

## THE CITY OF GOD AGAINST THE PAGANS

By Saint Aurelius Augustine

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BOOK TWENTIETH.

[continues]

22. What is meant by the good going out to see the punishment of the wicked. But in what way shall the good go out to see the punishment of the wicked? Are they to leave their happy abodes by a bodily movement, and proceed to the places of punishment, so as to witness the torments of the wicked in their bodily presence? Certainly not; but they shall go out by knowledge. For this expression, go out, signifies that those who shall be punished shall be without. And thus the Lord also calls these places "the outer darkness," to which is opposed that entrance concerning which it is said to the good servant, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord," that it may not be supposed that the wicked can enter thither and be known, but rather that the good by their knowledge go out to them, because the good are to know that which is without. For those who shall be in torment shall not know what is going on within in the joy of the Lord; but they who shall enter into that joy shall know what is going on outside in the outer darkness. Therefore it is said, "They shall go out," because they shall know what is done by those who are

without. For if the prophets were able to know things that had not yet happened, by means of that indwelling of God in their minds, limited though it was, shall not the immortal saints know things that have already happened, when God shall be all in all? The seed, then, and the name of the saints shall remain in that blessedness,—the seed, to wit, of which John says, “And his seed remaineth in him;” and the name, of which it was said through Isaiah himself, “I will give them an everlasting name.” “And there shall be to them month after month, and Sabbath after Sabbath,” as if it were said, Moon after moon, and rest upon rest, both of which they shall themselves be when they shall pass from the old shadows of time into the new lights of eternity. The worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, which constitute the punishment of the wicked, are differently interpreted by different people. For some refer both to the body, others refer both to the soul; while others again refer the fire literally to the body, and the worm figuratively to the soul, which seems the more credible idea. But the present is not the time to discuss this difference, for we have undertaken to occupy this book with the last judgment, in which the good and the bad are separated: their rewards and punishments we shall more carefully discuss elsewhere.

23. What Daniel predicted regarding the persecution of Antichrist, the judgment of God, and the kingdom of the saints. Daniel prophesies of the last judgment in such a way as to indicate that Antichrist shall first come, and to carry on his description to the eternal reign of the saints. For when in prophetic vision he had seen four beasts, signifying four kingdoms, and the fourth conquered by a certain king, who is recognised as Antichrist, and after this the eternal kingdom of the Son of man, that is to say, of Christ, he says, “My spirit

was terrified, I Daniel in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me," etc. Some have interpreted these four kingdoms as signifying those of the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. They who desire to understand the fitness of this interpretation may read Jerome's book on Daniel, which is written with a sufficiency of care and erudition. But he who reads this passage, even half-asleep, cannot fail to see that the kingdom of Antichrist shall fiercely, though for a short time, assail the Church before the last judgment of God shall introduce the eternal reign of the saints. For it is patent from the context that the time, times, and half a time, means a year, and two years, and half a year, that is to say, three years and a half. Sometimes in Scripture the same thing is indicated by months. For though the word times seems to be used here in the Latin indefinitely, that is only because the Latins have no dual, as the Greeks have, and as the Hebrews also are said to have. Times, therefore, is used for two times. As for the ten kings, whom, as it seems, Antichrist is to find in the person of ten individuals when he comes, I own I am afraid we may be deceived in this, and that he may come unexpectedly while there are not ten kings living in the Roman world. For what if this number ten signifies the whole number of kings who are to precede his coming, as totality is frequently symbolized by a thousand, or a hundred, or seven, or other numbers, which it is not necessary to recount? In another place the same Daniel says, "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as was not since there was born a nation upon earth until that time: and in that time all Thy people which shall be found written in the book shall be delivered. And many of them that sleep in the mound of earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting confusion. And they that be wise shall shine

