophesied of Christ in the Hebrew books. It may be that one man's exposition excels another's, and that ours is not the best; but all that is said must be referred to this city of God we speak of, which sojourns in this wicked world as in a deluge, at least if the expositor would not widely miss the meaning of the author. For example, the interpretation I have given in the work against Faustus, of the words, "with lower, second, and third storeys shalt thou make it," is, that because the church is gathered out of all nations, it is said to have two storeys, to represent the two kinds of men,—the circumcision, to wit, and the uncircumcision, or, as the apostle otherwise calls them, Jews and Gentiles; and to have three storeys, because all the nations were replenished from the three sons of Noah. Now any one may object to this interpretation, and may give another which harmonizes with the rule of faith. For as the ark was to

have rooms not only on the lower, but also on the upper storeys, which were called "third storeys," that there might be a habitable space on the third floor from the basement, some one may interpret these to mean the three graces commended by the apostle,—faith, hope, and charity. Or even more suitably they may be supposed to represent those three harvests in the gospel, thirty-fold, sixtyfold, an hundredfold,—chaste marriage dwelling in the ground floor, chaste widowhood in the upper, and chaste virginity in the top storey. Or any better interpretation may be given, so long as the reference to this city is maintained. And the same statement I would make of all the remaining particulars in this passage which require exposition, viz. that although different explanations are given, yet they must all agree with the one harmonious catholic faith. 27. Of the ark and the deluge, and that we cannot agree with those who receive the bare history, but reject the allegorical interpretation, nor with those who maintain the figurative and not the historical meaning. Yet no one ought to suppose either that these things were written for no purpose, or that we should study only the historical truth, apart from any allegorical meanings; or, on the contrary, that they are only allegories, and that there were no such facts at all, or that, whether it be so or no, there is here no prophecy of the church. For what right-minded man will contend that books so religiously preserved during thousands of years, and transmitted by so orderly a succession, were written without an object, or that only the bare historical facts are to be considered when we read them? For, not to mention other instances, if the number of the animals entailed the construction of an ark of great size, where was the necessity of sending into it two unclean and seven clean animals of each species, when both could have been preserved in equal numbers? Or could not God, who ordered them to be preserved in order to replenish the race, restore them in the same way He had created them?

But they who contend that these things never happened, but are only figures setting forth other things, in the first place suppose that there could not be a flood so great that the water should rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, because it is said that clouds cannot rise above the top of Mount Olympus, because it reaches the sky where there is none of that thicker atmosphere in which winds, clouds, and rains have their origin. They do not reflect that the densest element of all, earth, can exist there; or perhaps they deny that the top of the mountain is earth. Why, then, do these measurers and weighers of the elements contend that earth can be raised to those aerial altitudes, and that water cannot, while they admit that water is lighter, and liker to ascend than earth? What reason do they adduce why earth, the heavier and lower element, has for so many ages scaled to the tranquil æther, while water, the lighter, and more likely to ascend, is not suffered to do the same even for a brief space of time? They say, too, that the area of that ark could not contain so many kinds of animals of both sexes, two of the unclean and seven of the clean. But they seem to me to reckon only one area of 300 cubits long and 50 broad, and not to remember that there was another similar in the storey above, and yet another as large in the storey above that again; and that there was consequently an area of 900 cubits by 150. And if we accept what Origen has with some appropriateness suggested, that Moses the man of God, being, as it is written, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," who delighted in geometry, may have meant geometrical cubits, of which they say that one is equal to six of our cubits, then who does not see what a capacity these dimensions give to the ark? For as to their objection that an ark of such size could not be built, it is a very silly calumny; for they are aware that huge cities have been built, and they should remember that the ark was an hundred years in building. Or, perhaps, though stone can adhere to stone when

cemented with nothing but lime, so that a wall of several miles may be constructed, yet plank cannot be riveted to plank by mortices, bolts, nails, and pitch-glue, so as to construct an ark which was not made with curved ribs but straight timbers, which was not to be launched by its builders but to be lifted by the natural pressure of the water when it reached it, and which was to be preserved from shipwreck as it floated about rather by divine oversight than by human skill. As to another customary inquiry of the scrupulous about the very minute creatures, not only such as mice and lizards, but also locusts, beetles, flies, fleas, and so forth, whether there were not in the ark a larger number of them than was determined by God in His command, those persons who are moved by this difficulty are to be reminded that the words "every creeping thing of the earth" only indicate that it was not needful to preserve in the ark the animals that can live in the water, whether the fishes that live submerged in it, or the sea-birds that swim on its surface. Then, when it is said "male and female," no doubt reference is made to the repairing of the races, and consequently there was no need for those creatures being in the ark which are born without the union of the sexes from inanimate things, or from their corruption; or if they were in the ark, they might be there as they commonly are in houses, not in any determinate numbers; or if it was necessary that there should be a definite number of all those animals that cannot naturally live in the water, that so the most sacred mystery which was being enacted might be bodied forth and perfectly figured in actual realities, still this was not the care of Noah or his sons, but of God. For Noah did not catch the animals and put them into the ark, but gave them entrance as they came seeking it. For this is the force of the words, "They shall come unto thee,"—not, that is to say, by man's effort, but by God's will. But certainly we are not required to believe that those which have no sex also came; for it is

expressly and definitely said, "They shall be male and female." For there are some animals which are born out of corruption, but yet afterwards they themselves copulate and produce offspring, as flies; but others, which have no sex, like bees. Then, as to those animals which have sex, but without ability to propagate their kind, like mules and she-mules, it is probable that they were not in the ark, but that it was counted sufficient to preserve their parents, to wit, the horse and the ass; and this applies to all hybrids. Yet, if it was necessary for the completeness of the mystery, they were there; for even this species has "male and female." Another question is commonly raised regarding the food of the carnivorous animals,—whether, without transgressing the command which fixed the number to be preserved, there were necessarily others included in the ark for their sustenance; or, as is more probable, there might be some food which was not flesh, and which yet suited all. For we know how many animals whose food is flesh eat also vegetable products and fruits, especially figs and chestnuts. What wonder is it, therefore, if that wise and just man was instructed by God what would suit each, so that without flesh he prepared and stored provision fit for every species? And what is there which hunger would not make animals eat? Or what could not be made sweet and wholesome by God, who, with a divine facility, might have enabled them to do without food at all, had it not been requisite to the completeness of so great a mystery that they should be fed? But none but a contentious man can suppose that there was no prefiguring of the church in so manifold and circumstantial a detail. For the nations have already so filled the church, and are comprehended in the framework of its unity, the clean and unclean together, until the appointed end, that this one very manifest fulfilment leaves no doubt how we should interpret even those others which are somewhat more obscure, and which cannot so readily be discerned. And

since this is so, if not even the most audacious will presume to assert that these things were written without a purpose, or that though the events really happened they mean nothing, or that they did not really happen, but are only allegory, or that at all events they are far from having any figurative reference to the church; if it has been made out that, on the other hand, we must rather believe that there was a wise purpose in their being committed to memory and to writing, and that they did happen, and have a significance, and that this significance has a prophetic reference to the church, then this book, having served this purpose, may now be closed, that we may go on to trace in the history subsequent to the deluge the courses of the two cities,—the earthly, that lives according to men, and the heavenly, that lives according to God.

