

St. Albert the Great

THE MARIAN BIBLE

Biblia Mariana

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Marian Bible. The Book of Genesis Begins.

THE MARIAN BIBLE OF D. ALBERT THE GREAT, BISHOP OF RATISBON, OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS. THE BOOK OF GENESIS BEGINS.

In the beginning God created heaven and earth ^[1].

1. Heaven, namely the empyrean, through which the Lady of the world, the Virgin Mary, is understood. For she is like heaven for many reasons, one of which is set down in the history. For the empyrean, as soon as it was made, was immediately disposed and ordered, which was not so for the other heavens. So she was in grace and sanctification. (Look in the title concerning heaven.) For heaven is said from washing away, that is, from purging the darknesses of heretics and sinners.

2. She is also called light. Genesis I, 2: Darknesses were upon the face of the abyss ^[2]. The Gloss: "The darknesses of ignorance and blindness, upon the face of the human heart." And God said: Let light be made ^[3], that is, let Mary be generated and be born. The Gloss: "From the eternal light let temporal light first be made, so that through it the other things may be seen." For light is said from washing away, that is, from purging the darknesses of heretics and sinners. And light was made. And God saw the light, that it was good ^[4]. For light does many good things. (Look in the title concerning light, and adapt it.) And he called the light Day ^[5], that is Mary; this name is hers forever. For she is most fittingly called day, and Eve night. The Gloss: "God began his works from light."

3. She is also the fruit-bearing earth ^[6], that is, bearing Christ in the nativity. The Gloss: "The food of the Word is works of mercy." And the fruit-tree making fruit ^[7], etc.; for Jesus himself was the green plant in the nativity, but a tree making fruit in the passion.

4. She is also the day of the completion of the Lord's works. Genesis II, 2: And God completed on the seventh day his work that he had made. The Gloss: "Because he blessed and sanctified it." For his work is blessing and sanctification. And he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had performed. The Gloss: "Because he gave rational creatures rest in himself."

5. She is the fountain of irrigation for sinners made dry through sin. Genesis II, 6: A fountain, that is Mary, was ascending, in the nativity when she was born, or in the assumption, from the earth of misery and darknesses, watering with grace, pardon, and glory the whole surface of the earth.

6. She is also the paradise of planting. Genesis II, 8: The Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure, that is, Mary, from the beginning; in it he placed the man, that is, Christ, whom he had formed, insofar as he is man, in the incarnation. The Gloss: "Paradise is a garden of delights, which was made when the waters were removed from the surface of the earth, and it is a high place, because the waters of the flood did not reach there." Note this concerning her sanctification.

7. She is the river of delight. Genesis II, 10 and following: A river, that is, the abundance of eternal delight, went forth, namely in the nativity, from the place of pleasure. The Gloss: "From the paternal fountain:" to water paradise. The Gloss: that is, the Church. The name of one is Phison. The Gloss: that is, change of mouth, because she changed for us the mouth of severity into the mouth of kindness ^[8]. The name of the second river is Gehon. The Gloss: that is, the gaping of the earth, because she enlarged and widened herself through the desire of the Saints. Her gaping is for receiving for us an abundance of graces; moreover she also makes us gape, and makes her Son toward us. The name of the third river is Tigris. The Gloss: that is, swiftness in supplying help, in exhibiting consolation, and in interceding to God for sinners. The fourth river is Euphrates itself. The Gloss: that is, fruit-bearing in every fullness of graces, and, with respect to us, most generous in communication.

8. She is also the helper of our redemption. Genesis II, 20: But for Adam there was not found a helper like him ^[9], because all have turned aside; together they have become useless. Therefore the Lord God said: It is not good for the man to be alone, that is, Christ. Let us make for him, by creating and bringing into the world, a help like himself, that is, Mary.

9. She is also the staff of the crushing of the devil. Genesis III, 15: I will put great and implacable enmities between you and the woman: she will crush your head. The Gloss: which is death.

10. She is also the mother of life. Genesis III, 20: Adam called the name of his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all nations, that is, of all who work well, to whom sins are contrary, which are called mortal.

11. She is also the ark of salvation. Genesis VI, 13 and following: The Lord said to Noah: The end of all flesh has come before me. The Gloss: that is, of all mortals, except those who were to be saved in the ark. Make yourself an ark, that is, Mary, which looks to her nativity, from smoothed woods, that is, squared, pitch-covered, and polished woods, so that nothing may cling to it (note this concerning her sanctification), and strong and indissoluble, so that it may be dissolved neither by the force of winds nor by inundation. Such is Our Lady. You shall make little dwellings in the ark. The Gloss: The diverse orders of life; for she has

the orders of Married Persons, Widows, and Virgins. And with pitch, that is, with the ardor of love, you shall smear it within and without. The Gloss: lest it be dissolved inside or outside. You shall make a window in the ark. The Gloss: for sending out the raven or the dove. This window is called the noonday dawn, and it is also called crystalline. And in one cubit you shall complete its summit. The Gloss: One cubit is charity. Pairs from all things shall enter with you, that they may be able to live. The Gloss: lest they perish in the flood.

12. She also, after God, is the beginning of every grace in us. Genesis VII, 11: In the six-hundredth year of the life of Noah, that is, of Christ, who entered the ark, that is, the womb of the Virgin Mary, which was done in the incarnation, all the fountains, that is, of graces, of the great abyss were broken open, when the flood of graces inundated Mary, and the devil was submerged, and sins were destroyed.

13. She also, through her coming into the world, when she was born, brought the branch of olive, that is, of peace between us and God. Genesis VIII, 11 ^[10]: The dove, that is, Mary, who is compared to a dove, came to him, namely to Noah, toward evening, namely at the end of the world, carrying the branch of olive, that is, of peace between us. The Gloss: "Of refreshment and of light." With green leaves in her mouth, when she said: Behold the handmaid ^[11]. Therefore Noah understood that the waters of God's indignation and fury over the earth had ceased.

14. She is also the altar of propitiation and of God's appeasement. Genesis VIII, 20 and 21 ^[12]: Noah built an altar to the Lord, that is, Mary; and taking from all clean cattle and birds, he offered holocausts upon the altar. And the Lord smelled the odor of sweetness, and said: Never again will I curse the earth because of men... Therefore I will not again strike. The Gloss: by a temporal judgment, every living soul, as I did; but with Mary praying, I will spare everyone seeking pardon.

15. She is also the sign of security for the fearful sinner. Genesis IX, 12 and 13: This is the sign of the covenant that I give between me and you: ... my bow. The Gloss: which had two colors, blue outwardly and fiery inwardly, I shall put in the clouds. I set this for myself as a sign of security in the clouds of heaven, lest fearful men be afraid that they will be destroyed by another flood of rains. The bow exists only from the rays of the sun and a moist cloud. And when I shall cover the heaven with clouds, my bow, that is, Mary, will appear in the clouds, and I will remember my covenant with you; ... and the waters of the flood will no longer be for destroying all flesh ^[13], that is, sinners.

16. She also is the exalter of our humility, because she is our sister and kinswoman. Genesis XII, 11 and following: And when Abram was near to entering Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife: I know that you are a beautiful woman, ... and the Egyptians will kill me and keep you. Say therefore, I beg you, that you are my

sister, so that it may be well with me because of you, and my soul may live by your grace. And at the end of chapter XX, 13: Do this mercy with me: in every place to which we shall enter, you will say that I am your brother.

17. She is also called the mother of joy and exultation. Genesis XXI, 1 and following: The Lord visited Sarah, that is, Mary. The Gloss: which is interpreted princess. And he fulfilled what he had spoken. The Gloss: through the Prophets. She conceived and bore a son in her old age. The Gloss: that is, in the last times, Christ.

And Abraham called the name of his son, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac, that is, joy, because at the nativity of Christ the shepherds and Angels rejoiced ^[14]. And Sarah, that is, Mary, said: God has made laughter for me, but Eve lamentation; whoever hears, whether sinner, just person, or Angel, will laugh with me, that is, will rejoice together with me, because I have borne gladness for the Angel, grace for the just person, pardon for the sinner. And again she said: Who would believe that Abraham would hear that Sarah, that is, poor little Mary, would nurse the son whom she bore to him now old? that I should nurse him who nurses all things; that I should carry him who carries all things. The Gloss: "This is a commendation of grace."

18. She is also the prince of all creatures, with respect to defense, exhortation, and command. Genesis XVII, 15: God also said to Abraham: You shall not call Sarai your wife Sarai, that is, my princess and as it were of one nation, but Sarah, that is prince absolutely, as it were prince of all. For she will say to this one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes ^[15]. Concerning this principality Pharaoh says to Joseph, Genesis XLI, 40: Only by the throne of the kingdom will I precede you. And below, verse 44: Without your command no one shall move hand or foot, etc.

19. She is also the vessel for drawing from the fountain of life, the refresher of thirsty souls. Genesis XXIV, 15 and following: Rebecca, which is interpreted patience, that is, Mary, was going out, namely in the nativity, when she was born, having a water-jar on her shoulder. The Gloss: "About to receive humbly the Word of God:" a maiden exceedingly fair, a most beautiful virgin, and unknown to man; but she had gone down to the fountain. The Gloss: of Life, to which she had inclined herself to draw, and she had filled the water-jar, namely of the heart, with grace, pardon, and glory. And the servant met her and said: Give me a little water to drink. The Gloss: concerning the salvation of the soul, supply from your jar, because from the jar of the world I have drawn vanity, and from the jar of the devil iniquity. She answered: Drink, my lord; and quickly she lowered the jar upon her arm and gave him drink. And when he had drunk, she added: Indeed, I will draw also for your camels the water of grace, pardon, and gladness, until all drink. Song of Songs V, 1: Drink, and be inebriated, dearest ones, etc. Therefore she gave a draught to all the camels; whence she is also most generous.

20. She is also the hostess of wandering souls. Genesis XXIV, 23 and following: Eliezer said to Rebecca: Whose daughter are you? Tell me: is there a place in your father's house for lodging? She answered: I am the daughter of Bathuel... There is also very much straw and hay with us, and a spacious place for lodging. The Gloss: "Through the breadth of charity." And Laban, Rebecca's brother, said: Enter, blessed of the Lord; why do you stand outside? I have prepared the house and a place for the camels ^[16]. And he brought him into the lodging. Rebecca also is Mary; the brother of Rebecca is Christ, who has brought us into the kingdom.

21. She is also the spouse and mother of propitiation, whom he prepared from eternity, as mother for the Son, as reconciliation for the guilty, as reward for the just. Genesis XXIV, 42 and following: Eliezer said: I came today to the fountain of water, and I said: The virgin who shall hear from me, Give me a little water to drink from your jar, and shall say to me, Both you drink and I will draw for your camels, she is the woman whom the Lord has prepared for the son of my lord. Hence she herself can say: From eternity I was ordained ^[17].

22. She is also the sister of our profession, defense, fidelity, and exaltation.

Genesis XXIV, 59 and following: Therefore they sent her away, namely when she was assumed from us into heaven, praying prosperity for their sister, saying: You are our sister by humanity, fidelity, and dignity; may you grow into thousands of thousands by ascending beyond all the choirs of Angels, and may your seed, that is, we little worms, possess the gates of the empyrean, of their enemies, the demons, who were cast out from there.

23. She is also the procurer of eternal blessing. Genesis XXVII, 13 and following: Mother Rebecca said to Jacob: Upon me, she said, let that curse be, my son; only hear my voice, as it warns, counsels, and calls; and going, bring what I have said, if in some way you may earn this blessing. Behold the odor of my son, like the odor of a full field. The Gloss: Full of virtues, which the Lord has blessed. May God give you from the dew of heaven. The Gloss: that is, from contemplation, and from the richness of the earth, the abundance of good works, of grain, namely charity, and of wine, the fervor of the Holy Spirit, and of oil, mercy. The blessed Virgin had these three things most perfectly in herself, and she also procures them for us.

24. She is also the ladder of ascent from guilt to grace, from the world to heaven. Genesis XXVIII, 12 and 13: Jacob saw in dreams a ladder, that is, Mary. For through her the Son of God descended to us, and we through her to him. Standing upon the earth: although she sits on the throne, nevertheless, for sinners to profit, she is near; and its top touching heaven: because although she is most humble, nevertheless she is most subtle, reaching into the Trinity itself. Also the Angels of God ascending and descending through her; and the Lord leaning upon the ladder, by taking flesh from her, and by drawing us through her to himself.

25. She is also the gate of the kingdom and of our entrance into the kingdom. Genesis XXVIII, 16: Jacob said: Truly the Lord is in this place. And below, verse 17: How terrible this place is to demons, lovely to men, delightful to God! This is nothing else but the house of God and the gate of heaven, because from there is access to the kingdom of the heavens.

26. She is also the dawn of illumination. Dawn is light poured into earthly vapor. Genesis XXXII, 26 and 27: the Angel says to Jacob: Let me go, for dawn has now ascended. Now dawn has ascended through the nativity, by appearing in the world, or in the assumption, by going to the heavens; that is, Mary. He answered: I will not let you go, etc. And the Angel said: Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel^[18].

27. She is also the most perfect fullness of all graces after the Lord. Genesis XLI, 5: Seven ears of grain. The Gloss: that is, spiritual gifts, were sprouting on one stalk, that is, Mary, full and beautiful, with which she overflows by generous piety.

28. She is also the granary of holiness against the famine of death. Genesis XLI, 33 and following: Let the king, that is, God the Father, provide a wise and industrious man, namely his Son Christ, and set him according to his humanity over the land of Egypt, that is, the world, who... may gather the fifth part, the fruit of graces, through the seven years of fertility, namely in the time of grace, into the granaries of all eternity, that is, Mary. And let it be prepared for the future famine of seven years, which will oppress Egypt, which indeed will be in Gehenna. And Joseph, that is, Christ, opened all the granaries, namely Mary in the annunciation, who is full according to the words of Gabriel, Luke I, 28: Hail, full of grace; in the passion, himself; in the ascension, the empyrean heaven. And he was selling

Notes

[1] Genesis I, 1. (*Genes. I, 1.*)

[2] *Ibid.*, verse 3. (*Ibid.*, v. 3.)

[3] *Ibid.*, verses 3 and 4. (*Ibid.*, vv. 3 et 4.)

[4] *Ibid.*, verse 4. (*Ibid.*, v. 4.)

[5] *Ibid.*, verse 11. (*Ibid.*, v. 11.)

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Ibid.

[8] Psalm XI, 3. (*Psal. XI, 3.*)

[9] Genesis II, 18. (*Genes. II, 18.*)

[10] Genesis VIII, 11. (*Genes. VIII, 11.*)

[11] Luke I, 38. (*Luc. I, 38.*)

[12] Genesis VIII, 20. (*Genes. VIII, 20.*)

[13] Genesis IX, 14 and 15. (*Genes. IX, 14 et 15.*)

[14] Luke II, 8 and following. (*Luc. II, 8 et seq.*)

[15] Matthew VIII, 9. (*Matth. VIII, 9.*)

[16] Genesis XXIV, 31 and 32. (*Genes. XXIV, 31 et 32.*)

[17] Proverbs VIII, 23. (*Proverb. VIII, 23.*)

[18] Genesis XXXII, 28. (*Genes. XXXII, 28.*)

End of Genesis and Book of Exodus, page 370

to the Egyptians ^[1]. The Gloss: At the price of their salvation. But when Jacob heard that food was being sold in Egypt, he said to his sons: Why are you negligent, etc. ^[2]?

29. She is also the priestly land, namely of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, which always was and is free from the condition of actual sin, both venial and mortal. Genesis XLVIII, 22: Jacob, that is, God the Father, said to Joseph, that is, to Christ: I give you one portion, that is, Mary, who is of accepted action in all things, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow. Note this here concerning her sanctification.

30. She is also the mother of blessing. Genesis XLIV, 25 and 26: O Mary, the God of your father will be your helper, above and below, within and without, on the right and on the left. And the Almighty will bless you with blessings of heaven from above. The Gloss: Subjecting to you all heavenly and earthly things, so that you may rule over Angels and men. With blessings of the abyss lying below, so that you may rule also in Purgatory. With blessings of the breasts. The Gloss: Of the breasts ministering the drink of milk to the Lord. The blessings of your father have been strengthened by the blessings of his fathers. The Gloss: By the merits of all the Patriarchs and Prophets, so that none may be compared with you.

BOOK OF EXODUS.

These are the names of the sons of Israel ^[3].

1. The most blessed Lady, queen of heaven, mother of God, is called the little basket of hiding ^[4]; hence, when now in the time of grace he could not hide, namely God the Father could not hide, without manifesting to the world his Son hidden from the ages, he took a basket of rushes, that is, Mary, and smeared it with bitumen and pitch; and he placed the little infant inside, that is, Christ, in the incarnation, and set him out in the sedge of the river-bank, where approach was from afar. For a thing is sometimes brought out for showing, sometimes for selling, sometimes for giving. So Christ.

2. She is also the bush of apparition. Exodus III, 2: The Lord appeared to him, Moses, in a flame of fire from the midst of the bush, that is, Mary; and he saw that it burned and was not consumed.

3. She is also the rod of division. Exodus XIV, 15 and 16: Why do you cry to me? Speak to the sons of Israel that they set out; but you, lift up your rod, that is, Mary, through devotion, and stretch out your hand over the sea of all tribulations and temptations. And divide it. The Gloss: The waves of those who contradict, so that the sons of Israel may walk in the midst of the sea through dry land.

Notes

[1] Genesis XLI, 56. (*Genes. XLI, 56.*)

[2] Genesis XLII, 1. (*Genes. XLII, 1.*)

[3] Exodus I, 1. (*Exod. I, 1.*)

[4] Exodus II, 3. (*Exod. II, 3.*)

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4. She is also the rod of striking, which obtains grace for us with Christ. Exodus XVII, 3 and following: The people thirsted because of lack of water... And the Lord said to Moses: Take the rod, that is, Mary, and you shall strike the rock, that is, Christ, by impelling him through her; and water will come forth from it, so that the people may drink.

5. She is also the sweetener of all bitternesses. Exodus XV, 23 and following: They could not drink the waters because they were bitter. The Gloss: that is, tribulations; but the Lord showed him, Moses, wood, that is, Mary, having this power, that when he had sent it into the waters, they were changed into sweetness.

6. She is also the vessel of refreshment. Exodus XVI, 33: Take one vessel, that is, Mary, and put Manna there, that is, Christ, God and man, which was done in the incarnation, and place it before the Lord to be kept. The Gloss: for eternal remembrance.

7. She is also the mountain of habitation in the incarnation. Exodus XIX, 18: The whole mountain Sinai, that is, Mary, was smoking with grace and devotion, because the Lord had descended upon it in the fire of the Holy Spirit; and smoke ascended from it as from a furnace; and the whole mountain was terrible, namely to the devil and to all the Saints. Exodus XXIV, 16: The glory of the Lord dwelt upon Sinai, that is, Mary. The Gloss: that is, upon my measure, or my jar; for she is both God's measure and ours, and the jar of liberation, covering him with a cloud. The Gloss: with divine protection, for six days. The Gloss: because we are ordered to work for six days.

8. She is also the mercy-seat of pardon. Exodus XXV, 17 and following: You shall make a mercy-seat, that is, Mary, of purest gold, because in her mother's womb she was sanctified more than others. From there I shall command and speak to you, etc. You shall also make a table: ... and you shall make for it a golden rim. The Gloss: because she refutes all harmful and idle things. And you shall place upon the table the loaves of proposition. Hence she is also called the table of satisfaction.

9. She is also the lampstand of illumination. Exodus XXV, 31 and following: You shall make a hammered lampstand. The Gloss: with the hammers of the passion. And seven lamps. The Gloss: The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; and you shall place them upon the lampstand, that is, Mary, so that they may shine. The Gloss: for illuminating the tabernacle.

10. She is the hyacinth veil ^[1], with which the Son of God was veiled, and we are veiled from the devil and sin and the wrath of God.

11. She is also the altar of holocaust ^[2], with respect to the passion. And the altar of incense ^[3], with respect to devotion and contemplation.

12. She is also the reconciler, which office she took up, especially when ascending into heaven. Hence Moses designates her, Exodus XXXII, 30, who said to the people who had adored the calf: You have sinned a very great sin. You have sinned, says our Virgin, most easily, most foolishly, most shamefully, most manifoldly, most greedily, most indissolubly. I will ascend to the Lord mercifully, faithfully, solemnly, if in some way I shall be able to entreat him for your crime. The Gloss: because it is so great. But note that Moses prayed as a sinner and a servant. Hence he also said, Exodus XXXII, 13: Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Behold, because on his own behalf he carefully brings in the fathers. But Mary prays as daughter, commands as sister, rules as mother. III Kings II,

Notes

[1] Exodus XXVI, throughout. (*Exod. XXVI, passim.*)

[2] Exodus XXXV, 13 and elsewhere. (*Exod. XXXV, 13 et alibi.*)

[3] *Ibid.*, verse 16. (*Ibid.*, v. 16.)

End of Exodus and Book of Leviticus, page 372

20: Ask, my mother; for it is not right that I should turn away your face. Hence on the Vigil of her assumption the Church prays in the secret, saying: "May the prayer of the Mother of God commend our gifts before your clemency, whom you therefore transferred from the present age, that she might intercede confidently before you for our sins."

13. She is also the tabernacle of filling. Exodus XL, 31 and 32: After all things were perfected, so that, namely, God should become man and man God, the cloud, that is, the Holy Spirit, covered the tabernacle of testimony, that is, Mary. Luke I, 35: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, etc. And the glory of the Lord filled it, that is, Christ filled it with himself for the redemption of the human race, with grace for the strengthening of the just, with pardon for the reconciliation of the guilty, with joy for the consolation of the sad, so that there is none who hides himself from his heat ^[1].

BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

But he called Moses, and the Lord spoke to him, etc. ^[2].

1. The queen of the world is called the door of presentation, at which every sinner ought to be presented. Leviticus I, 2: The man who shall offer. The Gloss: voluntarily, a victim to the Lord, for appeasing God to himself, shall first offer it at the door of the tabernacle, that is, at Mary. Hence Bernard in the Sermon on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin: "Whatever that is which you prepare to offer, remember to commend it to Mary, etc."

2. Likewise, she is the door of cleansing. Leviticus XIV, 11 and following: the leper, that is, the sinner, is cleansed at the door of the tabernacle through the lamb and the oil, that is, the richness of God, mercy and grace. And the priest shall sprinkle the leper with oil seven times before the Lord. The Gloss: So that the seven demons may be cast out, and so that he may receive the Holy Spirit.

3. Likewise, she is the tree that feeds and overshadows. Leviticus XXIII, 40 and following: You shall take for yourselves the fruits, that is, of Christ, of the most beautiful tree, that is, Mary, and the branches of palms. The Gloss: that is, the branches of continence and of the chastity of marriage. And branches of a tree of dense foliage. The Gloss: Of all virtues, namely the fruit, but especially mercy, which must be continuous and abiding. And you shall dwell in little shelters for seven days. The Gloss: The whole life is held as a shelter of seven days.

4. Likewise, she is the year and time of propitiation. Leviticus XXV, 9 and following: You shall sound the trumpet in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, in the time of propitiation, etc. The Gloss: Because the human race is freed from corruption by goodness and clemency, to whom it was said in Adam: You are dust, and into dust you shall return ^[3]. And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year, that is, Mary, and you shall call remission.

Notes

[1] Psalm XVIII, 7. (*Psal. XVIII, 7.*)

[2] Leviticus I, 1. (*Levit. I, 1.*)

[3] Genesis III, 19. (*Genes. III, 19.*)

End of Leviticus and Book of Numbers, page 373

The Gloss: of all sins, of all labors, to all the inhabitants of your land, not only of heaven, but also of earth. For man, namely the sinner, will return to his possession. The Gloss: paradise, and each one will return to his former family. The Gloss: of the Patriarchs and Prophets.

5. Likewise, she is the tabernacle of union between us and God. Leviticus XXVI, 11 and following: I will set my tabernacle firmly in the midst of you. The tabernacle, that is, Mary, which is mine by sanctity, mine by firmness, mine by fidelity, mine by breadth, mine by generosity; and this in the midst of you, because she is common. And my soul will not cast you off. The Gloss: I dare, and I say, that Christ is the soul of God. As if he were saying: My Son will not cast you off. I will walk among you. The Gloss: having been made man. And I will be your God, protecting, freeing, saving, crowning. And you will be my people, by fearing me as Lord, by loving me as God, by praising me as creator.

BOOK OF NUMBERS.

The Lord spoke to Moses ^[1].

1. The queen of the world, Lady of heaven, Mother of God, is called the mother of concealment and wrapping; for she wraps the Son of God with our humanity, sinners with compassion, the just and the servants of God with protection. Numbers IV, 6 and following: They shall spread a whole hyacinth cloak, that is, Mary. Note the office of the cloak, and adapt it to the Virgin. They shall cover the lampstand, that is, Christ in the incarnation. All the vessels with which service is rendered to the sanctuary, that is, all the servants of Christ who serve God, they shall wrap in the hyacinth cloak, because she will protect all who serve her Son.

2. She is also the tabernacle of sinners, which was sanctified for the cleansing of others; which was completed for the enrichment of the poor; which was erected for the exaltation of the abject: sanctified in conception and nativity; completed in the incarnation of the Son of God; erected in her glorious assumption. Concerning these three, Numbers VII, 1: Moses. The Gloss: that is, Christ, on the day on which he completed the tabernacle, by filling her with every grace. Luke I, 28: Hail, full of grace. And he erected it. The Gloss: with spiritual glory. And, in the same place, IX, 15: On the day on which the tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered it. The Gloss: The incarnation of Christ, whose clemency protects the tabernacle of the Church, whose goodness disposes it, whose prudence directs its passage on the way of this age.

3. Likewise, she is the cloud of overshadowing and leading. Numbers X, 11 and following: The cloud, Mary, was lifted up. (Look concerning the cloud.) It was lifted up, I say, in the assumption, from the tabernacle of the covenant, that is, from the militant

Notes

[1] Numbers I, 1. (*Numer. I, 1.*)

Book of Numbers, page 374

Church. And the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. The Gloss: which is interpreted wild ass, or fertility. And the camp of the sons of Judah moved by their troops. For nothing else remains except to follow her. Hence, Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 26, she herself cries: Come over to me, all, etc. And we ought to cry: Draw me after you ^[1].

4. Likewise, she, as the ark of the covenant, preceded us into heaven to prepare a place for us. Numbers X, 33 and 34: The ark of the covenant of the Lord, that is, Mary, went before them, which was done in the assumption, for three days providing a place for the camps. The cloud of the Lord also was over them by day when they went forward. The Gloss: Divine protection, that is, the grace of the Holy Spirit, defended the elect from the beginning and kept them for future rest.

5. Likewise, she is the trumpet of convocation for coming, the trumpet of exhortation for fighting, the trumpet of jubilation for feasting. Numbers X, 4 and following: If you sound once, namely with the trumpet, the princes will come to you... But if a longer and broken blast sounds, the first camps will move, etc. If you go out to war..., you shall sound with howling trumpets, etc. If at any time you have a banquet and feast days and calends, you shall sound with trumpets, etc.

6. Likewise, she is the tabernacle of protection in every tribulation. Numbers XVI, 43: Moses and Aaron fled to the tabernacle of the covenant, when the whole multitude wanted to kill them. After they had entered it, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. The Gloss: Let us learn from this how great is the usefulness for Christians, how God protects them in tribulation. For then especially the grace of God is present, when the savagery of men is stirred up. And although the Saints are of great merit, the glory of the Lord does not appear to them except in danger, and almost in death itself.

7. Likewise, she is the flowering rod. Numbers XVI, 8: Moses found in the tabernacle of the Lord that the rod of Aaron, that is, Mary, had sprouted; this was done when she bore the Son while remaining a virgin; and, with buds swelling, flowers had broken forth, which, after the leaves spread, were formed into almonds.

8. She is also the rock of refreshment. Numbers XX, 8 and following: The Lord said to Moses: Speak to the rock, that is, Mary, and it will give the waters of clearest graces. And when Moses had raised his hand, striking the flint twice with the rod, waters came forth. The Gloss: "of spiritual grace," most generous, so that the people and the beasts drank. The Gloss: "Because she denies grace to no one who asks."

9. Likewise, she is the fountain and well of all consolation. Numbers XXI, 13, 16 and following: The sons of Israel camped against Arnon. The Gloss: that is, against the curse. And from that place there appeared, through the nativity, a well, that is, Mary, concerning which the Lord spoke to Moses: Gather the people, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang, through thanksgiving, this song: Let the well rise, that is, Mary, through the nativity by appearing in the world, or through the assumption into heaven, by pouring over us streams of graces. They sang together cheerfully, unanimously, and strongly: The well that the Princes dug. The Gloss: "The Prophets by reason of announcement, the Patriarchs by reason of exhibition, the Apostles by reason of showing," and the leaders prepared it, that is, kings.

10. Likewise, she is the star of illumination. Numbers XXIV, 17: A star will arise, namely through the nativity, that is, Mary, who is well compared to the star of the sea, from Jacob; and a rod will rise, that is, Christ, from Israel, namely from the root of Jesse ^[2]; and he will strike the leaders of Moab, that is, the demons, freeing and saving us from sins.

Notes

[1] Song of Songs I, 3. (*Cantic. I, 3.*)

[2] Isaiah XI, 1. (*Isa. XI, 1.*)

Book of Deuteronomy, page 375

BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

These are the words that Moses spoke ^[1].