as the brightness of the firmament; and many of the just as the stars for ever." This passage is very similar to the one we have quoted from the Gospel, at least so far as regards the resurrection of dead bodies. For those who are there said to be "in the graves" are here spoken of as "sleeping in the mound of earth," or, as others translate, "in the dust of earth." There it is said, "They shall come forth;" so here, "They shall arise." There, "They that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment;" here, "Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting confusion." Neither is it to be supposed a difference, though in place of the expression in the Gospel, "All who are in their graves," the prophet does not say "all," but "many of them that sleep in the mound of earth." For many is sometimes used in Scripture for all. Thus it was said to Abraham, "I have set thee as the father of many nations," though in another place it was said to him, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." Of such a resurrection it is said a little afterwards to the prophet himself, "And come thou and rest: for there is yet a day till the completion of the consummation; and thou shalt rest, and rise in thy lot in the end of the days."

24. Passages from the Psalms of David which predict the end of the world and the last judgment. There are many allusions to the last judgment in the Psalms, but for the most part only casual and slight. I cannot, however, omit to mention what is said there in express terms of the end of this world: "In the beginning hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth, O Lord; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." Why is it that Porphyry, while he

lauds the piety of the Hebrews in worshipping a God great and true, and terrible to the gods themselves, follows the oracles of these gods in accusing the Christians of extreme folly because they say that this world shall perish? For here we find it said in the sacred books of the Hebrews, to that God whom this great philosopher acknowledges to be terrible even to the gods themselves, "The heavens are the work of Thy hands: they shall perish." When the heavens, the higher and more secure part of the world, perish, shall the world itself be preserved? If this idea is not relished by Jupiter, whose oracle is quoted by this philosopher as an unquestionable authority in rebuke of the credulity of the Christians, why does he not similarly rebuke the wisdom of the Hebrews as folly, seeing that the prediction is found in their most holy books? But if this Hebrew wisdom, with which Porphyry is so captivated that he extols it through the utterances of his own gods, proclaims that the heavens are to perish, how is he so infatuated as to detest the faith of the Christians partly, if not chiefly, on this account, that they believe the world is to perish?—though how the heavens are to perish if the world does not is not easy to see. And, indeed, in the sacred writings which are peculiar to ourselves, and not common to the Hebrews and us,—I mean the evangelic and apostolic books,—the following expressions are used: "The figure of this world passeth away;" "The world passeth away;" "Heaven and earth shall pass away,"—expressions which are, I fancy, somewhat milder than "They shall perish." In the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, too, where the world which then was is said to have perished, being overflowed with water, it is sufficiently obvious what part of the world is signified by the whole, and in what sense the word perished is to be taken, and what heavens were kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of

judgment and perdition of ungodly men. And when he says a little afterwards, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great rush, and the elements shall melt with burning heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be burned up;" and then adds, "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?"—these heavens which are to perish may be understood to be the same which he said were kept in store reserved for fire; and the elements which are to be burned are those which are full of storm and disturbance in this lowest part of the world in which he said that these heavens were kept in store; for the higher heavens in whose firmament are set the stars are safe, and remain in their integrity. For even the expression of Scripture, that "the stars shall fall from heaven," not to mention that a different interpretation is much preferable, rather shows that the heavens themselves shall remain, if the stars are to fall from them. This expression, then, is either figurative, as is more credible, or this phenomenon will take place in this lowest heaven, like that mentioned by Virgil,— "A meteor with a train of light Athwart the sky gleamed dazzling bright, Then in Idæan woods was lost." But the passage I have quoted from the psalm seems to except none of the heavens from the destiny of destruction; for he says, "The heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish;" so that, as none of them are excepted from the category of God's works, none of them are excepted from destruction. For our opponents will not condescend to defend the Hebrew piety, which has won the approbation of their gods, by the words of the Apostle Peter, whom they vehemently detest; nor will they argue that, as the apostle in his epistle understands a part when he speaks of the whole world perishing in the flood, though only the lowest

