

On the Triune *Elohim*
Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
One and the Same Jehovah

In Two Volumes
1572

by
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With support from
The Davenant Trust and The Acton Institute

This translation is the fruit of the Wenden House at New Saint Andrews College. Wenden House is a project making use of the Latin scholarship at NSA to produce English translations of influential, yet previously untranslated, Latin works for the service of the church and the academy. Wenden scholars meet twice a week, under the direction of an NSA faculty member, to produce a collaborative translation. In addition to the translation work, the Wenden scholars meet to discuss translation theory, as well as the larger historical and theological context of the works that they are translating. The scholars are primarily graduate students at NSA. Scholarships for Wenden students are awarded by merit and are made possible by the generosity of the NSA's supporters.

We would like to thank Peter Escalante and Anna VanDenBroak for their editorial contributions.

Timothy Griffith has been of invaluable assistance by being constantly "on call" to help unravel a number of translation difficulties.

And we would like to give special thanks to the generous financial support of The Davenant Trust and Brian Oxley.

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Sources and Abbreviations

Adam <i>Dial</i>	Adamantius, <i>Dialogus de Recta in Deum Fide</i>
Aqu <i>Sum</i>	Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i>
Aug <i>De Trin</i>	Augustine, <i>De Trinitate</i>
Aug <i>Agon.</i>	Augustine, <i>De Agone Christi</i>
Bas <i>C. Sab. et Ar. et An.</i>	Basil, <i>Contra Sabellios et Arium et Anomoeos</i>
Cic <i>De Nat</i>	Cicero, <i>De Natura Deorum</i>
Cle <i>Str</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromata</i>
Eus <i>De Evang</i>	Eusebius, <i>De Evangelica Praeparatione</i>
Gr Naz <i>Orat</i>	Gregory Nazianzus <i>Orationes</i>
Lact <i>Div Inst</i>	Lactantius <i>Divinae Institutiones</i>
Lom <i>Sent</i>	Lombard, <i>Sententiae</i>
Nov <i>De Trin</i>	Novatian, <i>De Trinitate</i>
Orig <i>Hom in Is</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies in Isaiah</i>
Ruf <i>Hist Ecc</i>	Rufinus, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
Soc <i>Hist Ecc</i>	Socrates, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
Soz <i>Ecc Hist</i>	Sozomen, <i>Ecclesiastica Historia</i>
Tert <i>Adv Prax</i>	Tertullian, <i>Q. Septimii Florentis Tertulliani Carthaginensis presbyteri adversus praxean sive de trinitate liber</i>
Theo <i>Hist Ecc</i>	Theodoret, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>

Letter to the Reader

Grace and Peace to the Christian Reader, from Girolamo Zanchi.

Besides those things which I wrote in the Letter to the Archbishop¹ (which letter I also desire you to read, Christian reader, as it is fitting for you, since it pertains to all those who have the glory of Christ and his salvation in their heart), I also desire that you be instructed in those things which are necessary for understanding with greater ease and clarity the whole doctrine of God which is treated in these books.

As you see, there are thirteen books; the first volume contains eight, and the second contains the remaining five. My reason for this structure and division into two volumes was that I considered that the explanation and confirmation of the whole doctrine ought to be given separately from the refutation of false doctrine, so that the truth might first be established for the saints without any hindrance from the sophistries of our opponents. As for the objections and sophistries of our adversaries, which shake and disturb some of the weak minded, it will become apparent that they ought to be examined and refuted. God himself distinguished the light from the darkness and the day from the night; and so it is that when we see the light shining, the darkness is more easily recognized. So too, when we understand and are persuaded of the truth, we notice lies without great difficulty, and are able to discern the sophistries that cover the lies from the true arguments.

Therefore since if we are well armed, rather than unarmed, we are more prudently and effectively equipped for a fight with our enemies, I wanted first of all to fortify the souls of the saints with the understanding and persuasion of the truth, before I led them into battle along with me against our enemies. This is the reason why I decided to separate the whole work into two volumes. In one of them I collected the truth and the arguments for it; in the other, whatever is opposed to both the truth and the arguments for it.

The sum of my teaching is this: there is only one true and eternal God, distinguished into three *Elohim* or persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – each of whom is God, Jehovah; not such that there are multiple Jehovahs, but all are one and the same Jehovah. I have arranged this thesis into five propositions. The first of these treats the one God alone; the second, the number and the true ὑποστάσεις² of the *Elohim* or persons in God; the third, the real distinction of the three ὑφισταμένων;³ the fourth, the true and eternal Deity of each; the fifth and last proposition, the one and the same οὐσία⁴ of each of them.

¹ Zanchi refers here to his dedicatory epistle to Edmund Grindal, formerly the Bishop of London, then the Archbishop of York, and soon to be the Archbishop of Canterbury.

² ὑποστάσεις - *hypostases*, or subsistences

³ ὑφισταμένων – ones subsisting

⁴ οὐσία – being

And so in the first book is contained the *προλεγόμενα*⁵ to the whole discussion of God, in which I treat the various ideas that have been held about God, and the explanation of the terms *οὐσίας, ὑποστάσεως* and others which are used in this disputation. Then, with the first thesis, it is explained and confirmed that there is only one true and eternal God; the second thesis, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are true *ὑφισταμένα* and true persons; the third thesis, that the three are so really and truly distinct that one is not another; the fourth thesis, that the Father of Christ is true Jehovah.

The second book contains many different Old Testament passages (and their explanations) from Genesis all the way to Malachi, which demonstrate that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was known by Moses and all the Prophets to be the true and eternal God Jehovah.

Next, in the third book (which is like a *προαύλιον*⁶) we come to the New Testament. There, I demonstrate the worthiness and majesty of Christ by various means and arguments, some certain, some probable. It is clear that he is not *ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον*,⁷ as Ebion and others said, neither is he pure creature or pure angel, as Arius taught.

The fourth book begins with an explanation of the ways in which someone can be called “of another,” and particularly the Son of God. Then I bring forth testimonies from heaven, that is, from the Father, Holy Spirit, Angels, and the Son himself that demonstrate that Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal Father, begotten of the substance of the Father himself. Here, among other things, I will examine many chapters from the Gospel of John.

I will confirm the same thesis in the fifth book, using the testimonies of those who witnessed to the deity of Christ on earth—first the Saints, John the Baptist, Zacharias, the Apostles, and other believers; then we will also use the testimonies of the unbelievers—the Jews, Pilate, and even the demons. In addition to these testimonies there are both arguments drawn from certain self-evident principles as well as testimonies from some of the most ancient Fathers, such that the consensus of the whole Church (from the beginning all the way to the present without interruption) about the eternal generation of the Son from the substance of the Father becomes apparent.

In the sixth book, having first explained the means by which someone is called by the name of God, I will demonstrate with strong arguments, that when Christ is called God in the Scriptures, this name is proclaimed of him both properly and essentially. Additionally, I will demonstrate that it is taught that he is God by nature, no less than the Father. Then, having carefully considered the Apostolic testimonies in which Christ is called God, this argument will be abundantly confirmed. Among other things, I will examine the prologue of the Gospel of John, such that, having refuted the interpretations of all the heretics, the orthodox teaching of the Church will be confirmed and established.

⁵ *προλεγόμενα* – *prolegomena*

⁶ a *προαύλιον* – gateway; porch

⁷ *ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον* – bare man

The seventh book is about the deity of the Holy Spirit, which I will confirm with the same testimonies—first of the old covenant, then of the new. Thus I will establish as absolutely certain the fourth thesis, namely, that the Son and the Holy Spirit are true and eternal God no less than the Father.

In the last book of the first volume, I will use the same method to clearly defend the following: that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, although they are distinct persons, are nevertheless only one Jehovah.

In the second volume, the first book contains a *προλεγόμενα* concerning the arguments of the heretics, the particular schemes which the Antichrists employ against this sound doctrine of God, and the method of refuting these Antichrists. The second book has responses to the objections and sophistries of Paul of Samosata, Servetus, and others who oppose the second and third theses, regarding the true *ὑποστάσεις* and distinction of the persons. In the third book, I refute those arguments, which are usually offered by the Arians and others against the fourth thesis, regarding the natural and eternal generation of the Son by the Father, and his true Deity. In the fourth book I vindicate the eternal Deity of the Holy Spirit from the scoffing of Macedonius, and all the other *πνευματομάχοι*.⁸ In the fifth book, I respond to the tricks of the Tritheists, and confirm even more so that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are only one Jehovah. Finally, I defend against Ochino that the knowledge of this doctrine of the Trinity is necessary for eternal salvation, in so far as it is obviously set forth in the Scriptures and in the Creed. This is the sum and the analysis of all these books.

In the whole work I have made effort to be clear, and also, as much as was possible, to be brief. For if perhaps, at first glance, I seem overly lengthy to some people, those same people will understand that I cannot be blamed once they have read the whole book, and have carefully considered the distinguished grandeur of the argument, and the multitude of passages of Holy Scripture on which the argument is founded.

In setting forth and confirming the doctrine of the Apostles, I restrain myself; for I ought to remain within the limits of Scriptures, which gathered and examined according to the first principles of the faith, alone have the power to confirm these and all other true doctrines of religion in as much as these doctrines are consistent with the Scriptures themselves. If I sometimes bring in testimonies from the Fathers, they are only added as witnesses, so that the unbroken consensus of the Church should be evident from the time of the Apostles till the present. In gathering testimonies from the Scriptures, I have not given only those which are certain, but also those which are probable. I use these probable ones only to illustrate Christ's majesty. For when the probable testimonies are joined with the certain, they have the power to persuade men who are not obstinate; especially in the Holy Scriptures, where the power of persuasion depends not on argument, but on the authority of the speaker. But it pleased the Holy Spirit to intimate many things rather than to explain them openly,

⁸ *πνευματομάχοι* – disputers against the Spirit, Spirit-fighters

so that the teachings might appear to be ἀκρόαμανα,⁹ and should only be understood by those who are θεοδίδακτοι,¹⁰ for whose sake he spoke. Should I wish to provide examples of this in the course of my argument, I have many from the Apostles.