1. The most blessed Lady, the Virgin Mary, is called the bearer of weak souls. For she carried the Son of God for us in the womb of sanctity, and she carries us in the womb of compassion. Deuteronomy I, 31: The Lord your God carried you, and not only he, but also the pious Virgin Mother of God, as a man is accustomed to carry his little son. The Gloss: "whom he loves most tenderly, and does not permit to labor." In every way through which you walked. The Gloss: "He was never lacking," until you came to this place.

2. Likewise, she is the best land, not bringing forth thorns and thistles, easiest to cultivate, most fertile, because she brings forth God and man. Deuteronomy VIII, 10: Bless the Lord. The Gloss: by giving thanks, for the best land, that is, Mary, which God gave you, so that you may be fed, enriched, and praised.

3. Likewise, she is the sister of our poverty. Hence she is bound to come to our aid by the constitution of the law. Deuteronomy XV, 9 and 11: Do not turn away the eyes of your compassion, O Mary, from your poor brother, namely the sinner, who, although he is a sinner and poor, is nevertheless your brother by nature. For the poor will not be lacking in the land of your habitation, that is, in the world. For they cannot be rich as you are, to whom it was said: Hail, full of grace ^[2]. Therefore I command you to open swiftly, cheerfully, abundantly, the hand of assistance and defense to your needy and poor brother. The Psalmist prays this, Psalm CIII, 28: When you open your hand, etc.

4. Likewise, she is the altar of sanctification, containing love of God and neighbor. Deuteronomy XXVII, 5 and 8: You shall build an altar to the Lord on Mount Ebal. The Gloss: which is interpreted abyss, from stones that the iron of sin has not touched, which, immaculate and not corrupted in flesh and spirit, have not received the darts of the devil. And who is this among pure humans, and we shall praise him? except she alone, most excellent after God. And you shall write upon the stones all the words of this law, especially of the love of God and neighbor, plainly and clearly. The writer of this altar was the Holy Spirit.

5. Likewise, she is the mountain of blessing, but Eve was the mountain of curse. Deuteronomy XXVII, 12: These shall stand to bless the people, giving not the blessing of the world, which is deceitful, upon Mount Garizim. The Gloss: Which is interpreted division. For she, as most prudent, divided good from evil, and the better from the good, and the best from the better, by choosing that. Luke X, 42: Mary chose the best part. She also divided us from the world, the devil, sin, and death.

6. Likewise, she is the heaven of enrichment, whence all better things come forth. Deuteronomy XXVIII,

Notes

[1] Deuteronomy I, 1. (*Deuter. I, 1.*)

[2] Luke I, 28. (*Luc. I, 28.*)

End of Deuteronomy and Book of Joshua, page 376

12: The Lord will open. The Gloss: being appeased, he who at one time, being angry, had closed his best treasure, heaven; heaven, that is, Mary, so that he may give rain to the earth. The Gloss: to the hearts of earthly persons. For through her the Lord rains grace upon us for driving away the dryness of the soul and for conferring the fruitfulness of virtues.

7. Likewise, she is the bridal chamber of God's delights. Deuteronomy XXXIII, 12: And he said to Benjamin: The most beloved of the Lord. The Gloss: that is, Christ the Son of God, will dwell the whole day in the bridal chamber, that is, in Mary. The Gloss: "At no time alienated by any vice." Hence there he will be found by those seeking, and he will rest between her shoulders. The Gloss: "Among good works."

8. Likewise, she is the mother of enkindling, the mother of guarding, the mother of instruction. Concerning these three, Deuteronomy XXXIII, 2 and 3: In his right hand, that is, Mary, a fiery law. The Gloss: that is, charity, by which she more easily sets the saints aflame with love of herself. Second, All saints are in her hand for guardianship. Likewise: And those who approach her feet. The Gloss: "That they may learn, and humbly receive from her doctrine." Look for what she teaches.

BOOK OF JOSHUA.

And it happened after the death of Moses ^[1].

1. The Lady of Angels, Mother of God, is the boundary of our inheritance. Joshua I, 2 and following: The Lord said to Joshua, that is, to every one serving God: Every place that is above (the Lord does not wish to give them a place on earth, which is base, but above, which is best, and this because he loves us), which the footprint of your foot shall tread, I will hand over to you..., from the desert and Lebanon as far as the great river Euphrates, that is, Mary. Note the uses of a great river, and adapt them. And as far as the great sea, that is, as far as Christ, who is compared to a great sea, will be your boundary. The Gloss: "So that you may not only become an heir of God, but a coheir of Christ."

2. Likewise, she is the window of escape. Joshua II, 17 and 18: The spies said to Rahab: We shall be guiltless of the oath..., if this scarlet cord shall not be the sign. The Gloss: that is, reddened by his blood; and if you shall have tied it in the window through which you let us down.

3. She is also the window which, through the cord, that is, through her Son, lets sinners down so that they may escape, and draws the just.

4. Likewise, she is the ark of showing the direct way into heaven; hence we ought to follow her swiftly. Joshua III, 6: Joshua, that is, Christ, said: Take up the ark of the covenant and go before the people; for the ark will go before us by ascending into heaven, by preparing a place, by advocating for us, by drawing us to herself through the Jordan.

Notes

[1] Joshua I, 1. (*Josue I, 1.*)

End of Joshua and Book of Judges, page 377

Joshua IV, 10 and 11: And the people hastened and passed over. The Gloss: "We must not act idly, not slackly; but all things must be passed through swiftly." And when all had passed over, although some most easily, nevertheless all fixing their hope of help upon her, the ark of the Lord also passed over. For she will precede us on account of some things, and will follow after us on account of certain things.

5. Likewise, she is the shield of defense with respect to us, and the shield of killing with respect to the demons. Joshua VIII, 18 and following: The Lord, namely the Father, said to Joshua, Christ his Son: Lift over every creature pure in sanctity, dignity, piety, and usefulness the shield, that is, Mary, defender of sinners and attacker of demons, which is in your hand, against the city Hai. The Gloss: "Hai is interpreted chaos, or their habitation, that is, of the demons who reign in the abyss." And when he had raised the shield, that is, Mary, in the annunciation by taking her as mother, and in the assumption by placing her with himself on the throne, he did not draw back the hand that he had stretched upward, holding the shield, that is, Mary, for our consolation, for the devil's slaughter, and for the destruction of sins, until all the inhabitants of Hai were killed. The Gloss: "Of these we ought to leave none, but destroy all."

6. Likewise, she is the sun, for helping all the faithful. Joshua X, 13: The sun and moon stood still until the nation avenged itself upon its enemies. The Gloss: visible and invisible. Therefore the sun stood in the midst of heaven and did not hasten to set. The Gloss: "it always rises for the faithful."

7. Likewise, she is the city of refuge. Joshua XX, 1 and following: to her he ought to flee who desires to escape death.

8. Likewise, she is the altar of our testimony. Joshua XXI, 26 and following: the sons of Ruben and Gad said: Let us build for ourselves an altar, that is, Mary, of infinite greatness, in mercy, in goodness, in humility, in generosity, in the conception of the Son of God, as a testimony of liberation, liberty, and heavenly inheritance, so that it may belong to our right to offer both holocausts and victims and peace-offerings; and so that tomorrow your sons may by no means say to our sons: You have no part in the Lord. And they call the altar, Our Testimony, that the Lord himself is God. This altar was built in conception, sanctified in the

womb, built up in the incarnation, in the assumption.

BOOK OF JUDGES.

After the death of Joshua ^[1].

1. The Lady of the world, Mother of God, and Queen of heaven, is a fighter for her own against the world, against the devil, and against sin. Hence she is signified by Judah, of whom it is said, Jud-

Notes

[1] Judges I, 1. (*Judicum I, 1.*)

Book of Judges and Book of Ruth, page 378

ges I, 1 and 2: The sons of Israel consulted the Lord, and deservedly, because he himself says: Without me you can do nothing ^[1], saying: Who will go up, whether some one of the Angels, whether some one of the Saints, before us who are weak, ignorant, and imprudent, against the Canaanite, that is, the world, the devil, and sin, and will be the leader of the greatest, most restless, continual war? And the Lord said: Judah, that is, Mary, which is interpreted confessing, will go up. For she went up in the nativity by appearing to the world, and in the assumption before the heavenly Father to intercede with him, always offering herself first for us. Behold, I have handed the land into her hands, indeed also heaven and myself. Hence he says from the mouth of his Son, Matthew XXVIII, 18: All power has been given to me. Therefore do not enter battle without her. For she is the leader of our war; she ought to go before by the office enjoined on her by the whole Trinity.

2. Likewise, she is the mother of liberation, jubilation, and joy. Judges V, 6 and following: The paths rested. The Gloss: "Because I was occupied by enemies, and I did not dare to go up to prayer at the house of the Lord." The strong ceased in Israel and rested, until Deborah arose, that is, Mary; arose, by appearing in the world through the nativity, or by ascending into heaven through the assumption, a mother in Israel. The Gloss: "because by counseling, exhorting, and preaching, she freed from enemies." And she herself, after God, did this supremely; hence, giving thanks to God, she says there, verse 2: I am, I am, poor little Mary, humble Mary, nevertheless Mother of God, Queen of heaven, Lady of the world, who will sing to the Lord. The Gloss: "The voice of the just person; he indeed is of melodious voice and sincere mind, so that his song delights the divine hearing; she has in herself absolutely no hoarse sound of sin, and nothing of offense in the tongue, nothing of thickness in the spirit"; I will sing psalms to the Lord God of Israel, saying, Luke I, 46: My soul magnifies the Lord. Below, in the same place, verse 8: The Lord chose new wars. The Gloss: "Because he made the unarmed strong and triumphant." And he himself overturned the gates of the enemies.

3. She is the fleece of divine dew. Judges VI, 36 and following: Gideon said to God: I shall place this fleece of wool, that is, the sacred Virgin, on the threshing-floor, in the Jewish nation. If the dew of the whole world shall flow on the fleece alone. The Gloss: that is, in Mary alone, which was done in the annunciation, when Christ assumed humanity in her; and if there is dryness in all the earth and in the hearts of unbelievers, I shall know that through my hand you will free Israel. For that she was filled with grace above every pure creature was the sign of our liberation. And it was done so. And rising in the night, after the fleece, that is, Mary, had been pressed through invocation and through devout salutation, he filled the bowl, the Gloss: of the heart, with dew, that is, grace.

BOOK OF RUTH.

In the days of one judge ^[2].

1. The most blessed Lady is called Mother of beauty, but to me in the passion of her Son she was of bitterness and grief. Ruth I, 19 and following: The women were saying, at the coming

Notes

[1] John XV, 5. (*Joan. XV, 5.*)

[2] Ruth I, 1.

Book of Ruth, page 379

of Naomi into Bethlehem, which can look to the double coming of the Blessed Virgin, either her coming into the world through the nativity, or the coming when she came into Bethlehem to give birth: This is that Naomi. This is she in whom there is not even the stain of venial sin, who carries in her womb the white and ruddy one. But what follows looks to the state of Christ's passion. She said to them: Do not call me Naomi, that is, beautiful, but call me now, in the passion of my Son, Mara, that is, bitter, because the Almighty has filled me very much with bitterness, namely the Lord who filled me in the annunciation with joy and gladness, but in the passion with grief and sadness. I went out full, in the annunciation, when it was said to me, Luke I, 28: Hail, full of grace. And the Lord has brought me back empty, since returning alone I left my Son in the tomb. Why therefore do you call me Naomi, whom the Lord has humbled, and the Almighty has afflicted? Therefore the pains that I had escaped in the nativity I now paid in full in the passion of my Son, as Damascene was saying ^[1].

2. Likewise, she is the handmaid of election and operation. Ruth II, 2 and following: Ruth, which is interpreted seeing, hastening, unfailing, said: I shall go into the field, namely of the Church, and gather ears, that is, the poor, the blind, and the lame, in the manner of my Son, who gladly gathers such persons, which have fled from the hands of the reapers, namely of the world and the devil. The devil had gathered almost the whole earth, sending his sickle into another's harvest; hence also boasting he says, Isaiah X, 14: I have gathered the whole earth. But the handmaid of God gathers in the field of the Church humbly, because the ears remain; faithfully, because she follows the tracks of the reapers, so that what others cast aside she may take. Hence, Psalm XXVI, 10: For my father and my mother have abandoned me, but the Lord has taken me up. Perseveringly, because until the end of the world she gathers the faithful to herself. Hence it follows, verse 7: From morning until now she stands in the field, and not even for a moment has she returned home. Likewise, Boaz, that is, God, said: Let no one rebuke her as she gathers, namely Mary, who gathers whom she wishes. Likewise, she gathers wisely; hence it follows, verses 17 and 18: Beating with a rod, namely of tribulation, and shaking out what she had gathered, she found three measures of barley, namely Married Persons, Widows, and Virgins. Carrying them in the bosom of mercy and on the back of patience, she returned into the city, namely the heavenly Jerusalem.

3. Likewise, she is the one who clothed herself and us, and covered and wrapped us with the cloak of divinity, as is said of Christ in the Preface: "That he might grant us to be sharers of his divinity." Ruth III, 9 and following: Ruth said to Boaz, that is, to God: I am Ruth, your handmaid; spread your cloak over your servant, because you are near kin. And he said: Blessed are you by the Lord, daughter.... Therefore do not fear; but whatever you shall say to me, I will do for you; for all the people who dwell within the gates of my city know that you are a woman of virtue. Nor do I deny that I am near kin, etc.

Notes

[1] St. John Damascene, Book IV On the Orthodox Faith, chapter 13. (*S. Joan. Damascenus, Lib. IV de Fide orthodoxa, cap. 13.*)

First Book of Kings, page 380

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

There was one man from Ramathaim Sophim ^[1].

1. The Queen of the heavens is the ark of exultation in the tabernacles of the just, and the ark of fear in the tabernacles of demons and evil persons. I Kings IV, 5 and following: And when the ark of the covenant of

the Lord, that is, Mary, had come through the nativity into the world, into the camp of the troubled, the tempted, and of the whole Church militant, the Philistines, that is, the demons, feared, saying: Woe to us! For she has come, to whom it was said, Genesis III, 15: I will put enmities between you, etc. For there was not such great exultation, namely of sinners, yesterday and the day before, when they did not have such a helper. And the Philistines said: What is this voice of great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews? Psalm CXVI, 15: The voice of exultation and salvation is in the tabernacles of the just. And they knew that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. And they said: Woe to us! But they, namely the Hebrews, said: Good for us. Who will save us from the hand of these sublime gods? For where she is by help, there also is God the Trinity.

2. Likewise, she is the burning sun, the mother of warming the cold sons of Adam. I Kings XI, 9: Tomorrow there will be salvation for you, of grace and pardon, when the sun grows warm, that is, Mary. Did she not grow warm, when the whole deity substantially slipped into her? This is the sun burning us in three ways. Hence it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLIII, 4: The sun burning mountains threefold, breathing out fiery rays, etc.

3. She is also the horn of anointing, from which they are anointed unto dignity, unto sanctity, unto beauty. I Kings XVI, 1 and following: The Lord, the Father, said to Samuel, that is, Christ: Fill your horn, that is, Mary, with oil, that is, with yourself and with every grace; this was done in the incarnation. And from it you shall anoint kings and priests and sons of God, whomever I shall show you. Hence Bernard: "From her fullness individuals and all receive ^[2], etc."

4. Likewise, she is the city and house of satisfaction. I Kings XX, 6: David asked me that he might go quickly; this was done in the incarnation, when he even anticipated the Angel whom he had sent to the glorious Virgin Mary, in Bethlehem, his own city, most holy and most rich. Hence it follows: Because the solemn victims for God, Angels, the just, and sinners are there for all his fellow-tribesmen. Psalm LXXXVI, 3: Glorious things are said of you, city of God, that is, Mary!

5. Likewise, she is the restrainer of the wrath of God with respect to sinners, who restrained David, that is, Christ, from the eternal killing of foolish Nabal, that is, the sinner; she is signified by Abigail, who, I Kings XXV, 24 and following, fell at David's feet, humbling herself in all things. And she said: Let this iniquity be upon me, my lord. The Gloss: "Do not avenge." Therefore let malice not be found in

Notes

[1] I Kings I, 1. (*I Regum I, 1.*)

[2] St. Bernard, Sermon 3 on the Annunciation and the sermon on Apocalypse XII, 1: A great sign, etc. (*S. Bernardus, Serm. 3 de Annuntiatione et serm. super illud Apocal. XII, 1: Signum magnum, etc.*)

End of I Kings and II Kings, page 381

you, but rather diffusive goodness, piety for forgiving, attractive mercy. And David said to Abigail, appeased by her intercession: Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, namely the Father of mercies, who sent you, most merciful and most prudent, today, namely whenever you intercede for sinners, or especially in the assumption, to meet me, to appease, to restrain, and to make settlement between me and sinners. And blessed is your speech, more than that of all Angels, indeed of all Saints. Psalm CIV, 19 and 20: The speech of the Lord inflamed him. The king sent and released him, that is, the sinner. And blessed are you, who prevented me, most fierce against sinners, as he says in Hosea V, 14: I am like a lioness to Ephraim and like a lion's cub to the house of Judah. I, I will seize, and go. And in the same place, XI, 8: I will meet them like a bear robbed of cubs, and I will tear apart the inner parts of their liver, avenging myself by my most heavy and intolerable hand. And unless you had quickly come to meet me, which was done when she was born, by taking on for yourself the reconciliation of sinners, there would not have remained of Nabal until morning light one urinating against the wall, because I would have utterly destroyed him. Now Abigail was that most prudent and most beautiful woman ^[1]. And David said to Abigail: Go peacefully into your house; behold, I have

heard your voice. But what voice? the voice of compassion for sinners, the voice of preservation for the just, the voice of faithfulness for rewarding services rendered. And I honored your face in conception, by sanctifying you; in your nativity, by illuminating the world through you; in my incarnation, by choosing you above all as mother; and in your assumption, by placing you beyond all the choirs of Angels at my right hand.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

And it happened after Saul had died ^[2].

1. The holy Theotokos, Virgin and Mother of God, is honored by God in her glorious assumption in this, that on account of her honor the Lord remits sins to the guilty, pours grace into the dry, and promises glory to the just. II Kings VI, 12 and following: David, that is, Christ, went and brought the ark of God, that is, Mary, from the house of Obededom, namely in the assumption, into the city of David, that is, into the empyrean heaven, with joy. And there were seven choirs with David. The first of these is the choir of Angels. The second, of Patriarchs. The third, of Prophets. The fourth, of Apostles. The fifth, of Martyrs. The sixth, of Confessors. The seventh, of all holy Virgins. By all these the Queen of heaven was honored in her assumption. And David, that is, Christ, blessed the people, remitting sins to the guilty, pouring grace into the dry, and promising glory to the just. And he distributed to the whole multitude of Israel ... a cake

Notes

[1] I Kings XXV, 3. (*I Regum XXV, 3.*)

[2] II Kings I, 1. (*II Regum I, 1.*)

End of II Kings and III Kings, page 382

of bread, and one roast of beef, and fine flour fried with the oil of gladness, in the resurrection, on account of the honor of his mother.

2. Likewise, she is the Mother of recalling sinners from the far country. Hence she is signified by the Thecuite woman, who said to David, II Kings XIV, 7 and following: They seek to extinguish my spark that has been left. And King David said: The Lord lives! for not one of the hairs of your son shall fall upon the earth. And thus Absalom was recalled.

3. Likewise, she is the mother of preservation, who cherishes sinners so long until she obtains for them the grace of God. Hence she is signified by Resphan, which is interpreted chariot ^[1], who did not allow the birds by day or the beasts by night, that is, the demons, to tear the seven men hanging on the gibbet, namely of sin, on account of the seven mortal sins, from David, that is, from Christ, but prohibited them, until water, namely of grace, contrition, and confession, dripped upon them from heaven, that is, from the mercy of God. The Gloss: "The pious solicitude of the saints comes to the aid of sinners by the insistence of prayers, until it obtains the mercy of God upon them, restraining depraved men and malignant spirits, lest they further corrupt their life by suggesting evil things." And David buried Saul.

4. Likewise, she is the cistern of grace. II Kings XX, 15: David desired water and said: O if someone would give me a drink of water from the cistern that is in Bethlehem beside the gate!

THE THIRD BOOK OF KINGS.

King David had grown old and had very many days of age ^[2].

1. The ever most excellent Virgin Mary was desired and sought by the desire and ardor of the holy Fathers, that she might warm the King of kings through the incarnation in her lap, that by receiving him she might warm him; in the preservation of the whole life of Christ, by ministering to him in this world; and that she might stand in the empyrean heaven praying for sinners. In III Kings I, 1 and following, the Virgin Mary is

signified by Abisag the Shunammite, which is interpreted my father abounding, or the roaring of my father; concerning her praise it is said: Therefore his servants, namely David's servants, that is, the holy Fathers, said to him: Let us seek in all the earth a rational creature that is under heaven for our lord the king, a young virgin, worthy, and let her stand before the king, and warm him, and sleep in his bosom: so that the King of kings, and let her warm him, through the incarnation in the lap of her womb, and let him sleep in her bosom, the most pure with the most pure, the creator in a creature, the Father in a daughter, the Lord in a handmaid. Let us also seek the most wise Virgin, most ardent in charity, who may inflame God himself toward liberation and compassion; for it is contained there, and let her warm our lord the king. Let us also seek the most wise Virgin who knows, wills, and is able to stand as intercessor before the king to re-

Notes

[1] II Kings XXI, 8 and following. (*II Regum XXI, 8 et seq.*)

[2] III Kings I, 1. (*III Regum I, 1.*)

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strain, to excuse, to judge, and to appease. Therefore they sought a beautiful young woman in all the borders of Israel, and they found, although with the greatest difficulty, Abisag the Shunammite, that is, Mary. Let us all choose her, according to that saying of the Poet: Choose one to whom you may say: You alone please me. She was sought in the Law and the Prophets, in the time of the Patriarchs and Prophets, but she was found in Nazareth by the Archangel Gabriel ^[1], in the time of grace in the annunciation.

2. Likewise, she is the advocate of sinners, having three things, namely wisdom, eloquence, and fidelity, which an advocate ought to have; hence she is signified by Bathsheba. III Kings I, 18 and following: Bathsheba, that is, Mary, said to Adonijah, that is, to the sinner: Good; I will speak prudently, humbly, insistently, and perseveringly for you, miserable, needy, and despairing. But to whom? certainly to the great, strong, and glorious King. Therefore Bathsheba came to King Solomon, which was done in the assumption, that she might speak to him for Adonijah, that is, the sinner. And the king, that is, Christ, rose to meet her, cheerfully, totally, and solemnly. And a throne of glory was set for the mother of the king. In the annunciation the Lady of the world was placed on the throne of grace; in the passion of the Son, on the throne of mercy; in our case in judgment, on the throne of mercy; but in her assumption to the heavens, on the throne of glory. Hence it follows: She sat at his right hand, as empress, as distributor of graces. And the king said to her: Ask confidently for all, my most pure mother, most obedient to me, and most dear above every creature; for it is not right, neither before me nor before the Angels and all the saints, that I should turn away your face by not hearing you asking for anything whatever.

3. Likewise, she is the mother and lady of salvation; this was signified in Abiathar the priest, who had offended King Solomon. The king said to him: ... Indeed, you are a man of death; but today I will not kill you, because you carried the ark, that is, Mary, by honoring her, by subjecting yourself to her, and by committing yourself to her fidelity and mercy, before David my father.

4. Likewise, she is the temple of charity. III Kings VI, 22: in her praise it is said: There was nothing in the temple, that is, Mary, that was not covered with gold. The Gloss: "For charity alone reigns." Two doors in the temple were of olive woods ^[2]. The Gloss: "Love of God and neighbor."

5. Likewise, she is the cloud and dwelling-place of the hiding of the Son of God ^[3].

6. III Kings X, 1 and 2: But also the queen of Sheba, that is, Mary, entered Jerusalem with a great company of servants and Saints, indeed also of her Son himself, and this on the day of the assumption. Sheba is a royal city of Ethiopia, whence this queen was, who ruled over the two kingdoms of Ethiopia and Egypt.

7. Likewise, she is the throne of the whole Trinity. III Kings X, 18 and following: King Solomon made a throne, that is, the glorious Virgin, and this in the time of grace, when the mother of mercy was born in the world, of ivory, of chastity, purity, innocence, great in nature, in grace, in glory,

Notes

[1] Compare Luke I, 26 and following. (*Cf. Luc. I, 26 et seq.*)

[2] III Kings VI, 32. (*III Regum VI, 32.*)

[3] Note that something is lacking in this place, omitted by the scribe through carelessness. For from chapter VIII of the Third Book of Kings, in which the cloud and the house of the Lord filled by the cloud are treated, he passed to chapter X of the same book and to the history of the queen of Sheba (note of the Lyon editor). (*Nota aliqua hoc in loco deesse, a scriptore per incuriam dimissa. Nam a cap. VIII libri III Regum, in quo agitur de nebula et domo Domini per nebulam impleta, transiit ad cap. X ejusdem, et ad historiam reginae Saba (Nota edit. Lugd.).*)

End of III Kings and IV Kings, page 384

in mercy, in humility, in goodness, in generosity, and in beauty. Hence it follows: And he clothed it totally, royally, more than every pure creature, with very yellow gold, that is, with supreme charity, indeed with himself. It had six steps. The first is humility. The second, virginity. The third, poverty. The fourth, blushing modesty. The fifth, patience. The sixth, temperance. And the top of the throne was round, by hope of heavenly things. And there were two hands on this side and that holding the seat, that is, Mary. The two hands are fear and reverence; for she had fear and reverence toward the Son, because although he was her son, nevertheless he was Lord and God. And two lions stood beside each hand, and twelve little lions standing upon the six steps on this side and that; no such work was made in wondrousness, usefulness, preciousness, dignity, and beauty, in all the kingdoms of heaven and earth.

8. Likewise, she is the jar and vessel of satisfaction. III Kings XVII, 12 and following: In her praise the widow, that is, the Church, says: The Lord your God lives! for I do not have bread, except as much flour as a handful can hold in the jar, and a little oil in the flask. To her Elijah said: ... But thus says the Lord God of Israel: The jar of flour, that is, Mary, will not fail, because she is always able and willing to give, because she is most generous, because she is most rich, because she is full of grace. Nor will the flask of oil be diminished, with which she always feeds us, anoints us, and will gladden us.

9. Likewise, she is the cloud cooling, raining, and giving, in the annunciation, that is, in the time of grace. III Kings XVIII, 44 and 45: A little cloud, that is, Mary, little through humility but immense through grace, was ascending, either in her nativity by appearing to the world, or in the assumption by penetrating the heavens; or she was ascending by nature, because most noble, by grace, because most rich in every grace, by glory, because exalted above all the choirs of Saints. From the sea, that is, from this world. And a little above, verse 41: And Elijah, that is, Christ, said to Ahab: There is the sound of much rain, that is, of graces, raining upon all and pouring grace into those seeking grace. And below, verse 45: And when he turned this way and that, behold, the heavens were darkened, and clouds and wind, and a great rain was made. For, as Bernard says, individuals and all receive from her fullness ^[1].

THE FOURTH BOOK OF KINGS.

Moab transgressed ^[2].

1. The Empress of the heavens is the vessel of invocation and healing. IV Kings II, 20 and 21: Elisha said: Bring me a new vessel, that is, Mary. For all others have grown old and been corrupted through sin, but she is new, having manifold newness. And put salt in it. The Gloss: "The

Notes

[1] St. Bernard, Sermon on the Lord's Annunciation, and the sermon on those words of Apocalypse XII, 1: A great sign appeared, etc. (*S. Bernardus, Sermon in Annuntiatione dominica, et sermon super illa verba Apocal. XII, 1: Signum magnum*

apparuit, etc.)

[2] IV Kings I, 1. (*IV Regum I, 1.*)

End of IV Kings and Book of Tobit, page 385

Word of the Lord was made flesh." For the Son of God is the salt. And when he had sent that salt into the fountain of waters, which was done in the annunciation, he said: Thus says the Lord: I have healed these waters, that is, fluid and pestiferous human nature; and in them there will no longer be death or sterility, but life and fruitfulness.

2. Likewise, she is the window of illumination, illuminating the whole house of the Church with the light of divinity. Hence she is also called the vehicle of light. IV Kings XIII, 17 and following: Elisha said to Joash, king of Israel: Open the eastern window, that is, Mary, through whom light and life enter, just as through the western window, that is, Eve, death and darkness entered. And when he had opened it, which was done when, remaining an incorrupt virgin, she bore the Savior to the world, Elisha said: Shoot the arrow, that is, Christ, because he arose and was born from her. And he shot. And Elisha said: The arrow of the Lord's salvation, and the arrow of salvation against Syria, that is, against all demons; and you shall strike Syria in Aphec until you consume it, reducing it to nothing. Hence, Psalm XIV, 4: The malicious one has been reduced to nothing in his sight.

BOOK OF TOBIT.

Tobias from the tribe and city of Nephthali ^[1].

1. In the most blessed Virgin Mary, after God, the greatest generosity is commended. Tobit IV, 8 and 9: As you are able, so be merciful, by showing mercy to all imploring you. If you have much, because you are full of grace ^[2], Lady of heaven and earth, bestow abundantly, as it befits the Queen of all creatures to give; if you have little, strive gladly to impart even a little. The Gloss: "The will is weighed by God, not the quantity of what is given."