part of it, and the corresponding heavens were destroyed, so in the psalm the whole is used for a part, and it is said "They shall perish," though only the lowest heavens are to perish. But since, as I said, they will not condescend to reason thus, lest they should seem to approve of Peter's meaning, or ascribe as much importance to the final conflagration as we ascribe to the deluge, whereas they contend that no waters or flames could destroy the whole human race, it only remains to them to maintain that their gods lauded the wisdom of the Hebrews because they had not read this psalm. It is the last judgment of God which is referred to also in the 50th Psalm in the words, "God shall come manifestly, our God, and shall not keep silence: fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call the heaven above, and the earth, to judge His people. Gather His saints together to Him; they who make a covenant with Him over sacrifices." This we understand of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we look for from heaven to judge the quick and the dead. For He shall come manifestly to judge justly the just and the unjust, who before came hiddenly to be unjustly judged by the unjust. He, I say, shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence, that is, shall make Himself known by His voice of judgment, who before, when He came hiddenly, was silent before His judge when He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and, as a lamb before the shearer, opened not His mouth, as we read that it was prophesied of Him by Isaiah, and as we see it fulfilled in the Gospel. As for the fire and tempest, we have already said how these are to be interpreted when we were explaining a similar passage in Isaiah. As to the expression, "He shall call the heaven above," as the saints and the righteous are rightly called heaven, no doubt this means what the apostle says, "We shall be caught up

together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." For if we take the bare literal sense, how is it possible to call the heaven above, as if the heaven could be anywhere else than above? And the following expression, "And the earth to judge His people," if we supply only the words, "He shall call," that is to say, "He shall call the earth also," and do not supply "above," seems to give us a meaning in accordance with sound doctrine, the heaven symbolizing those who will judge along with Christ, and the earth those who shall be judged; and thus the words, "He shall call the heaven above," would not mean, "He shall catch up into the air," but "He shall lift up to seats of judgment." Possibly, too, "He shall call the heaven," may mean, He shall call the angels in the high and lofty places, that He may descend with them to do judgment; and "He shall call the earth also" would then mean, He shall call the men on the earth to judgment. But if with the words "and the earth" we understand not only "He shall call," but also "above," so as to make the full sense be, He shall call the heaven above, and He shall call the earth above, then I think it is best understood of the men who shall be caught up to meet Christ in the air, and that they are called the heaven with reference to their souls, and the earth with reference to their bodies. Then what is "to judge His people," but to separate by judgment the good from the bad, as the sheep from the goats? Then he turns to address the angels: "Gather His saints together unto Him." For certainly a matter so important must be accomplished by the ministry of angels. And if we ask who the saints are who are gathered unto Him by the angels, we are told, "They who make a covenant with Him over sacrifices." This is the whole life of the saints, to make a covenant with God over sacrifices. For "over sacrifices" either refers to works of mercy, which are preferable to sacrifices in



the judgment of God, who says, "I desire mercy more than sacrifices;" or if "over sacrifices" means in sacrifices, then these very works of mercy are the sacrifices with which God is pleased, as I remember to have stated in the tenth book of this work; and in these works the saints make a covenant with God, because they do them for the sake of the promises which are contained in His new testament or covenant. And hence, when His saints have been gathered to Him and set at His right hand in the last judgment, Christ shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat," and so on, mentioning the good works of the good, and their eternal rewards assigned by the last sentence of the Judge.

25. Of Malachi's prophecy, in which he speaks of the last judgment, and of a cleansing which some are to undergo by purifying punishments. The prophet Malachi or Malachias, who is also called Angel, and is by some (for Jerome tells us that this is the opinion of the Hebrews) identified with Ezra the priest, others of whose writings have been received into the canon, predicts the last judgment, saying, "Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty; and who shall abide the day of His entrance? ... for I am the Lord your God, and I change not." From these words it more evidently appears that some shall in the last judgment suffer some kind of purgatorial punishments; for what else can be understood by the word, "Who shall abide the day of His entrance, or who shall be able to look upon Him? for He enters as a moulder's fire, and as the herb of fullers: and He shall sit fusing and purifying as if over gold and silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out like gold and silver?" Similarly Isaiah says, "The Lord shall wash the filthiness of the