I do not use analogies by which a doctrine might be explained, unless in some way the analogies should render this doctrine easier for the saints to understand, as if I were placing the things themselves before their eyes. But I do not suggest that the divine things are such that analogies taken from human experience can fully explain them. For what is able to be found in the created things which is able to be compared in any way with the eternal and divine majesty? However, I often use the example of the human soul, and I say that its essential faculties are the essential parts of the soul (which are really nothing other than the soul itself), and I write that the soul by itself is nothing other than the faculties themselves. Therefore I use this analogy, since it especially pertains to our topic, and I do not use it rashly, since many respectable Philosophers hold this opinion as well. Nevertheless, it does not escape me what others have written, chiefly the Scholastics, and especially Aquinas in *Quaestionibus Disputatis*, where he defines the potential intellect,¹¹ neither as substance nor accident, but something in between both. Whatever the truth may be, it is not my task to dispute it in these books. In my opinion, there is enough reason to include this analogy for explaining the mystery of the one essence and three persons. Namely because this notion of the one soul and its three faculties (which is defended as both true and certain by many and even great men) parallels and likewise images what the Church of Christ believes from the Scriptures and teaches about the one unified God distinct in three persons (as if in three essential parts), which nevertheless are no other τῷ εἶναι¹² than the one unified God himself. Furthermore, this ought not to seem absurd since the same reality can also be observed in created things according to the opinion of great men.

And because the whole determination of this controversy depends on an orthodox understanding of Scripture, that is, through the Scriptures themselves, according to the analogy of faith, and according to the universal consensus of all the proven Doctors from all of antiquity and up to this time, I therefore followed this method of interpreting the Scriptures which I have just described and that I know to be a true, certain, and genuine rule for interpreting the Scriptures. For this reason in some passages I prefer to follow more recent doctors over the ancient Fathers, and in other passages I favor the ancient Fathers over the recent doctors, according to whether (having diligently examined the Scriptures through the Scriptures according to the analogy of faith) either one or the other seems to miss the mark. Nevertheless, whenever I am compelled to reject an interpretation, I do so soberly, with appropriate esteem and reverence for all.

⁹ ἀκρόαμανα – things made void, without authority

¹⁰ θεοδίδακτοι – ones taught by God

¹¹ *potentias animae*

¹² τῷ εἶναι – in essence

However, sometimes I explain passages using the understanding of the more recent doctors, such that the interpretation of the ancient Fathers is still able to be retained, since it neither does violence to the words of Scripture, nor becomes disagreeable with other parts of the Scriptures, and since it agrees with the analogy of faith. For example, consider Baruch chapter 3: “Afterwards, *she* (certainly the wisdom of God, Christ) appeared in the land and *she* dwelt among men.” For is it not the case that these two verbs, “appeared” and “dwelt,” actually refer to θεός?¹³ After all, this is how the Vulgate has translated it: “Afterwards, *he* appeared on earth and *he* dwelt among men.” For in the Greek it is this: οὗτος ὁ θεός ἡμῶν, οὐ λογισθήσεται ἕτερος πρὸς αὐτόν. ἐξεῦρεν πᾶσαν ὁδὸν ἐπιστήμης (clearly this is God) καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν Ἰακωβ τῷ παιδί αὐτοῦ, καὶ Ἰσραὴλ τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ. μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὤφθη (namely, οὗτος ὁ θεός ἡμῶν) καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συνανεστράφη.¹⁴ Or if we were to interpret these words as they are best understood, the passage would become clearer for demonstrating the eternal Deity of Christ, to whom alone is attributed the name of our God, the creation of all things, the giving of the law, and finally the incarnation. For what God have we who has appeared on earth and dwelt among men, besides that λόγος whom John called θεός and about whom he added, “And the λόγος was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory”? Therefore, let no one wonder why I sometimes cite this passage according to the Vulgate translation, and other times, just as others have done, I interpreted it to be about God’s eternal wisdom.

If anyone wonders that in the passage about Christ from Revelation 1 (“I am the A and Ω, the beginning and the end,’ says the Lord, ὁ ὢν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ παντοκράτωρ.”)¹⁵ I added the name of God, reading it thus, λέγει ὁ κύριος, ὁ θεός:¹⁶ let him know that I did this because certain codices have ὁ θεός in this passage instead of ὁ κύριος. The Scriptures attribute both names to Christ, as noted, and repeatedly places the names together.

No one with good sense will marvel that the same arguments for proving the deity of Christ are repeated in various passages, since the method we have accepted demanded this. For I have determined not to use certain kinds of arguments used by others, but rather to examine diligently the particular passages which are about Christ, and to elicit the true sense from the context, from the preceding and following verses, and from the sense of the words as well, and finally to demonstrate whether it can be gathered truly from all this whether or not Christ is the true God, regardless of whether these arguments be drawn from his individual characteristics, attributes, works, worship, or from the names of God, or from specific declarations, as well as other passages. For I have judged

¹³ θεός - God

¹⁴ “This is our God; no other will be reckoned with him. He discovered the whole way of knowledge (clearly this is God) and gave her to his servant Jacob and to Israel who was loved by him. After this she appeared (namely, “this is our God”) on earth and associated among humans” (Baruch 3:35-37).

¹⁵ ὁ ὢν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ παντοκράτωρ – the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty

¹⁶ λέγει ὁ κύριος, ὁ θεός – says the Lord God

this method would be more useful to the Church and more fitting for what I have sought to show, than if I had used bare arguments, particularly since I argue against such heretics who boast that they accept nothing other than the simple testimony of Scripture.

In my refutation, I have taken particular effort to demonstrate the fallacies in each of our opponents' objections and sophistries. Yet I certainly do not commend this method of argumentation at all times, especially when engaging with learned men who have no need of this. However, I did want to include it in these books in order that I might be mindful of the more simpleminded, and in order that perhaps these childish ones might themselves more easily see the deceits, tricks, frauds, and incompetency of those who are thought to be wisest and most devout men (God forgive me that I grant them this claim). And by this, all might more diligently seek to guard themselves against these heretics. This is also the reason why in the second volume, where I ought to fight more directly, I did not want to speak ῥητορικῶς,¹⁷ but rather διαλεκτικῶς,¹⁸ that is, to confront and deal with them directly.

When I refuted Lelio Sozzini's impious interpretation of the first chapter of John's Gospel, I omitted his name and merely referred to him as a scoundrel, because I did not then know for certain that he was the author of that tract and I had not yet seen his name appear in any of the books of our opponents. But now, since his position is all too clear and the Servetians consider him to be one of their faithful and pious doctors, I also want to make it clear to you, reader, who he is. Lelio was born of a noble and honest family, was well taught in Greek and in Hebrew, and was considered to be, at least externally, blameless. For these reasons, despite the fact that he was a man full of various heresies, there once was a deep friendship between him and me. He never revealed his heresies to me, except as matters of disputation, and he did so always asking, as if he was desirous of being taught. At first, for many years, he only privately nurtured his Samosatianism, but later he led astray whomever he could into that error—and he led many. He ventured many different arguments with me as well, as I have said, in order that he might, by means of that same error, swallow me up along with him in a sudden and eternal destruction, just as Matteo Gribaldi and others had previously done. However, when they all saw that I was not only a complete stranger to this blasphemy, but had been received into the Church and had become a zealous defender of her true judgments, he and all the others made a complete renunciation of my friendship, and I, in turn, renounced theirs.

For this reason I give eternal thanks to my Lord Jesus Christ, who has preserved me sound and constant by the true knowledge of him, and to whom be all praise and glory eternally. Finally, I want to ask you, dear reader, if you are to find a problem in either of the indices, either the biblical index or the index of terms, please set aside your objection, suspend your judgment, and just consult the book. In the indices you will find that they have been collected and ordered too hastily on

¹⁷ ῥητορικῶς – rhetorically

¹⁸ διαλεκτικῶς – dialectically

account of the shortness of time such that they are either incomplete or incorrect. This is because I did not compose the indices, and they could not be corrected prior to printing.

Bene Vale.

Heidelberg: September 1, 1572

PART ONE

Book One

On The One True God, Eternal Father, Son, And Holy Spirit

The true God Jehovah, is only one, and this God is three אלהים, truly distinguished from one another: in particular the Father of Christ, his Son, and the Spirit of each. And the Father is the true Jehovah.

Chapter One

There are various opinions about God. For this reason, the true doctrine concerning God should be searched out. The chief points of these conclusions about God must be thoroughly investigated.

I. There are two kinds of men, who have argued or written one thing or another about God. One kind consists of those who have never acknowledged the word of God; such are all the heathen and barbarian nations. The other consists of those who have acknowledged and still do acknowledge Holy Scripture. Those of the gentile nations who have written about God, are either set in such variance and disagreement, that to enumerate their beliefs would be tiresome; or their traditions are so impious, absurd, and obscene, that they cannot be heard or recited without shame and indignation. Some simply denied that there is a God, which is what Cicero writes about Diagora Melio (also called ἄθεος)¹⁹ and Theodore of Cyrene; and others testify of similar instances. Some have doubted God's existence, such as Protagoras; others affirmed it.