2. Likewise, in her after God the greatest humility is commended. Tobit IV, 11: Never allow pride in your sense. The Gloss: that is, in the mind, or in your word. The Gloss: nor yet in deed, to dominate. The Gloss: If it ever exists, nevertheless let it not reign. For she never had a movement of pride, but after God was most excellently humble.

3. Likewise, in her after God is commended readiness, especially in the most swift and superabundant repayment of services spent upon her. Tobit IV, 15: Whoever shall have worked anything for you, O Mary, whether just or sinner, for the praise and honor of you and of your Son, restore the reward to him immediately: royally, because you are queen; abundantly, because you are most rich; usefully, because she is most faithful; and let not the wages of your hireling remain with you.

Notes

[1] Tobit I, 1. (*Tob. I, 1.*)

[2] Luke I, 28. (*Luc. I, 28.*)

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BOOK OF JUDITH.

And so Arphaxad, king of the Medes ^[1].

1. In our Judith, that is, in the Virgin Mary, admirable beauty and wisdom venerable before all mortals are commended. Judith XI, 18 and 19: The servants of Holofernes were saying, because not only the servants of God admire her, but also the servants of the world and the devil, one to another: There is no such woman

upon the earth, indeed not even above heaven, in appearance, because she also lacked the stain of venial sin. In exterior beauty we believe she was most beautiful and most perfectly disposed: toward God, when she said, Luke I, 38: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, etc.; toward the Angel, when she said in the same place, verse 34: How shall this be?; toward just men, when she greeted Elizabeth; toward sinners, when she said to the servants at the wedding, John II, 5: Whatever he shall say to you, do; and also toward her Son, when she said, Luke II, 48: Son, why have you done this to us?

2. The Lady of the world is also commended by the renowned excellence of her name. For she, after God, is the most named. Judith XI, 21: Holofernes said to Judith. The Gloss: which is interpreted confessing or praising, and signifies Mary: You will be great, and your name, that is, Mary, or star of the sea, will be named, because she will be named Mother of God by God, by Angels, by the just, by sinners, by Patriarchs, etc., in the whole earth, indeed in the whole heaven.

3. The most holy Virgin is also commended for widest charity, which is considered in this, that she sought not so much her own exaltation as our liberation. Judith XII, 8: Judith prayed to the Lord, the God of Israel, most fervently, that he would direct her way to the liberation of his captive and afflicted people.

4. The greatest gratitude is also commended in her. For she gave thanks without ceasing for benefits conferred on her and to be conferred on us through her, namely that the devil might be overcome, sin destroyed, the world freed. Judith XIII, 10 and following: She cut off the head of Holofernes, that is, of the devil, by praising God and consoling us, and she said from afar to the guards of the walls: Open the gates. The Gloss: that is, the devotion of the heart, because God is with us. The Gloss: "So that, taking on in me the flesh of our weakness, he might make us sharers of his divinity, so that as defender and victor he might snatch us from the power of the devil." And all ran together to her, namely the Angels, to whom she gave gladness; the just, to whom grace; sinners, for whom she obtains pardon. But she, ascending to a higher place. The Gloss: to praise God for his benefits, lifting up her hearers, said: Praise the Lord our God. The Gloss: Not me, but him who did not abandon those hoping in him, because he is most faithful; and in me, his humble and devout handmaid, he fulfilled wondrously, generously,

usefully, and wisely, his mercy, because he was incarnate in me for sinners, which he promised through the mouth of the Prophets to the house of Israel, that is, the Church; and he killed in my hand, that is, through the Son, who is my hand, the enemy of his people. The Gloss: that is, the devil, on this night of grace and mercy. Behold the head of Holofernes. She is the one of whom it is said, Genesis III, 15: She will crush your head.

5. The greatest fortitude is also commended in her. Judith XIII, 22 and following: All, namely Patriarchs and Prophets and all the faithful, said to her, Judith, that is, to the glorious Virgin Mary: The Lord has blessed you in his power, granting you grace and strength, because through you, not through any Angel or Saint, he has reduced our enemies to nothing, by overcoming the devil, destroying sins, and vivifying the world. Because today, namely on the day of the annunciation, when she was made Mother of God, or on the day of the assumption, when she was exalted above all the choirs of Angels, he so magnified your name, reverend to Angels, beloved to men, fearful to demons, in heaven and on earth, that your praise may not depart from the mouth of men and of all Angels, who shall remember the power of the Lord manifested through you forever; for them you did not spare your soul on the day of the most bitter death of your beloved Son, because of the anguish and tribulation of your race, the miserable sons of Adam, but you mercifully, manfully, and faithfully came to the aid of the great, bitter, shameful, and eternal ruin before the sight of our God. And all the people said: Let it be! Let it be! ... And Judith said to Achior: The head of all unbelievers has fallen this night by my hand.

6. The Queen of Angels is also commended for the greatest humility, which is considered in this, that she calls all little worms, the lost sons of lost Adam, her brothers. Judith XIV, 1 and following: Judith said to all the people: Hear me, brothers, whose sister I am by nature. Likewise, elsewhere she calls us sons. Proverbs

VIII, 32: Now therefore, sons, hear me, as a mother; but here, Hear me, brothers, as a sister. Hang up this cruel, wicked head, full of every deceit, which I cut off, upon our walls. The Gloss: "In evangelical doctrine, which is the wall of believers, in that part in which you openly show that the enemy's pride has been crushed." When the sun goes out. The Gloss: "She teaches how we should pursue our enemy." When he goes out from my womb, like a bridegroom from his bridal chamber ^[2], which was done in the nativity of the Lord: the sun, that is, Christ my son, illuminating the blind, inflaming the cold, making the sterile fruitful, and giving and diffusing himself to all like the sun. Go out with force, fearing nothing, to battle against the world, the devil, and sin.

7. The most blessed Virgin is also commended by the highest wisdom, through which she confounded the kingdom of the devil and crushed his head. Judith XIV, 16: One Hebrew woman, that is, Mary, made a great and unexpected confusion in the house of King Nabuchodonosor, that is, the devil. For she confounded his pride through her humility, his craftiness through wisdom, and so concerning the others.

8. She is that one who drew the Son of God from heaven into her womb, so that she herself became for him mother of incarnation and house of habitation. Judith XV, 9 and following: Joachim. The Gloss: "Which is interpreted resurrection of the Lord, signifies Christ," who came from Jerusalem into Bethulia. The Gloss: that is, into the womb of the Virgin, that he might see Judith. The Gloss: that is, prove faith and love. And when she had gone out to him through the nativity, they all blessed her with one voice, saying: You are the glory of Jerusalem,

Notes

[1] Judith I, 1.

[2] Psalm XVIII, 6. (*Psal. XVIII, 6.*)

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that is, of those who are in heaven; you are the joy of Israel, that is, of those grieving and groaning for sins in this world; you are the honor of our people, abject as we are, because you have acted manfully. The Gloss: "Against the prince of the world." And therefore you will be blessed forever by God, by Angels, and by men. And all the people said: Let it be! Let it be!

9. Likewise, she is the threatener of all who harm the servants and handmaids of her Son. Judith XVI, 20: Woe to the nation. The Gloss: forever, rising up against my race, that is, the worshipers of God!

BOOK OF ESTHER.

In the days of Ahasuerus ^[1].

1. Here the most blessed Lady is commended by the supreme power that, after God, she has over all creatures. Esther II, 7: Esther was exceedingly beautiful and fair of face. The Gloss: "surrounded with the variety of virtues." And below, verse 15 and following: Esther was very shapely and of incredible beauty; she seemed gracious and lovable to the eyes of all. For she pleases all: God, Angels, the just, sinners. And King Ahasuerus, that is, Christ, loved her more than all women, ... and placed the diadem of the kingdom upon her head. The Gloss: "He made her consort of the kingdom." Behold the power. And he made her reign powerfully and eternally: she reigns powerfully because she is most rich and bestows on whom she wishes, as much as she wishes, when she wishes, and as often as she wishes; eternally, because of her kingdom there will be no end ^[2]. Therefore she is deservedly called the most powerful, most generous, and eternal queen. These three things concur in no queen except in her.

2. Likewise, she is the spouse of God, concerning whose most worthy nuptials it is said, Esther II, 18: King Ahasuerus, that is, Christ, for the union and nuptials of Esther, that is, Mary, celebrated on the day of the annunciation, of which Gabriel was the mediator, ordered a banquet to be prepared. The Gloss: that is,

spiritual joy, very magnificent in the whole world, in heaven, and in purgatory; for the day of the incarnation of the Son of God is the day of greatest joy; and for all his princes and servants. The Gloss: that is, for greater and lesser. And he gave rest to all the provinces: the rest of grace to earthly persons, the rest of glory to heavenly persons, the rest from tribulation to those remaining in purgatory; and he bestowed gifts according to princely magnificence, giving royally, giving all things, giving swiftly, and giving cheerfully. Hence he cries to us, saying what the old man from Mount Ephraim said: Peace be with you; I will supply all things that are necessary; only, I beg you, do not remain in the street ^[3].

3. Likewise, she is the house and wardrobe from which the Son of God was clothed with flesh, the sinner with pardon, the just person with grace, the perfect person with glory. Esther IV, 1 and following: Mordecai was clothed with sackcloth, of mortality and misery,

Notes

[1] Esther I, 1.

[2] Luke I, 33. (*Luc. I, 33.*)

[3] Judges XIX, 20. (*Judicum XIX, 20.*)

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but now, alas, many are in the sackcloth of mortal guilt. He went as far as the doors of the palace, of grace and glory, for it was not lawful for one clothed in sackcloth to enter the court of the king. The Gloss: "Because no one with the corruption of the present life will enter the heavenly court." When Esther heard this she was dismayed, and she sent a wedding garment, so that, when the sackcloth had been removed, they might clothe him, namely with the cloak of praise for the spirit of grief ^[1].

4. Likewise, she is the golden rod, the sign of eternal life. Esther IV, 11: Whether man or woman, whoever, not called, shall enter the inner court of the king. The Gloss: not having the wedding garment, let him immediately be killed, by eternal death, unless perchance the king shall extend to him the golden rod, that is, Mary, as a sign of clemency, so that she may be for him a propitiatrix, and thus he may be able to live.

5. Likewise, she is the intervener and recaller of the desperate. For therefore the Lord created her in the nativity, assumed her as mother in the incarnation, and exalted her above all the choirs of Angels in the assumption, that she might intercede for sinners. Esther IV, 13 and 14: You are in the house of the king. The Gloss: "In the inner bosom of the king." Before all Jews, indeed before all Angels and all Saints. For if now, that is, in the time of our distress, you shall be silent, that is, shall not intercede for us, which may it be far from you, because the Lord desires to hear you, saying that word of the Song of Songs II, 14: Let your voice sound in my ears, etc. And who knows whether for this reason you have come to the kingdom, foreordained by God, prefigured by the Patriarchs, foretold by the Prophets, sought by sinners, chosen and prechosen by the whole Trinity, that you might be prepared in such a time, of the wrath of God, of tribulation, and of the grief of all the sons of Adam? The Gloss: "Therefore the king made you queen, that you might help us in persecution."

6. Our Queen is also commended for the greatest fidelity, goodness, and mercy, which is considered in this, that almost her whole supplication before God is for us, that we may be freed from enemies. Hence, Esther V, 1 and following: Esther was clothed in royal garments. The Gloss: "With faith, hope, and charity, and the other virtues; clothed with these, she is more worthily joined to the king." And she stood, as sinner, advocate, helper, after she was assumed, in the court of the royal house. And the king was sitting upon the throne... And when he had seen Queen Esther, preeminent before all by nature, grace, glory, generosity, dignity, nobility, and compassion, standing, not like proud Lucifer wishing to sit, but standing wondrously beside the cross ^[2], and mercifully and faithfully in heaven for sinners, she pleased his eyes, and he extended toward her the golden rod, that is, the power that he wills his mother to have in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

And the king said to her: What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your petition? Even if you ask half of my kingdom, indeed the whole, it will be given to you... But she answered: If I have found grace in your eyes, O king, give me my people ^[3]. The Gloss: mine by faith, mine by devotion, mine by affectionate veneration of her, mine by total gift, and by your commission, for whom I beseech you, once standing wretchedly by the cross, but now joyfully with you in heaven. For how will I be able to endure the slaughter and killing of my people ^[4]? Since I can, and know how, and wish to free them through you, through yours, and through me.

7. Likewise, through her rising and nativity, she poured over the whole Church the light of immeasurable joy. Esther VIII, 16: To the Jews, that is, to Christians, a new light, that is, Mary, seemed to arise, namely when she was born. For she is the joy of the sorrowful, the honor of the heavenly fatherland, and the festal dance of all the blessed.

Notes

[1] Isaiah LXI, 3. (*Isa. LXI, 3.*)

[2] John XIX, 25. (*Joan. XIX, 25.*)

[3] Esther VII, 3.

[4] Ibid., VIII, 6.

Book of Job, page 390

THE BOOK OF JOB.

There was a man in the land of Uz, named Job ^[1].

1. The Queen of the world, the Virgin Mary, is called the rising dawn. Job III, 9: Let him expect light and not see it, who does evil things, or even good things not with a right heart, nor the rising of the dawning dawn, that is, of Mary, who in her nativity rose for shadowed sinners. The Gloss: "The rising dawn is the Church, which leaves the former shadows and comes into the light of justice." Her coming also worked in manifold fashion into the world. Job XIV, 8: Withdraw a little from him. The Gloss: because withdrawal does not grant rest until the desired one comes: desired by the Patriarchs and Prophets and by the whole human race. But to what end should she come? Let her come, I say, as a help to my God. Hence in Genesis II, 18: Let us make for him a help like himself. To the just she comes unto grace, to sinners unto pardon, to Angels unto gladness, to the devil unto grief.

2. Likewise, she is the throne of mercy; when the sinner comes to it, he is absolved. Job XXIII, 3 and 4: Who will grant me ... that I may come even to his throne? that is, even to Mary, who is the throne of mercy; and then I shall set judgment before him, and I shall fill my mouth with rebukes, so that his words of mercy may answer me.

3. Likewise, she is the dawn terrifying demons. Job XXIV, 17: If dawn suddenly appears, that is, Mary, either coming forth into light by being born to the world, or ascending into heaven, so that she might pour grace into sinners by God's authority, the demons themselves think it the shadow of death. The Gloss: those who grieve over this. She also, so far as lies in her, denies the light of grace and mercy to no one. Thus Baldad to Job, XXV, 3: Over whom will his light not rise? namely the light of Mary: over what Angel, or elect person, or just person, or sinner, does her light not rise for reward or for help?

4. Likewise, she is the place of the union of divinity and human nature. Job XXVIII, 1: There is a place for gold, that is, for the Son of God there is the Virgin Mary, in whom divinity is smelted, that is, united to humanity, majesty to weakness, eternity to wondrousness. Therefore if you wish to be united to God, approach Mary so that you may become one spirit with God.

5. Likewise, she is the shining lamp and the rock pouring out oil. Job XXIX, 1 and following: Who will grant me that I may be beside the former months, etc., when his lamp, that is, Mary, was shining over my head, and

by her light I was walking in darkness; when the rock, that is, Mary, was pouring streams of oil for me, generously and gladly? The Gloss: that is, the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

6. Likewise, she is also well compared to Job, because all the virtues that are commended in him she had in the highest degree. Mary showed concerning herself in the person of blessed Job

the secret habitation of God in herself. Job XXIX, 4: God was secretly with me in my tabernacle, which is against hypocrites, who show him to be in the way, to be in fact with them, which nevertheless is not so.

7. She also showed herself the liberator of crying sinners. Job XXIX, 11: The hearing ear was blessing me, saying, Luke I, 28: Blessed are you among women, etc. In the same place, verses 11 and 12: The seeing eye gave testimony to my fidelity, because I had mercifully and powerfully freed the poor person crying out, that is, the sinner, whom the devil was choking, hell wished to swallow, and against whom every creature was preparing to rise up. And the orphan for whom there was no helper, neither among Angels nor among men.

8. She also showed herself to be the raiser of those falling. Job XXIX, 13: The blessing of one perishing in soul and body, perishing before God and every creature, came upon me. The Gloss: "The blessing of the one perishing happens when she forestalls the sinner's destruction and brings him back from the pit of fault." And I consoled the heart of the widow, that is, of the soul widowed of God.

9. She also showed herself both the guide of blind sinners and the support of the lame. Job XXIX, 15: I was an eye to the blind, that is, to the sinner, leading him, showing him the way, defending him from the pit of hell. And a foot to the lame, that is, to the sinner.

10. She also showed herself to be the plunderer of the devil and sin and hell, the rescuer of sinners. Job XXIX, 17: I was breaking the jaw-teeth of the unjust one, that is, of the devil, by laying bare his snares, and from his teeth I was taking away the prey, by snatching out the sinner whom he was already eating and wished miserably to swallow. I was taking away. The Gloss: "by converting." Likewise, I was also taking away violently, wisely, totally, and finally, the prey, that is, the miserable sinner.

11. She also showed herself to be the most abundant irrigator of the driest world. Job XXIX, 23: They were waiting for me, that is, for my coming through the nativity into the world, those who were on earth and in purgatory, like saving, pure, and general rain. And they were opening their mouth as to the late shower.

12. She also showed herself, in the manner of the Son, to be the most generous giver of graces. Job XXXI, 16: If I denied what they wanted to the poor. The Gloss: that is, to the humble. And if I made the eyes of the widow wait, that is, if I delayed giving to those waiting. The Gloss: "Delay does not darken the light of giving." What is sought with true humility must be given without delay, that is, what is asked not from desire but from necessity, so that the merits of good works may be increased not only by the gift, but also by the swiftness of the gift.

13. She also showed herself to be the feeder of hungry souls. Job XXXI, 17: If I ate my morsel alone, that is, if I did not communicate to others what was given to me by God; indeed, what is more, if I did not communicate the morsel, that is, the body of my Son, to others. And the orphan from her did not eat abundantly and confidently and royally, according to that word of Psalm LXXVII, 25: Man ate the bread of Angels; the orphan from her, whose mother I am by compassion and whose feeder I am by generosity. The Gloss: "For some are accustomed to give many things generously, but they shrink from having the poor as companions in domestic life, not having the grace of common life; but this one would think that he was doing prejudice to piety if he alone ate what the Lord of all had created for common use."

14. She also showed herself unable to contain mercy, especially when she is invoked. Job XXXI, 18: From my infancy

Notes

End of Job and Proverbs of Solomon, page 392

mercy grew with me, great, pious, and diffused. And from my mother's womb it went out with me, abundantly and commonly.

15. She also showed that she cannot despise anyone, although he may be a sinner, provided nevertheless that he seeks mercy. Job XXXI, 19: If I despised the one perishing. The Gloss: "Here is humility, because some give more on account of acquaintance than on account of nature," because he did not have the clothing of virtues. The Gloss: "For this reason I did not despise the poor man without covering, although I am in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety ^[1]." And below, Job XXXI, 20: If his sides did not bless me, and he was warmed from the fleeces of my sheep. The Gloss: "This is piety."

16. She also showed herself to be the judge of mercy more than of justice in the cause of sinners. Job XXXI, 21: If I lifted my hand against the orphan, that is, the sinner, namely to oppress him, even when I saw myself superior at the gate. The Gloss: that is, in judgment superior to all Angels and Saints. The Gloss: "For neither did I then wish by power to exact the affairs of my utility against the orphan, when I saw that I was more powerful in judgment even by justice; for here, by the name of gate, judgment, which was carried out at the gate, is signified."

17. She also showed herself to be a hostess and general receiver, most generous, of God and of men. Job XXXI, 32: The stranger did not remain outside: she offered the lodging of the virginal womb to the Son of God, and to the pilgrim also the lodging of grace and mercy and glory. My door lay open to the traveler, swiftly, totally, and frequently.

18. She also showed herself to be the Queen of the heavens. Job XXIX, 25: And when I sat royally, powerfully, and sublimely, as a king, that is, as queen, wife, and mother of the eternal King, while an army of sinners stood around, nevertheless I was the consoler of those grieving, that is, Mary the comforter.

19. Likewise, she is the singular eagle, concerning whose praise and proclamation the Lord speaks to Job, XXXIX, 27 and 30: Will the eagle, that is, Mary, at your command, as at mine, who inspire whatever I command, be lifted up in nature, grace, and also in glory, and in every prerogative, above all the choirs of Angels, and will she set her nest in high places?... Her young will lick blood, and wherever the corpse will be, immediately she is present. The Gloss: "Christ sitting in heaven is the refreshment of the just."

THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel ^[2].

1. The Queen of all creatures is called wisdom by Solomon. Proverbs VII, 4: He says to wisdom, that is, to Mary: You are my sister. For as she had the greatest humility, so she had the greatest wisdom, etc. Where humility is, there is also wisdom. But

Notes

[1] Psalm XLIV, 10. (*Psal. XLIV, 10.*)

[2] Proverbs I, 1. (*Proverb. I, 1.*)

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in Mary there was immeasurable humility. Therefore there was immeasurable wisdom. For wisdom is a certain spiritual taste and a taste of the first truth, after the manner of the highest goodness, which she had before all. According to Solomon's counsel we ought to call this wisdom our sister. But because it follows there, verse 5: That she may guard you, as most wise and most faithful, from the foreign woman, that is, from

every unclean and depraved will, and from the alien woman who makes her words sweet although they are most bitter.

2. Likewise, she is the pouch of redemption. Proverbs VII, 20: The little pouch, that is, Mary, of money, of liberation, he took with himself; on the day of the full moon he will return to his house.

3. Likewise, in the person of uncreated truth and eternal wisdom, she cries to us through Solomon, Proverbs VIII, 6 and 22: Hear me, as the mother of a son, because I am about to speak of great things: The Lord possessed me. As if she were saying: Great are the things I say, because he who is mighty has done great things for me ^[1]. Concerning this I give thanks, because the Lord Father, the Lord Son, the Lord Holy Spirit, namely, possessed me. The Father possessed me through all things, by potentially snatching me from every sin. The Son possessed me through wisdom, by assuming me into cooperation for the redemption of the human race. Genesis II, 18: It is not good for man to be alone, etc. The Holy Spirit possessed me, as the temple of glory, by worthily dwelling in me and totally filling me with every grace. Luke I, 28: Hail, full of grace. And again, verse 35: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, etc.

4. Likewise, I give thanks to you, because through him I was ordained forever, or from eternity ^[2]. For none of the Angels, Seraphim, or Cherubim, but the eternal one himself ordained me from eternity. Likewise, the highest Father ordained me as Exorcist, with respect to expelling demons. Hence Genesis III, 15: She will crush your head. As Doorkeeper, with respect to the exclusion of the unclean and the introduction of the clean. Ezekiel XLIV, 2 and 3: This gate will be closed. And again, verse 3: It will be closed for the prince. The prince himself will sit in it. As if he were saying: This gate introduced the Prince and his imitators, and will be closed to the unworthy. As Reader, with respect to the exposition of all the Prophets according to the letter in herself. Hence Isaiah VII, 14: Behold, the Virgin will conceive, etc. And the Angel to her, Luke I, 31: Behold, you will conceive. As Acolyte, with respect to illumination. Song of Songs VI, 9: Who is she who goes forth like the rising dawn, etc.? And that word of Numbers XXIV, 17: A star will arise. As Subdeacon, with respect to the observation of the divine word, by which she recounted what was to be written for others. Hence Luke II, 19: Mary was preserving all these words, pondering them, etc. As Deacon and Priest, with respect to the formation and dispensation of the Lord's body from herself. For she communicated to us the body of her Son as food, and his blood as drink. As Bishop, with respect to solicitude for all the Churches. As Pope, who is father of fathers, having power in heaven and on earth; so also she is the mother of all Christians, and has power in heaven and on earth and in purgatory and in hell. Thus therefore the Mother of God, Queen of heaven, is totally ordained. Or otherwise: I was ordained, as Bernard says: "For the Angel unto gladness, for the just person unto grace, for the sinner unto pardon, for the sorrowful unto consolation, for the captive unto redemption, for the devil unto trampling" ^[3].

5. Third, I give thanks for this, that he conceived me for the purpose, against the destruction of death and sin. This is noted there, Proverbs VIII, 24: The abysses did not yet exist, that is, the demons, or the abysses of misery and sin; and I was already conceived, namely in the presence and predestination of God, so that I might display light against darkenesses, grace against fault, life against death.

6. Fourth, I give thanks for this, that he assumed me for composing; this is noted there, Proverbs VIII, 30: I was with him, composing all things, in my womb through the incarnation. I was composing the first with the last, the small with the great, deity with humanity. Hence, Proverbs XXXI, 10: From far away and from the furthest ends of the earth. Likewise, I was in the world composing through the passion of my Son and the redemption of the whole human race. Likewise, I was composing with my Son heavenly things for dwelling, earthly things for pilgrimage, infernal things for burning.

7. The most blessed Virgin Mary is also commended from her faithful charity, because she names herself our mother and calls us her sons. Proverbs VIII, 32: Now therefore, sons, hear me, calling, consoling, interceding for you, and instructing you. Blessed in body and soul are those who keep my ways: the ways of humility

against pride, of chastity against luxury, of generosity against avarice. And below, verse 35: He who finds me, by serving humbly, devoutly, and faithfully, will find the life of grace and glory, and will draw salvation from the Lord, of soul and body, from the Lord who is eternal salvation.

8. Solomon also commends her from fortitude. Proverbs XXXI, 10: Who will find a strong woman, like Mary? There are three to which the greatest fortitude is appropriated, namely God, death, and the devil. In a certain way she separated God by humility. Hence Gregory: "How great, therefore, is the virtue of humility, for the sake of teaching which alone truly, he who is great beyond reckoning became small even unto the passion ^[4]?" Likewise, she overcame death, which no mortal can resist, because through her life returned. Likewise, she reduced the devil with all his power to nothing. Hence Genesis III, 15: She will crush your head.

9. Likewise, she is commended from the confidence that one has in her. Proverbs XXXI, 11: The heart of her husband trusts in her. The Gloss: "As a king in an unconquerable fortress." For all the Saints were conquerable, at least as to venial sins. But she is wholly unconquerable. Or, He trusts in her as a merchant in a most industrious wife, because no Angel or man wins for God so many and so great souls as she does. Or, He trusts in her as a father in a most prudent daughter. For she alone before all knows how to plead prudently before every heavenly prince concerning the salvation of sinners.

10. Likewise, she is commended from her most dutiful operation. Proverbs XXXI, 13: For she sought wool and flax, and worked by the counsel of her hands. The Gloss: "Because she covered the Son of God with humanity, sinners with compassion, the Church with the illumination of the Holy Spirit."

11. She is also compared to a ship putting in to port, because of usefulness. Proverbs XXXI, 14: The Virgin Mary became like the most laden ship of the merchant, namely

Notes

[1] Luke I, 49. (*Luc. I, 49.*)

[2] Proverbs VIII, 23. (*Proverb. VIII, 23.*)

[3] St. Bernard, Sermon II on Pentecost, and in the sermon on the Blessed Virgin on those words of Apocalypse XII, 1: A woman clothed with the sun,... and on her head a crown of twelve stars. (*S. Bernardus, Serm. II in Pentecoste, et in sermone de B. Virgine super illa verba Apocalypsis, XII, 1: Mulier amicta sole,... et in capite ejus corona stellarum duodecim.*)

[4] St. Gregory the Great, Book XXXIV of the Moralia, chapter 18. (*S. Gregorius M., Lib. XXXIV Moraliū, cap. 18.*)

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of Christ, carrying her bread from afar, namely to us. Man ate the bread of Angels ^[1].

12. She is also commended from fortitude, there, Proverbs XXXI, 19: She put her hand to strong things. He calls perfect works strong things, such as loving enemies, doing good to those who hate, and praying for those who persecute us ^[2].

13. She is also commended from generosity, there, Proverbs XXXI, 20: She opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her palms to the poor. For her generosity was so great that she opened her whole self through generosity. She opened her womb to the Son, her eyes to weeping for sinners, her ears to hearing their prayers, and her mouth to appeasing. Hence it is added, verse 26: She opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. The Gloss: "So that she does not punish immediately, as the law of Moses, but always mercifully spares."

14. She is also commended from the highest blessedness, there, Proverbs XXXI, 28: Her sons arose and proclaimed her most blessed. They proclaimed her blessed in nature, more blessed in grace, most blessed in glory. Or they proclaimed her blessed above all married women, more blessed above all widows, most blessed above all virgins. Or they proclaimed her blessed in the conversion of sinners, more blessed in the

conversion of the just, most blessed in the crowning of the elect.

15. She is also commended in the immensity of riches, as there, Proverbs XXXI, 29: Many daughters have gathered riches, that is, all blessed souls individually, with difficulty, meagerly. But you, who are the Mother of God, have surpassed them all in multiplicity, in preciousness, and in the immensity of all graces.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

The words of Ecclesiastes, son of David, king of Jerusalem ^[3].