sons and daughters of Zion, and shall cleanse away the blood from their midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning." Unless perhaps we should say that they are cleansed from filthiness and in a manner clarified, when the wicked are separated from them by penal judgment, so that the elimination and damnation of the one party is the purgation of the others, because they shall henceforth live free from the contamination of such men. But when he says, "And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out like gold and silver, and they shall offer to the Lord sacrifices in righteousness; and the sacrifices of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord," he declares that those who shall be purified shall then please the Lord with sacrifices of righteousness, and consequently they themselves shall be purified from their own unrighteousness which made them displeasing to God. Now they themselves, when they have been purified, shall be sacrifices of complete and perfect righteousness; for what more acceptable offering can such persons make to God than themselves? But this question of purgatorial punishments we must defer to another time, to give it a more adequate treatment. By the sons of Levi and Judah and Jerusalem we ought to understand the Church herself, gathered not from the Hebrews only, but from other nations as well; nor such a Church as she now is, when "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," but as she shall then be, purged by the last judgment as a threshing-floor by a winnowing wind, and those of her members who need it being cleansed by fire, so that there remains absolutely not one who offers sacrifice for his sins. For all who make such offerings are assuredly in their sins, for the remission of which they make offerings, that having made to God an acceptable offering, they may then be absolved.

26. Of the sacrifices offered to God by the saints, which are to be pleasing to Him, as in the primitive days and former years. And it was with the design of showing that His city shall not then follow this custom, that God said that the sons of Levi should offer sacrifices in righteousness,—not therefore in sin, and consequently not for sin. And hence we see how vainly the Jews promise themselves a return of the old times of sacrificing according to the law of the old testament, grounding on the words which follow, “And the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord, as in the primitive days, and as in former years.” For in the times of the law they offered sacrifices not in righteousness but in sins, offering especially and primarily for sins, so much so that even the priest himself, whom we must suppose to have been their most righteous man, was accustomed to offer, according to God’s commandments, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. And therefore we must explain how we are to understand the words, “as in the primitive days, and as in former years;” for perhaps he alludes to the time in which our first parents were in paradise. Then, indeed, intact and pure from all stain and blemish of sin, they offered themselves to God as the purest sacrifices. But since they were banished thence on account of their transgression, and human nature was condemned in them, with the exception of the one Mediator and those who have been baptized, and are as yet infants, “there is none clean from stain, not even the babe whose life has been but for a day upon the earth.” But if it be replied that those who offer in faith may be said to offer in righteousness, because the righteous lives by faith,—he deceives himself, however, if he says that he has no sin, and therefore he does not say so, because he lives by faith,—will any man say this time of faith can be

placed on an equal footing with that consummation when they who offer sacrifices in righteousness shall be purified by the fire of the last judgment? And consequently, since it must be believed that after such a cleansing the righteous shall retain no sin, assuredly that time, so far as regards its freedom from sin, can be compared to no other period, unless to that during which our first parents lived in paradise in the most innocent happiness before their transgression. It is this period, then, which is properly understood when it is said, "as in the primitive days, and as in former years." For in Isaiah, too, after the new heavens and the new earth have been promised, among other elements in the blessedness of the saints which are there depicted by allegories and figures, from giving an adequate explanation of which I am prevented by a desire to avoid prolixity, it is said, "According to the days of the tree of life shall be the days of my people." And who that has looked at Scripture does not know where God planted the tree of life, from whose fruit He excluded our first parents when their own iniquity ejected them from paradise, and round which a terrible and fiery fence was set? But if any one contends that those days of the tree of life mentioned by the prophet Isaiah are the present times of the Church of Christ, and that Christ Himself is prophetically called the Tree of Life, because He is Wisdom, and of wisdom Solomon says, "It is a tree of life to all who embrace it;" and if they maintain that our first parents did not pass years in paradise, but were driven from it so soon that none of their children were begotten there, and that therefore that time cannot be alluded to in words which run, "as in the primitive days, and as in former years," I forbear entering on this question, lest by discussing everything I become prolix, and leave the whole subject in uncertainty. For I see another meaning, which should