However, of these who affirmed God's existence, some acknowledged only one God, others contended that there are many. And of those who thought that there were many gods, some said that they were incorporeal spirits, others thought that they were embodied. And not a few of those, such as the Egyptians, Greeks, and particularly the Romans, also numbered their own dead among the gods, even the impure, perverted, adulterous, and those eminent in every kind of vice. Others worshipped living things that lacked reason, such as oxen, serpents, crocodiles, geese, and even various birds, fish, wild beasts, and other kinds of animals, just as if they were gods. Just as is plainly

¹⁹ Cic *De Nat* 1.2; Eus *De Evang* XIV
ἄθεος – godless

seen in their own books; and the Apostle testifies the same to the Romans.²⁰ All these errors, however, have proceeded from this particular cause: though they were living men, they lack the Spirit of God, just as they lack Scripture. They pondered and argued about God by means of human reasoning alone and the wisdom of their age. And then it became particularly true of them, that they, after they had known God (who willingly reveals himself) from observing created things in one way or another, did not glorify or give thanks to him. And so they became feeble in their reasoning and their foolish hearts were darkened, and when they professed to be wise, they became fools. Thus they heedlessly changed the glory of the incorruptible God, not only into mortal humans, but also into the imagined form of corruptible men, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and serpents—just as the excellent apostle taught.²¹

This caused that foolish distribution of gods, which is found amongst the pagans, into celestial, terrestrial, and infernal beings; gods of the sea, springs, and rivers, household gods and guardian gods, and countless others. And this was the source of their holiest gods (if God will pardon my speech), which they worship with utmost reverence, such as that impious, most disgraceful, and well nigh patricidal, Jupiter, who as king expelled his father and drove him into exile, who molested innumerable virgins and a prince. This is the source of that obscene and παιδεράστης²² Apollo, impure and illegitimate Asclepius, savage, adulterous, and murdering Mars, Mercury the thief and scoundrel, lewd Bacchus the father of drunkenness, notorious Ganymede, and finally wicked Vulcan the craftsman. From this also come the most infamous goddesses, the most promiscuous prostitute of gods as well as of men, and the creator of the harlot's craft, mother Venus, cruel and jealous Juno, most obscene Ops, Lupa, Leaena, Faula, Flora, the harlots; Rubigo, Febris, Fornax, Muta, Caca and many other thousands of gods and goddesses. The pagans worshipped these gods and goddesses; and after that, they did not wish to glorify the true God. And this, in brief, sums up the errors of the pagans, and the causes of their errors.

However, of those who have received and still do acknowledge Scripture, whether in part or in whole, some have thought and written excellently about God, such as the faithful Fathers, whom we follow. Yet, many others have bequeathed to us impious and blasphemous writings about God. They can, however, be divided into two categories. The first of the two are those who maintain that there is a plurality of gods. For some unreservedly and openly understand and declare that there are two gods, unbegotten, self-existing, eternal, but mutually opposed to one another. One is the cause of all good, whom they call, for this reason, the greatest good. The other, from whom comes all evil, they call, for this reason, the greatest evil. And these followed immediately after the Apostles: the Gnostics, the disciples of Carpocrates, and finally the Manicheans. Then there were the Cerdonians and the Marcionites who claimed that there was one God who was the author of the law and another

²⁰ Romans 1:23

²¹ Romans 1:21

²² παιδεράστης – lover of boys

who was the author of the Gospel. Afterwards there were the Valentinians, who called one depth and the other silence; or (as the Greeks say) βυθὸς καὶ σιγή,²³ from whence came all the gods. Others believed that there are three gods, or spirits, who are not only distinct from one another, but also separated: the Father is one, the Son is another, and the Spirit is a third. Augustine recalls these in *De Agone Christi*.²⁴ This heresy still has some defenders, whom they rightly call Tritheists. All of these are of the first category, namely those who conceive of a plurality of gods.

The second category consists of those who confess with us that there is only one God, nevertheless they flatly deny that there are three *hypostases*, or persons, within God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; or at least they strip both the Son and the Holy Spirit of their deity. And in this second category are, first of all, the Jews; they do not accept the divine name of Father, and certainly not those of Son and Holy Spirit. And much less do they concede the things signified by those names; that is that there is one who begets, and who, for this reason is called Father, and another who is begotten, and because of this is called the Son, and a third who proceeds or is breathed from each, and who therefore is called the Holy Spirit.

Next in this category are the Noetians, Sabellians, Praxeans, and Hermogenians. They indeed grant these names for God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and this is because these names are clearly found in the New Testament; but they eliminate the thing itself. They do not accept that there are three *Hypostases*, or three ὑφιστάμενα,²⁵ or three things subsisting through themselves, knowing, willing, and doing. But they say that the same God or the same thing, considered from different perspectives, is referred to by those three names – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus, they say that the Father was made man, and died, because he who is called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one and the same. And for this reason they have been called the *Patris passiani* – the “Father-sufferers.”

To these are added Paulus,²⁶ Samosatenus,²⁷ Photinus,²⁸ and Servetus.²⁹ They say that the Father certainly is both truly eternal and true God himself; but the Son, or the λόγος³⁰ did not subsist prior to the incarnation, but rather was an *Idea*, a concept, and a word of God; and then he finally began to subsist and truly became the Son of God when he was conceived in the womb of the virgin and was made man. The Holy Spirit, also does not subsist, but is a power of God; by which God

²³ βυθὸς καὶ σιγή – depth and silence

²⁴ Aug *Agon* bk. 3, ch. 15

²⁵ ὑφιστάμενα – (things) subsisting

²⁶ Grzegorz Paweł (c.d. 1591) Polish antitrinitarian

²⁷ Paul of Samosata (c. Third Cent) Bishop of Antioch

²⁸ Photinus (c.d. 376) Bishop of Sirmium in Pannonia

²⁹ Miguel Servet (d. 1553) Spanish antitrinitarian

³⁰ λόγος – the Word

works in his saints, and rules them. And thus they will not allow that the Son and Spirit are truly God.

Third in this category are those who grant both the names and the things themselves, but they deprive the Son, as well as the Holy Spirit, of their own nature and deity. They deprive each of their properties. They say that there are certainly three in heaven: the Father, the λόγος, and the Holy Spirit. But the Father is the only true and eternal God; the λόγος is a spirit created by the Father; the Holy Spirit is truly a spirit from God, made through the λόγος from nothing. Thus they rob the two of their deity, truly each one of their properties. They even deny that the Father is the Father when they deny that the Son was truly begotten from Him. These were the Arians and the Macedonians; and these Macedonians the Greek Fathers also called the πνευματομάχοι,³¹ because they were opposing the Holy Spirit.

This is the summary of those who acknowledge the Holy Scriptures, either in part (such as the Jews, the Manicheans, and several others) or, along with us, in its entirety (such as the other heretics). Nevertheless, they have taught and written many impious and blasphemous things about God, of which we group into two categories. The first are those who hold that there are plural gods, and the second are those who confess that God is one in such a way that they either deny that there are three persons or they strip them of their nature and properties. Where do these errors actually come from? It is because either they have not restrained themselves within the limits of Holy Scripture, but driven by curiosity they desired to search out that which God has not revealed; or, that which he revealed, they carefully studied, but they then failed to interpret according to the analogy of faith.

II. Therefore since they behave in this manner, we must take care that we do not fall into these sort of blasphemous errors when we begin to speak about God. While there are many rules that have been handed down to us in other places about how to understand and interpret Scripture and the divine mysteries, which we will explain shortly, there are two rules that especially should be observed. First, concerning such a mystery, let us think nothing, discuss nothing, except what Scripture itself supports—and with this let us be content. Of these things nothing which God himself did not wish to reveal should be searched out; and what he laid open, let it not be neglected. Second, to search out diligently the Scriptures according to the analogy of faith. We must interpret those Scriptures through Scripture itself.

For while there are many difficult and obscure questions in the discipline of theology, certainly that which is about the Trinity, just as it is most necessary of all to be believed, so too it is the most difficult and obscure of all to understand. And because of this no man, no matter how holy and wise, has ever been able to, or ever will be able to, understand by his own intelligence, what God is. Just as not only Simonides the philosopher, no less wise than learned, freely admitted of himself;

³¹ πνευματομάχοι – Spirit-fighters

but also all of the rest, the profane just as much as the holy authors, naturally acknowledge this. Much less is anyone able to understand, by what agreement³² the three are distinguished amongst themselves, Father, λόγος, and Holy Spirit: such that at the same time there are nevertheless not three Gods, but only one God.

These truly surpass every created capacity, which the Seraphim, in Isaiah,³³ also clearly taught, when in the presence of the divine majesty of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they covered their faces with two of their wings; signifying by that action, that the mystery of divine majesty cannot be understood by the intellect of any creature, not even by the Angels themselves. And so, this heavenly mystery must be thought about and spoken of, quite soberly and with the greatest reverence. The Holy Spirit taught us this in Proverbs.³⁴ “Just as,” he says, “he who eats much honey: it is not good for him. So too he who will search out majesty, is overwhelmed by glory.” This is especially true of the one who wants to search out and understand this mystery beyond the boundaries of the Scriptures. Certainly all the Fathers that I have read, both the Greek Fathers as much as the Latin Fathers, confirm this same thing. For although they wrote much about the Trinity (having been compelled to do so by the heretics) nevertheless they all naturally agree: one cannot argue about a more difficult and more dangerous thing than the Trinity. For the sight of the human mind cannot reach to such light, in order to perceive such a mystery as the unity and the trinity, except in so far as it can be gathered from the Scriptures through the light of the Holy Spirit.

Consider what Justin Martyr wrote in his book with the title ἔκθεσις πίστεως περὶ τῆς ὁρθῆς ὁμολογίας, ἥτοι περὶ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ὁμοουσίου τριάδος.³⁵ After he had explained the Trinity from the Scriptures (allowing the matter to be argued through Scripture and conclusions which are most clearly drawn from Scripture) he finally says: “a Unity within the Trinity is understood, and a Trinity is recognised within the unity. However this might in fact be, neither do I want others to attempt an explanation, nor am I able to satisfy myself.” And he concludes in these words: “in no way, therefore, since we are men, can we penetrate to that first and blessed essence.” Tertullian writes nothing different: “Whatever” he says, “you would relate about him (God, who is three and one), his power and virtue are much greater than that which you would communicate. What can you worthily speak or think about him, who is greater than all words and thoughts?”³⁶ And what about Augustine? “Where,” he says, “the unity of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is sought out, there is nowhere where being mistaken is more dangerous, where the seeking is more laborious, or

³² *quo pacto*

³³ Isaiah 6:2

³⁴ Proverbs 25:27

³⁵ “The exposition of the faith concerning right agreement, or concerning the holy and consubstantial Trinity.” The attribution to Justin is now considered spurious.