1. The Empress Virgin Mary is commended by Solomon from the usefulness of her nativity and the gloriousness of her assumption. Ecclesiastes I, 5: The sun rises and sets, and returns to its place. This sun is the Virgin Mary, who rose for the whole Church when she was born. But it must be known that in the genealogy she is narrated to have been born from the good and from the evil. That she was born from the good can have a threefold reason. The first is that the antiquity of nobility might ennoble her, because every tree is known from its fruit. For such a thing is more perfected as such in nature through virtue when it is inclined to that very thing from the origin of nature; for virtues are innate to us in themselves, but are perfected by custom. The second reason is that sanctity might surround her on every side: behind by nobility, before by

Notes

[1] Psalm LXXVII, 25. (*Psal. LXXVII, 25.*)

[2] Matthew V, 44. (*Matth. V, 44.*)

[3] Ecclesiastes I, 1. (*Eccle. I, 1.*)

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usefulness, above by dignity, below by power, on the right by the height of virtues, on the left by immunity from sin, within by charity, without by perfect conduct. The third reason is that her humility might appear more humble, because, as Bernard says: "Indeed, to be in a high place and not to think high things, but to consent to the humble, nothing is dearer to God, nothing rarer among men ^[1]." She was also born from the evil for three reasons. The first is that she might be exalted by comparison with the other of the extremes, according to that saying of the Philosopher: "Opposites placed next to each other shine forth more ^[2]." Song of Songs II, 2: As a lily among thorns, etc. As a thorn generated a rose, Judea generated Mary, the Church sings. The second reason is that wisdom might appear more merciful. For there is a going out from good to good. Hence Genesis I, 31: God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good. There is a going out from evil to evil. Ecclesiasticus X, 15: The beginning of every sin is pride. There is also a going out from good to evil, as Ecclesiasticus XXV, 33: From a woman the beginning of sin was made. There is also a going out from evil to good. And this is proper to God alone, whose wisdom malice conquers, because it reaches, etc. ^[3]. The third reason is that she might generate confidence for sinners, by this, that as their mediatrix she would touch both extremes with the same nearness. Hence just as she is sister of God, and mother, and daughter, so also the Church is mother, sister, and daughter of God; and thus she would also be inclined by nature to pity the sinner. This is the bow placed in the clouds of heaven as a sign of the covenant between heaven and earth ^[4]. For God could not have established peace with sinners more stably and effectively than by taking the daughter of sinners as spouse and mother for his Son. Nor did anyone make peace between God and man more than she who existed as mother of both. It follows: And it sets, because she paid her life through death. And it returns to its place, that is, to heaven, prepared eternally by God.

2. The most blessed Lady is also commended from every overflowing and immensity of graces. Ecclesiastes I, 7: All rivers enter into the sea, and the sea does not overflow, namely through pride. Mary is interpreted Lady, or illuminator, or illuminated one, or star of the sea, or bitter sea; these interpretations most fittingly suit her. She is Lady, because of all those of whom God himself is Lord, she also is Lady. And in this

singular excellence is noted. She is also the star of the true sun, generative without corruption or diminution of integrity, and in this the purity of her conception is explained. She is also the universal distributor of all good things. And therefore she is called star. She is also called sea because she is most full of all graces. For just as in the sea there is the gathering of all waters, so in her there is the uniting of all graces. Genesis I, 10: He called the gatherings of waters seas. She also in her own conduct in this world was bitter through the whole of it, but in the passion of the Son most bitter; moreover, for all coming out of bitterness, she is cause and example.

Notes

[1] St. Bernard, Letter 123 to D. Hildebert, archbishop of Tours. (*S. Bernardus, Epist. 123 ad D. Hildebertum, Turonensem archiepiscopum.*)

[2] Aristotle, Book II On Heaven and the World, commentary 40, and Book I On the Soul, commentary 85. (*Aristoteles, Lib. II de Caelo et Mundo, com. 40, et Lib. I de Anima, com. 85.*)

[3] Wisdom VII, 39 and VIII, 1. (*Sapient. VII, 39 et VIII, 1.*)

[4] Genesis IX, 12 and 13. (*Genes. IX, 12 et 13.*)

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THE SONG OF SONGS.

Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth ^[1].

1. Here the Lady of Angels is commended by Solomon from the reconciliation of God and sinners. Hence she is deservedly called the temple of peace, in which divinity kissed humanity. In that temple mercy and truth met each other, justice and peace kissed ^[2]. Song of Songs I, 1: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth. The Gloss: By the incarnation of the Son, which is the foretaste of the communication between us and God. Hence Bernard: "Let the kissing mouth be the Word assuming; the kissed mouth, the flesh that is assumed; but the kiss, which is produced equally by the one kissing and the one kissed, is the very person compacted from both, the mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus ^[3]. Therefore he will be in no way suspect to me. For he is my brother and my flesh ^[4]. For I think Christ will not be able to despise bone from his bones and flesh from his flesh ^[5]."

2. Likewise, she is commended from the beauty by which she excelled inwardly and outwardly. Song of Songs I, 14: Behold, you are beautiful, my friend, by simplicity of heart and cleanness of works. Your eyes are of doves. The Gloss: "With these you look upon God simply, and seek nothing other than him." Concerning the beauty of our Virgin it must be known that just as the Son is most beautiful in form before the sons of men ^[6], so she is most beautiful among the daughters and sons of men. For she had the beauty that could exist in a mortal body. But that the Gospel writes nothing concerning her beauty can have one cause: since Our Lady has been set for us as an example and as a mirror of making people saved, it does not wish her to be praised by such things whose disordered appetite or use was for many, and today is, a cause of perishing. Another cause is this: just as the supreme Angels are praised and named from the nobler gifts and not from the lower ones, which nevertheless are not doubted to be in them, so also the most blessed Virgin, most full of spiritual gifts and most noble in gratuitous gifts, so occupies the minds of those praising her that they forget bodily goods. Nevertheless we who love her ought to hold as an infallible rule that whatever of goodness or beauty ever existed in any of the saints grew out in her by excellence and through her into them.

3. Likewise, she is the lily of all chastity and fragrance. Song of Songs II, 2: As a lily among thorns, etc. The Gloss: "Which is pierced by thorns, yet retains whiteness, and then pours out a greater fragrance." Was not our lily among the thorns of those speaking against her and her Son?

Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary ^[7]? etc.; and especially when she stood among the crucifiers beside the cross near her Son ^[8].

4. Likewise, she is the wine-cellar of the whole Trinity, who gives and pours out from the wine of the Holy Spirit to whom she wishes and as much as she wishes. Hence, congratulating, she also says, Song of Songs II, 4: The king brought me into the wine-cellar. The Gloss: "That is, into the Church, in whose unity the Holy Spirit is accustomed to be given and received." Or the wine-cellar is the empyrean heaven, where all will be inebriated from the richness of the house of God^[9], into which she was brought by the King on the day of the assumption.

5. Song of Songs II, 4: He ordered charity in me, which he gave to me most excellently above all. This is proved thus through Luke VII, 41 and following, where the Lord asks concerning two debtors, of whom one owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty. Since they did not have from which they might repay, he forgave both. Which therefore loves him more? Simon answered and said: I suppose the one to whom he forgave more. But more was given to the most blessed Virgin above all creatures. Therefore she loves more than all creatures. Likewise, God gives abundantly to all^[10], etc., enlightening every man coming into this world^[11]. Nevertheless not all receive equally. Of this diversity there is a twofold cause. One is on the part of the receiver, because one is more capable than another, according to that word of Matthew XXV, 14 and 15: He handed over to them his goods, ... to each according to his proper power. The Gloss: that is, capacity. But true humility works this capacity, according to that word of James IV, 6: He gives grace to the humble. Therefore where greater humility is, there is greater capacity. But she was most humble above all. Therefore she was most capable. Therefore she was able to receive the greatest grace, namely as much as she could receive, so much she received. Likewise, on the part of the giver there is diversity of the gift, because when a giver gives according to reason, and reason looks to the end, he gives a greater gift when he gives for a greater end, as an Emperor gives a greater gift for being a senator than to one to whom he gives for being a simple servant. But grace was given to Mary for being the Mother of God, and to all others it is given for being servants and handmaids of God. Therefore just as it is immeasurably greater to be the Mother of God than a servant of God, so the gift for being Mother of God will be immeasurably greater than for being a servant of God. But the gift in which all things are given is the charity of the most blessed Virgin; therefore it will be immeasurably greater than the charity of every creature. The blessed Virgin also had the highest charity toward neighbor, because she set the soul of her Son and the Son himself for neighbor, whom she loved more than her own soul, and moreover offered him. And thus it is what is said: And a sword will pierce your own soul^[12].

6. Likewise, she is the mirror of all beauty after God. Song of Songs II, 14: Show me your face, namely the face of humility, which you showed in the incarnation, saying: Behold the handmaid of the Lord^[13]; the face of pallor, which you showed in my passion; the face of the highest beauty, which you showed in your assumption.

7. Song of Songs II, 14: Let your voice sound in my ears: the voice of piety, when you said, John II, 3: They have no wine; the voice of fidelity, when you counseled, in the same place, verse 5: Whatever he shall say to you, do; the voice of sorrow when you said, Luke II, 48: Son, why have you done this to us?; the voice of invitation, for inviting hungry sinners,

Proverbs IX, 5: Come, eat my bread, etc. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 26: Come over to me, all you who desire me, etc. These voices sound sweetly in my ears. For your voice is sweet, and your speech is comely^[14].

8. Likewise, she is Solomon's little bed^[15], in which the Son of God rested for nine months. Hence she herself says, Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 12: He who created me rested in my tabernacle.

9. Likewise, she is the most fortified tower, in herself and in others. Song of Songs IV, 4: Your neck is like the tower of David, which was built with bulwarks; a thousand shields hang from it. There each one will find defense against his own evil. There hangs the shield of chastity against luxury, of humility against pride, of charity against envy, of generosity against avarice. All the armor of the strong is in her.

10. Likewise, she is the one whom the whole Trinity invited to come to itself under manifold names. Song of Songs IV, 7 and 8: You are wholly beautiful, my friend. The Gloss: Immune even from venial sin; and therefore there is no stain in you. Come from Lebanon, my spouse, etc. He says Come three times, because of faith in the Trinity. Note that one much loved by the king is accustomed to be called by the lover with many names. So the most blessed Virgin is called by God friend, dove, beloved, beautiful, fair, sister, immaculate, perfect, chosen, Shulamite, daughter. Note the diversity of these names, and adapt them to the glorious Virgin.

11. Likewise, she is the one whom Solomon compares to dawn in her nativity, to the full moon in the ineffable conception of the Son of God, to the sun in her assumption, to the terrible battle-line of camps in the putting to flight of demons. Song of Songs VI, 9: Who is she who goes forth like the dawn, etc.

12. Likewise, she is the one to whom every pilgrimage cries. Song of Songs VI, 12: Return, return, O Shulamite! return, etc. Peter Damian explains thus: "Return first by nature. Surely because you have been so deified, have you therefore forgotten our humanity? By no means, Lady. You know in what danger you left us, where your servants lie, how greatly they sin. For it does not befit such great mercy to forget such great misery, because even if glory draws you away, nature recalls you. For you do not remember only the justice of God in such a way that you do not have mercy, nor are you impassible in such a way that you are without compassion. You have our nature, not another, and it is just that we be more abundantly infused with the dew of such great piety. Return second by power. He who is mighty has done great things in you ^[16], and all power in heaven and on earth has been given to you ^[17]. What will be denied to you, to whom it was not denied to call Theophilus back from the very jaws of perdition? You lifted up from the mud of filth and misery the unhappy little soul denying by his own signature all that was done in you. Nothing is impossible to you, to whom it is possible to raise the desperate into the hope of beatitude. For how will that power be able to oppose your power, which received the origin of flesh from your flesh? For you approach before that golden altar of human reconciliation, not only asking but commanding, Lady, not handmaid. Let nature move you; let power move you, because the more powerful you are, the more merciful you ought to be. Return third by love. I know, Lady, that you are most kind and love us with invincible love, whom in you and through

you your Son and your God loved with the highest love. Who knows how often you cool the wrath of the judge, when the power of justice goes forth from the presence of deity? Return fourth by generosity. In your hands are the treasures of the Lord's mercies, and you alone have been chosen, to whom such great grace is granted. Far be it that your hand should cease, since you seek occasion of saving the miserable and pouring out mercy; for your glory is not diminished but increased, when penitents are assumed to pardon and the justified to glory. Return therefore, O Shulamite, that is, despised one, whose soul a sword pierced, who were called the wife of the craftsman. For what purpose? That we may look upon you. It is the highest glory, after God, to see you, to cling to you, and to abide in the fortification of your protection. Therefore help your brothers crying continually to you, Lady. This is the threefold cord that draws the mother of mercy to visit and console us, namely the cord of nature, the cord of love, the cord of generosity" ^[18].

13. Our Queen is also commended from the highest nobility after the Lord. Song of Songs VII, 1: How beautiful are your steps in shoes, daughter of the prince! from whom Christ himself also descended by true generation ^[19]. Moreover, this nobility is considered in substance, if she possesses noble substance and property in herself. But in substance she had perfection of nature, and in soul fullness of grace. Likewise, it is considered in efficacy, if she produces noble effects from herself, and she generated from herself the Lord himself, the Son of God. Hence the most blessed Virgin is found to be noble in the highest degree in all things in which nobility is considered. For she drew her origin from kings, priests, and prophets. Hence she is also queen of mercy, priestess of justice, who did not spare her own Son ^[20], but stood beside the cross, as John says, XIX, 25, so that she might consider not only the Son of God, but also await the salvation of the

human race. She is prophetess of wisdom, according to that word of Isaiah VIII, 3: I approached the prophetess, that is, Mary. And although she was lifted upward by the highest nobility, nevertheless through humility she depressed herself below all downward. Hence Augustine says that she would by no means have been exalted above all the choirs of Angels, unless she had been humbled below all men ^[21]. And it must be known that where nobility of flesh is adorned by nobility of merits, each supplies to the other an increase of praise; but if they are separated, then nobility of flesh is not only not praised, but blamed, because the quality of an evil work acts contrary to the nobility of the origin of flesh. And the deformity of operation is so much more detestable as it is more against the natural inclination of origin and nobility. But nobility of mind without nobility of flesh is praised so much more as, even by conquering its own nature, it operates more laudably.

14. She is also commended from abundance of delights. Song of Songs VII, 6: How beautiful you are and how comely, dearest, in delights, namely of grace and glory. Solomon admires these delights when he says, Song of Songs VIII, 5: Who is she who ascends from the desert, flowing with delights, etc.? Concerning this glorious ascent, or assumption, of the Virgin Mother, Bernard speaks thus ^[22]: "It is time for all flesh to speak, when the Mother of the incarnate Word is assumed into heaven; nor ought human mortality to cease from praises, when in human nature alone it is exalted above the immortal spirits in

the Virgin. But concerning her glory, devotion does not permit silence, nor can a barren thought conceive anything worthy, or an unlearned speech bring it forth. Hence it is that the princes themselves of the heavenly court, in consideration of so great a novelty, cry out, not without wonder: Who is this who ascends from the desert, flowing with delights, etc.? As if they were saying: How great is this one, and whence comes such an abundance of delights to her, surely ascending from the desert? For equal delights are not found, etc. Who is this, who from under the sun, where there is nothing except labor and sorrow and affliction of spirit, ascends, flowing with spiritual delights? Why should I not call delights the beauty of virginity with the gift of fruitfulness, the mark of humility, the dripping honeycomb of charity, the inward parts of mercy, the fullness of grace, the prerogative of singular glory? Why do the Angels marvel that Mary ascends from the desert earth flowing with delights? Let them marvel rather that poor Christ descends from the fullness of the heavenly kingdom. For it seems worthy of a much greater miracle that the Son of God should be made a little less than the Angels, than that the Mother of God should be exalted above the Angels. Indeed, his emptying was made our filling; his miseries are the delights of the world. Who is this? I confess my lack of skill; I do not hide my own smallness of soul. Indeed there is not anything that delights me more, but neither is there anything that terrifies me more, than to have discourse concerning the glory of the Virgin Mary. Who then is this? All embrace, honor, and receive her with so great an affection of devotion, as is worthy, that although all are eager to speak of her, nevertheless whatever is said concerning the unspeakable, by this very fact that it could be said, is less pleasing, pleases less, is accepted less. Who then is this? This is she of whom, as Sedulius used to say:

She was seen to have no first one like her, nor a following one: Having the joys of a mother with the honor of virginity.

Mary, he says, chose the best part ^[23], etc. Plainly the best, because blessed fruitfulness was virginal, and virginity was fruitful. It is Mary's privilege; it will not be given to another, because it will not be taken away from her ^[24]. You will find in Mary absolutely all singular virtues, which seemed to be common.

Who is this? This is she most pure above all Angels. For what Angelic purity would dare to be compared to that virginity, etc.?

Who is this? This is she most humble, precious above all. In her there is the virtue of humility, with such great innocence, with a conscience altogether without fault, indeed with such fullness of grace, etc.

Who is this? This is she most merciful. Let your mercy be silent, blessed Virgin, if there is anyone who remembers that you, when invoked, failed him in his necessities. We, your little servants, rejoice with you in the other virtues, but in this virtue rather we rejoice for ourselves. We praise virginity, we marvel at humility, but mercy tastes sweeter to the miserable; we embrace mercy more dearly, we remember it more often, we invoke it more frequently.

Who is this? This is she, the repairer of the whole world; for this is she who obtained the reparation of the whole world and procured the salvation of all. For it is clear that she was solicitous for the whole human race, to whom it was said, Luke I, 30: Do not fear, Mary, you have found grace with God: grace indeed, which you were seeking.

Who is this? This is that sublime one, whose length of goodness, breadth of mercy, height of charity, and depth of humility no one can measure. Who then can investigate the length and breadth, the sublimity and depth of your mercy, O blessed one? For its length comes to the aid of all invoking her even to the last day. Its breadth fills the whole earth, so that your mercy also fills all the earth. Thus also its sublimity

Notes

- [1] Song of Songs I, 1. (*Cantic. I, 1.*)
- [2] Psalm LXXXIV, 11. (*Psal. LXXXIV, 11.*)
- [3] St. Bernard, Sermon II on the Song of Songs. (*S. Bernardus, Sermon II super Cantica.*)
- [4] I Timothy II, 5. (*I ad Timoth. II, 5.*)
- [5] Genesis II, 23. (*Genes. II, 23.*)
- [6] Psalm XLIV, 3. (*Psal. XLIV, 3.*)
- [7] Mark VI, 3. (*Marc. VI, 3.*)
- [8] John XIX, 25. (*Joan. XIX, 25.*)
- [9] Psalm XXXV, 9. (*Psal. XXXV, 9.*)
- [10] James I, 5. (*Jacobi I, 5.*)
- [11] John I, 9. (*Joan. I, 9.*)
- [12] Luke II, 35. (*Luc. II, 35.*)
- [13] Luke I, 38. (*Luc. I, 38.*)
- [14] The Vulgate has, Song of Songs II, 14: For your voice is sweet, and your face is comely. (*Vulgata habet, Cantic. II, 14: Vox enim tua dulcis, et facies tua decora.*)
- [15] Song of Songs I, 7. (*Cantic. I, 7.*)
- [16] Luke I, 49. (*Luc. I, 49.*)
- [17] Matthew XXVII, 18. (*Matth. XXVII, 18.*)
- [18] St. Peter Damian, Sermon II on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (*S. Petrus Damianus, Sermon II de Nativitate B. Mariae Virginis.*)
- [19] Luke I, 33; Matthew XIII, 55. (*Luc. I, 33; Matth. XIII, 55.*)
- [20] Romans VIII, 32. (*Ad Roman. VIII, 32.*)
- [21] We have not found this passage in St. Augustine, but in an anonymous author, in the sermon on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. It begins, "The mother of the Creator," in P. Canisius, book IV On the Mother of God, chapter 8; and in St. Bernard, Sermon on Blessed Mary, on those words of Apocalypse XII, 1: A great sign appeared, etc. (note of the Lyon editor). (*Locum hunc in S. Augustino non invenimus, sed in anonymo auctore, sermone de Nativitate B. Virginis. Incipit: "Creatoris matrem," apud P. Canisium, lib. IV de Deipara, cap. 8. Et in S. Bernardo, Sermon de B. Maria, super illa verba Apocalypsis, XII, 1: Signum magnum apparuit, etc. (Nota edit. Lugd.).*)
- [22] St. Bernard, Sermon IV on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. (*S. Bernardus, Sermon IV de Assumptione B. Virginis.*)
- [23] Luke X, 42. (*Luc. X, 42.*)
- [24] Ibid.

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of that heavenly city finds restoration, and its depth obtained redemption for those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Who is this? This is she, the emptier of hell, the restorer of heavenly Jerusalem, the giver of lost life. For through you heaven has been filled, hell has been emptied, the ruins of heavenly Jerusalem have been restored, lost life has been given to the miserable as they waited. Thus most powerful and most loving charity abounds in effect and in the affection of suffering-with and helping, equally wealthy in both. Therefore let our thirsty soul hasten to this fountain! Let our misery run back with all solicitude to this heap of mercy! Behold, now with what vows we could, we have led you, as you ascended, to the Son, and we have followed you, at least from afar, blessed Virgin.

Who is this? This is she who therefore ascended into heaven, that she might make known to the whole world the grace that she found, might obtain pardon for the guilty, medicine for the sick. Thus henceforth make your piety, the grace that you found with God, known to the world, namely by obtaining by your holy prayers pardon for the guilty, medicine for the sick, strength for the little-hearted, consolation for the afflicted, help and liberation for those in danger. On this day also of solemnity and gladness, through you, clement queen, may Jesus Christ, who is God blessed above all things forever, bestow the gifts of his grace on the little servants who invoke the sweetest name of Mary with praise."

15. Likewise, she is the one whom God addressed above every creature, Song of Songs VIII, 8: Our sister, namely Mary, is little, namely through humility, but greatest through dignity; she has no breasts, namely of concupiscence and luxury, but of grace and mercy. Therefore, What shall we do for our sister, most faithful, most modest, on the day of annunciation, when she is to be addressed? by the Angel outwardly, and by the announcement from the whole Trinity inwardly, for the reception of the Son of God, for the reconciliation of men, for the closing of hell, for the opening again of heaven, for the eternal trampling down of the devil.

16. Likewise, she is the wall of defense. Song of Songs VIII, 10: I am a most firm wall, and my breasts are like a tower, saving and exalting, from the time that I was made before him as one finding peace, which no one could find. I am the dove of Noah, bearing to the Church the branch of olive and of universal peace^[1].

THE BOOK OF WISDOM.

Love justice, you who judge the earth^[2].

1. The most blessed Lady is called the mother of the instruction of foolish sinners, Wisdom VII, 12: I did not know, namely I the sinner, that of all these, namely of the faithful of Christ, wisdom is the mother, namely Mary.

Notes

[1] Compare Genesis VIII, 10 and 11. (*Cf. Genes. VIII, 10 et 11.*)

[2] Wisdom I, 1. (*Sapient. I, 1.*)

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2. Likewise, she is the mirror of the goodness of God, and the mirror of imitation. Wisdom VII, 26: She is the brightness of eternal light, and a spotless mirror. The Gloss: even of venial sin; and the image of his goodness, namely of God.

3. Likewise, she is the anointress of God and man, who reaches from the end of the mercies of God even to the end of the miseries of sinful man. Wisdom VIII, 1: Wisdom reaches strongly from end to end, etc.

4. Likewise, she is the mother of the communication of all goods, and the mother of consolation, removing weariness through pious consolation and the address of wisdom. Wisdom VIII, 9: Therefore I purposed to bring this one, namely Mary, to me for living together through devotion, inviting her to come to me, knowing

that she will share with me generously, faithfully, humbly, and usefully from the goods of grace and glory, and she will be the address of my thought and weariness. The Gloss: Address, that is, alleviation.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

All wisdom is from the Lord God ^[1].

1. Theotokos, the Virgin Mary, is called the most faithful receiver of her servants. Ecclesiasticus IV, 12: Wisdom, that is, Mary, breathes life, of grace and glory, into her sons, and God through her receives gloriously those who seek him, humbly and devoutly, and she will go before in the way of justice, namely through grace in the present, and afterward in death she will go before to the way of glory. And where will she enter? The Gloss, there: God will bless, namely enriching and preserving him. Genesis XXX, 30, Jacob said to Laban: And the Lord blessed you at my entrance; much more at the entrance of Mary.

2. Likewise, she is the honored mother ^[2], who feeds the hungry son, gives drink to the thirsty one, exalts the one made alive, fills the empty one, lays up grace and glory over the needy one, and glorifies with an eternal name the one loving her. These six benefits of the glorious mother are touched on, Ecclesiasticus XV, 2 and following: She will meet him as an honored mother. And, She will feed him. And, She will give him drink. And, She will make him inherit an eternal name.

3. Likewise, she is the light of justice. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 6: I made an unfailing light arise in the heavens, that is, Mary, and like a cloud I covered all the earth.

4. Likewise, she is the bridal chamber of rest, in which the Son of God was never disturbed by any sin. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 11: In all things I sought rest, and I found it only in Mary; therefore I shall dwell in the inheritance of the Lord, that is, in Mary, who antonomastically is called the portion and inheritance of the Lord. Hence, because of this rest, it is said to her by the Church that she offered hospitality of her holy body to the Lord of heaven

Notes

[1] Ecclesiasticus I, 1. (*Eccli. I, 1.*)

[2] Ecclesiasticus XV, 2. (*Eccli. XV, 2.*)

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of her holy body ^[1]. Wherefore he himself in turn also offered hospitality to her in her assumption, saying: I was a stranger, and you gathered me in; I was hungry, and you gave me to eat ^[2]. Therefore I give you power in heaven, on earth, in the sea, and in all abysses ^[3].

5. Likewise, she is the tabernacle of the sleeping-place and rest of the Son of God. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 12: The Creator of all things said to me, and he who created me rested in my tabernacle. As if someone were asking: What is the cause of your coming into this most foul world? I answer: He created me so that through me, most wise, God the Father might be appeased; for he swore through Jeremiah, XIII, 14, saying: I will not spare..., nor will I have mercy. But what did wise Mary say? Since it is inevitable that you strike, let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, and upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself ^[4], who from divinity could suffer so great a blow, and yet according to humanity she grieved beyond measure concerning him. But the Father was saying that word of Isaiah LIII, 10: If he shall lay down his soul for sin, etc. But the Son said that word of Jonah I, 12: Because on account of me this storm has come upon you, etc.; I shall appease the Father by cry, by blood, by death. And then the appeased Father said: I do not will the death of the impious man, because now I see the death of my Son; but I will that the impious man be converted to his way and live ^[5].

Likewise, I was created so that through me the ignoble sinner might be ennobled; for nothing is ignoble except the sinner and sin. Psalm LXXXII, 11: They were made like the dung of the earth, namely through sin, who before were sons of God through grace. Therefore when Mary was born, we were ennobled by her in nature, because from Christ we are called Christians.

Likewise, I was born so that the weakness of the human race might be aided through me, most faithful. Ecclesiastes IV, 1: I saw the tears of the innocent, and no consoler. Hence she herself, consoling us, says that word of Hosea XIII, 9: Your destruction, Israel: only in me is your help.

Likewise, I was created so that through me, most bright, the shadows of the world might be put to flight. Genesis I, 1: Let light be made, that is, Mary, who illuminates all, but dissimilarly: she illuminates the married as a star, widowed persons as the moon, virgins and religious as the sun.

Likewise, I was created so that through me the strength of the devil might be conquered. Genesis III, 15: She shall crush your head.

Likewise, I was created so that through me the poverty of the sons of Adam might be enriched. Hence Jerome, in the sermon on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin that begins: You compel me ^[6], said that the Virgin is full of grace, who gave glory to the heavens, the Lord to the earth, and poured back peace, faith to the nations, an end to vices, order to life, discipline to morals.

It follows: He rested in my tabernacle ^[7], because with his whole divinity and humanity. He rested usefully, because while existing in my womb he worked, as David says, Psalm LXXIII, 12, salvation in the middle of the earth. He rested sweetly, bringing in no pain, and entering and going out with the integrity of the chamber of the virginal enclosure. He rested generously, bringing all his goods with him to me. Wisdom VII, 11: All goods came to me together with her, etc. He rested purely, the purest one in the purest. Hence she herself says, Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 15: In the city

sanctified, that is, Mary, I likewise rested. For the Son could say to her that word which Jacob says to Laban, Genesis XXX, 30: You had little, namely O mother, before I came to you, namely through grace in your mind and divinity in your womb. And now you have been made rich and renowned, because you are Lady on earth. For to you have been handed the keys of death and hell, and of heaven ^[8]. And the Lord blessed you at my entrance. For this is Noah's entrance into the ark, when all the fountains of the abyss of graces were broken open ^[9].

6. Likewise, she was exalted in glory and grace above every creature. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 17 and following: Like a cedar, namely for putting to flight, I was exalted on Lebanon; its odor puts to flight the devil, the ancient serpent. Or for sustaining the burdens of the whole human race, there: Like a cypress on Mount Sion, which never yields to burdens; so she never yields to any tribulations. Or for defending, as there: Like a palm I was exalted in Cades, which with branches spread out has leaves in the manner of a human hand. Or for pacifying, as there: Like a beautiful olive, which is the tree of peace. Or for giving shade against the heat of temptations, as there: Like a plane tree I was exalted, which is high, has broad leaves, and is spread through branches. So also is the Queen of heaven.

7. Likewise, she is the vine of pleasantness and gladness. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 23: I, like a vine, have brought forth the sweetness of odor. But Mary is compared to the vine for three reasons. First, because the flower of the vine puts serpents to flight; so Mary puts demons to flight. Second, because the tear of the vine calms impetigo and scab; so Mary calms any crime. Third, because it produces wine, which removes sadness; so Mary gives perpetual gladness.

8. Likewise, the Blessed Virgin calls herself a fourfold mother: mother of beautiful love, against luxury; mother of fear, against proud audacity; mother of knowledge, against ingratitude and ignorance; mother of hope, against confused distrust. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 24: I am the mother of beautiful love, and of fear, and

of knowledge, and of holy hope.