keep us from believing that a restoration of the primitive days and former years of the legal sacrifices could have been promised to us by the prophet as a great boon. For the animals selected as victims under the old law were required to be immaculate, and free from all blemish whatever, and symbolized holy men free from all sin, the only instance of which character was found in Christ. As, therefore, after the judgment those who are worthy of such purification shall be purified even by fire, and shall be rendered thoroughly sinless, and shall offer themselves to God in righteousness, and be indeed victims immaculate and free from all blemish whatever, they shall then certainly be “as in the primitive days, and as in former years,” when the purest victims were offered, the shadow of this future reality. For there shall then be in the body and soul of the saints the purity which was symbolized in the bodies of these victims.

Then, with reference to those who are worthy not of cleansing but of damnation, He says, “And I will draw near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against evil-doers and against adulterers;” and after enumerating other damnable crimes, He adds, “For I am the Lord your God, and I am not changed.” It is as if He said, Though your fault has changed you for the worse, and my grace has changed you for the better, I am not changed. And he says that He Himself will be a witness, because in His judgment He needs no witnesses; and that He will be “swift,” either because He is to come suddenly, and the judgment which seemed to lag shall be very swift by His unexpected arrival, or because He will convince the consciences of men directly and without any prolix harangue. “For,” as it is written, “in the thoughts of the wicked His examination shall be conducted.” And the apostle says, “The thoughts accusing or else excusing, in the day in which God shall

judge the hidden things of men, according to my gospel in Jesus Christ." Thus, then, shall the Lord be a swift witness, when He shall suddenly bring back into the memory that which shall convince and punish the conscience. 27. Of the separation of the good and the bad, which proclaim the discriminating influence of the last judgment. The passage also which I formerly quoted for another purpose from this prophet refers to the last judgment, in which he says, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord Almighty, in the day in which I make up my gains," etc. When this diversity between the rewards and punishments which distinguish the righteous from the wicked shall appear under that Sun of righteousness in the brightness of life eternal,—a diversity which is not discerned under this sun which shines on the vanity of this life,—there shall then be such a judgment as has never before been. 28. That the law of Moses must be spiritually understood to preclude the damnable murmurs of a carnal interpretation. In the succeeding words, "Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel," the prophet opportunely mentions precepts and statutes, after declaring the important distinction hereafter to be made between those who observe and those who despise the law. He intends also that they learn to interpret the law spiritually, and find Christ in it, by whose judgment that separation between the good and the bad is to be made. For it is not without reason that the Lord Himself says to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." For by receiving the law carnally, without perceiving that its earthly promises were figures of things spiritual, they fell into such murmurings as audaciously to say, "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked suppliantly before the face of the Lord Almighty? And now we call aliens happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up." It was these words of theirs which

in a manner compelled the prophet to announce the last judgment, in which the wicked shall not even in appearance be happy, but shall manifestly be most miserable; and in which the good shall be oppressed with not even a transitory wretchedness, but shall enjoy unsullied and eternal felicity. For he had previously cited some similar expressions of those who said, "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and such are pleasing to Him." It was, I say, by understanding the law of Moses carnally that they had come to murmur thus against God. And hence, too, the writer of the 73d Psalm says that his feet were almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped, because he was envious of sinners while he considered their prosperity, so that he said among other things, How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High? and again, Have I sanctified my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency? He goes on to say that his efforts to solve this most difficult problem, which arises when the good seem to be wretched and the wicked happy, were in vain until he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood the last things. For in the last judgment things shall not be so; but in the manifest felicity of the righteous and manifest misery of the wicked quite another state of things shall appear. 29. Of the coming of Elias before the judgment, that the Jews may be converted to Christ by his preaching and explanation of Scripture. After admonishing them to give heed to the law of Moses, as he foresaw that for a long time to come they would not understand it spiritually and rightly, he went on to say, "And, behold, I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the great and signal day of the Lord come: and he shall turn the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of a man to his next of kin, lest I come and utterly smite the earth." It is a familiar theme in the conversation and heart of the faithful, that in the last days before the judgment the Jews shall believe in the true Christ, that is, our Christ, by means of this great