³⁶ It is assumed that Zanchi intended *Adv Praxeus*, though Zanchi gives the note [*De Trinit.* p. 598]. In the following notes, where Zanchi gives page numbers for his patristic references, these will be provided in brackets [], preceded by an attempt to provide the reference according to modern conventions.

where the finding would be more fruitful.”³⁷ Neither did Ambrose, Hilary, nor the rest of the interpreters write anything different.

Let the Servetians and the Tritheists go on boasting that they understand the mystery of the Trinity perfectly, and let them contend that there is nothing difficult about this, if we proceed with Scripture alone. Besides the Fathers, the Seraphim themselves taught otherwise, who therefore covered their faces in the presence of such a great glory and divine majesty, in order that we might understand that not even the Angels themselves can perfectly fathom this mystery, and it is better that it be worshipped than painstakingly investigated.

And since it is so difficult to understand this mystery, then should we, therefore, desist from investigating and searching it out in the hopes of understanding it? Definitely not! For God has commanded that we examine the Scriptures,³⁸ which contain much about this mystery. Therefore, these are to be carefully searched out by us. And thus, just as we are to inquire into, discuss, and dispute, over the other points of Christian doctrine, so also for this subject, but from Scripture and within the limits of Scripture. The Fathers also teach the same thing. Wherefore we should do likewise, not so much because it is appropriate, but because it is required.

III. Moreover, in order that we might place a clear and precise outline of the mystery of the Trinity, drawn from Holy Scripture, at the front of our whole discussion, from which we should gather the questions to be discussed, and upon which our entire argument must depend, I think it would be a worthwhile endeavour if I briefly explained the passage 1 John 5. For although the Apostle does not deal explicitly with the Trinity there, but about the witnesses by which it is confirmed, that Jesus is the true Son of God, and the Messiah, about whom the law and the prophecies of the prophets had spoken. Nevertheless, he clearly relates both that there are three in heaven, either *hypostases* or persons (I won't argue over these words), Father, λόγος or Son, and Holy Spirit; and also that these three are not three gods, but only one God. For which reason, this passage is relevant to our discussion of God. Therefore, let us hear the Apostle:

1. John 5:5

τίς ἐστιν ὁ νικῶν τὸν κόσμον, εἰ μὴ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, and so on until verse 13.³⁹

All those who have written on this passage agree amongst themselves with regard to certain points. First, they agree certainly in the aim of the Apostle. Without a doubt he wants to prove that Jesus is the one in whom our faith solely ought to rest, as he is the true Son of God and Savior, on whom depends all our salvation and victory over the world. Second, then they agree that the Apostle

³⁷ Aug *De Trin* vol. 3, I.3.6

³⁸ John 5:39

³⁹ Who is he who conquers the world if not he who believes that Jesus is the son of God?

proves this by two kinds of testimony, some which testify from heaven and others which testify on earth. Third, they wonderfully agree about the heavenly testimonies, that they obviously are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because first the Father thundered above Christ from heaven, once at his baptism, and again at the transfiguration, saying, "This is my beloved Son."⁴⁰ Then the Son himself continually taught the same thing, that he was the true Son of God. Lastly, the Holy Spirit has testified the same thing in many ways, both before and after Jesus' death – at his baptism, when he descended upon him in the form of a dove and after the ascension when, in accordance with the promise of Christ, he descended upon his Apostles. At that time, he gave various gifts to the faithful. And such were those gifts that through them he clearly made known that Christ, on account of whose faith the Spirit was generously giving those gifts, was the true Son of God. Such were the gifts of tongues, of healing, and all the others, which were at first enumerated by Paul in the epistle to the Romans, but then in more detail in First Corinthians.⁴¹

All expositors, therefore, agree on these three points. But regarding the witnesses which he says bear witness on earth, specifically those that the Apostle names as water, blood, and Spirit, there is not such an agreement among everyone. It does not escape my notice how many interpretations have been offered for this passage. There are as many by the Fathers as there are by the most learned men of our age; which although I do not disapprove of them, neither is it worthwhile to relate each of them. I will relate only one, which seems to me more appropriate to the view of the Apostle and simpler. The essence of which is this: water indicates our regeneration, which comes through the Spirit of Christ. The legal purifications were types of this regeneration, and Baptism is a testimony of this. The blood indicates the righteousness of Christ, which is given to us by his blood, and which consists first in the remission of our unrighteousness and disobedience, then in the imputation of Christ's righteousness and obedience. The Spirit indicates the knowledge of God the Father in Christ, through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, of which Rom. 8 speaks, "the Spirit also gives witness to our spirit."⁴²

This explanation is confirmed in the passage of the Apostle taken from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, when he says that he has become to us wisdom from God, justice, sanctification, and redemption.⁴³ But to whom and how do these things testify that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God, and the Saviour? They testify to the faithful, in whom these blessings reside. These are those who first perceive themselves to have been given the Spirit or the knowledge of God (through the testifying of the Holy Spirit) that we are the sons of God.⁴⁴ They then perceive in themselves the water, that is the regeneration accomplished through the water of the Spirit of Christ. Finally, they

⁴⁰ Matthew 3:17 and 17:5

⁴¹ Romans 12:6 and 1 Corinthians 12:8

⁴² Romans 8:16

⁴³ 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁴⁴ Romans 8:16

have understood themselves to have been bathed and sprinkled by the blood of Christ, that is, justified. Therefore, the faithful have in themselves these three witnesses.

It is clear how these testify to this. The faithful know that they have these benefits from Christ and through Christ. If, however, Christ were not the true Son of God, and the Saviour of the world, then he could not convey these benefits. Therefore, from these by which the faithful perceive the benefits of Christ in themselves, they conclude that Jesus is the true Son of God and Saviour. Behold how and in what ways these three witnesses testify, by the Spirit, by the water, and by the blood, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, the benefits which we receive here on earth from Christ, and through faith in Christ, are the testimonies, about which John said, there are three, which testify on earth— the Spirit, the water, and the blood. All these benefits refer back to these three things: first to the knowledge of God the Father, from the testimony of the Spirit of Christ, second to our sanctification and regeneration, through the water of the Spirit of Christ, and third to righteousness through the blood of Christ. These three kinds of benefits the faithful receive from Christ and perceive themselves to have received. This is a profound interpretation, suited to the view of the Apostle, and not at all contrived.

IV. Nevertheless, I do not think I would be doing any disservice if I also add my own interpretation, which pious and learned men may then consider. For it is not absurd if we interpret the exact same passage of the Holy Scriptures differently, so long as the words of the Holy Spirit are not twisted, and the interpretation accords with the analogy of faith. Therefore, it is the goal of the Apostle to demonstrate, as it has been said, that Jesus is the true Son of God, the Christ or Messiah, about whom the Prophets prophesied; and thus, he is the one in whom all our faith ought to rest. This is the goal, as anyone can see. For since others deny that Jesus is the Christ, John himself here argues that he is indeed the Christ. And for what purpose? So that the faithful might be strengthened in the faith of Christ, and through Him they might be saved, just as is clear from verse thirteen.

But how does he prove this from these witnesses? First, from the heavenly witnesses, the greater witnesses without exception: by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Insofar as they have plainly testified outside of us from heaven, as has been previously declared, these are called the heavenly witnesses, because these testimonies have been immediately conveyed from heaven and have been heard and seen by many. Second, he proves this from those testimonies which he says are testifying on earth. Which are these? There are three kinds of prophecies about Christ, which Jesus, when he was still entirely on earth, showed to have been fulfilled in Himself, and this is the summary of these three.

First, that Christ would come, as the prophet foretold,⁴⁵ who would bring the heavenly doctrine of the Gospel, and would sprinkle it among the nations, in order that he might also be the light of the nations. The Holy Spirit often in Scripture either compares this heavenly doctrine of the

⁴⁵ Isaiah 49:6

Gospel to water or signifies it through water, such as in Isaiah 11. “And the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”⁴⁶ And he speaks of the preaching of the Gospel, by which preaching the knowledge of Jehovah would overflow, to the nations throughout all the world. Ezekiel chapter 47 is almost entirely about this water, that is, about the doctrine of the Gospel, which Christ was destined to spread through the work of the Apostles throughout the entire world. It is also about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which follow the reception of the doctrine of the Gospel, and are often signified in Scripture by the word “water.” For he saw a great multitude of waters flowing out of the temple to the east, to the west, and to the south; and he said it was going up, such that it came all the way up to his knees. And “to rain,” “to bring forth,” or “distil” water from heaven, are very common expressions with the Prophets when meaning the transmission of heavenly doctrine. And a drop of rain is used for doctrine; just as it appears in Job 26 and 29, Ezekiel 20 and 21, Amos 7:16, and Deuteronomy 32. “My teaching,” Moses said, “rains like a flood.” And so it is that often by the word “Baptism” it is actually the doctrine of faith, which we profess in baptism, that is to be understood, as in Acts 19.⁴⁷ Therefore, it is not doubtful, that by the word “water,” doctrine is to be understood.

Then they foretold that the Messiah would come as a High Priest, who would offer a sacrifice for sins, not for his own, but for those of others.⁴⁸ And indeed, that he must die such a kind of death, as we see Jesus died; that is, that he was to be betrayed by a disciple, and was to be sold for thirty silver coins, similarly, the shepherd was to be beaten, the flock was to be scattered, his hands and feet were to be pierced, and he was to be crucified between the sinners. However, this suffering and death is signified by the word “blood.”