9. She is also the depository of the whole Trinity, in which the sinner ought to seek whatever he has need of in grace. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 25: In me is every grace of life ^[10], against death, and of truth, against falsehood; in me is all hope, against despair; in me is all hope of the way ^[11] and of virtue, against every vice.

10. Likewise, she, sitting at the right hand of the Son of God, seeing our dangers, cries out, Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 26: Come over to me, all who, etc. Note from what, to whom, and whom she invites to come over. From what: from the deceiving world, from infecting sin, from the devouring devil. Or otherwise, as if she were saying: Pass over from the world, because the world passes away, and its concupiscence ^[12]; therefore pass over to me. Or, pass over while you can, from guilt to grace, because afterward you will not be able. But to whom? To me, who am the illuminatrix of sinners. Job XXIX, 15: I was an eye to the blind. Likewise, to me, who am the reconciler of sinners, as is clear in II Kings XXV, 1 and following, concerning Nabal and Abigail. Or, to me, who am the general receiver of all Christ's pilgrims. Job XXXI, 32: My door lay open to the traveler. But whom do you invite to pass over to you? All you who desire me, honoring me and loving me also through tender devotion. But why ought we to pass over? That you may be filled from my generations, because you are empty; that you may be saved, because you are lost; that you may be made sweet, because you are bitter.

Hence, in the same place, verse 27: For my spirit is sweet above honey, repelling every bitterness of sin. And pass over for this, that you may be satisfied, as there, verse 29: Those who eat me will still hunger, etc. The Gloss: through desire and devotion. Or, for this reason, that you may be instructed, as there, verse 30: He who hears me will not be confounded, and those who work in me, by serving me, will not sin. And below, verse 31: Those who make me clear, by preaching faithfully, truly, and devoutly to others, will have eternal life, through me and through my Son.

11. Likewise, she is the one who was created for us and sent into the world. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 14: From the beginning and before the ages I was created, etc. Seek concerning this in Proverbs VIII, 22: The Lord possessed me.

12. Likewise, she is the one whose habitation is in the fullness of the graces of Angels and Saints, and in the fullness of the Trinity itself. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 41 and following: I like the river Dioryx, which is interpreted medicine of generation, namely of the sick sons of Adam; and like an aqueduct I came forth from paradise. I said: I shall water my garden of plantings, and I shall make drunk the fruit of my meadow, that is, of my Son: ... and I shall illuminate all who hope in the Lord, not in the world or in another thing.

13. Likewise, she is the one who is praised commonly with prayers, and who commonly ought to be praised by all. Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 47: See, namely Angels, just persons, sinners, that I have not labored for myself alone, namely by nursing my Son, nourishing him, and standing by the cross, but for all who seek the truth.

14. Likewise, she is the sun, which by its presence adorns heaven. Ecclesiasticus XXVI, 21: As the sun rising to the world in the highest things of God, so is the appearance of a good woman for the ornament of her house. And Ecclesiasticus XLII, 16: The sun, illuminating through all things, looked, and the work of the Lord is full of his glory. Again, XLIII, 2 and following: The sun in its appearance, announcing at its going forth, is a wonderful vessel, a work of the Most High. At midday it burns the earth, and in the sight of its heat who will be able to endure? Keeping a furnace in works of heat: the sun, burning the mountains threefold, breathing out fiery rays, and shining with its rays, blinds the eyes. Great is the Lord who made it, etc.

15. Likewise, she is the moon that indicates to us the feasts of eternal pleasantness. Ecclesiasticus XLIII, 6: From the moon comes the sign of a feast day. Note concerning the signs of the moon.

16. Likewise, the Virgin Mary is signified by Abraham, in whose praise, and in the praise of his son Isaac, it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLIV, 25: The Lord gave him the blessing of all nations; this was verified

autonomastically of that Virgin, to whom the Lord gave every blessing. And, that we may repeat a little from the beginning, she had the blessing of the seventh day, on which God rested from every work that he had performed ^[13]. For in her truly there was the consummation of the works of the day, since all created things are united with the Creator in one work, namely in man: and the first becomes last, and the last first. For there is no perfection of motion except when it is in a circle. She also had the blessing of Adam and Eve. Genesis I, 28: Have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the birds of heaven, and all living things that move upon the earth. For through power she has dominion over the fishes of the sea, that is, over demons established in the bitterness of hell. She also has dominion over the birds of heaven, that is, over Angels flying through contemplation of God. She also has dominion through mercy over the living things that move upon the earth, that is, over men established in this world.

Likewise, she had the blessing of Jacob, which consists in three things. First in abundance

of necessities, there, Genesis XXVII, 28: May God give you from the dew of heaven and from the fatness of the earth an abundance of grain and wine. Second, in the dignity of goods, there, verse 29: Be lord of your brothers, and let the sons of your mother bow before you; let peoples serve you. In the removal of disadvantages, there, verse 29: Whoever curses you, let him be cursed; and whoever blesses you, let him be filled with blessings. Therefore let us all praise Mary, and let us say: Blessed are you among women ^[14].

She also had the blessing of Balaam, in which seven things are noted. The first is her glorious generation, there, Numbers XXIV, 17: A star shall rise from Jacob. The second, the incarnation of the Son of God, there: And a rod shall arise from Israel. The third, the destruction of vices, there: And let him strike the leaders of Moab. The fourth, the liberation of men, there, verse 18: And Idumaea will be his possession. The fifth, the confirmation of the blessed, there: Israel will act strongly. The sixth, the dominion of the rest, there, verse 19: From Jacob there will be one who rules. The seventh, the damnation of evils, there: And he will destroy the remnants of the city.

She also had the blessing of Moses, Deuteronomy XXVIII, 3 and following: Blessed are you in the city, and blessed in the field. Blessed is the fruit of your womb... Blessed shall you be entering and going out: you who migrated from this life without the pain of death, and entered heaven in body and soul.

She also had the blessing of Aaron; Ecclesiasticus XLV, 9 and following, concerning whose praise it is said: He crowned him with vessels of virtue,... and girded him round about with many golden bells, to give a sound in his walking, to make the sound heard in the temple as a memorial for the sons of his people.

She had the blessing of Samuel, concerning whose praise it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLVI, 16 and following: He renewed the empire, and anointed princes, etc. And, He saw the God of light, etc. He accepted no money, even down to shoes, from any flesh, and no man accused him.

She also had the blessing of David, concerning whose praise it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLVII, 4 and following: In his youth he killed the giant, and removed reproach from the nation... He crushed enemies on every side, and rooted out the contrary Philistines even to the present day.

She also had the blessing of Solomon, concerning whose praise it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLVII, 16 and 17: He was filled, like a river, with wisdom... Your name was spread abroad to distant islands.

She also had the blessing of Joseph, concerning whose praise it is said, Ecclesiasticus XLIX, 17, that he was prince of the brothers, firmament of the nation, collector of grain, and stabilizer of the people.

She also had the blessing of Onias, concerning whose praise it is said, Ecclesiasticus L, 1 and following, that in his days wells of waters flowed forth, and that he supported the house, and that he was like the morning star in the middle of a cloud, and like the full moon, and like the shining sun, and like a rainbow shining among clouds of glory, and like the flower of roses in spring days, and like lilies that are at the passage of water, and like fragrant incense; and like fire flashing forth and incense burning in fire; and like a solid vessel

of gold adorned with every precious stone; and like an olive budding forth, and a cypress lifting itself into height; and that he stretched forth his hand in liberation, and poured a libation from the blood of the grape, etc., to the high prince.

Notes

[1] See the Prose or Sequence that begins, Let us rejoice on this day. The present light of the day was the day of rest of the Maker of all things. Thus he rested in Mary, while in this way his Virgin becomes a lodging. (*Vide Prosam seu Sequentiam quae incipit, Jubilemus in hac die. Hodierna lux diei Dies fuit requiei Plasmatoris omnium. Sic quievit in Maria, Dum ipsius in hac via Virgo fit hospitium.*)

[2] Matthew XXV, 35. (*Matth. XXV, 35.*)

[3] Psalm CXXXII, 6. (*Psal. CXXXII, 6.*)

[4] Psalm LXXIX, 18. (*Psal. LXXIX, 18.*)

[5] Ezekiel XXXIII, 11 and XVIII, 23-32. (*Ezechiel. XXXIII, 11 et XVIII, 23-32.*)

[6] It is found in volume II, among the letters to Paula and Eustochium (note of the Lyon editor). (*Habetur tom. II, inter epistolas ad Paulam et Eustochium (Nota edit. Lugd.).*)

[7] Ecclesiasticus XXIV, 12. (*Eccli. XXIV, 12.*)

[8] Apocalypse I, 18. (*Apocal. I, 18.*)

[9] Compare Genesis VII, 11. (*Cf. Genes. VII, 11.*)

[10] The Vulgate has `of the way`. (*Vulgata habet via.*)

[11] There the Vulgate has `life`. (*Ibi est vita in Vulgata.*)

[12] I John II, 17. (*I Joannis, II, 17.*)

[13] Genesis II, 2. (*Genes. II, 2.*)

[14] Luke I, 28. (*Luc. I, 28.*)

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ISAIAH THE PROPHET.

The vision of Isaiah, son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem ^[1].

1. The Queen and Lady of all the Prophets is called the house and city of our faithfulness. Isaiah I, 27: You shall be called, namely O Mary, by the Patriarchs and Prophets, the city of the just one, that is, of Christ; a faithful city, faithfully receiving and preserving those who flee to her. The Psalmist praises this city, saying, Psalm LXXXVI, 3: Glorious things have been said of you, city of God. For this city was founded upon humility, walled by chastity, towered by charity, enriched by poverty, guarded by discretion, free by immunity from sins, pacified by victory over temptations, adorned with divine service through elegance of morals, built as a refuge of sinners, populous in virtue, watered with all gratuitous gifts, abounding in mercies, situated on high through excellence of privileges.

2. Likewise, she is the tabernacle that God the Father extends to sinners for four reasons. Isaiah IV, 6: The tabernacle, that is, the Virgin Mary, will be for shade. The Gloss: under protection; by day from heat. The Gloss: of persecution, God our helper ^[2]; and for concealment from whirlwind and from rain. The Gloss: that is, from greater and lesser persecution; hence Psalm LX, 5: I shall be protected in the covering of your wings.

3. Likewise, she is the throne of the incarnation of the Son of God. Isaiah VI, 1: I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and lifted-up throne, that is, the Virgin Mary, high as to soul and lifted up as to body. And below, verse 3: The whole earth, that is, house, is full of his glory. The Gloss: that is, with every grace, from his majesty. The Gloss: of the one reigning.

4. Likewise, she is the one who conceived and bore the liberator of all peoples. Isaiah VII, 14: For this reason the Lord himself will give you a sign of salvation and liberation, namely this: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son. The Gloss: calling sinners back. And his name will be called Emmanuel. The Gloss: that is,

God with us. With us by humanity, divinity, and fidelity. Hence Bernard: "Do not flee, O Adam, because God is with us ^[3], etc."

5. Likewise, she is the rod of the flower. Isaiah XI, 1: A rod shall come forth, that is, Mary, from the root of Jesse, and a flower. The Gloss: that is, Christ, who is a rod to the swollen, but to the good is the flower of virtues, the crown of Angels, and the garland of the elect; from his root he shall ascend, for the salvation of the elect, for the consolation of the afflicted, and for the liberation of captives.

6. Likewise, she is the receptacle and hiding-place of those fleeing from the wrath of God. Isaiah XVI, 4: Moab, be their hiding-place from the face of the devastator, that is, of Christ, who will devastate the impious.

7. Likewise, she is the throne of mercy, on which the Son of God mercifully judges the sinner. Isaiah XVI, 5: His throne will be prepared in mercy. The Gloss: that is, of the Son, because all sinners lack the grace of God; and he will sit upon it judging; for otherwise he will judge sitting on the throne of justice, which is in the future. Sitting and judging on the throne of mercy, when God wishes to spare the sinner, he considers and attends to five things. First, the weakness of the one sinning. Second, the malice of the insulting devil, saying that word of Psalm LXX, 11: God has abandoned him; pursue him, etc. Third, the sorrow of the penitent himself, when he cries out, Psalm VI, 3: Have mercy on me, because I am weak; heal me, Lord, because my bones are troubled. Fourth, the intercession of the Church triumphant, and especially of the Blessed Virgin, whose prayer cannot be despised. Fifth, above all things, his own goodness, concerning which he himself says, Matthew XX, 15: Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish, etc.?

Therefore the throne of glory was prepared in the nativity of the glorious Virgin. He sat upon it in the incarnation. But sitting on the throne of justice he will judge what is just. Hence it follows, in the same place, verse 5: Seeking judgment, in the second coming, and swiftly rendering. The Gloss: To each one according to his works ^[4], which is just. The Gloss: saying to the cursed: Go into eternal fire, etc., and to the good: Come, blessed ones ^[5], etc. But how does he render swiftly, since he waits for sinners, not taking vengeance, even to decrepit age? On this word, which he says, Deuteronomy VII, 10: Rendering at once to those who hate him. The Gloss: All time, compared to eternity, is as a point; and therefore God does not reckon it, even when he waits a long time.

8. Likewise, she is a most pure cloud without any sin. Isaiah XIX, 1: Behold, the Lord will ascend upon a light cloud. The Gloss: the body of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And he will enter Egypt. The Gloss: that is, the world. And the idols of Egypt will be moved together before his face, because he will destroy all sins.

9. Likewise, she is the city of strength against every evil. Isaiah XXVI, 1 and 2: Sion is the city of our strength, that is, Mary. The Gloss: It is the voice of the just both now and in the future. The Savior will be placed in her as a wall, that is, Christ, and as an outer wall, according to humanity. Open the gates. The Gloss: The Lord to the Angels; and let the just nation enter, keeping truth, not liars, not the unjust.

10. Likewise, she is a wealthy house and city. Isaiah XXXIII, 20 and 21: Look upon Sion, that is, Mary, the city of our solemnity; your eyes will see the city Jerusalem, a wealthy habitation, namely with grace. A tabernacle. The Gloss: and she is the house itself, because only there is our Lord magnificent, since in Mary he did great things, and through her he does great things, and because of her and in her he appeared magnified.

11. Likewise, she is the cause on account of which sinners praise God. Isaiah XLIII, 20: The beast of the field will glorify me. The Gloss: that is, the beastly man; dragons, that is, great and poisonous men; and ostriches. The Gloss: that is, hypocrites; because I gave, especially in the desert, that is, in Mary, waters, of all graces, and rivers, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that I might give drink. The Gloss: of living water, to my people, my elect people, crying to me, to whom I gave drink generously. For she is the rock concerning which it is said, Numbers XX, 8: Speak to the rock, that is, to Mary, and she will give waters, namely of

graces and joys.

12. Likewise, she is the earth sprouting the Savior. Isaiah XLV, 8: Drop down dew, heavens, from above, etc. The Gloss: Let Gabriel come, let him send us dew, and announce to us salvation

and let the clouds. The Gloss: that is, the Prophets, rain. The Gloss: by announcing the nativity, passion, and resurrection of Christ, the Just One, that is, Christ Jesus.

13. Likewise, she is the virtue of mercy, in which sinners are carried to conversion. Isaiah XLVI, 3 and 4: Hear me,... you who are carried by my womb. The Gloss: that is, in mercy; who are borne by my womb, that is, clemency. I shall carry, and I shall save. The Gloss: if you have been converted.

14. She is the earth making salvation. Isaiah LIII, 2: He shall ascend. The Gloss: the Son of God, like a little shoot. The Gloss: from the womb of the Virgin, before him, and like a root from thirsty earth. The Gloss: dry and clean from intercourse.

15. Likewise, she does not abandon us. Isaiah LIV, 10: The mountains will be moved, and the hills will tremble; but my mercy, that is, my mother, will not withdraw from you, will not leave you, nor abandon you, provided only that you wish to be converted.

16. Likewise, she is the fountain from which every good flows forth. Isaiah LVIII, 11: You will be, O Mary, like a watered garden. The Gloss: conspicuous with the flowers of virtues and the fruits of works; and like a fountain of waters. The Gloss: you will be made like Christ your head, whose waters will not fail, spiritual waters that water the Church.

17. Likewise, she is the one who meets God more confidently, lest he strike sinners. Isaiah LIX, 16: He saw. The Gloss: God, that there is no man. The Gloss: a holy one among the Jews, and he was perplexed. The Gloss: that is, saddened, because there is no one to meet him. The Gloss: to meet God, that he may not strike. But she meets him on behalf of all, like Abigail, when David was pleased.

18. Likewise, she is the city illuminated in the incarnation of her Son. Isaiah LX, 1 and following: Arise, be illuminated, Jerusalem, that is, Mary, because your light has come, that is, the Son of God, to illuminate, as the sun illuminates the world. Because behold darkness. The Gloss: unbelief and sin, will cover the earth, that is, the earth-loving one, and gloom the peoples; but over you the Lord will arise, most worthily. The Gloss: the true sun; and his glory will be seen in you, like light in a lamp, like the sun in a cloud, and like fire in the bush. And the nations, that is, miserable sinners, will walk in your light, that is, in Christ, who is light; and kings, that is, just persons, or even Angels, in the splendor of your rising: for all need your grace, your illumination, your propitiation.

19. Likewise, she is the one to whom all flow together through devotion. Isaiah LX, 4: Lift up, O Mary, your eyes round about you, namely the eyes of mercy and goodness, and see cheerfully: all these have been gathered together. The Gloss: from every nation that is under heaven, sinners for pardon, the just for grace, the sorrowful for joy; they have come to you, that is, crying out for your honor and mercy: Help, Lady, those who cry continually to you, because although we are sinners, nevertheless we are sons and daughters of your mercy. Hence it follows: Your sons, O Mary, will come from afar. The Gloss: from the far region of sin; and your daughters will rise from the side. The Gloss: You who once were far off have been made near^[6]. And below, verse 5: Then you will see, when you lift up your eyes, and you will overflow, and your heart will marvel and be enlarged. The Gloss: before joy, when the multitude of the sea shall have been converted to you. The Gloss: all the nations of the world, and the strength of the nations, shall have come to you.

20. Likewise, she is the House of the majesty of the whole Trinity and the altar of appeasement. Isaiah LX, 7: They will be offered, namely all the faithful who through the hand of Christ the priest wish to be received and presented to the Father, upon my appeasable altar

that is, Mary, my mother; and the house of my majesty, which the whole Trinity powerfully possessed and filled, I shall glorify in the heavens, before the Angels and Saints of God. Hence it follows, verse 12: For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you, O my Mother, will perish. The Gloss: on the day of judgment. As if he were saying: Therefore those who serve her will not perish.

21. Likewise, she is the one in whom the heavenly blessing is reserved for us. Isaiah LXV, 8: Thus says the Lord: As if, after a storm, a grain is found. The Gloss: unharmed. This grain is the Virgin Mary, unharmed by every sin, in the cluster of the human race. This was found in the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary: and let it be said. The Gloss: to the one wishing to touch: Do not scatter it. The Gloss: Allow it to grow, because it is a blessing. The Gloss: that is, it pleased God that it be reserved from so great a storm as a blessing. Thus I shall do for the sake of my servants, that I may not destroy the whole. The Gloss: the human race.

22. She is the house of imperial majesty. Isaiah LXVI, 1: What is that house that you will build for me? so immense that I may be enclosed in it. Jeremiah XXIII, 24: I fill heaven and earth. What then is that so great, so broad, so long house that you will build for me? This house is built by the counsel of the Patriarchs and Prophets, and by the counsel of David in holiness. Psalm XCI, 5: Holiness befits your house, Lord. And such holiness as is free from every defilement.

Likewise, by the counsel of Jeremiah, XVIII, 3, saying: I went down into the house of the potter, etc., to Mary, who is the house of all reformation and renewal. In this house let the Son of God be formed according to our image and likeness, mortal from immortal, last from first, poor from rich. In this house let the luxurious person be reformed to chastity, the proud to humility, the envious to charity, the blind to light, the lame to steps. Hence she herself says, Job XXIX, 15: I was an eye to the blind and a foot to the lame. O how eagerly the mutilated would run to such a house, where their members would be restored to them!

Likewise, by the counsel of Isaiah ^[7] saying: "The house of all fullness." In this house the sinner is filled with pardon, the just man with grace, the Trinity with glory, the person of the Son with human substance, so that there is no one who withdraws from that house with empty hand.

Likewise, by the counsel of Hosea ^[8] saying: A house of reception and protection of fleeing sinners, so that the one fleeing to her may be received and protected from the devil, from sin, and especially from an angry God. These are the counsels according to which the Virgin Mary was built into a house of holiness, for our cleansing; into a house of fullness, for our salvation; into a house of reformation, for the renewal of the whole creature.

23. Likewise, every nature is stupefied and marvels at her childbirth and the mode of giving birth, Isaiah LXVI, 7: Before she labored, she gave birth. The Gloss: she begot without time the strong Son, through whom all things were made and subsist. And below, verse 8: Who ever heard such a thing, that before she should labor, she should give birth, so that naturally labor should precede birth? The Father begot without time; you, Virgin, bore the same one in

Notes

[1] Isaiah I, 1. (*Isa. I, 1.*)

[2] Psalm XXX, 20. (*Psal. XXX, 20.*)

[3] St. Bernard, Sermon II on the Advent of the Lord. (*S. Bernardus, Serm. II de Adventu Domini.*)

[4] Psalm LXI, 13. (*Psal. LXI, 13.*)

[5] Matthew XXV, 41 and 34. (*Matth. XXV, 41 et 34.*)

[6] Ephesians II, 13. (*Ad Ephes. II, 13.*)

[7] We judge that an error has crept in here in the citation of the prophet Isaiah and of Hosea, for it has nothing to do with the point. But to us, for Isaiah, the places of Nehemiah, II Esdras IX, 25, seem to be cited: They possessed houses full of all goods. And in the same place, X, 38: The Levites will offer the tenth part of their tithe in the house of our God, to the treasury, into the house of treasure, that is, Mary, who is the treasury and house of treasure of all graces and goods, and the house of all fullness, because in her one is filled, etc. But for Hosea we judge that Joshua XX, 1 and following should be read, where God

commands cities to be designated for fugitives, which are a refuge, or house of refuge (Psalm XXX, 3), and a house of reception, etc. (note of the Lyon editor). (*Mendum irrepsisse hic arbitramur in citatione prophetae Isaiae, et Osee: ad propositum enim nihil habet. Nobis autem pro Isaia citanda videntur loca Nehemiae, II Esdrae, IX, 25: Possederunt domos plenas cunctis bonis. Et, ibidem, X, 38: Levitae offerent decimam partem decimae suae in domo Dei nostri, ad gazophylacium in domum thesauri, id est, Mariam, quae est gazophylacium et domus thesauri omnium gratiarum et bonorum, et domus totius plenitudinis, quia in hac repletur, etc. - Pro Osee autem legendum censemur Josue, XX, 1 et seq., ubi urbes pro fugitivis designari Deus jubet, quae sint refugium, vel domus refugii (Psal. XXX, 3,) et domus receptionis, etc. (Nota edit. Lugd.).*)

[8] See the preceding note. (*Vide notam superiorem.*)

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time. Luke II, 7: She bore her firstborn Son and wrapped him in cloths. O virgin, you gave birth wondrously, as Isaiah says here.

Likewise, you gave birth incorruptibly, like a star to a ray, a rod to a flower, and a vine to odor.

Likewise, you gave birth usefully, because he is the restorer of Angels and men, and therefore you are praised and blessed by Angels and men and by corporeal things. Angels praise you for three things, because he whom you begot restored by giving back what was lost, by multiplying the number, by increasing what was added over, namely the fourth hierarchy. Men praise you for three things, because you begot for them a redeemer, justifier, glorifier. Corporeal things praise you, because he whom you begot changed corporeal things by renewing, ennobling, and uniting all things in the body of Christ to divinity. The Father praises you because of chastity. The Son praises you because of humility. The Holy Spirit praises you because of goodness. Every creature praises you, O Virgin Mary, for you begot for the heavens an illuminator, for the unclean a flooder, for the bent a straightener, for the sorrowful a consoler, for the bound a consoler, for the poor an enricher, for the desperate a comforter, for the erring a leader-back, for those contending a crowner.

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET.

The words of Jeremiah, son of Helcias ^[1].

1. The Lady of the Prophets, the Virgin Mary, is a rod striking demons, correcting sinners, and keeping watch over the elect. Jeremiah I, 11 and 12: What do you see, Jeremiah? And he said: I see a watching rod, that is, Mary, watching faithfully over the elect as a mother over a son, watching mercifully like a master over a disciple. Thus she watches over sinners, to correct them, and she watches terribly over demons. And the Lord said to me: You have seen well, because I shall watch, as a father, but she will watch as a mother, over my word, that I may do it.

2. Likewise, she is the throne of mercy, to which sinners are mercifully gathered. Jeremiah III, 17: In that time, that is, of grace, they will call Jerusalem, that is, Mary, the throne of the Lord, on which God sat through mercy, by incarnating himself, and all nations will be gathered to her, that is, sinners, who there are absolved and are not punished according to their merits.

3. Likewise, she is the city and house of salvation. Jeremiah VIII, 14: Come together quickly, and let us enter the fortified city, that is, to Mary, fortified in nature, in grace, in glory; and let us be silent there. The Gloss: because we do not dare to entreat the Lord whom we have offended, but let her entreat and ask, because the Lord our God has made us be silent. The Gloss: because we offended him; and he gave us bitter water to drink. The Gloss: that is, we made sweet God bitter to us.

4. She is also the olive of all mercy and goodness. Jeremiah XI, 16: An olive

Notes

[1] Jeremiah I, 1. (*Jerem. I, 1.*)

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rich, beautiful, fruitful, splendid, the Lord called your name. Adapt these names to the diverse graces of the most blessed Virgin.

5. Likewise, she herself is the throne of propitiation. Jeremiah 14:21: Do not give us into reproach, ... and do not bring disgrace upon us, namely the disgrace which we have deserved: remember the throne of your glory, that is, Mary, do not make your covenant void. Gloss: of promised salvation, with us.

6. Likewise, she herself is our advocate, against the wise judge, against the most cunning enemy, and this in a desperate case. Jeremiah 15:1 and 2: And the Lord said to me: If Moses and Samuel stood before me. Gloss: praying for the people: my soul is not toward this people. But what, O good Jesus, if the mother of mercy shall have stood before you, will you, being angry, say to her concerning sinners, as to Jeremiah: Cast them out from your face, and let them go forth to sword, famine, captivity, and death? You will not so speak to your mother. Therefore, appeased by the voice of Mary, cry out: lead back the wretched to peace against the sword, to fullness against famine, to liberty against captivity, to life against death. She alone will take up the cause of the desperate, which none of the other Saints is fittingly permitted to take up, while the Lord says to the desperate sinner, Jeremiah 15:5: Who will have mercy on you, Jerusalem? that is, O desperate soul, which before were a vision of peace, but now are a vision of hell. Who will be saddened for you? when the sentence of death is borne against you, when it shall be said to you: Depart from me, accursed ones ^[1], and so forth. There, when all abandon us, she will not abandon us. For she will have mercy, and she will suffer with us; she will go to plead for our peace, which she will obtain more benevolently.

7. Likewise, she herself is the potter's house, or the house of the renewal of the human race. Jeremiah 18:1 and following: the Lord said to Jeremiah: Arise, and go down into the house of the potter. The house of God the potter is the Virgin Mary, in whom God made his work upon the wheel, the work of the incarnation, placing himself on the wheel of human changeableness, so that the fountain thirsted, the bread hungered, rest grew weary, light was darkened, life died on the wood. And this is what follows, verse 4: The vessel was broken, namely in the passion, but reshaped in the resurrection. This is the house in which the wretched Theophilus was reshaped, as is sung in praise of her on the day of her annunciation in the prose which begins: "Hail, Mary, reshaping Theophilus for grace."

8. Likewise, she herself is the most wise advocate, obtaining pardon and grace, and pleading that saying of Jeremiah 18:20: Remember, O Son, that I stood, at the time of your death, in your sight, at the cross, pitifully, and now with you in heaven, powerfully, in gilded clothing ^[2]. That I might speak good for those who are worthy of eternal death, and might turn your indignation away from them.

9. Likewise, she herself, after the example of the Son, offers herself for us. Jeremiah 26:14: Behold I, namely the mother of God, am in your hands, placing my whole self in your service: do to me what is good, not only to me, but also to you, now and in the future. And not only concerning me, indeed concerning my Son, whose body and blood you receive daily on the altar, do to me what you will; nevertheless do what is right in your eyes, and not only before yourselves, but also before your heavenly Father.

10. Likewise, she herself is the city of height. Jeremiah 30:18: A city, that is, Mary, shall be built by the Lord on high, so that it may be a support for all. Matthew 5:14: A city set upon a mountain cannot be hidden

Notes

[1] Matthew 25:41. (*Matth. XXV, 41.*)

[2] Psalm 44:10. (*Psal. XLIV, 10.*)

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set. And the temple will be founded. The temple of grace, mercy, and glory, and the temple of the whole Trinity, wholly is Mary: she has been founded through humility, raised up through hope, adorned through

charity.

11. Likewise, she herself is the work of all newness. Jeremiah 31:22: The Lord has created a new thing upon the earth, indeed in heaven and under the earth. A woman, that is, immaculate Mary, will wonderfully encompass a man, without male seed in the bosom of her womb.