and admirable prophet Elias who shall expound the law to them. For not without reason do we hope that before the coming of our Judge and Saviour Elias shall come, because we have good reason to believe that he is now alive; for, as Scripture most distinctly informs us, he was taken up from this life in a chariot of fire. When, therefore, he is come, he shall give a spiritual explanation of the law which the Jews at present understand carnally, and shall thus “turn the heart of the father to the son,” that is, the heart of fathers to their children; for the Septuagint translators have frequently put the singular for the plural number. And the meaning is, that the sons, that is, the Jews, shall understand the law as the fathers, that is, the prophets, and among them Moses himself, understood it. For the heart of the fathers shall be turned to their children when the children understand the law as their fathers did; and the heart of the children shall be turned to their fathers when they have the same sentiments as the fathers. The Septuagint used the expression, “and the heart of a man to his next of kin,” because fathers and children are eminently neighbours to one another. Another and a preferable sense can be found in the words of the Septuagint translators, who have translated Scripture with an eye to prophecy, the sense, viz., that Elias shall turn the heart of God the Father to the Son, not certainly as if he should bring about this love of the Father for the Son, but meaning that he should make it known, and that the Jews also, who had previously hated, should then love the Son who is our Christ. For so far as regards the Jews, God has His heart turned away from our Christ, this being their conception about God and Christ. But in their case the heart of God shall be turned to the Son when they themselves shall turn in heart, and learn the love of the Father towards the Son. The words following, “and the heart of a man to his next of kin,”—that is, Elias shall also turn the heart of a man to his next of kin,—how can we understand this better than as the heart of a



man to the man Christ? For though in the form of God He is our God, yet, taking the form of a servant, He condescended to become also our next of kin. It is this, then, which Elias will do, "lest," he says, "I come and smite the earth utterly." For they who mind earthly things are the earth. Such are the carnal Jews until this day; and hence these murmurs of theirs against God, "The wicked are pleasing to Him," and "It is a vain thing to serve God." 30. That in the books of the Old Testament, where it is said that God shall judge the world, the person of Christ is not explicitly indicated, but it plainly appears from some passages in which the Lord God speaks that Christ is meant. There are many other passages of Scripture bearing on the last judgment of God,—so many, indeed, that to cite them all would swell this book to an unpardonable size. Suffice it to have proved that both Old and New Testament enounce the judgment. But in the Old it is not so definitely declared as in the New that the judgment shall be administered by Christ, that is, that Christ shall descend from heaven as the Judge; for when it is therein stated by the Lord God or His prophet that the Lord God shall come, we do not necessarily understand this of Christ. For both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the Lord God. We must not, however, leave this without proof. And therefore we must first show how Jesus Christ speaks in the prophetic books under the title of the Lord God, while yet there can be no doubt that it is Jesus Christ who speaks; so that in other passages where this is not at once apparent, and where nevertheless it is said that the Lord God will come to that last judgment, we may understand that Jesus Christ is meant. There is a passage in the prophet Isaiah which illustrates what I mean. For God says by the prophet, "Hear me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. I am the first, and I am for ever: and my hand has founded the earth, and my right hand has established the heaven. I will call them, and they shall stand together, and be gathered, and hear. Who