Finally, they predicted that he would come, as a king, who would conquer his enemies by his power, triumph over them, and liberate his people. Likewise, by his power he would be resurrected from the dead on the third day, and he would display great signs. Among these signs, the Prophet also includes these: “Then,” he says, “the eyes of the blind will be uncovered, and the ears of the deaf will be opened; the lame will dance like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will be loosed.”⁴⁹ Since Jesus has accomplished these things by his Spirit and power, as the King who has authority over everything, he has entirely demonstrated by these that he is the Messiah. However, this power and strength of the king Messiah is understood by the word “Spirit.” “He has been justified in the Spirit,”⁵⁰ the Apostle says, that is by his own power; by which he performed the miracles, by which he raised the dead, by which he vanquished his enemies, and by which he subdued the entire world to himself, he has been declared and acknowledged as true God. Just as Peter said, “But having been

⁴⁶ Isaiah 11:9

⁴⁷ Acts 19:3

⁴⁸ Isaiah 53

⁴⁹ Isaiah 35:5; Luke 7:22

⁵⁰ 1 Timothy 3:16

made alive by the Spirit, by which Spirit he also preached to the spirits who are now imprisoned (that is, the souls of the impious), having formerly rebelled, when they once awaited the power of God, in the days of Noah,”⁵¹ so too Christ said, “If, however, I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”⁵² Consider how by that Spirit he proves that the Messiah and King has come.

But when all these have been fulfilled in Jesus, here on earth, he gives especially clear testimony not only to the minds of the faithful themselves, but to the minds of the entire world, that he wants in particular to reveal that Jesus is the Christ. Therefore, by three kinds of witnesses John shows (now turning to his words) that Jesus is the Christ. First he testifies in this way by the witnesses from heaven: he whom the Father, and the λόγος himself, and the Holy Spirit all testify from heaven that he is the Messiah and the Son of God, must therefore be the true Son of God and Messiah. Neither the Father, the λόγος, nor the Holy Spirit can testify falsely, since “the Spirit (that is, God) is truth itself.”⁵³ But certainly the Father, the λόγος, and the Holy Spirit have testified about this Jesus. Therefore the testimony is sure.

Then the same thing is confirmed by the witnesses from earth, in this way: he first would come as a prophet, proclaiming the teaching of the Gospel through water, baptizing throughout all the land, just as the prophets foretold. He would then come as High Priest, enduring exactly the kind of death, through blood, that the Prophets prophesied the Messiah would suffer, and doing so for the sins of others, as Isaiah had predicted long before.⁵⁴ He finally would come, as a king, performing through the Spirit, that is, through his power, such great miracles, the kind that had been predicted of the Messiah by the prophets; and whereby he would vanquish his enemies, raise himself from the dead, and subdue the world to himself. I say that he who came in this way, through water, through blood, and through the Spirit, he is the true Christ.

And that is the way that Jesus came. For first he came through water as a prophet: the water, obviously of the Gospel, demonstrating that he was the Messiah. Hence in order that he might confirm this, he was accustomed to direct his listeners to search out the Scriptures, because they testify about him.⁵⁵ Then he came through blood, as High Priest, and he gave himself to death, as the prophets foretold. Just as we see in the Gospels, after they recount something about the suffering of Christ, they immediately follow it with the testimony drawn from the prophets. This was done, “in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.” Why, I ask, do they add this testimony? In order that they might show from this kind of suffering, that Jesus is the Messiah, according to this argument of John. Then he came through the Spirit, as King. And by his Spirit, that is by his power,

⁵¹ 1 Peter 3:18-20

⁵² Matthew 12:28

⁵³ 1 John 5:6

⁵⁴ Isaiah 53

⁵⁵ John 5:39

he performed such great miracles, which declared him to be the Messiah, about whom these things had been prophesied. Therefore, he repeatedly directed his listeners to consider them, for instance, “If you do not believe me, believe my works.” “The works which I do in the name of the Father, they themselves give testimony of me.”⁵⁶ And by this Spirit he rose again from the dead and, having conquered his enemies, freed his people from the hands of their enemies; and made all the world subject to them.⁵⁷

Thirdly, the same thing is proved by the unique testimony of God, in the hearts of the faithful, in this way: he is the true Messiah and Son of God, and when we have accepted him through faith, we also receive the internal testimony of God in us. This is, *πληροφορία*,⁵⁸ a certain and firm persuasion, about the benevolence of God towards us. Because, in order that he might save us, he sent his Son, in whom he placed life, just as he later explains what sort of testimony this is. Thus the Lord had promised through the prophets, that he would cause those who believed in the Messiah, to have in themselves this testimony, or the *πληροφορία*, and a certainty through the Holy Spirit about the benevolence of God. Jeremiah speaks to this point, “I will put my law in their hearts.”⁵⁹ Similarly, “They will all know me.” What is this knowledge, except the testimony of God in us? Then, if he, in whom we believe, as the Son of God, was not truly the Son of God, then God certainly would not have given to those who believe in him, as great a testimony, as the one that he has given. He does not want, nor is able, to give a false testimony. This one, therefore, is the Messiah whom, when we accept him by faith, we also receive him as a testimony from the Father. And such is this Jesus in whom we believe. Everyone who believes in him as the Son of God has this testimony of God in himself. A testimony, I say, certain, firm, true, by which the external testimony of the word is sealed, that is, truth already received by faith. And thus we know more and more that the Lord is truthful. Therefore Jesus is the true Son of God, and the Christ.

The proof of this follows from the fact that its opposite leads to absurdity: he who does not believe in God, makes him a liar, because he does not believe his testimony, which God has testified about his Son. An explanation of this testimony follows, which is received by the faithful, and is rejected by the unbelievers. This is, without a doubt, the chief point of the Gospel—that God wants us saved in eternal life, truly for no other reason than for the sake of Jesus his Son. And for that reason he says, “and this is the testimony, namely that God gives eternal life to us, and that life is in his Son.”⁶⁰ The conclusion follows, “Whoever (therefore) has the Son (that is, whoever believes in

⁵⁶ John 10:38 and 25

⁵⁷ 1 Peter 3:18, 2 Corinthians 13:3, and Ephesians 4:8

⁵⁸ *πληροφορία* – full assurance

⁵⁹ Jeremiah 31:33

⁶⁰ 1 John 5:11

the Son, for he is grasped through faith) has life. Whoever does not have the Son of God, does not have life.”⁶¹

Here we have the fourth argument, which confirms that Jesus is the Son of God and the true Christ. It is an argument from the office of Messiah, which is established thus: he who, having been received by us through faith, imparts eternal life, is the true God or also Christ. This is only properly said of God and of the Messiah, just as the prophets have taught and preached, that he would come in order to give us life.⁶² And such is Jesus in whom we believe as though he were the Son of God, because the one who has the Son has eternal life. Therefore, since we see that those who receive Christ through faith, also receive eternal life, and this is the proper office of the Messiah and the Son of God, it follows that Jesus is the Messiah.

So it seems to me that this passage of John can be suitably explained. Thus John demonstrates by the most beautiful series of arguments that Jesus truly was the Christ and the Son of God. He does so first by two kinds of witnesses, which have testified to it externally. One kind in heaven: Father, λόγος, Holy Spirit. The other kind on earth: the Water, that is the doctrine of the Gospel which Christ, by the work of the apostles, has scattered throughout all of the earth; the Blood, that is, the nature of the death which he died, not for his own, but for the sins of others; the Spirit, that is, by the power of his deity, by which he has, by various means, openly declared who he is. Second, he confirms the same thing by two different kinds of testimonies, which bear witness internally, within the hearts of the faithful. One being the μαρτυρία τοῦ Θεοῦ,⁶³ that is the πληροφορία, concerning the teaching of the Gospel, that God has surely given life on account of his benevolence, and this in Christ. The other being the reception of eternal life, which is given to those that believe in Jesus. And so let this be the judgment of learned men.

V. Now from this passage I have collected these propositions about the Trinity, which must later on be explained and confirmed by us. The first of these is that there is only one God, because he says in the singular number, “the testimony of God.” Second, there are three things subsisting in heaven or three ὑφιστάμενα. He says that there are three in heaven, and with the Father, whom no one denies to be a true ὑφιστάμενον, he adds the λόγος itself and the Holy Spirit, as the same kind of witnesses. Each in turn, as we demonstrate, gives his own clear testimony. Third, these three are truly distinguished from one another. He says that there are three witnesses, and we know that the Father has given testimony of the Son, as of a thing distinct from himself. Fourth, that each of these is the true God, each one equal to the other in all respects. Because after he had said that these three testify in heaven, he calls the testimonies of each of these equally the testimony of God. Therefore, each is equally God, such that one is in all respects equal to the other. Fifth, they are not divided

⁶¹ 1 John 5:12

⁶² Hosea 6:2

⁶³ μαρτυρία τοῦ Θεοῦ – the witness of God

amongst themselves, so that there are three Gods, but all are only one God. For besides the fact that he says that these three are one, he additionally calls the testimony of these three the testimony of God, namely of one.

Chapter Two

On the names which are taken from the Fathers on this point, such as unity, Trinity, Person, essence, ὁμοουσία

I. Moreover, before I set out to explain this doctrine concerning the Trinity, certain other things still need to be mentioned, namely those concerning the words οὐσία, ὁμοουσία, ὑπόστασις, or πρόσωπον, ἐνότης καὶ τριάς.⁶⁴ For just as the Fathers used these words when they argued this matter against the heretics, thus we are also compelled to use them in the explanation of this doctrine and for the same reason as the Fathers had been compelled to do so. And indeed just as we do not approve disputing over terminology when the words fit the subject, in the same way we cannot help but praise when, for the sake of a better explanation, clearer terms are used in places where ambiguous terminology endangers the doctrine of Holy Scripture, by which clearer words both the truth of Scripture might be more openly explained and heresies better refuted. However, I will say three things about these words. First, although all these expressions are not read in Scripture syllable by syllable, nevertheless they are not alien to Scripture, since we have the thing itself abundantly and clearly in Scripture. Then, because certain men deny that these words are found amongst the ancient Fathers of the early church (Tertullian, Justin, Irenaeus, Origen, Lactantius), but are only read in the books of the later Fathers (as in Athanasius, Basil, Augustine, and other Fathers of that age), therefore we will show that they appear frequently even among those first Fathers. Lastly, we will discuss what these words meant to the Fathers, and especially what is the difference between οὐσία καὶ ὑπόστασις.