12. Likewise, she herself is that vessel concerning which the Holy Spirit says, Ecclesiasticus 42:2: A wonderful vessel, the work of the Most High; wonderful, because it contains one greater than itself, namely God, whom the whole world does not carry, yet the entrails of a maiden bear him, as holy Church sings; wonderful, because it contains wine and water without interval and yet without mixture, namely the wine of deity and the water of humanity, because God in her suffered neither commixture nor division, as the same Church sings on the feast of the Circumcision of the Lord. Wonderful, because she received God closed within herself, whom, closed, she poured forth: hence a virgin before birth, a virgin in birth, and after birth.

Likewise, she herself is the mountain and house of all security. Jeremiah 31:23: May the Lord bless you, that is, Mary, beauty of justice, holy mountain. Gloss: whoever has dwelt in it will sustain or fear no ambushes.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH THE PROPHET.

How does the city full of people sit alone ^[1]?

1. The chosen bride of God, widowed at the death of her Son, sustaining pains and afflictions beyond measure. Lamentations 1:1: She has become as a widow. Gloss: with the bridegroom absent, the mistress of the nations; the princess of the provinces of heaven and earth has been made subject to the tribute of distress and sorrow. Whence Damascene ^[2]: "But even she, blessed and made worthy of gifts above nature, sustained at that time of the passion the pains of birth which she escaped when giving birth; from the maternal compassion of her entrails, bringing forth again the torn one, and seeing him whom by his nativity she had known as God slain as a malefactor, she is cut apart in her thoughts as by a sword; and this is: A sword will pass through your own soul ^[3]."

2. Likewise, she herself is the mother of bitterness in the passion of the Son, who was the mother of sweetness in conception. Hence, praying to the Father, she says, Lamentations 1:20: See, O Lord. O Father, let your tortures bend you as Father and you as kindly judge. See your Son, most beautiful, made most misshapen; lofty, cast down most low; crying to you: Eli, Eli, why have you forsaken me ^[4]? See your Son, joined to me above all things

Notes

[1] Lamentations 1:1. (*Thren. I, 1.*)

[2] Saint John Damascene, Book IV On the Orthodox Faith, chapter 15. (*S. J. Damascenus, Lib. IV de Fide orthodoxa, cap. 15.*)

[3] Luke 2:35. (*Luc. II, 35.*)

[4] Matthew 27:46. (*Matth. XXVII, 46.*)

Lamentations and Ezekiel the Prophet, page 415

through death. See poor me, Mary, the mother of your only-begotten Son, because I am full of bitterness in the soul which the sword has passed through; full of bitterness in the ears, hearing the cry of the Son crying: Why have you forsaken me? hearing the cry of him taking leave of me and saying: Woman, behold your son ^[1]. Full of bitterness in the eyes, because I saw him crowned with thorns, pierced by the lance, on every side stained with blood; because now I am full of bitterness, I ask that sinners be full of mercy, the just of grace, the elect of glory. There follows, Lamentations 1:36: My voice, O Father of mercies, you have heard, and the voice of your Son you have heard: do not turn the ear of propitiation away from my sobbing and from the cries of my heart for sinners, whom I commend to your loving-kindness.

EZEKIEL THE PROPHET.

And it happened in the thirtieth year ^[2].

1. The queen of the Prophets is the house in which the Son, having professed humanity, was made our brother. Ezekiel 3:24, the Lord said to Ezekiel. Gloss: which is interpreted strengthened by God, and signifies Christ: Enter, subtly through the glass window, abundantly like rain upon the fleece, taking on all the bonds of punishments; wonderfully, he whom the whole world cannot enclose is enclosed in the womb of the tender Virgin. Whence it follows: To be enclosed in the midst of your house, that is, in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

2. Likewise, she herself is the mother of instruction. Ezekiel 5:5: This is Jerusalem, that is, Mary; I have placed her in the midst of the nations. Gloss: that is, in the navel of the world. Whence Psalm 73:12: You have worked salvation in the midst of the earth.

3. She herself also is the gate concerning which it will be said below, Ezekiel 11:1: And he brought me to the gate, that is, Mary, the eastern gate of the house of the Lord, through which light shone forth to the whole world, which looks toward the rising of the sun. Gloss: of justice.

4. Likewise, she herself is the mother of justice. First, because she bore judgment and justice, namely Jesus Christ, who is our justice and sanctification ^[3]. Second, because she herself never raised her eyes to any evil. Third, because she saddened no one, but made all glad. Fourth, because she seized nothing by force: which Eve did not do, for she wished to seize divinity and lost happiness. Fifth, because she gives her bread, that is, the body of the Son, on the altar daily to the hungry. Sixth, because she covers the naked sinner with the garment of pardon, the just person with the garment of grace, the elect person with the garment of glory, and the Son of God with the garment of human substance.

5. Likewise, she herself is the mother of life. Ezekiel 16:31: Thus says the Lord, namely

Notes

[1] John 19:26. (*Joan. XIX, 26.*)

[2] Ezekiel 1:1. (*Ezechiel. I, 1.*)

[3] 1 Corinthians 1:30. (*I ad Corinth. I, 30.*)

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to desperate sinners: Why will you die, house of Israel? that is, sinners, who are sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who by the merits of the fathers ought deservedly to live. From this it is argued: If by the merits of Abraham and the others we can live, who were servants of God, therefore through her who is greater, namely the mother of life, we ought to live, because he gave every judgment of mercy to his mother, so that all may honor the mother, just as they honor the Son ^[1]. And because we are sons of her mercy, the Lord cries that which immediately follows, Ezekiel 16:32: I do not will the death of one dying, namely the sinner, but rather that life may live. Gloss: the life of grace, by the prayers of the Virgin Mary.

6. Likewise, she herself is she who defends us from the wrath of God. Ezekiel 22:30: Thus says the Lord: I sought among them a man who would place a hedge between. Gloss: that is, intercession, and would stand opposed against me for the land, that is, for the sinner, lest I scatter it, namely swiftly, and I did not find one, because this was reserved for the Virgin Mary.

7. Likewise, she herself is the clothing of the sun of justice. Ezekiel 32:7: I will cover the sun, that is, Christ, with a cloud, that is, mercifully with humanity in my womb.

8. Likewise, she herself is the gate of the illumination of every creature. Ezekiel 43:1 and 2: He led me to the gate which looked toward the eastern way. And behold, the glory of the Lord of Israel, Jesus Christ, was

entering, likewise by the eastern way, because he was conceived without sin; others, however, enter the world by the western way, of original fault. And his voice was. Gloss: God's, like the voice of many waters, and the earth shone from his majesty; this was properly done in the advent of Christ.

9. Likewise, she herself is the temple of majesty. Ezekiel 43:4: The majesty of the Lord entered the temple, that is, the womb of Mary. For what purpose? To sanctify: Psalm 45:5: The Most High sanctified his tabernacle. To fill it: whence there follows, verse 5: And behold, the house was filled with the glory of the Lord. To dwell with us: whence there follows, verse 7: And he said to me: Son of man, the place of my throne and the place of the steps of my feet, where I dwell, that is, in Mary, in the midst of the children of Israel forever. Gloss: not for a time. And below, verse 10: But you, son of man, show, by preaching and praising, to the house of Israel the temple, that is, Mary, according to length, breadth, height, and depth, concerning which he speaks well and sufficiently above.

10. Likewise, she herself is the closed gate. Ezekiel 44:1 and following: And he turned me to the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looked toward the East, and it was closed. Gloss: the Virgin Mary, a virgin before birth, in birth, and after birth. And the Lord said to me: This gate shall be closed; it shall not be opened, and a man shall not pass through it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered through it. Gloss: with the doors closed. And it shall be closed for the prince. Gloss: for the Word of God, at whose coming it will be unlocked for his use. The prince himself. Gloss: that is, Christ, will sit in it, that he may eat. Gloss: with us, bread before the Lord. He shall enter by the way of the vestibule of the gate. Gloss: so that he may bring to grace those who cannot enter by themselves; for he himself has been poured into all; and he shall go out by its way. Gloss: poured around all those who are outside.

11. Likewise, he himself is the gate lying open through mercy to the sinner. Ezekiel 46:1 and following: The gate which looks toward the east. Gloss: whence the sun of justice rises: on the sabbath day it shall be opened. Gloss: namely on the seventh, in which there is rest; and on the day of the kalends ^[2], that is, of the solemnities of her Son, and in

Notes

[1] Compare John 5:22 and 23. (*Cf. Joan. V, 22 et 23.*)

[2] Ezekiel 23:13 and following. (*Ezechiel. XXIII, 13 et seq.*)

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with fervor it shall be opened, through largeness; and the prince will enter ... But the gate shall not be closed. Gloss: after the departure of the prince, until evening. And the people of the land will adore at the entrance of that gate. Gloss: when the gate will be opened; therefore it will not be closed, so that the people may adore after the prince. The prince will offer the holocaust of the remission of all sins. Gloss: that is, Christ, on the sabbath day, literally, when the feast of his mother is kept. But the prince will be in their midst. Gloss: namely of those entering and going out. Whence John 1:26: One stands in your midst, whom you do not know. With those entering he will enter, and with those going out he will go out. Gloss: standing by as witness of both sexes, namely of virtue or of sin.

DANIEL THE PROPHET.

In the third year of Joakim ^[1].

1. Mary, empress of the Prophets, is called the mountain of the breaking of the devil and of sinners. Daniel 2:34 and 35: A stone was cut off. Gloss: that is, Christ, from the mountain, that is, from Mary, who is a curdled mountain, a rich mountain, a mountain in which it has pleased God to dwell ^[2]. Cut off without hands, that is, generated without the work of a man, and he struck the statue, that is, the devil and all the proud, and broke them to pieces. Psalm 17:43: I will crush them like dust, and so forth. But the stone which

had struck the statue became a great mountain, great in nature, great in power, great in mercy, great in vengeance. And it filled the whole earth and heaven. Gloss: by glory, heaven. Habakkuk 3:3: His glory covered the heavens. By mercy, the earth. Psalm 32:5: The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. Hell, with grief and misery. Whence Job 10:22: A land of misery and darkness.

2. Likewise, she herself is a tree commended in many ways, Daniel 4:7 and following. First, she is commended from commonness, there: I saw, and behold a tree in the middle of the earth, that is, Mary in the midst of the Church, looking upon all, and as far as lies in herself, holding herself commonly toward all. Second, from dignity, there: And its height was excessive. Bernard: "O Virgin, sublime branch, to what a height you raise your holy summit, even to him sitting on the throne, even to the Lord of majesty. Nor indeed is this wonderful, since you send the roots of humility on high ^[3]." And great. Gloss: by the greatness of virtues. Third, from strength, there: And strong. Gloss: against the devil, death, and sin. Seek that saying of Proverbs 31:10: Who will find a strong woman? And its tallness touching heaven, that is, Christ God. Fourth, from mercy toward all, there: The sight of it. Gloss: of mercy,

Notes

[1] Daniel 1:1. (*Daniel. I, 1.*)

[2] Psalm 67:16 and 17. (*Psal. LXVII, 16 et 17.*)

[3] Saint Bernard, Sermon II On the Advent of the Lord. (*S. Bernardus, Sermon. II de Adventu Domini.*)

Daniel and Hosea the Prophet, page 418

was even to the ends of the whole earth. Gloss: Not only to the Angels and the just, but also to sinners; indeed to those who are in purgatory. Fifth, from fruitfulness, there: Its leaves were very beautiful, that is, the words which she spoke to the Angel, to her kinswoman, to the Son, to the ministers. And its fruit was exceedingly great, that is, Christ Jesus, who suffices both for Angels and for human beings. Sixth, from feeding, because she fed all, there: And the food of all was in it, that is, of Angels and of human beings. Seventh, from most faithful protection, there: Beneath it, that is, beneath her protection, dwelt, confidently and joyfully, animals and beasts, that is, wretched sinners, because of refreshment, protection, rest, and beauty. Eighth, from the delight which all the Saints have in her, there: And in its branches, namely of virtues, that is, of humility, mercy, charity, and so forth, the birds of heaven dwelt, that is, all the Saints, and from it all flesh was fed, because she nourishes all.

HOSEA THE PROPHET.

The word of the Lord, which came to Hosea ^[1].

1. The blessed Virgin Mary is the vine of fruit-bearing. Hosea 10:1: Israel is a leafy vine, that is, Mary full of every grace, having good shoots; the fruit has been made equal to it. This fruit surpasses all others in quantity and quality, holiness and sweetness. Hosea 14:6: I shall be like dew. Gloss: I will take away the heat of blazing fire and of lust, when she has been infused with this dew.

2. Likewise, she always bursts forth into works of loving-kindness. Hosea 14:6: Its root will burst forth. Gloss: that is, the good will shall be led through to the effect of a good work, as of Lebanon. And below, verse 7: Its branches will go from virtue into virtue ^[2].

3. Likewise, she herself is the mother of mercy. In the same place, 14:7: Her glory will be like the olive tree. Gloss: through works of mercy: and her fragrance like Lebanon. And below, verse 8: Her memorial is like the wine of Lebanon, which, seasoned with diverse spices, sends forth a sweet fragrance. Bernard: "We praise virginity, we wonder at humility, but mercy tastes sweeter to the wretched; we embrace mercy more dearly, we remember it more often, we invoke it more frequently, and so forth ^[3]."

Notes

[1] Hosea 1:1. (*Osee, I, 1.*)

[2] Compare Psalm 83:8. (*Cf. Psal. LXXXIII, 8.*)

[3] Saint Bernard, Sermon IV On the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (*S. Bernardus, Sermo IV de Assumptione B. Mariae Virg.*)

Joel, Jonah, and Micah the Prophet, page 419

JOEL THE PROPHET.

The word of the Lord which came to Joel, the son of Phatuel ^[1].

1. Our Lady, the Virgin Mary, is she to whom every creature looks after God. Joel 1:20: But even the beasts of the field, that is, sinners, like a threshing floor thirsting for the rain of pardon, have looked up to you. Gloss: demanding the dew of mercy, because the springs of waters have dried up; but not you, who superabound with the fullness of graces.

2. Likewise, she herself is the spring of the house of the Lord, watering the dryness of sinners. Joel 3:18: On that day, namely of grace and mercy, a spring from the house of the Lord, that is, Mary by being born in the world, shall go forth and water the torrent of thorns. Gloss: so that those who were pierced by the stings of vices may now be adorned by the flowers of virtues.

JONAH THE PROPHET.

The word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amathi, saying ^[2].

1. The mother of mercy is the sea which could never rest through desires and sighings until the true Jonah, that is, the Son of God, was sent into it through the incarnation. Jonah 1:11 and following: The men said to Jonah. Gloss: Jonah, which is interpreted dove, is Christ: What shall we do to you, and the sea will cease from us? And he said to them: Take me and cast me into the sea, that is, into Mary, the richest into the poorest, the highest into the lowest, the Lord into the handmaid. And they took Jonah, that is, Christ. Gloss: not resisting, but voluntarily obeying the will of the Father; and they cast him into the sea, that is, into the womb of Mary, with angelic honor and service.

MICAH THE PROPHET.

The word of the Lord which came to Micah, and so forth ^[3].

1. Mary is the tower of the power of God. Micah 4:8: Tower of the flock, that is, a defense, cloudy, overshadowing and hiding sinners, it shall come all the way to you. Gloss:

Notes

[1] Joel 1:1. (*Joel, I, 1.*)

[2] Jonah 1:4. (*Jonae, I, 4.*)

[3] Micah 1:1. (*Michaeae, I, 1.*)

Micah and Zechariah the Prophet, page 420

God: and the first power will come. Gloss: that is, Christ giving to you the second power in all things, so that you can say: All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth ^[1].

ZECHARIAH THE PROPHET.

In the eighth month ^[2].

1. Our mother is the wall of preservation against the devil, the world, and sin. Zechariah 2:5: I will be a wall of fire round about. Gloss: a defense in them. And below, verse 8: Whoever has touched you, by detracting, persecuting, troubling, touches the pupil of my eye, which is immediately avenged.

2. Likewise, she herself is the stone of the foundation, adorned in the fullness of graces. Zechariah 3:9: Behold the stone which I have set before Jesus; upon one stone, that is, Mary, there are seven eyes, that is, the fullness of all spiritual grace.

3. Likewise, she herself is the lampstand of illumination in the Church. Zechariah 4:2: I saw, and behold an entirely golden lampstand, that is, Mary, and its lamp, that is, Christ, upon its head, and its seven lamps upon it, that is, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; and seven funnels. Gloss: in these the oil of mercy is poured into the lamps, so that they may shine on the lampstand, that is, in Mary.

4. Likewise, she herself is the chief stone. Zechariah 4:7: The Lord will bring forth the chief stone, and he will equal grace to its grace. Gloss: The grace of the stone will equal the grace which she exercised toward sinners.

5. Likewise, she herself is the temple of fortification. Zechariah 9:12: Thus says the Lord. Gloss: to sinners, to the just, and to all: Turn back. Gloss: trustingly, to the fortification, that is, to Mary, bound ones of hope, and those to be freed by the mercy of God.

6. Likewise, she herself is the spring of communication. Zechariah 13:1: There will be an open spring for the house of David. Gloss: that is, for all those thirsting and dwelling in Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner and of the menstruous woman, that is, of greater criminal sins.

Notes

[1] Matthew 28:18. (*Matth. XXVIII, 18.*)

[2] Zechariah 1:1. (*Zachar. I, 1.*)

The Gospel according to Matthew, page 421

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham ^[1].

1. The Lady of the Evangelists in the Gospel of blessed Matthew, 1:18: When she had been betrothed, and so forth. Great was the humility, that the Lady wished to be betrothed to a servant, the Empress to a craftsman. Whence Bernard: "Who is this virgin so venerable that she is greeted by an Angel, so humble that she is betrothed to a craftsman, and so forth? You hear, O sinner, a virgin; you hear one humble. If you cannot imitate the virginity of the humble one, imitate the humility of the Virgin. For you can be saved without virginity, but without humility you cannot, and so forth. For Mary pleased by virginity, yet conceived by humility ^[2]."

But the betrothal of the Virgin was useful for many things. First, so that marriage might be shown to be good. Second, so that Mary might be deprived of no good. Third, so that the enemy might be deceived. Fourth, so that a witness of chastity might be had. Fifth, so that the origin of the Lady might be described, for Scripture is not accustomed to genealogize women. Sixth, so that she might be preserved from infamy. Seventh, so that punishment might be guarded against. Eighth, so that persecution might be removed from Christ. Ninth, so that a son might be provided. Tenth, so that the Lord might be served. Eleventh, so that humility might be joined to virginity. Twelfth, so that the occasion of carelessness about reputation might be taken away from virgins. Thirteenth, so that the charity and humility of the Son might be shown, who preferred to be called the son of a craftsman rather than have his mother defamed. Fourteenth, so that the dignity of the mother might be associated with humility, so that the greater she was, by so much the more she might humble herself, namely that she should be the mother of God and the wife of a craftsman.

2. Likewise, she herself is commended from sublime dignity, in that she becomes the mother of Jesus. Bernard ^[3]: If you attend also to whose mother she is, and so forth, does not Mary boldly call God and the

Lord of Angels her son, saying: Son, why have you done thus to us ^[4]?"

3. Likewise, she is commended from faithfulness: for God stored the treasure of our redemption in her, as there: She was found having in the womb. But what? Bernard says: "The joy of Angels, the grace of the just, pardon for sinners. Therefore give back, O mother, what you owe: the hostage by whom we may be redeemed, the treasure by which we may be enriched, the brother by whom we may be united, God through whom we may be exalted; for this you have in the womb."

4. Likewise she is commended from highest purity, as there: Of the Holy Spirit. Whence Anselm: "It was fitting that with that purity, than which no greater can be understood under God, the virgin

should shine, to whom God the Father was arranging to give his only Son, whom, begotten from his heart as equal to himself, he loved as himself, in such a way that naturally one and the same Son would be common to God the Father and the Virgin; and she whom the Son himself was substantially choosing as mother for himself, and from whom the Holy Spirit was willing and was going to work that he should be conceived and born, he from whom he proceeded ^[5]."

5. Likewise, she is commended from the usefulness of the nativity of God, as there, verse 20: Joseph, son of David, and so forth. There follows, verse 21 and following: But she will bear a son, and so forth. But whom? The restorer of Angels, the redeemer of human beings, the renewer of bodily things. And his name will be called, as Isaiah says, Emmanuel ^[6], which is interpreted God-with-us. With us by brotherhood, because he is our brother and flesh ^[7]. With us by companionship, John 17:12: Father, ... those whom you gave me, I have guarded, and so forth. With us by provision, 1 Peter 5:7: Casting all your care upon him. With us in eternal dwelling, Matthew 28:20: Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the age.

6. Likewise, she herself is the star in the East. Matthew 2:2: We have seen his star in the East. This star first appears to the sinner returning to God; whence there follows: And we have come to adore him, that is, the Son of God and the Lady, his mother.

7. Likewise, she herself troubles Herod, that is, the devil, as there, verse 3: But Herod the king, hearing, was troubled, and so forth; and below, verse 7: Herod diligently learned from them the time of the star, that is, of Mary, who appeared through nature, by being born into the world, and through grace, by appearing in the mind; therefore Herod, that is, the devil, is more vehemently terrified.

8. Likewise, she herself furnishes leadership to those following her, as there, verse 9: And behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, as the reconciler of the guilty and inviter of guests.

9. Likewise, she herself gladdens her pilgrims, as there, verse 10: But seeing the star, that is, Mary, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

10. Likewise, Mary herself ought to be taken up in two things: for driving away the devil and for returning into the homeland. Concerning the first, in the same place, verse 13: The Angel of the Lord appeared in dreams to Joseph, that is, to the sinner sleeping in sins, saying: Arise, namely quickly, and take the child and his mother, namely the child for offering to the Father, the mother for reconciliation, so that she may speak for you. Concerning the second, the Angel said to Joseph, Matthew 2:20: Arise joyfully, and take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel, that is, into the heavenly homeland; for those who sought the soul of the child have died, indeed also those who sought your soul, namely demons, tempting you, thoughts attacking you, the world deceiving you, who seek to extinguish the grace of Christ in you and to drag you to hell.

11. Likewise, she herself is the mountain of the illumination of all the beatitudes. Matthew 5:1 and following: Jesus, seeing the crowds, ascended the mountain, that is, Mary in the incarnation. But the first illumination of beatitude is the illumination of poverty; whence, verse 3: Blessed are the poor in spirit, and so forth. Blessed are the poor. Gloss: those whom not necessity but faith and devotion makes poor, so that, with

all things despised, they may live to God. But such contempt of all things was in the blessed Virgin in the highest degree. For some give the superfluous things of nature, but not of the person. Augustine: "Use superfluous things; give necessary things to the poor:

use precious things; give cheap things to the poor; and this is the first degree of poverty ^[8]." The second degree is to give the superfluous things of nature and of the person. Luke 11:41: What remains, give as alms. Gloss: Let us divide with our neighbors not only outward things, but very necessary things. The third degree is not only to give superfluous things, but also necessary things. Whence Luke 3:11: He who has two tunics, let him give to one who does not have. The fourth degree is to give all necessary and superfluous things together, but still to retain oneself: as certain Philosophers did, although not for God. The fifth degree is to give all things and to leave oneself: on that account to labor with the hands, so that one may have from which to give necessity to the one suffering need. The Apostle had this degree. The sixth degree is to give all things and to add oneself besides. Whence in the Gospel of Matthew 19:21: If you wish to be perfect, go, sell, and so forth. The seventh degree is to give all things, and oneself, and to labor in spirit and body, so as to feed one's neighbor with spiritual bread. And this is more excellent than the sixth, because Gregory says: "It is more to refresh with the food of the word the mind that will live forever than to satisfy with earthly bread the belly of flesh that will die ^[9]." The eighth degree is to leave all things and oneself, and from the substance of one's own body to receive a part for the refreshment of the souls of neighbors. So the most blessed Virgin from her most pure flesh and blood made for us the bread of life, which whoever shall eat will not taste death forever ^[10]. The ninth degree is to give all things, one's own soul and body, even the deity united to these, to one's neighbor as food of the soul under another species. This is the degree of highest poverty on the way. The tenth is to give oneself according to the whole body and soul, and deity under its own species, as food of body and soul together in eternal beatitude, concerning which Luke 14:15 says: Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Here it is clear that blessed Mary has poverty of spirit more excellently than every human being, except Christ; because, since she surpasses all in dignity and had poverty equal to others, she surpasses all disproportionately in poverty.

The second illumination is meekness, there, Matthew 5:4: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land. She had this meekness and mildness, excepting Christ, most excellently. Gloss: The meek person is one who rules over bad manners; this she did most perfectly. For her rule over bad manners was without battle; the rule of all others is with battle. Likewise, Gloss: The mild person does not provoke, nor is provoked. For he thinks to harm no one and to profit all in the highest degree. She fulfilled this most perfectly. Whence the Church, praising her in the hymn "Hail, star of the sea," says concerning her: "Singular Virgin, meek among all, us, and so forth."

The third illumination is mourning. In the same place, verse 5: Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be consoled. This mourning, after Christ, was most excellently in the blessed Virgin. Likewise, the less services are owed, the more pleasing they are; but the mourning of the blessed Virgin Mary was in no way owed by a debt of necessity, but only by a debt of charity. Therefore, just as her mourning was disproportionate to others, so also her consolation was disproportionate to others.

The fourth illumination is hunger and thirst for justice, there, verse 6: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, and so forth. This likewise was in her most excellently.

The fifth is the illumination of mercy, there, verse 8: Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. But since mercy is to give and to forgive, and the blessed Virgin gave more than all and forgave more over all, therefore above all she received the beatitude of mercy. Ambrose says: "Mercy is to leave no one

in misery, and to make no one wretched"; this is in the blessed Virgin in the highest degree. Therefore she has the beatitude of mercy in the highest degree.

The sixth is the illumination of cleanness, there, verse 8: Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. But these, as the Gloss says, are clean of heart whom the conscience of sins does not accuse; but this was in the blessed Virgin in the highest degree. Therefore she had cleanness of heart in the highest degree.

The seventh is the illumination of peace, as there, verse 9: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Gloss: While the law of the flesh fights against the law of the mind, not only in one way, but not even in this way, can we be peacemakers. Therefore she existed as more pacified than all, in whom the flesh did not rebel against the spirit. And thus she possessed and possesses the beatitude of highest peace.

The eighth illumination is of martyrdom or persecution, as there, verse 10: Blessed are those who suffer persecution for justice. Here that persecution is treated which is martyrdom, to which a little crown is owed. Whence Bernard: "Not undeservedly do we proclaim her far more than a martyr, in whom, undoubtedly, the affection of compassion exceeded the sense of bodily passion ^[11]." Likewise, Bernard on that saying, In the fullness of the Saints is my detention ^[13]: "Deservedly her detention was in the fullness of saints, to whom the faith of the Patriarchs was not lacking, nor the spirit of the Prophets, nor the zeal of the Apostles, nor the constancy of Martyrs, nor the sobriety of Confessors, nor the chastity of Virgins, nor the fruitfulness of the married, nor the purity of Angels ^[12]." These are the eight rays of illumination by which the mind of the Virgin Mary was incomparably illuminated before all.

12. Likewise, she herself is the city set for us on high and for refuge. Matthew 5:14: A city cannot be hidden, that is, Mary cannot be concealed, set upon a mountain, namely of virtues and graces.

13. Likewise, she herself is the lamp shining for all. Matthew 5:15: Nor do they light, namely the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a lamp, that is, Mary, who was lit on the day of the incarnation, and place it under a bushel, as those who dishonor her do, but upon a lampstand, that is, the Church, so that it may shine, without distinction, for all who are in the house, that is, in the Church or in the world.

14. Likewise, she herself is the altar of our offerings. Matthew 5:23 and 24: If you offer your gift at the altar, that is, at Mary, go first to be reconciled with your brother, that is, Jesus Christ.

15. Likewise, she herself is our giver and lender. Matthew 5:42: Whoever asks from you, O Mary, insistently, give to him. Gloss: those things which can be given honorably and justly; and from one willing to borrow from you, you who are most rich, do not turn away.

16. Likewise, she herself is the sun shining everywhere. Matthew 5:45: The Father, who makes his sun, that is, the Virgin Mary, rise, by nativity in the world and by grace in the mind, upon the good, so that they may be strengthened, consoled, and illuminated; and upon the evil, so that they may be converted and saved. And he rains upon the just and the unjust, but in one way and another way.

17. Likewise, she herself is the good tree, which makes the best fruit. Matthew 7:18: A good tree cannot, that is, one good in nature,

better in grace, but best in glory, make evil fruits. Gloss: because the fruit of the tree sprouts from the root. Nor can a bad tree, that is, wretched Eve, make good fruits, because we are conceived and born in the bitterness of original fault.

18. Likewise, she herself is the house of all firmness. Matthew 7:24 and 25: He shall be likened to a wise man, that is, to Christ, who built his house, that is, Mary, upon rock. Therefore that person will not be the house of God who is easily changed by inconstancy. And the rain descended, and the floods came, in the passion of the most beloved Son, and the winds blew, namely the revilers and mockers, saying, Matthew 27:40: Vah! you who destroy the temple of God. And they rushed against that house, that is, against Mary. Whence she herself could say to the Father that saying of the Psalmist, Psalm 41:8: Your waves have passed over me. And she did not fall through cruelty and unbelief, as did the Apostles; but she stood most strong beside the cross, because she had been founded upon firm rock, that is, Christ.