has declared to them these things? In love of thee I have done thy pleasure upon Babylon, that I might take away the seed of the Chaldeans. I have spoken, and I have called: I have brought him, and have made his way prosperous. Come ye near unto me, and hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; when they were made, there was I. And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." It was Himself who was speaking as the Lord God; and yet we should not have understood that it was Jesus Christ had He not added, "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." For He said this with reference to the form of a servant, speaking of a future event as if it were past, as in the same prophet we read, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter," not "He shall be led;" but the past tense is used to express the future. And prophecy constantly speaks in this way. There is also another passage in Zechariah which plainly declares that the Almighty sent the Almighty; and of what persons can this be understood but of God the Father and God the Son? For it is written, "Thus saith the Lord Almighty, After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. Behold, I will bring mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord Almighty hath sent me." Observe, the Lord Almighty saith that the Lord Almighty sent Him. Who can presume to understand these words of any other than Christ, who is speaking to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? For He says in the Gospel, "I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," which He here compared to the pupil of God's eye, to signify the profoundest love. And to this class of sheep the apostles themselves belonged. But after the glory, to wit, of His resurrection,—for before it happened the evangelist said that "Jesus was not yet glorified,"—He was sent unto the nations in the persons of His apostles; and thus the saying of the psalm was fulfilled, "Thou wilt deliver me from the contradictions

of the people; Thou wilt set me as the head of the nations." So that those who had spoiled the Israelites, and whom the Israelites had served when they were subdued by them, were not themselves to be spoiled in the same fashion, but were in their own persons to become the spoil of the Israelites. For this had been promised to the apostles when the Lord said, "I will make you fishers of men." And to one of them He says, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." They were then to become a spoil, but in a good sense, as those who are snatched from that strong one when he is bound by a stronger. In like manner the Lord, speaking by the same prophet, says, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and mercy; and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me, and they shall mourn for Him as for one very dear, and shall be in bitterness as for an only-begotten." To whom but to God does it belong to destroy all the nations that are hostile to the holy city Jerusalem, which "come against it," that is, are opposed to it, or, as some translate, "come upon it," as if putting it down under them; or to pour out upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and mercy? This belongs doubtless to God, and it is to God the prophet ascribes the words; and yet Christ shows that He is the God who does these so great and divine things, when He goes on to say, "And they shall look upon me because they have insulted me, and they shall mourn for Him as if for one very dear (or beloved), and shall be in bitterness for Him as for an only-begotten." For in that day the Jews—those of them, at least, who shall receive the spirit of grace and mercy—when they see Him coming in His majesty, and recognise that it is He whom they, in the person of their parents, insulted when He came before in His humiliation, shall repent of insulting Him in His passion: and their parents themselves, who

were the perpetrators of this huge impiety, shall see Him when they rise; but this will be only for their punishment, and not for their correction. It is not of them we are to understand the words, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and mercy, and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me;" but we are to understand the words of their descendants, who shall at that time believe through Elias. But as we say to the Jews, You killed Christ, although it was their parents who did so, so these persons shall grieve that they in some sort did what their progenitors did. Although, therefore, those that receive the spirit of mercy and grace, and believe, shall not be condemned with their impious parents, yet they shall mourn as if they themselves had done what their parents did. Their grief shall arise not so much from guilt as from pious affection. Certainly the words which the Septuagint have translated, "They shall look upon me because they insulted me," stand in the Hebrew, "They shall look upon me whom they pierced." And by this word the crucifixion of Christ is certainly more plainly indicated. But the Septuagint translators preferred to allude to the insult which was involved in His whole passion. For in point of fact they insulted Him both when He was arrested and when He was bound, when He was judged, when He was mocked by the robe they put on Him and the homage they did on bended knee, when He was crowned with thorns and struck with a rod on the head, when He bore His cross, and when at last He hung upon the tree. And therefore we recognise more fully the Lord's passion when we do not confine ourselves to one interpretation, but combine both, and read both "insulted" and "pierced." When, therefore, we read in the prophetic books that God is to come to do judgment at the last, from the mere mention of the judgment, and although there is nothing else to determine the meaning, we must gather that Christ is meant; for though the Father