Thus, with regard to the first point, this is our opinion: ALTHOUGH THESE EXPRESSIONS, ABOUT WHICH THERE IS A QUESTION, DO NOT APPEAR SYLLABLE BY SYLLABLE IN SCRIPTURE, NEVERTHELESS THEY ARE NOT ALIEN TO SCRIPTURE, SINCE NOT ONLY DO WE HAVE THE THING ITSELF IN SCRIPTURE, BUT ALSO THERE ARE TERMS IN SCRIPTURE FROM WHICH THESE EXPRESSIONS ARE DERIVED BY TRUE AND NECESSARY CONSEQUENCES.

For we find throughout Scripture, that there are three in heaven, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Therefore, is it so absurd if from this word “three,” that we deduce the substantive noun “Trinity”? And thus we will argue by way of an etymological connection. There are three in heaven—Father, λόγος, Holy Spirit—and these three are one (that is, one, not so much in agreement of testimony, as in unity of Essence). Therefore, is this not the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God? And just as the seraphim sing out to those three, saying “Holy, holy, holy Lord God Sabbaoth,”⁶⁵ thus we

⁶⁴ οὐσία – essence, substance; ὁμοουσία – of the same substance, consubstantial; ὑπόστασις – an individual instance of a given essence; πρόσωπον – person; ἐνότης καὶ τριάς – unity and trinity

⁶⁵ Isaiah 6:3

call this unity of three persons a holy Trinity. For has not this other expression θεότης⁶⁶ also been deduced from the word θεός,⁶⁷ which the Apostle uses in his letter to Colossians?⁶⁸ I say the same about “unity.” The word “unity” is not in Scripture in this sense; nevertheless, its equivalent appears—“These three are one.”⁶⁹ “I and the Father are one.”⁷⁰ How are we erring if, using the same rule of combination, we say, “These three are one”? Therefore there is a unity of these three, or of persons, in God.

The third expression, οὐσία, that is essence, is not in Scripture; but we have something equivalent to it, where God says that his name is ὁ ὢν—“He who is.”⁷¹ From this word ὢν, is derived the substantive – οὐσία. The word is equivalent. We also have the thing by a necessary consequence. If God is ὁ ὢν, he therefore has being and οὐσία. Christ truly said, “I and the Father are one,”⁷² that is, of one power, and therefore of essence. Therefore we have the thing. In the same way, it must be said about the word ὁμοούσιος,⁷³ that ὁμοούσιος is from οὐσία, thus also ἐπιούσιος,⁷⁴ which word appears in the Gospel Matthew. “Give us bread ἐπιούσιον.”⁷⁵ The word ὑπόστασις appears in Scripture with the meaning that we have used. The Apostle said to the Hebrews, “Christ is χαρακτήρα τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ,”⁷⁶ namely of the Father. Although we may not have the word Person, or as the Greeks say το πρόσωπον, with the same meaning, which we use when we say the “person of the Father,” nevertheless we have the thing itself. Scripture certainly refers to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as things that are distinguished between themselves, indivisible, subsisting, with knowledge, and with will, as we will later discuss. However, a person is thus defined: it is an indivisible substance, with knowledge, with will, and incommunicable. So why is it not permitted to reason from a definition to a defined thing? Could we not clearly argue in this way?

The Father has these attributes, therefore, the Father is a person.

The Son has these attributes, therefore, the Son is a person.

The Holy Spirit has these attributes, therefore, the Holy Spirit is also a person.

⁶⁶ θεότης – deity

⁶⁷ θεός - God

⁶⁸ Colossians 2:9

⁶⁹ 1 John 5:7

⁷⁰ John 10:30

⁷¹ Exodus 3:14

⁷² John 10:30

⁷³ ὁμοούσιος – consubstantial

⁷⁴ ἐπιούσιος – being sufficient for the day

⁷⁵ Matthew 6:11

⁷⁶ Hebrews 1:3

χαρακτήρα τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ - the imprint of his existence or substance

The Greek Fathers were, however, compelled to use this expression because of the heretics, who were denying that these three—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were three distinct things, such that one was not the other. Scripture prohibits that they say there are three Gods. They could not say that there are three men, since only the Son was a man. Also at that time to say “three things” was inadvisable. Nor, indeed, is an individual substance expressed in this way. Therefore, they used the term *το πρόσωπον* for a good reason. So, even if these exact words are not found in Scripture syllable by syllable, nevertheless, since we have the things themselves, these words are then equivalents to them, as we have shown. Thus it follows that these words have been groundlessly rejected by the heretics, as if they were alien to Scripture. I add to this the testimony of Socrates, to confirm what we have just said. Socrates relates the decision of the Council of Alexandria *περὶ ὁμοουσίας*,⁷⁷ in which it is maintained that the Holy Spirit is also himself ὁμοούσιος, of the Father, in just the same way as the Son. He continues with these words: “They (Athanasius, Eusebius, and the other Fathers of that Council) certainly did not introduce into the church a new religion contrived by themselves, but that which the Apostolic tradition has held from the beginning, and also has been clearly philosophised by wise Christian men.”⁷⁸ Therefore, that is enough about the first point.

II. When it comes to the next point, it is clear to those who have even an introductory knowledge of the most ancient Fathers that these same words are also found among them. Let Justin Martyr appear first, who prospered in the church of Christ under Emperor Antonius, around 150 AD. He published a book whose title was *ἔκθεσις πίστεως, περὶ τῆς ὀρθῆς ὁμολογίας, ἥτοι περὶ τῆς ἁγίας, καὶ ὁμοουσίου τριάδος*.⁷⁹ Do you notice the *ὁμοούσιος*, and do you notice the *ἁγία τριάς*?⁸⁰ Not only did he use these expressions in the title, but even more often in the book itself. At the very beginning on the first page, he repeats the word *τριάδος*. He also has the word *οὐσία* and *ὑπαρξίς*.⁸¹ As well as others, he also says *τὸ μὲν ἀγέννητον καὶ γεννητὸν καὶ ἐκπορευτὸν οὐκ οὐσίας, ἀλλὰ τρόποι ὑπάρξεως*.⁸² And he even briefly explains the difference between *οὐσία* καὶ *ὑπαρξίς* and often repeats the word *ὑπόστασις*. In fact, I would say that he uses the word *πρόσωπον* a thousand times. On the first page, and following, he says that there are three *πρόσωπα* in God.

⁷⁷ *περὶ ὁμοουσίας* – concerning the same essence

⁷⁸ *Hist. Eccles.* Bk. 3, ch. 7.

⁷⁹ *The exposition of the faith concerning right agreement, or concerning the holy and consubstantial Trinity.* The work more commonly appeared under the title *ἔκθεσις τῆς ὀρθῆς πίστεως* – *The Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Zanchi’s argument here is unfortunately undermined by the fact that the attribution of this work to Justin Martyr is now considered spurious and more probably to have been a post-Nicean composition.

⁸⁰ *ἁγία τριάς* – holy Trinity

⁸¹ *ὑπαρξίς* – subsistence

⁸² Unbegotten and begotten and proceeding are not modes of being but are modes of subsistence.

Tertullian, who flourished around 210 AD, under Emperor Lucius Septimus Severus (both elsewhere, but also particularly in his books *De Trinitate* and *Contra Praxeam*) most often uses those same words concerning the Trinity. It is from these words that he derives the title for his second book: *De Trinitate*. For instance, notice the use of the word “Person,” when he says, “therefore the heretics do not want Christ to be a second *person* after the Father.”⁸³ Similarly, he also uses the same word “Person” more than six times in the following pages. The words “Unity” and “Trinity” are used in *Contra Praxeam*.⁸⁴ He himself defines what he understands by the word “Person.”⁸⁵ Clemens Alexander in *Stromata*⁸⁶ uses the Greek word ἁγία τριάς, and he says that it was in some way known by Plato. Origen, also a disciple of Clemens, did not just use the expression “Trinity” only once. In his first book on Isaiah chapter 6 on the words, “Holy, holy, holy Lord,” he says that the mystery of the Trinity is insinuated and he constantly repeats that expression.⁸⁷ In the *Dialogue Concerning the Right Faith*, he used the word “essence” at the beginning, saying that Christ is of the same essence as the Father.⁸⁸ And again in the martyr Pamphilus’ *Defence of Origen*, it obviously appears that Origen was accustomed to using these words. Firmianus Lactantius does not abstain from using these expressions. Besides other passages, read book four which is about “True Wisdom,” chapter 39, having the title “Concerning the Unity of the Father and the Son.”⁸⁹ Notice the word “Unity.” Likewise, in that same passage he uses the word “Persons.” It is unnecessary for us to speak about the later Fathers because our enemies admit that they made use of those words. In fact, they say that those, such as Athanasius, Basil, and the others, were the authors of those words. But they are deceived, as has already been demonstrated.

Therefore, the conclusion is, that these words “Trinity,” “Unity,” “Essence,” and “Persons,” have their first origin in Scripture. Then they were taken up by the Fathers, even the earliest. Let ignorant men go and laugh at these words and say that they do not appear in the early Fathers. Why do they do this? In order that, after they have rejected those words, they might condemn that doctrine. This is what the Arians do; they reject the doctrine *περὶ ὁμοουσίας* of the Son with the Father. How? By saying that these words are not found in Scripture, but are only the invention of men. Contrary to them, we also point out to our adversaries what things Theodoret wrote in the *Ecclesiastical History* Book I, chapter 8. The argument of Theodoret is this:

⁸³ Nov *De Trin* 26.2; [p. 617]

⁸⁴ Tert *Adv Prax* ch.2 and 3; [pp. 406 and 409]

⁸⁵ Tert *Adv Prax*. ch. 21, 22, 29, and 30; [pp. 425, 427, and 430]

⁸⁶ Cle *Str* bk.5 ch. 14; [bk. 5, p. 250]

⁸⁷ Orig *Hom in Is.* 1.2

⁸⁸ Adam *Dial.* 1.2. The attribution to Origen is now largely rejected.