19. Likewise, she herself is the little boat in which the Son of God crossed over from the shore of immortality to the shore of mortality, taking on our humanity and conferring his deity upon us. Matthew 9:1: Jesus, going up into the little boat, crossed over and came into his own city.

20. Likewise, she herself is designated by the Centurion, because she can truly say, Matthew 8:9: For I also, namely Mary, am a human being, although exalted above the Angels, having soldiers under me, that is, all the Angels. And I say to this one: Go, and he goes; go to liberate, console, and transfer companions from earth, and he goes obediently. And to another: Come, and he comes.

21. Likewise, she herself is designated by Joseph, to whom the king of Egypt said: Only by the throne of the kingdom will I precede you.... Without your command no one shall move hand or foot in all the land of Egypt ^[14].

22. Likewise, she herself is the place of the treasures of God. Matthew 12:35: The good man, that is, Christ, God and man, from the good treasure, that is, from the Virgin Mary, brings forth good things, namely things of mercy, grace, and glory.

23. Likewise, she herself is the mountain of mercies. Matthew 21:1 and following: When Jesus had come to the Mount of Olives. Gloss: looking to the height of mercy. For mercy is designated by oil. Therefore he came to the Mount of Olives, that is, to Mary, when he was incarnate from her. But his coming has a threefold usefulness. First, because the bound she-ass is loosed from the punishments of sins. Second, because she is led into Jerusalem, that is, into the vision of peace. Third, because she is ruled and adorned with the garments of the disciples, namely in morals and in faith.

24. Likewise, she herself is the servant of sinners, according to the constitution of the Son. Matthew 23:11: He who is greater among you shall be your servant. But she, apart from God, is greater than all. Therefore she is also servant. But she serves willingly. Luke 1:38: Behold the handmaid of the Lord. She serves universally, because in heaven and on earth and in purgatory. Ecclesiasticus 24:14: In the holy dwelling I ministered before him. She serves humbly, because to the small as to the greatest, to the poor sinner as to the rich just person. She serves faithfully, because she daily feeds and gives drink to us with the body and blood of her Son.

Notes

[1] Matthew 1:1. (*Matth. I, 1.*)

[2] Saint Bernard, Homily I On Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. I super Missus est.*)

[3] The same, in the same place. (*Idem, ibidem.*)

[4] Luke 2:48. (*Luc. II, 48.*)

[5] Saint Anselm, Book On the Virginal Conception, chapter 18. (*S. Anselmus, Lib. de Conceptu virginali, cap. 18.*)

[6] Isaiah 7:14. (*Isa. VII, 14.*)

[7] Genesis 37:27. (*Genes. XXXVII, 27.*)

[8] Saint Augustine, Sermon 5 On the words of the Lord in the Gospel according to Matthew. (*S. Augustinus, Serm. 5 de verbis Domini in Evangelium secundum Mattheum.*)

[9] (Saint Gregory the Great,) Homily 6 on the Gospel. (*(S. Gregorius M.) Homilia 6 in Evang.*)

[10] John 8:51 and 52. (*Joan. VIII, 51 et 52.*)

[11] Saint Bernard, Sermon on the Blessed Virgin on those words of Apocalypse 12:1: A great sign appeared, and so forth. (*S. Bernardus, Serm. de B. Virgine super illa verba Apocalypsis, XII, 1: Signum magnum apparuit, etc.*)

[12] Although this authority is usually cited from Saint Bernard, nevertheless we do not find it in Saint Bernard, but in Idiota, in the book of Contemplations on the Blessed Virgin, chapter 2, in these words: "Purity of Angels was not lacking to you, nor faith of Patriarchs, nor knowledge of Prophets, nor zeal of Apostles, nor patience of Martyrs, nor sobriety of Confessors, nor innocence or humility of Virgins; in sum, you are empty of no kind of virtues." It exists in volume X of the Cologne edition of the Library of the old Fathers. (Note of the Lyon editor.) (*Licet haec auctoritas ex S. Bernardo citari soleat, eam tamen in S. Bernardo non reperimus, sed in Idiota, in libro Contemplationum de B. Virgine, cap. 2, in haec verba: "Non defuit tibi puritas Angelorum, non fides Patriarcharum, non scientia Prophetarum, non zelus Apostolorum, non patientia Martyrum, non*

The Gospel according to Mark, page 426

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ^[1].

1. The Lady of the Evangelists, the Virgin Mary, is compared to a grain of mustard. Mark 4:31 and 32, concerning which it is said that it is less than all seeds, and this through humility; and when it has been sown, namely by appearing in the world, it rises into a tree which by height, breadth, and age surpasses the nature of herbs. It is high, because it is lifted up to heavenly things; broad, because it occupies the whole world; aged, because it cannot be ended. These three are in the tree, namely Mary, who is greater in glory and charity than all garden plants, that is, Angels and human beings, and makes branches. Gloss: of mercy and compassion, great ones, so that under the shade of her protection the birds of heaven, that is, the saints of God, indeed also sinners, can dwell trustfully because of security, joyfully because of shade, usefully because of fruitfulness.

2. Likewise, she herself is the pillow of all virtues, on which the Son of God sleeps. Mark 4:38 and 39: He himself was in the stern sleeping on a pillow, in Mary, because he did not find such rest elsewhere. And the disciples wake him and say to him: Master, does it not concern you that we are perishing? And rising in the resurrection, he rebuked the wind, that is, the devil, and said to the sea, that is, to all temptations: Be silent, be mute.

3. Likewise, she herself is the poor widow, but the most generous enricher of the whole Church: for no human being or Angel gave as much as she did. Mark 12:43: This poor widow, poor in things, that is, Mary, cast in more than all. More in quantity, preciousness, and usefulness, because she sent Christ her Son for the joy of the desolate, for the illumination of the blind, for the liberation of captives.

4. Likewise, she herself is the first who, after God, meets the sinner returning. Mark 14:13: Go into the city, namely into the communion of the Church, which, O sinners, you lost through sin, and a man will meet you, that is, Mary, as a mother hastening. Ecclesiasticus 15:2: And she will meet him like an honored mother, carrying a jar of water, namely an amphora of graces and mercy. But now let us hear the counsel of God: Follow her: truly, because then you will not go astray; safely, because she can defend from every attack; and joyfully, because she leads to Jesus. Whence it follows: Into the house, namely the heavenly house, into which she enters, namely in her glorious assumption. Therefore deservedly blessed is the human being whom you meet, Mary: meet me, I ask, a sinner, and lead me mercifully into your house.

Notes

[1] Mark 1:1. (*Marc. I, 1.*)

The Gospel according to Luke, pages 427-428

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

There was in the days of Herod, king of Judea, a priest, and so forth ^[1].

1. The Empress of the Evangelists, the Virgin Mary, is commended from the greatest dignity. Luke 1:26 and 27: The Angel Gabriel was sent, and the rest down to this, the name of the Virgin was Mary. Although God was with the blessed Virgin by essence, power, and presence, as he is generally in creatures, and although he was in her through indwelling grace, as he is specially in the saints, nevertheless, because he was still distant

by bodily presence, so that in her God might become man, passible like us, he wished to send an Angel to the Virgin, to announce the Virgin's childbirth.

This sending was necessary for four things: for the honoring of God, for the showing of angelic dignity, for the commendation of the most blessed Virgin, and for our usefulness. God is honored in this annunciation in three ways. As to power, in that he has Angels as ministers. Second, as to wisdom, in that he met the manner of the robber; because the Angel of God taught a virgin, just as an evil angel deceived a virgin. Third, as to goodness, in that he omitted nothing among the contingent things, in everything that was necessary for the honor of his mother and our usefulness. Second, it was necessary for the showing of angelic dignity, which is shown in three things. First, because here the Angel exercised his office, namely of announcing, in the highest way. Second, because he was conscious of the highest counsel. Third, because he announced the highest blessedness of human beings. Third, it was also necessary for the commendation of the Virgin, which is shown in three things. First, in this, that no messenger other than the Angel Gabriel is sent. Second, in this, that he speaks so many mysteries with her. Third, in this, that God works the work of our salvation only with Mary's consent, which consent the Angel prepared. Fourth, it was also necessary for our usefulness, namely for the confirmation of faith, for the showing of the friendship of Angels, and for the procuring of our salvation.

2. There follows: The Angel Gabriel. This Angel was not from the greater ones, but was an Archangel, and this for the honor of the Virgin, because if one from the higher orders were sent, it would be believed that he was illuminated by him. Therefore he is sent from the lesser ones, so that it may be shown that the Angel is only the outward bearer of the business and ministry, but God by himself is the worker of the business, the decreer of salvation, the inspirer of understanding, the incliner of the mind to consent, and the expositor of the manner of excuse. Whence the Angel, asked about the manner, referred it to the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:35: The Holy Spirit will come upon you. But Gabriel the Archangel appeared to her in bright clothing, as certain people say, for the honor of him who proceeded as light from light. And this, as is believed, was at daybreak, so that with the morning sun rising, the sun of justice, Christ our God, and the Church would rise at the same time, as is said, Malachi 4:2.

3. There follows: Into a city. If it is objected that this annunciation ought not to have happened in a city, but in the most worthy place, namely in the temple, because of the most worthy work, I answer that the Lord, in all the more principal deeds which he performed in the world, was always in a common place, showing by this why he had come into the world: born among sinners, placed in a manger before an ox and an ass, conversing among sinners, crucified between thieves, rising again and first appearing to a sinful woman. Thus also he wished to be conceived in a city, which is a common place, he "who for our salvation came down from heaven," as the Church sings in the Creed. He descended to show that he came for all. He was born on the way, because his life ought to be for us a way to the kingdom of heaven. He suffered outside the gate^[2], because through his passion no one is freed except through conversion to him.

4. There follows: Of Galilee, which is the region inhabited by Gentiles and Jews. And thus he wished to be conceived in a common region, who wished to be born for all; for he is not only God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles^[3]. That region by its name expressed most well the property of the incarnation. For Galilee is interpreted revelation or transmigration: because in this annunciation there was a revelation of the highest secrets, when the Word, which inhabited inaccessible light^[4], was made flesh^[5]. In like manner there was the greatest transmigration, namely from ignorance into knowledge, from fault into grace, from shadow into truth, from deity into humanity, which was the greatest.

5. There follows: Whose name was Nazareth. Nazareth is interpreted flower. Therefore the Lord was fittingly conceived in Nazareth, because as fragrance proceeds from a flower without corruption, so he proceeded with the beauty of virginity and the integrity of the mother preserved.

6. There follows: To a virgin. But why not to a woman? I answer: From a woman the beginning of sin was made ^[6], from a woman under the aspect of woman and not under the aspect of virgin. For Eve, insofar as she was a virgin, did not destroy us, but insofar as she was joined to a man, when she carnally generated us. Whence Augustine in the *Enchiridion* ^[7] and in other places: "Original sin is born from the wound of concupiscence, which is attached to the mingling of seeds; to this wound he who came to heal the wound ought not to have been subject." Likewise, To a virgin: because temporal generation is the image of eternal generation. Hence, just as eternal generation is from one incorrupt and undivided being, so temporal generation ought to be from one incorrupt woman, that is, from a virgin. It is also believed that the most blessed Virgin was in the act of contemplation when the Lord's annunciation came to her. But she was being raised to the highest power, in that she bore God above nature. And she was raised to this through faith, according to that saying of Mark 9:22: All things are possible to one who believes. She was also raised to the highest dignity, through this, that she was made the mother of the whole creature by recreation. And she was raised to this through humility, according to that saying of Matthew 23:12: Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. She was also raised to the highest charity, through this, that she was highest and nearest to God, as one who was his daughter, mother, sister, and spouse. And she was raised to this through charity, according to that saying of Proverbs 8:17: I love those who love me. She was also raised to the highest familiarity, and chastity made that, according to that saying of Wisdom 6:20:

Incorruption makes one nearest to God. Therefore she was raised up wholly, she who was wholly filled and wholly glorified.

7. There follows: Betrothed. This betrothal was useful for many things, as is had at Matthew 1:18: When she had been betrothed, and so forth. It is believed that she conceived God at such an age as was perfect in stature and in bodily quantity.

8. There follows: To a man whose name was Joseph. Joseph was a man through constancy of faithfulness, as to justice; a man through the virtue of chastity, as to temperance; a man through excellence of discretion, as to prudence; a man through vigorousness of action, as to fortitude. And thus the excellence of the four cardinal virtues is noted. Bernard: "There is no doubt that this Joseph, to whom the mother of the Savior was betrothed, was a good and faithful man. Faithful, and so forth ^[8]."

9. There follows: Of the house of David. But it is asked, since here the most pure conception of God is being written, why David, who at one time existed as a notorious sinner, is placed there. It must be said that he is placed here not because he was a sinner, but because Joseph descended carnally from him and was like him in virtues by imitation. Nor, on account of the stain of sin which he destroyed through repentance, ought he to have been named less in the genealogy of the Lord, but boldly proclaimed, since this both generates confidence for sinners and increases the mercy of him who says: In whatever hour the sinner shall groan, and so forth.

10. There follows: And the name of the Virgin was Mary. Note that the blessed Virgin did not newly acquire the interpretation of her name, but was born also in this. For she was always the star of the sea, and she illuminates both those preceding her and those following her, because salvation never came to anyone except through faith in the Word incarnate, or to be incarnate, from the Virgin. Hence she herself also, in the faith of human beings, and in God's election and confirmation, always existed as Lady and Queen of all creatures. Whence she herself can fittingly say that saying of Proverbs 8:22: The Lord possessed me, and so forth. Whence that saying in the same place, verse 24: The abysses were not yet, and so forth. It must also be known that the name Mary was most fittingly imposed upon our Virgin for three things. First, because of the dignity of the person. Second, because of the usefulness of her action. Third, because of the property of the divine conception. The dignity of the person is expressed through the nature of light, which is understood in the star of the sea. For just as nothing is more beautiful or nobler than light, so after God nothing is worthier than Mary. And note that this blessed Virgin was not only illuminated by divine light, like the moon by the

sun, but she also produced from herself the very light which is God ^[9], like the dawn producing the sun, which illuminated all things capable of illumination. And thus in the blessed Virgin the excellence of dignity is expressed through the nature of light. The usefulness of action is understood in this, that she leads, leads away, conducts, leads back, and brings all shipwrecked persons through to the harbor of eternal salvation. The property of the divine conception is signified by this, that as a star brings forth a ray without diminution, so the Virgin brought forth the Son without corruption.

11. And the Angel entering to her, said. Here Mary is commended from highest modesty. Whence Bernard: "Where did he enter to her? I think into the secret room of a modest chamber, where perhaps, with the door closed upon herself, she prayed to God the Father in secret. For the Angel did not find open the little door of the Virgin, whose purpose surely was to flee the crowd of human beings and to avoid conversations, lest even the silence of one praying be disturbed ^[10]." From these words of divine Bernard, certain people believe that the most blessed Virgin, at the coming of the Angel, with knees bent and pious hands lifted, eyes raised to heaven toward the Father of mercies for the incarnation of his Son, poured out most devoted prayers with tears, and reverently rose to meet the Angel coming, and, when his announcement had been perceived, consented as one believing in it; and, as soon as the salutation had been completed, with knees again bent to the earth and eyes and hands raised to heaven, with tears breaking forth from the depths of the heart because of joy, she gave thanks most devoutly. And this is the manner of those who receive the Lord's body from the hand of an Angel, that is, of a priest, from the altar.

12. There follows: Hail. Hail, as if without woe of body and soul. Through sin the human being incurs a threefold woe in the body. The first is the body's distemper and the disorder of natural appetites. The second is the mutual opposition of body and soul, because the flesh lusts against the spirit ^[11]. The third is the body's reduction to ashes after death. The blessed Virgin was without this threefold woe in the body, since she has a body whole in virginity, pacified with the spirit, and never reduced to ashes after death. On the part of the soul the human being has a threefold woe: error in the rational power, sorrow in the concupiscible power, shame in the irascible power. The Virgin Mary was also immune from this threefold woe, for she never erred in discretion, nor in elevation, nor in execution.

Likewise, there is another threefold woe, namely of fault, punishment, and ignorance. The woe of fault is threefold: original, actual mortal, and venial. Or thus: woe of avarice in work, woe of luxury in flesh, woe of pride in the heart. Concerning this threefold woe it is said in Apocalypse 8:13: Woe, woe, woe to those dwelling on the earth. Likewise, the woe of punishment is threefold, namely woe of Gehenna, woe of purgatory, woe of penitence. Likewise, the woe of ignorance is threefold, namely ignorance of believing, acting, and being saved. The most blessed Virgin Mary was without this manifold woe. Likewise, there is a threefold woe in women specially, namely woe of sterility in virgins, woe of subjection in married women, woe of desolation in widows. The blessed Virgin was also immune from this threefold woe. For she was a Virgin without sterility, married without subjection, a widow without desolation. Likewise, in women there is a threefold woe: for every woman, except her, loses virginity in conception; after conception, bodily beauty and health; in childbirth, the society of human beings. She also was immune from this. In conception she did not lose virginity, but acquired purity; after conception, she did not lose beauty, but shone forth so much that Joseph could not look upon her. Likewise, after childbirth she did not lose the society of human beings; indeed then she was constituted mediator of God and human beings. Whence in childbirth she is visited by shepherds and kings.

Likewise, she herself is full of grace through the inflow of divine goodness, so that the fullness of her grace may supply the defect in us. Also, she herself is the star fixed in the firmament of glory, so that she may lead us shipwrecked ones back from the state of misery to the harbor of eternal salvation. For this reason the Church adds to that salutation the happy name Mary.

13. There follows: Full of grace. In four ways she was full of grace. First, because she had in the highest degree all general and special graces, of which every other creature was empty. Second, because her grace was so great that a pure creature was not capable of greater grace. Third, because she contained in herself the whole uncreated grace, and thus in every manner of grace she was full of grace. Concerning this fullness Bernard says ^[12]: "We read in the Acts of the Apostles both Stephen full of grace and

fortitude ^[13], and that the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit ^[14], but in a way far unlike Mary; otherwise the fullness of deity would not have dwelt bodily in him ^[15] in the same manner as in Mary. Nor did they conceive of the Holy Spirit in the way the blessed Virgin Mary did. Therefore the fullness of the blessed Virgin removes emptiness, but her fullness denies partiality. For God did not give the Holy Spirit to her by measure ^[16], but, as the Gloss says, not particularly, but generally and universally. But the fullness of the Saints, which is common, imports overflowing and outpouring. For grace fills the soul inwardly, and thus flows outwardly through works." Concerning all these fullnesses it is said, Ecclesiastes 1:7: To the place from which the rivers go forth, they return that they may flow again. But the place of these fullnesses is the abyss of deity, from which all rivers go forth through the outpouring of graces, and return through thanksgiving, so that they may flow again through the multiplication of graces.

14. There follows: The Lord is with you, namely with you in the womb, with you in exile, with you on the throne, with you through essence, with you through power, with you through presence, with you through indwelling grace, with you through bodily presence. Likewise, with you in his own humiliation, since you offered him in the temple. With you in his persecution, when he endured the cross, when you were standing beside the cross ^[17]. With you in his consolation, when he rose again from the dead.

15. There follows: Blessed are you among women. First, because she is most reverend to Angels and human beings, or because she was enriched by the Son and glorified by the succession of all the faithful. Likewise, blessed by God, because in his conception the Holy Spirit is the impregnator, the Virgin is the conceiver, God is the one conceived. Likewise, blessed by God, because according to dignity she herself is the head and beginning of women, and this for three reasons. The first is because she had whatever good was in women. The second, because she had each of those goods in the highest degree, which no woman ever had nor will have, namely because she was Virgin of virgins, because she was mother and virgin. The third, because she was the mother of God. For there is a threefold good in women, namely the good of married women, of widows, and of virgins. The good of married women is threefold, namely fidelity, offspring, and sacrament. The good of widows is similarly threefold, namely liberty of contemplation, exercise in works of piety, chastisement of the flesh. The good of virgins is similarly threefold, namely incorruption of flesh, no subjection to a man, and angelic way of life. The blessed Virgin had all these goods in the highest degree, and furthermore she surpassed all in causality, because she was Virgin of virgins; in purity, because pure in the highest degree; in fruitfulness, because mother. She surpasses widows, because she had the good of widows in highest contemplation, in preeminent piety, in most excellent chastity. She excels married women in three things, because she had fruitfulness without corruption, offspring without a father, and fruitfulness with respect to the highest nature, because she is the mother of God.

16. There follows: And blessed is the fruit of your womb. First, because he did not have the prick of the tinder. Second, because he knew all things. Third, because he did not see corruption. For through sin we fell into this threefold curse, namely the prick of the tinder. Whence Genesis 3:17 and 18: Cursed is the earth in your work; ... it will bring forth thorns and thistles for you. Second, labor concerning necessary things. Whence, in the same place, verse 19: In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread. Third, the necessity of reduction to ashes. Whence, in the same place: You are dust, and into dust you shall return.

Likewise, Blessed is the fruit of your womb, because he is the Father of all through creation in the being of nature, Father of all through recreation in the being of nature, Father of all through recreation in the being of grace, Father of all through the glorification of the creature in the being of glory. Likewise, Blessed is the

fruit of your womb, not only because of the emptying of the curse, but also because of the possession of every good. For he had the goodness of human nature in the highest degree, and the goodness which is from the conjunction of both in the highest degree. Likewise, this fruit is blessed with the blessing of nature, the blessing of grace, and the blessing of glory. For he had a body blessed by nature, because pure in form, because beautiful in harmony, because emptied. He also had a soul blessed from the tinder, from ignorance, from sin. He also had blessed deity in himself and in his works.

17. There follows: When she had heard, she was troubled at his word, and she was considering what kind of salutation this was, wondering at the wisdom, mercy, charity, truth, humility, dignity of the messenger, newness of the salutation, immensity of the things, and her own smallness. In addition she was considering how venerable, how delightful, how saving, how familiar, how singular this salutation was, which was dictated by God the Father, inspired by the Son himself, announced by the Angel.

18. There follows: And the Angel said to her: Fear not, Mary. As if he were saying: Do not fear the greatness of the king, your own smallness, the rarity of the word, the incomprehensibility of the things, the ambiguity of the sentence, the completion of the promise, the loss of salvation. Do not fear, because you have found grace before God; you did not create it as God, did not always have it as your Son did, did not seize it as the first Angel did, did not lose it as the first parent did, did not buy it as Simon Magus did, but you found it, because you sought as the most prudent virgin, taught as the most faithful one, gave back as the most merciful mother. You found what? I say, the charity of God having mercy, the truth of God promising, and your suitability for this.

19. There follows: Behold, you shall conceive. This conception is the work of the whole Trinity; nevertheless it is appropriable to the Holy Spirit, because of the work of highest kindness, to whom belongs the distribution of gifts. But whence this most holy conception was made, one must say with Damascene that it was not only from the bloods, but also from the flesh of the blessed Virgin. For in one place, namely in Book IV On the Orthodox Faith^[18], he says: "From the bloods"; in another place he expressly says: "From the most pure flesh and blood"^[19].

20. There follows: You shall conceive in the womb. What is said, in the womb, seems superfluous, for everyone conceiving conceives in the womb. To this it must be said that this is the privilege of this conception alone. For all other women conceive into the womb; she alone conceived in the womb, because she conceived as a virgin. We also concede that the Lord was in the womb for two hundred seventy-six days. These are thirty-nine weeks and three days. He also came forth while the womb was closed, without assuming the dowry, by being born supernaturally.

21. There follows: And you shall call his name Jesus. The Lord imposed this name Jesus by furnishing the reality of the name; the Angel by proclaiming it; the Lady by obtaining it; Joseph by carrying it out. This name was imposed by God eternally, by the Angel in the incarnation, by the Lady and Joseph in the circumcision.

22. There follows: He shall be great. Great in nobility, dignity, piety, virtue, fame, newness. Likewise, great according to every mode. Great according to substance, because God. Great according to quantity, because omnipotent. According to quality, because supremely good. According to relation, because Son of God. Great according to when, because eternal. Great according to where, because everywhere. Great according to position or power, because heaven is his seat, but earth the footstool of his feet^[20]. And he sits upon the Cherubim^[21], and walks upon the wings of the winds^[22]. Great according to habit, because his garment is white as snow^[23], and so forth. Strength and beauty are his clothing^[24]. Great in the greatness of action, that is, in the incarnation. Genesis 1:1: In the beginning God created heaven and earth, that is, he begot the Son, in whom he created, recreated, justified, and glorified all things. Great in the passion, and great he will be in glorification.

23. There follows: And he shall be called Son of the Most High, by eternal naming, by the attestation of Scripture, by the prophecy of John, by the proof of works, by the confirmation of Peter, by the declaration of the Father, by the showing of the dove, by the suspicion of demons, by the singularity of doctrine, because never did a man speak thus as this man^[25]. In all these ways he will be called by human beings the Son of the Most High, only-begotten in the being of nature, only-begotten in the gifts of grace.

24. There follows: And the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. Through the temporal kingdom of David is figured the spiritual kingdom of Christ, in which Jesus Christ has the throne of kingdom, the throne of priesthood, the throne of teaching, the throne of judgment, the throne of banquet.

25. There follows: And he shall reign, namely by having mercy on the wretched, rooting out the evil, exalting the good, commanding all, subjugating enemies, holding court, promulgating laws, enlarging the kingdom. But he will reign through grace and glory.

26. There follows: In the house of Jacob forever. Whence Bernard: "Blessed are those in whom God now reigns through grace and forever through glory, and so forth. Come meanwhile, Lord Jesus; remove scandals from your kingdom, which is my soul, so that you may reign in it, as you ought. For avarice comes and claims for itself a seat in me. Boasting desires to dominate me. Pride wishes to be called king there. Luxury, ambition, envy, and detraction, each says: I shall reign there. Come therefore, my Lord Jesus Christ, scatter them in your power^[26], and reign in me, because you yourself are my King and my God^[27]."

27. There follows: How shall this happen, since I do not know a man? as dominator of my person, as ruler of my works, as corrupter of my body, as binder of my soul, as propagator of offspring, I never wish to know him by any thought of these things. Whence Bernard, in the same place^[28]: "She does not doubt concerning the fact, but asks the manner and order. For she does not ask whether this will happen, but how this will happen. As if she were saying: Since my Lord, witness of my conscience, knows that it is the vow of his handmaid not to know a man, by what law, by what order will it please him that this happen? If it will be necessary for me to break the vow so that I may bear such a Son, I both rejoice concerning such a Son and grieve concerning the purpose; nevertheless let his will be done. But if I shall conceive as a virgin and also bear as a virgin, which certainly, if it shall please him, will not be impossible^[29], then I truly know that he has regarded the humility of his handmaid^[30]. How therefore shall this happen, since I do not know a man?"

28. There follows: And the Angel answering said to her: The Holy Spirit will come upon you. But what spirit? The Spirit purging, the Spirit illuminating, the Spirit filling, the Spirit perfecting, the Spirit establishing, the Spirit consecrating, the Spirit making fruitful. He will come upon you in the highest degree, for the highest act. And he who will come with him is above all, namely the Son of God.

29. There follows: And the power of the Most High will overshadow you, by extinguishing the tinder, by protecting against tribulation, by making a shade for your flesh, by making known that manner to you alone, by hiding his light in you, by making you the refreshment of wayfarers, by setting you against the heat of concupiscence.

30. There follows: But Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word. A shrewd handmaid has seven offices. First, she cleans the house. Whence Hebrews 1:3: Making purification of sins, and so forth. Second, she prepares foods. Genesis 18:6, this is Sarah who mixed three measures of flour. She is also the one who presented the roasted and fried Lamb in the Church to the hungry to be eaten. Third, she heats the furnace, namely the furnace of our souls, which the fire of divine love kindles. Fourth, she carries water to the thirsty, namely the water of grace, which she unceasingly administers to the thirsty. Fifth, she goes around and visits the whole house. Whence handmaid, ancilla, is said from an and cieo, cies, which means to move. She goes around the upper and lower hemisphere, Angels through joy, the just through grace, the guilty through pardon; nor is there one who hides himself from her heat^[31]. Sixth, because she carries and nurses children. That you may be filled from the breast of her

consolation ^[32]. Seventh, because she prepares a bed for the weary. Whence that saying of John 14:2 suits her: I go to prepare a place for you. Hence she, because of these seven offices, compares herself to a handmaid, saying: Behold the handmaid, and so forth.

31. Likewise, she herself is the mother of salutation. Luke 1:40: Mary entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth. But how did she greet? Faithfully. Whence she went into the hill country with haste, not rejoicing to be seen long in public. Usefully, for Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Whence she says in the same place, verse 43: Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Gloss: "The voice of Mary kindled not only the mother, but also the offspring more vehemently."