will judge, He will judge by the coming of the Son. For He Himself, by His own manifested presence, “judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son;” for as the Son was judged as a man, He shall also judge in human form. For it is none but He of whom God speaks by Isaiah under the name of Jacob and Israel, of whose seed Christ took a body, as it is written, “Jacob is my servant, I will uphold Him; Israel is mine elect, my Spirit has assumed Him: I have put my Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor cease, neither shall His voice be heard without. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: but in truth shall He bring forth judgment. He shall shine and shall not be broken, until He sets judgment in the earth: and the nations shall hope in His name.” The Hebrew has not “Jacob” and “Israel;” but the Septuagint translators, wishing to show the significance of the expression “my servant,” and that it refers to the form of a servant in which the Most High humbled Himself, inserted the name of that man from whose stock He took the form of a servant. The Holy Spirit was given to Him, and was manifested, as the evangelist testifies, in the form of a dove. He brought forth judgment to the Gentiles, because He predicted what was hidden from them. In His meekness He did not cry, nor did He cease to proclaim the truth. But His voice was not heard, nor is it heard, without, because He is not obeyed by those who are outside of His body. And the Jews themselves, who persecuted Him, He did not break, though as a bruised reed they had lost their integrity, and as smoking flax their light was quenched; for He spared them, having come to be judged and not yet to judge. He brought forth judgment in truth, declaring that they should be punished did they persist in their wickedness. His face shone on the Mount, His fame in the world. He is not broken nor overcome, because neither in Himself nor in His Church has persecution prevailed to annihilate Him. And

therefore that has not, and shall not, be brought about which His enemies said or say, "When shall He die, and His name perish?" "until He set judgment in the earth." Behold, the hidden thing which we were seeking is discovered. For this is the last judgment, which He will set in the earth when He comes from heaven. And it is in Him, too, we already see the concluding expression of the prophecy fulfilled: "In His name shall the nations hope." And by this fulfilment, which no one can deny, men are encouraged to believe in that which is most impudently denied. For who could have hoped for that which even those who do not yet believe in Christ now see fulfilled among us, and which is so undeniable that they can but gnash their teeth and pine away? Who, I say, could have hoped that the nations would hope in the name of Christ, when He was arrested, bound, scourged, mocked, crucified, when even the disciples themselves had lost the hope which they had begun to have in Him? The hope which was then entertained scarcely by the one thief on the cross, is now cherished by nations everywhere on the earth, who are marked with the sign of the cross on which He died that they may not die eternally. That the last judgment, then, shall be administered by Jesus Christ in the manner predicted in the sacred writings is denied or doubted by no one, unless by those who, through some incredible animosity or blindness, decline to believe these writings, though already their truth is demonstrated to all the world. And at or in connection with that judgment the following events shall come to pass, as we have learned: Elias the Tishbite shall come; the Jews shall believe; Antichrist shall persecute; Christ shall judge; the dead shall rise; the good and the wicked shall be separated; the world shall be burned and renewed. All these things, we believe, shall come to pass; but how, or in what order, human understanding cannot perfectly teach us, but only the experience of the events themselves. My opinion, however, is, that they will happen in the order in which I

have related them. Two books yet remain to be written by me, in order to complete, by God's help, what I promised. One of these will explain the punishment of the wicked, the other the happiness of the righteous; and in them I shall be at special pains to refute, by God's grace, the arguments by which some unhappy creatures seem to themselves to undermine the divine promises and threatenings, and to ridicule as empty words statements which are the most salutary nutriment of faith. But they who are instructed in divine things hold the truth and omnipotence of God to be the strongest arguments in favour of those things which, however incredible they seem to men, are yet contained in the Scriptures, whose truth has already in many ways been proved; for they are sure that God can in no wise lie, and that He can do what is impossible to the unbelieving.