⁸⁹ Lact *Div Inst* 4.29

Those who are accustomed to protest, that these words are not found in Scripture, they have given a stupid argument. For they have constructed an impious doctrine out of words foreign to Scripture. For these words are certainly foreign to Scripture: “He was from nothing and there was a time when he was not.” For Arius uses these words to describe Christ, saying that he was from nothing. Do they then complain that they themselves have been condemned on account of words, which are not found in Scripture, even though their meaning is pious? They with their own mouth have clearly brought forward these words from the earth as if they had found them in a heap of dung. However, the bishops did not coin these phrases by their own invention, but rather by the testimony of the use of the Fathers. The early bishops, around one hundred and thirty years ago, one of great Rome and the other of our city, refuted the assertion that the Son was a creature, and not coessential with the Father. Neither did this escape Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesarea, who initially was joined together with Arius, but later subscribed to the Synod of Nicaea, and in his books he has even testified and has affirmed, that the early, learned, and tested bishops and authors, made use of the word coessential for the Father and the divinity of the Son.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, I will not conceal what the Council of Nicaea (which was attended by, among others, Athanasius and Osius of Cordoba) decided about the two words ὑποστάσεως καὶ οὐσίας.⁹¹ That council determined how those words should and should not be used. I refer to the words from the *Ecclesiastical History* of Socrates.

Since, truly, many later (that is after the Council of Nicaea) wanted to argue and quibble about this matter (namely περὶ οὐσίας, καὶ ὑπόστασεως). For this reason they declared these things about *ousia* and *hypostasis* at the Synod (Alexandria): These words are not to be used about God. And οὐσία is not used in Holy Scripture: and the word ὑπόστασεως is necessarily an abuse of the Apostles’ doctrine. They have decided to use those words for another reason, that is that they might reject the opinion of Sabellius, so that we should not think by the limitations of the language that what is called by three names is one thing, but each one of these names of the Trinity indicates its own *hypostasis* with regards to the divinity. The Synod certainly did then decide this.⁹²

Thus far, Socrates. Clearly, it was a pious decision, for surely it should not have been approved to use these words in the councils – essence, ὑπόστασις; but they should simply use the words of Holy Scripture, by which the unity and distinction are signified – such as God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit,

⁹⁰ Theo Hist Ecc 1.7

⁹¹ ὑποστάσεως καὶ οὐσίας – subsistence and being

⁹² Soc Hist Ecc 3.7

one God, Son sent from the Father, etc. The other words should only be employed against the heretics, in order that the opinions of Sabellius and Arius might be refuted. Thus, we see from this decree that the Fathers and all the early Church acted together to employ these words to expel heresies from the Church, not to establish new doctrine beyond the limits of Scripture (as the heretics falsely accuse). For the very same reason, our heretics cannot bear these words; but we, following in the footsteps of the Fathers, we must retain those in order that the doctrine of the heretics might be more easily refuted. And so this is more than enough for the second point.

III. Now I come to the third. For it must now be explained what these words signified to the Fathers, beginning concerning οὐσία καὶ ὑπόστασις. These two words οὐσία (that is essence) and ὑπόστασις (that is subsistence) exceedingly disturbed the Greek churches, as it appears in The Church Histories specifically where recounted by Sozomenes.⁹³ Consider this canon of the Council of Alexandria: we should not use those words to speak about God, unless we are trying to refute the opinion of Sabellius. Socrates also writes about this.⁹⁴ There were enormous controversies amongst the Greeks regarding whether οὐσία καὶ ὑπόστασις signified the same thing, and if there was a difference between them, what that difference was. These discussions can be found amongst other places in Socrates' The Church Histories;⁹⁵ Rufinus;⁹⁶ Sozomenes.⁹⁷ Along with those previously mentioned, Basil's letter to his brother Gregory called περὶ οὐσίας, καὶ ὑπόστασεως should be read.⁹⁸ This letter is also included in the volume of The Church Histories of Eusebius, Theodoret, and Ruffinus, which was printed in Basel.⁹⁹ Also in Gregory of Nazianzus in his *Two Orations on the Holy Lights*, given in Greek.¹⁰⁰ And in Augustine On the Trinity.¹⁰¹ In the same volume of The Church Histories, there is a discussion of Joachim Camerarius, περὶ οὐσίας, καὶ ὑπόστασεως.¹⁰² About these same words, see Peter Lombard¹⁰³ and Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologicae*.¹⁰⁴

Οὐσία, in Greek, is that by which everything that is, is what it is; that is, the nature of a thing common to every individual of that kind and therefore is equally said of all those individuals.

⁹³ Soz *Ecc Hist* 6.12

⁹⁴ Soc *Hist Ecc* 3.7

⁹⁵ Soc *Hist Ecc* 3.12

⁹⁶ Ruf *Hist Ecc* 1.29

⁹⁷ Soz *Ecc Hist* 5.12

⁹⁸ Letter 38; [listed as letter 43 by Zanchi]

⁹⁹ *Autores Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (Basel: Froben, 1523), 531.

¹⁰⁰ Gr Naz *Orat* 39; [p. 232]

¹⁰¹ Aug *De Trin* 5.8-10; 7.4, 6

¹⁰² Zanchi gives p. 531

¹⁰³ Lom *Sent* bk 1, dist 23-26

¹⁰⁴ Aqu *Sum* 1.29.2

ὑπόστασις is that which each one is, and is distinguished from another by its own singularity and properties, and therefore each one is indivisible and incommunicable or is a thing itself subsisting, which the Greeks call ὑφιστάμενον, and the Scholastics call supposit,¹⁰⁵ others subsistence, others substance. To take an example common to us: human nature, that by which we are what we are (obviously men), is an οὐσία. It is common to all men and therefore it is predicated about individual men because each one is a man and by his humanity is a man. Each one is a ὑπόστασις, distinguished from others by fixed characteristics and therefore indivisible and incommunicable.

The Latins understood it this way as well. Consider Augustine's *On the Trinity*.¹⁰⁶ Thus also the Scholastics assert from Aristotle. "οὐσία signifies the quiddity of a thing, which the definition signifies."¹⁰⁷ Also "the essence is that which is signified by that definition. The definition, however, encompasses the individual principles."¹⁰⁸ ὑπόστασις, however, is the subject or the supposit, which exists in a kind of substance. It is also called the first substance—that is, what subsists through itself; for instance, the man Peter. It should, however, be observed here, first that essence is not an imaginary thing, existing only in the mind, as εἶδος.¹⁰⁹ Next, that it is not a thing separated from individuals, as if it were a certain idea, but rather it is always dwelling within an individual. And it is that thing by which they exist and subsist. Thus, if there were no individuals of that individual species, there would also be no essence or nature of that individual species. Humanity or human nature (in order that I might provide an example) embraces in its kind both the soul gifted with reason and the organic body, by which whoever is a man, is a man. But this nature does not subsist outside of men; truly it is always dwelling within men. Thus, it would be that if there were no men, there could also be no humanity. So, with God the divine essence is nothing outside of the existence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as if there were some fourth member in which these three were contained (as the unskilled falsely accuse us). But the totality is in the Father Himself, the totality is in the Son, the totality is in the Holy Spirit.

And the divine essence is in the divine persons much more excellently than the human essence is in us. For the essence is finite in individual men, which is why there are plural men, or rather ὁμοιούσιαι,¹¹⁰ than ὁμοούσιαι.¹¹¹ However, the entire, infinite essence of God is in each divine person, and therefore the same essence is fully in each; for which reason they are truly ὁμοούσιαι not ὁμοιούσιαι; and therefore, there is only one God. For what is the essence of God

¹⁰⁵ A self-existing thing

¹⁰⁶ Aug *De Trin* 5.8-11

¹⁰⁷ Aqu *Sum* 1.29.2

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*

¹⁰⁹ εἶδος – form

¹¹⁰ ὁμοιούσιαι – of similar substances

¹¹¹ ὁμοούσιαι – of the same substance

other than his own nature, that is, his deity or divinity? Even though θεότης¹¹² and θειότης¹¹³ are different in Greek. For, the first word signifies nature (that is essence); the second truly signifies quality. But the Latins use divinity for deity. Therefore, just as the essence of man is humanity itself, or human nature, so also the essence of God is nothing other than deity itself, or divine nature. And just as to whom humanity is given, to him human nature and essence is also given, so also to whom divinity (or, as is better in Greek, θεότης) is given, to him is also given the divine essence or nature. Which is why just as we correctly call him, in whom we say is humanity, human, and he is a real human, so also it is necessary that he is true God in whom we correctly say is the θεότης; which Paul certainly said about Christ.¹¹⁴

I add here what Basil wrote, by which what I have said is confirmed and illustrated. And it will become clear that the Fathers did not believe the essence of God could extend outside of the persons of God. But rather, just as human nature, or humanity, is able to be grasped by reason apart from an individual or apart from all humans themselves, yet it does not actually exist or subsist outside of humans, so also divine essence is able to be considered apart from the divine persons, but does not exist or subsist apart from them. But the essence is always fixed in the Father, in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit—the whole and the same in each individual. These are the words of Basil, from *A Sermon Against Sabellius and Arius*.