32. Likewise, she herself is the Virgin giving birth, in which, as Sedulius said: She was seen to have neither a first like herself nor a following one. She bore her Son ^[33]. Her own by the donation of the Father, by the election of the Son, by the will of the Holy Spirit. Whence Bernard: "Is this not what you sought, what you groaned for, what you sighed for day and night in prayer, that you might become the mother of God ^[34]?" This Son, I say, her own, she bore for many reasons. First, so that what she alone bore in the womb she might communicate to us from charity. Second, so that she might show with her finger, face to face, God hidden from the ages, saying: Here lies in the manger the one who also rules the stars. Third, so that she might fulfill the desire of all Saints desiring the nativity. Whence the Church sings on the vigil of the Lord's nativity: "Behold, all things are fulfilled, and so forth." Fourth, so that the deposit of God the Father, deposited in her, she might faithfully present again. Whence the Angel said to the shepherds:

Notes

[1] Luke 1:5. (*Luc. I, 5.*)

[2] Hebrews 13:12. (*Ad Hebr. XIII, 12.*)

[3] Romans 3:29. (*Ad Roman. III, 29.*)

[4] 1 Timothy 6:16. (*I ad Timoth. VI, 16.*)

[5] John 1:14. (*Joan. I, 14.*)

[6] Ecclesiasticus 25:33. (*Eccli. XXV, 33.*)

[7] Saint Augustine, in the Enchiridion, chapter 34. (*S. Augustinus, In Enchiridio, cap. 34.*)

[8] Saint Bernard, Homily II on Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. II super Missus est.*)

[9] 1 John 1:5. (*I Joannis, I, 5.*)

[10] Saint Bernard, Homily III on Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. III super Missus est.*)

[11] Galatians 5:17. (*Ad Galat. V, 17.*)

[12] Saint Bernard, Homily III on Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. III super Missus est.*)

[13] Acts 6:8. (*Act. VI, 8.*)

[14] The same, 2:4. (*Ibid., II, 4.*)

[15] Colossians 2:9. (*Ad Coloss. II, 9.*)

[16] John 3:34. (*Joan. III, 34.*)

[17] John 19:25. (*Joan. XIX, 25.*)

[18] Saint John Damascene, Book IV On the Orthodox Faith, chapter 3. (*S. J. Damascenus, Lib. IV de Fide orthodoxa, cap. 3.*)

[19] The same, in the same place, chapter 15. (*Idem, ibidem, cap. 15.*)

[20] Isaiah 66:1. (*Isa. LXVI, 1.*)

[21] Psalm 98:1. Compare Psalm 79:2. (*Psal. XCVIII, 1. Cf. Psal. LXXIX, 2.*)

[22] Psalm 103:3. (*Psal. CIII, 3.*)

[23] Daniel 7:9. (*Daniel. VII, 9.*)

[24] Proverbs 31:25. (*Proverb. XXXI, 25.*)

[25] John 7:46. (*Joan. VII, 46.*)

[26] Psalm 58:12. (*Psal. LVIII, 12.*)

[27] Saint Bernard, Homily III on Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. III super Missus est.*)

[28] The same, in the same place. (*Idem, ibidem.*)

[29] Luke 1:37. (*Luc. I, 37.*)

[30] Luke 1:48. (*Luc. I, 48.*)

[31] Psalm 18:7. (*Psal. XVIII, 7.*)

[32] Isaiah 66:11. (*Isa. LXVI, 11.*)

[33] Luke 2:7. (*Luc. II, 7.*)

[34] Saint Bernard, Homily IV on Missus est. (*S. Bernardus, Homil. IV super Missus est.*)

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to the shepherds: You will find the infant ... placed in a manger ^[1].

Likewise, she herself is she who brought the summer of grace and drove away the winter of vices. Luke 21:29 and 30: See the fig tree, that is, Mary, when it has already produced from itself the fruit, that is, Christ, which was done in the nativity; you know that summer is near, namely the summer of grace, fruitful for us through the mother of mercy.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

In the beginning was the Word, and so forth ^[2].

1. The most blessed Lady according to the Gospel of John is called the mother of the restoration of all things. John 1:3 says concerning her Son: All things were made through him. Thus it is said concerning her: All things were remade through her, as Anselm says ^[3].

2. Likewise, she herself is our light, which after God enlightens every human being coming into this world ^[4].

3. Likewise, she herself is the enclosure of the humanity of the Son of God, in which, as is said, John 1:14: The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; in this God of Angels was made the brother of the sinner. Note that a good word ought to have five things. First, that it be whole. Thus the Son of God is wholly with the Father and whole with us. Second, it ought to be right. Thus Christ is the just and right God ^[5]. Third, it ought to be manifestative: for it manifests to us the Father through power, the Son through wisdom, the Holy Spirit through kindly benevolence. Likewise, it manifested to us the vanity of the world, the harmfulness of sin, the bitterness of punishments, and the eternity of glory. Fourth, it ought to be gladdening for the desolate. So also Christ. Matthew 1:3: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs, and so forth. Fifth, it ought to be strengthening for the weak. So also Christ; whence he said, Matthew 10:28: Do not fear those who kill the body. Why was this very Word made flesh? First, so that the Son of God might show himself compassible with us. Second, so that he might demonstrate that he had taken on all our defects, except ignorance and sin. Third, so that he might present himself to us as palpable and touchable. Fourth, so that by his excellence he might lift us up from our fragility.

4. Likewise, she herself is the storehouse of fullness, whence all receive stipends. John 1:16: From his fullness we all have received, namely after God, and grace for grace.

5. Likewise, she herself is the general baptism of sinners. John 1:28: John was baptizing, unto remission of sins. She spiritually preserves the form of this baptism by baptizing in us. For she baptizes, that is, cleanses sinners, "in the name of the Father," through power; "in the name of the Son," through wisdom; "in the name of the Holy Spirit," through goodness and clemency. Hence if John was questioned because of the office of Baptism: Who are you? and so forth, so also we, if we question her, Who are you? she will answer us that I am not the Christ, but the mother of Christ and the baptism of sinners.

6. Likewise, she herself is the temple of the whole Trinity, into which no one is admitted except God alone. John 2:15 and 16: He cast all out of the temple, ... and said: Do not make the house of my Father a house of

trade, as Eve and we did.

7. Likewise, she herself is the spring of Jacob, for many reasons. First, because she refreshes the thirsty with the waters of grace. Whence Jesus said to the woman, John 4:10: If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, Give me to drink, perhaps you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water, that is, grace and glory. Second, because she illuminates sins that are to be seen. Whence Jesus said, in the same place, verse 18 and following: You have had five husbands. And the woman immediately added: Lord, I see that you are a prophet. As if she were saying: Before I was blind, but now I see. Third, because she frees from sin. Whence the woman left her water jar, namely the water jar of cupidity, pleasure, and vanity. And she says to those men, namely the Samaritans: Come and see the man, and so forth.

8. Likewise, she herself is the pool of the Savior, having five porches ^[6]. Into this pool, according to the time of mercy, the Angel of the Lord, that is, the Son of God, descended, moving in it the water of graces for healing. Whence there one was made healthy from whatever infirmity he was held by.

9. Likewise, she herself is the female judge of the living and the dead. John 5:27: He gave him power, namely the Father to the Son according to humanity, to make judgment, because he is the Son of man. But if the Son has power to make the judgment of justice, she herself also by concession has power to make the judgment of mercy, because she is the mother of God. Whence she, from confidence in the Son, can say that saying of Matthew 20:15: Is it not permitted to me to do what I will? Therefore she is also signified by Deborah the prophetess, wife of Lapidoth, who judged the people at that time and sat under a palm tree, to which the children of Israel ascended for every judgment ^[7]. Whence consequently she can say that word of her Son, John 9:30: For judgment I came into this world, namely that I may be the female judge of mercy. But it belongs to a judge to know all things. Whence it is said in the second part of the Decretum: "One judging ought to investigate all things ^[8]."

10. Likewise, she herself is the drawer of sinners. John 6:44: Jesus said to the crowds: No one can come to me unless my Father, who sent me, draws him. But do those whom your mother draws to you not come to you? Certainly every one whom the mother draws to him, it is impossible that he perish, as Anselm says ^[9].

11. Likewise, she is a work of admiration, both of Angels and of human beings. John 7:21: I have done one work, that is, Mary, who

Notes

[1] Luke 2:12. (*Luc. II, 12.*)

[2] John 1:1. (*Joan. I, 1.*)

[3] This can be gathered from Saint Anselm, in the book On the Excellence of the Blessed Virgin, chapters 10 and 11, and from Saint Bernard, Sermon II on the feast of Pentecost. "Deservedly," he says, "the eyes of the whole creature look upon you, because in you, and through you, and from you the kindly hand of the Almighty recreated whatever he had created." Yet more expressly blessed Peter Damian, in a sermon on the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, said: "From the treasury of deity the name of Mary is unfolded, and through her, and in her, and from her, and with her this whole thing is decreed to be done, so that just as without him nothing was made, so without her nothing was remade." (*Colligi id potest ex S. Anselmo, libro de Excellentia beatae Virginis, capp. 10 et 11, et ex S. Bernardo, serm. II in festo Pentecostes. "Merito, inquit, in te respiciunt oculi totius creaturae, quia in te, et per te, et de te benigna manus Omnipotentis, quidquid creaverat, recreavit." Expressius tamen beatus Petrus Damianus in sermone de annuntiatione B. Virginis, dixit: "De thesauro divinitatis Mariae nomen evoluitur, et per ipsam, et in ipsa, et de ipsa, et cum ipsa totum hoc faciendum decernitur, ut sicut sine illo nihil factum, ita sine illa nihil reffectum sit."*)

[4] John 1:9. (*Joan. I, 9.*)

[5] Deuteronomy 32:4. (*Deuter. XXXII, 4.*)

[6] John 5:2. (*Joan. V, 2.*)

[7] Judges 4:4 and 5. (*Judicum, IV, 4 et 5.*)

[8] Decretum, Part II, case 30, question 5. (*Decret. II Part., causa 30, quaest. 5.*)

[9] Saint Anselm, Book On the Praises of the Blessed Virgin. (*S. Anselmus, Lib. de Laudibus B. Virginis.*)

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one and singular, and all of you admire her nature, her grace, her glory, her humility, her mercy.

12. Likewise, she herself is the seat of mercy. Hence the Son of God brought forth for the children of Adam a sentence of absolution. John 8:8 and 9: But Jesus, bending himself downward. Gloss: from the seat of the Father into the world, was writing with his finger on the earth ... Let the one of you who is without sin first cast a stone at her, etc. And immediately he added, verses 10 and 11: Has no one condemned you, woman? She said: No one, etc.

13. Likewise, she herself is the door of heaven. Hence she can speak that saying of John 10:9: If anyone enters through me, he will be saved.

14. Likewise, she herself is the vine. John 15:1: I am the true vine, and my Father, etc. Note the properties of a good vine, and adapt them to the Virgin Mary.

15. Likewise, she herself is the mother of faithful standing. John 19:25: There stood beside the cross of Jesus his mother, and so forth. It is pleasing to exclaim concerning that standing. Therefore I cry and say that that standing is most faithful. For a faithful advocate willingly stands at the tribunal of the judge, where for his little client a sentence of absolution is given, and for the adversary a sentence of damnation. Thus Mary our advocate stood beside the cross, on which the Son of God, hanging as judge of all, gave sentence concerning the damnation of the devil and concerning the absolution of sinners. As there, Luke 23:34: Father, forgive them, and so forth. Or the sentence concerning the opening of the kingdom, as in the same place, verse 43: Today you will be with me, and so forth.

I cry secondly and say that that standing is most wise. For the blessed Virgin teaches us always to stand under the tree of the cross for protection from the kite of hell, for cooling from the heat of the world and of sin, and for resting from the labor of guilt. Genesis 18:4 and 5, Abraham said: Rest under the tree, ... and afterward you will pass on.

I cry thirdly, because that standing is most useful. For the Master Christ, sitting in the chair of the cross, teaches us in every tribulation to cry to the Lord, as there, Mark 15:34: Eloi, Eloi, and so forth. Gloss: as man he speaks, as man he weeps, as man he is crucified, as man he is troubled. Secondly, he teaches us to pray for persecutors, as there, Luke 23:34: Father, forgive them, and so forth. Thirdly, he teaches us to have mercy on the afflicted, as there: Amen I say to you: today you will be with me in paradise. Gloss: The Lord always gives more than is asked, as is clear in the thief, who was saying: Remember me. And he: Today you will be with me in paradise. The Lord quickly forgives, because that man is quickly converted. Fourthly, he teaches us to have diligence and care for parents, there, John 19:26: Woman, behold your son. Fifthly, to desire salvation, there, verse 28: I thirst. Sixthly, in the moment of death to call upon God, there, Luke 23:46: Father, into your hands, and so forth.

16. Likewise, she herself is most powerful in her assumption. Hence that saying of John 20:17 befits her: Go to my brothers and say to them: I ascend to my Father and your Father, and so forth. No one could so fittingly use these words as the most blessed Virgin in her assumption to the kingdom of heaven. Hence note three things concerning her assumption, namely how she ascended. First, she ascended happily, because to God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Hence she said: I ascend to my Father, and so forth. Likewise, she ascended cheerfully, because she trampled upon the world, the devil, and sin. Likewise, she ascended royally, with the choirs of Angels and Saints, and with her leader Jesus Christ. Hence they themselves, marveling, could say: Who is this who ascends through the desert, and so forth ^[1].

Secondly, it must be seen why she ascended, namely that she might block up hell, that she might open heaven, that she might placate God the Father, that she might gladden the army of heaven, that she might draw us to herself. Song of Songs 1:3: Draw me after you, and so forth.

Thirdly, it must be seen whither she ascended. And it must be known that after Christ she ascended to the most noble and highest place; for a threefold reason required this. The first was her highest nobility after God. Whence Aristotle says: "A noble thing ought to be in a noble place ^[2]." So also she herself. The second was the quality of merits, because she herself had the highest merit. Therefore after Christ she ought to have the highest place. The third is the truth of God promising. For the ordinance of God is that everyone who humbles himself is exalted, and the one who humbles himself most greatly is exalted most greatly. But she herself did this most greatly after Christ. Therefore she ought to be exalted most greatly. Therefore, renowned Mother of God, draw us to yourself, if you do not wish us to withdraw from you; otherwise we shall flee from you, you who are blessed among and above all women ^[3] forever and ever. Amen.

Notes

[1] Song of Songs 3:6. (*Cantic. III, 6.*)

[2] Aristotle, Book On the World, chapter 7. (*Aristoteles, Lib. de Mundo, cap. 7.*)

[3] Luke 1:42. (*Luc. I, 42.*)

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THE BOOK OF APOCALYPSE.

The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, and so forth ^[1].

1. According to John in the Apocalypse, the most blessed Virgin Mary is called the seat of the Son of God. Apocalypse 4:2 and following: I saw, and behold a seat, namely Mary, was placed in heaven, that is, in the Church. This seat is called the seat of all nobility, because God alone sat in her. Whence above the seat, one sitting, that is, God and man. I say sitting, prepared for judging, he was like the appearance of jasper and sardius. Likewise, this is the seat of all propitiation. Whence, in the same place, verse 3: A rainbow was around the seat. Gloss: that is, peace and propitiation, which is around, protecting. She herself is the seat of threat. Whence it is said in the same place, verse 5: And from the throne proceeded flashes of lightning of threat, and voices of admonition, and thunders of highest placation. She herself is the seat of all beauty. Whence: And seven lamps burning before the throne, that is, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which she herself was illuminated before all mortals. This is the throne concerning which, Apocalypse 7:9 and 10, it is said: I saw a great crowd, and so forth. There follows: Standing before the throne, namely of God. Gloss: that they may be looked upon. And they were crying with a great voice, in the present and especially in the future, saying: Salvation to our God, who sits upon the throne.

2. Likewise, she herself is the altar of oblation. Apocalypse 9:13: I heard one voice, that is, Mary, from the four horns of the golden altar. Gloss: upon which whatever is offered is accepted, which is before the eyes of God. The four horns are these: mercy, humility, kindness, and generosity.

3. Likewise, she herself is the queen crowned with twelve prerogatives. Apocalypse 12:1: A great sign appeared in heaven. Gloss: that is, in the Church: a woman clothed with the sun, that is, Mary with Christ, because she clothed herself with Christ, who illuminates her. And the moon was under her feet. Gloss: that is, all earthly things. Whence Bernard says: "Why should human frailty tremble before Mary? There is nothing severe in her, nothing terrible; she is wholly sweet, offering milk and wool to all. Turn over more diligently the whole sequence of the Gospel history: and if perhaps anything rebuking, if anything hard, if finally any sign even of slight indignation occurs in Mary, from now on hold her suspect and fear to approach, and so forth. For she herself is called the woman clothed with the sun: and just as it rises indifferently over the good and the evil, so she too does not discuss past merits, but offers herself able to be entreated by all, most merciful to all, and finally pities the necessities of all with a certain most ample affection ^[2]."

Deservedly, therefore, she herself is crowned with twelve stars, that is, with twelve prerogatives. Of these the first is her sanctification. The second, the angelic salutation. The third, the Holy Spirit's coming upon her.

The fourth, the conception of the Son of God. The fifth, first-rank virginity. The sixth, that she is fruitful without corruption. The seventh, that she is pregnant without burden. The eighth, that she is in childbearing without pain. The ninth, gentleness of modesty. The tenth, devotion of humility. The eleventh, magnanimity of belief. The twelfth, martyrdom of heart.

Or otherwise: On her head a crown of twelve stars. The first star and privilege of the most blessed Virgin is immunity from sin, which cannot be said of other human beings. 1 John 1:8: If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The second is the impossibility of sin, because since there is fullness of grace in the Blessed Virgin, for this reason she is said not to be able to sin; this again is in no other human being.

The third is that she merited by every movement and work. Whence the Apostle, to the Colossians 3:23: Whatever you do, from the heart, and so forth. 1 Corinthians 10:31: Whether you eat or drink, and so forth. This, among all the saints of this life, she herself did most fully.

The fourth is purity in the highest degree. Whence Anselm says: "It was fitting that the blessed Virgin should shine with that purity than which none greater under God can be understood, to whom God the Father was arranging to give his only Son, whom, begotten equal to himself from his own heart, he loved as himself: so that naturally one and the same person would be the Son of the Father and of the Virgin. And whom the Son himself substantially chose as a mother for himself: and from whom the Holy Spirit willed, and was going to operate, that he should be conceived and born, from whom he himself proceeded ^[3]."

The fifth, that she herself is called Mother of God, on account of which she is called full of grace. Whence it is clear that no greater grace can be understood, nor be shared by a pure creature, than to be the Mother of God by nature. For it is more to be the mother of God by nature than to be a son of God by adoption.

The sixth is that she is mother and virgin at the same time, which again belongs to her alone. Whence the Church and Sedulius sing:

She was seen to have neither a first one like her, nor a following one.

Whence Dionysius says: "This is new, and the newest of all new things ^[4]."

The seventh is that she is the Virgin of virgins, and this for three causes. First, because she herself is the mother of all in virginity. For she herself offered this glorious gift of virginity to God without command, counsel, and example. Second, because she herself excels all virgins in the extinction of the tinder and in the highest purity below God. Third, because in virginity she excels the Angels. For the purity of Angels is necessary, but this one is voluntary. Whence this is more pleasing than that.

The eighth is that she is the mother of all, for she gave birth to one human being in whom she regenerated us all. Likewise, in one human being she brought forth for us whatever was necessary for this life and the future life. Likewise, she is the mother of all in dignity, because she herself is first-born before every creature. For she who is the mother of the creator is the mother of all creatures, and thus the mother of all goods.

The ninth is that she herself is called star of the sea, for five reasons. For in that star one must consider substance, quality, position, state, and effect. First, the substance is heavenly and the origin of incorruptible light. So also she herself is heavenly in conduct, incorrupt in body, the origin of light in regeneration. Second, she is superior in quality. So also she herself, with respect to all the Saints, is brighter in virginity, more useful in fecundity. Third, in position she is highest and last. So also she herself is highest in dignity and last in humility. Fourth, the state of a star is without motion, without setting, without error. So also she herself is without the motion of inconstancy, without the setting of fault, without the error of ignorance. Fifth, the effect of a star is threefold: it attracts iron, draws light, directs sailors. So also she attracts sinners, illuminates the penitent, and directs the innocent. And thus it is clear why she herself is called star of the sea.

The tenth is that she herself is called gate of heaven. And first on account of this, because the gate exports and imports. So also she herself is called gate, because through her there went out whatever of grace, created or uncreated, ever came into the world. Or for this reason, because through her there entered whatever of grace, created or uncreated, ever came into the world. Or for this reason, because through her there entered whatever good ascended to the heavens. Whence the Son says concerning her that saying of Wisdom 7:11: All good things came to me together with her.

The eleventh is the communication of the passion, concerning which Damascene says: "But she herself, namely the mother of God, blessed and made worthy of gifts above nature, sustained at the time of the passion those pains of childbirth which she escaped while giving birth, out of maternal compassion of her inward parts, again bringing forth the lacerated one. And thus she herself grieved supremely; and thus she ought supremely to be glorified ^[5]."

The twelfth is her exaltation above every creature into a fourth hierarchy, and on account of this she is called queen of mercy. Whence the Church sings in her praise on the feast of the Assumption: "The holy Mother of God has been exalted, and so forth." And it must be known that among these twelve privileges of the blessed Virgin, the last, namely that she is named queen of mercy, properly belongs to her exalted into the aforesaid dignity. First, because mercy comprehends more than glory. For justice, grace, and glory by themselves say only the bestowal of good. But mercy says the bestowal of good and the removal of evil. Therefore of itself the kingdom of mercy comprehends more and extends itself more widely than the kingdom of justice, grace, and glory. Likewise, glory itself is only in the heavens, but mercy is in heaven and on earth and in purgatory. Therefore the kingdom of mercy is greatest. Likewise, since it is proper to her Son always to have mercy and to spare, and she herself is queen over the patrimony and property of her Son, therefore she herself is most fittingly called queen of mercy.

4. Likewise, the Blessed Virgin is figured by the seven Angels.

Apocalypse 16:1 and following, of whom the first poured out his vial upon the earth; the second Angel into the sea; the third, upon the rivers; the fourth, upon the sun; the fifth, upon the seat of the beast; the sixth, into the great river Euphrates; the seventh, into the air. So also she herself poured out vials of grace and mercy into all.

5. She herself also has in the highest degree the properties of all the Angels. Whence one must see concerning each one. And first, concerning the properties of the first hierarchy, ascending, of which the first is the order of Angels. Of this there are three properties. One is that that order is ordered immediately to the human hierarchy; but she herself is ordered nearer to us. For Angels are only placed over us. But she herself exists as one placed over us together with others, as mother, and daughter, and also sister. The second is that we are more known to them through understanding; but she herself knows our infirmities through experience. The third is that individual Angels guard individual human beings; but she herself guards individuals and all together.

The second order is that of Archangels, according to Dionysius ^[6], who likewise also seem to have three properties. The first of these is that they communicate from superiors; so she herself communicated from the highest ones to us, namely from the Trinity. The Holy Spirit will come upon you ^[7]. The second is to be above inferiors; but she herself is above all. The third is to reduce inferiors. She herself did this in the highest degree, because she recalled fallen man to the restoration of the Angels.

The third order is that of Principalities, which similarly have three properties. The first is imitation of the first principle. Thus the blessed Virgin imitates the first principle, namely her Son, in all mercy and humility. The second is the ornament of virtues, which she herself has in the highest degree. Whence in Song of Songs 1:4: I am black, but beautiful, and so forth. The third is to be reductive of inferiors to the primitive principle itself; this she herself also had in the highest degree, because from the last she made the first, and from the first the

last.

Now let us see concerning the second hierarchy, of which there are also three orders. The first is that of Powers, which have three properties. The first is the grace of its order and dignity guarded. She herself had this in the highest degree, because she was Virgin after childbirth, and before childbirth, and in childbirth, while the dignity of maternity stood. The second is something ordaining others. So also she herself was the discoverer and ordainer of the virginal order. The third is something active and reductive. So also she herself was led back through example. Whence she is called star of the sea.

The second order is that of Virtues, whose properties are three. The first is unchangeable manliness, which consists in the blessed Virgin in three things: in resistance to the contrary, because she conquered every sin; in assault upon the arduous, namely in the highest poverty; in tolerance of adversity, namely the passion of the Son. The second is no slowness of any weakness. She herself had this with excellence, because that same angelic life which Angels have, she herself led in the flesh without burden of the flesh, and therefore she ran ahead of them to the greater prize. The third is generosity toward inferiors, which she herself has with excellence. For they give the gifts of God; but she herself gives God himself. Or, they give only to inferiors; she gives to inferiors and superiors. For she gave God to the world and the world to God.

The third is the order of Dominations, which have, according to Dionysius ^[8], these properties. The first is freedom from servitude. The second is invincibility by enemies. The third, liberal severity. The fourth, superiority of minute service. The fifth, lack of any subjection. The sixth, immunity from dissimilarity. The seventh, an ordered will of dominating. The eighth, conformity of herself and of her own to God. The ninth, no vanity in dominating. The tenth, a participating conformity of the Lordly domination. The blessed Virgin had all these properties in the highest degree.

It remains now to see concerning the highest hierarchy, in which, first in ascending, is the order of Thrones, whose properties are six. The first is height. The second is the surrounding of the king. The third, stable placement. The fourth, reception of the king. The fifth, carrying of the king. The sixth, familiar opening. So also the blessed Virgin is highest with respect to the first. She surrounded the King with the bosom of her womb, as to the second. She chose him as the throne of glory and grace, as to the third. She received him through bodily presence, as to the fourth. She carried the King of glory into the world from heaven, as to the fifth. To her was given the sacrament of the incarnation, alone before all others, to know and experience, as to the sixth.

The second order is Cherubim, of which according to Dionysius ^[9], there are four properties. The first is to be around him. So also she herself surrounded him wholly, namely in conception. The second is reductive, through which, according to the Commentator, is understood the thing by which they tend toward God. So also the blessed Virgin reduced to God all things capable of being reduced. The third is active, which is, as the Commentator says, that they may walk according to God. This she herself did before all. The fourth is exemplary, which is, according to the Commentator, that they may do this according to their own example. So also she herself existed as the exemplar of all virtues.

The highest order of all is the order of Seraphim, whose properties, according to Dionysius in the place nearest above, are eight. The first is mobile, namely of love, which is life. So also she herself is for us the cause of eternal life. The second is incessable, and it is charity, because it is perpetual. So also she herself has the incessability of charity above the Seraphim. The third is hot, and it is warm and quieted love. The blessed Virgin had this above the Seraphim. For greater is the virtue which makes one quieted in tumult and din than that which makes one quieted in silence and quiet. So also the blessed Virgin was altogether tranquil in the tumult of tribulations and persecutions. The fourth is sharp. And the Commentator says that sharp is wisdom. But she herself was most wise. The fifth is overflowing, which is when through the fire of charity one is lifted above oneself; and she was elevated above all the choirs of Angels. The sixth is intent, which is,

according to the Commentator, that one may go into him. This she also did. The seventh is inward, which is, as the Commentator says, that one may not flow out to exterior things. Indeed she herself flowed upward above nature and contrary to nature, and all who flowed downward she led back upward with herself. The eighth property is inflexible, which is that they may not turn aside to affairs outside him. And the blessed Virgin had this above the Seraphim. For those, only from the time at which they received that, did not turn aside from him; but she not only never turned aside from him, but turned all things to him.

Therefore the most blessed Virgin Mary is an Angel in the discovery of grace, an Archangel in the generation of God, a Prince in the subjection of Princes, a Power in the operation of supernatural things, a Virtue in the perfection of God's strongest acts, a Domination in the placement above the creature, a Throne in the bodily reception of God, a Cherubim in the most secret knowledge of all secrets, a Seraphim in love highest above all.

Notes

[1] Apocalypse 1:1. (*Apocal. I, 1.*)

[2] Saint Bernard, Sermon on these words of Apocalypse 12:1. (*S. Bernardus, Sermon super haec verba Apocalypsis, XII, 1.*)

[3] Saint Anselm, Book On the Virginal Conception, chapter 18. (*S. Anselmus, Lib. de Conceptu virginali, cap. 18.*)

[4] Saint Dionysius, Book On the Divine Names, chapter 2. Saint Jerome, Epistle or sermon to Paula and Eustochium; Saint Damascene, Book III On the Orthodox Faith, chapter 1; Saint Cyprian, sermon On the Nativity of Christ; and Saint Bernard, sermon 3 on the Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord and Homily 1 on Missus est, have this more expressly. (Note of the Lyons edition.) (*S. Dionysius, Lib. de Divinis nominibus, cap. 2. Expressius id habent S. Hieronymus, Epist. seu serm. ad Paulam et Eustochium; S. Damascenus, Lib. III de Fide orthodoxa, cap. 1; S. Cyprianus, serm. de Nativitate Christi, et S. Bernardus serm. 3 in Vigilia Natalis Domini et Homil. I super Missus est. (Nota edit. Lugd.).*)

[5] Saint John Damascene, Book IV On the Orthodox Faith, chapter 15. (*S. J. Damascenus, Lib. IV de Fide orthodoxa cap. 15.*)

[6] Saint Dionysius, Book On the Celestial Hierarchy, chapters 6 and 9. (*S. Dionysius, Lib. de Coelesti hierarchia, cap. 6 et 9.*)

[7] Luke 1:35. (*Luc. I, 35.*)

[8] Saint Dionysius, Book On the Celestial Hierarchy, chapter 8. (*S. Dionysius, Lib. de Coelesti hierarchia, cap. 8.*)

[9] Saint Dionysius, Book On the Celestial Hierarchy, chapter 7. (*S. Dionysius, Lib. de Coelesti hierarchia, cap. 7.*)

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O Queen of mercy, of grace, and of glory, Empress of all things, may you kindly receive this little book, compiled in whatever way for your honor, and may you wash away all my sins, finally bestow grace making one pleasing, and lead me, your most unworthy servant, to everlasting glory. Amen.

You also, Reader, whatever in it must be corrected, may you strive to correct with fraternal charity.

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