Although I count that they are two, nevertheless they are not divided in nature. And he who says they are two, does not introduce something foreign. Since there is one God as Father, one God as Son; and there are not two Gods, because the Son is identified with the Father. For I do not think there is one deity in the Father and another deity in the Son, nor this one nature in the Father and that other nature in the Son. By which, therefore, the property of the persons of the Godhead becomes clear to you—I count separately the Father and the Son. Because, truly, by fitting one essence into both persons, you ought not to be divided into believing in a multitude of gods. And thus, Sabellius falls, and whoever teaches an inequality between the persons is crushed. When I say there is one essence, I understand that there are not two portions from one, but that from the beginning the Son of the Father has subsisted, not the Father and the Son from one higher essence. For we do not say that they are brothers, but we confess the Father and the Son. However, there is a sameness of essence, since the Son is from the Father, not fashioned by command, but begotten from his nature, not divided from the Father, remaining complete, perfectly emanating.¹¹⁵

¹¹² θεότης – deity

¹¹³ θειότης – divinity

¹¹⁴ Colossians 2:9

¹¹⁵ Bas C. Sab. et Ar. et An. [p. 365-266]

From which it is also evident, just as we do not say about ourselves, that humanity begets humanity, but rather a man begets a man, and a father begets a son (actions which are never attributed to essences, but rather to supposits), so too in God. Thus it is God of God, the Son from the Father.

Now we must consider ὁμοούσιος, in particular, in what sense the Fathers said the Son and the Spirit are ὁμοούσιος with the Father, and within themselves. Clearly it is not in the same sense in which people are said to be ὁμοούσιος amongst themselves, because although they are of the same nature, they nevertheless are divided one from the other. They understood ὁμοούσιος in this way: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (as they are not only of the same nature but also of the same essence, nature, and deity) are absolutely indivisible. Thus, they are truly only one God. Hence rightly Constantine the Great, in the Nicene Council, said for this reason that the Son is ὁμοούσιος with the Father, because he does not subsist from the Father by any corporeal relationship, division, or any removal. And in these divine and ancient sayings is a worthy judgment.

For the Fathers opposed two kinds of Arianism with the word ὁμοούσιος. First, those who were saying the Son is ἐτερούσιος,¹¹⁶ that is that he was indeed from the Father, but not begotten from the essence of the Father, ἀλλὰ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων.¹¹⁷ Then those who were teaching that he is from the essence of the Father, but through transmission, just as we are from the substance of our parents. Therefore, the essence of the Son and the essence of the Father are certainly similar and of the same nature; however, they truly do not have the same essence, but two essences.

Against these two heresies, the Fathers determined from the Scriptures that the Son is both begotten from the actual substance of the Father and that the essence of the Father and the Son is entirely one and the same. Therefore the Father communicated this by begetting the Son, not a foreign essence, but his own; not merely a portion of it, but the whole and entirely same essence. And this is so by an imperceptible and inscrutable manner, for the essence of God is infinite, immeasurable, most simple, and therefore of such a sort that neither κατὰ μερισμόν,¹¹⁸ nor κατ' ἀπορίαν,¹¹⁹ nor κατὰ προβολύν,¹²⁰ nor the rest can be communicated by any other fleshly way. They grasped the whole thing by the word ὁμοούσιος, and with that expression, the light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father. And this is enough περὶ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ὁμοουσίας.¹²¹

IV. It ought to be noted that in addition to this, it is not the case that there is nothing said about the word “person.” First, there is a twofold reason why the Latins, and then also the Greeks, preferred to

¹¹⁶ ἐτερούσιος – of a different substance or essence

¹¹⁷ ἀλλὰ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων – but from non-existing material

¹¹⁸ κατὰ μερισμόν – by division

¹¹⁹ κατ' ἀπορίαν – by an outflow

¹²⁰ κατὰ προβολύν – by an offshoot

¹²¹ “concerning οὐσίας [essence] and ὁμοουσίας [same substance]”

use the word *προσώπον*, or “person”, rather than *ὑπόστασις*, or “subsistence.” One, because what the Greeks called *ὑπόστασις*, signifies “substance” to the Latins, for the word “subsistence” is a barbarism to them. However, the word “substance,” sometimes signifies to the Latins simply the essence of the thing, *οὐσία*, but at other times *ὑπόστασις*, that is the thing itself subsisting (like John or Peter). Aristotle, however, created two categories of substances, of which he calls certain ones “primary substances,” as there are individuals within a particular kind, (like Plato or Socrates), for they are things subsisting through themselves, and therefore they are truly substances. However, he calls others “secondary substances,” which are the kinds and the species. Since, therefore, the word “substance” is *ἀμφίβολος*¹²² to the Latins: thus it was that the Latins preferred to use the word “person” when they spoke about the Trinity rather than the word “substance.” Here another reason arises, certainly, namely that the word “hypostasis” is broader in Latin than the word “person,” for it is also used for inanimate things, and things lacking reason. “Person,” however, is only used for things gifted with reason. For we can call a dog, a horse, or stones *ὑπόστασεις καὶ ὑφιστάμενα*,¹²³ but never “persons.” Men, however, are “persons” or *πρόσωπα*. Therefore for these two reasons the Latins preferred to use the word “person” rather than “substance” and *ὑπόστασις*. Hence it happened, that afterwards the Greeks also would say, following the example of the Latins, that there is one *οὐσία* and three *πρόσωπα*.

Next, the double meaning of “person” ought to be observed: sometimes it means quality, by which one man differs from another man, in soul, and in body, and in externals, which the Rhetoricians call the attributes of the person. Thus Valla teaches in *De Elegantis* (chapter 34). And thus he shows, by many examples, that this is the most common usage of the term in the Latin tongue. Indeed, the word “person” is also often used in this sense in the Scripture, insofar as it does not signify “substance,” but rather “quality,” the external mask, as when it is said *οὐκ ἔστι προσωπολήπτης ὁ θεός*¹²⁴ and *οὐκ ἔστι προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ*.¹²⁵ And as the Lord judges, *ἀπροσωπολήπτως*.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, at other times it does signify the “substance,” that is, man himself. Cicero commands, in his letter to Atticus (book 7), that he should watch for and discern if a peaceful person is to be desired. Similarly in his *Academica*, and in the first book of *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, and in *Familiaribus ad Appium*. Thus also, therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are said to be three persons, because they are subsisting substances. How unjustly Valla scourged Boethius, when, in his book *De Trinitate*, he defined person to be an indivisible substance of immutable nature. Thus also the scoundrel Servetus, no less ignorant than impious, laughs at the use of the word “person” with regard to the divine persons, because (he says) this word does not

¹²² ἀμφίβολος - ambiguous

¹²³ ὑπόστασεις καὶ ὑφιστάμενα – hypostases and subsisting things

¹²⁴ “God is not a respecter of persons,” Acts 10:34

¹²⁵ “There is no regarding of the person with God,” Romans 2:11

¹²⁶ “. . .without regard to the person,” 1 Peter 1:17

mean a “substance,” but a quality, a state, or a distinction of office; just as one is the “person” of a slave, another of a master. It is as if, because it often signifies these qualities and offices, it could therefore never signify those “substances” themselves, that is, the men themselves.

Certainly Tertullian, a man most widely learned, in *Contra Praxeam*,¹²⁷ understood it otherwise. Since the word “person” had been used often, and was still going to be used, he wanted to explain what he meant by this word. Speaking about the person of the Son, he said this: “Whatever was the substance of the Word (that is, τοῦ λόγου) I call that a ‘person,’ and I claim for it the word ‘Son,’ and when I acknowledge the Son, I maintain his distinction from the Father.” Do you see how Tertullian uses the word “person” for “substance,” not for “quality”? For that purest man perceived in the doctrine of the Trinity that the Father brought forth the Word before all eternity (just as I say): just as when also a man brings forward his own word. But that word of God was not an accident, like our words, but the substance, and that inseparable from the Father, as afterward he demonstrates and explains by many similarities. Therefore Tertullian understood within the divine persons: each person is an individual substance, subsisting through itself, and incommunicable, because certainly the Father cannot be the Son, nor vice versa. So too all the Fathers – Justin, Irenaeus, and whoever else – used this word “Person.” Therefore this other meaning of person ought to be retained, so far as it signifies a subsisting thing. Hence the definition of person, as learned men are accustomed to set forth, ought to be retained, as holy, true, consistent with Scripture, approved of by the whole Church. Which definition is this: “Person” is a substance, individual, understanding, incommunicable. Truly from all of these, I conclude that it is made clear to everyone, what the Fathers understood by the name οὐσία and ὑποστάσεως or πρόσωπον, and ought to be understood by us in the Church of God.

V. In sum, by the word “essence” we understand, along with the Fathers, the θεότητης,¹²⁸ or divine nature, eternal, most simple, incorporeal, most perfect, immortal, the cause of all things, which is not outside of the persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but rather the whole exists in each individual one of them, and is communicated to each and is predicated of each equally. Thus, the Son and the Holy Spirit are God and are rightly called God, just as much as the Father is God and is rightly called God. We truly understand the persons—the Father himself, the Son himself, and the Spirit himself, as subsisting by this common essence through each, individual, knowing, incommunicable, distinct amongst each other by their own qualities, but not at all divided in their divinity. Hence that which certain men have written is simply unsatisfying, saying that these persons are properties. There is a great difference between a person and the property of a person. For the property of a person is its particular manner of subsisting. The person is that divine essence, only having been distinguished by the particular manner of subsisting. Just as the property of the person

¹²⁷ [p. 409]

¹²⁸ θεότητης – deity

of the Father is to be ἀγέννητον,¹²⁹ and to beget; but these properties are not the person of the Father. For the person of the Father, or the Father himself, is a substance subsisting through himself, knowing, willing, according to its own property, or is distinguished from the Son and the Holy Spirit only according to its particular manner of subsisting. Thus we may truly say that the Father himself is the divine essence itself, not simply, but to the extent that when he is considered according to his property, which is to be unbegotten and generating. And in this way the Son is this same divine essence, not simply, but to this extent that when he is considered according to this peculiar quality, which is to be begotten by the Father. And the Holy Spirit is this same divine essence, not simply, but according to this property, which is to be ἐκπορευτός¹³⁰ from the Father and Son, as Justin says. For what is the Father? He is God, not begotten but generating. What is the Son? God, not generating, but begotten. What is the Holy Spirit? God neither generating nor begotten, but proceeding from the Father and Son. Similarly, the Fathers clearly explained and illustrated the difference between οὐσίαν and ὑπόστασιν.

Human nature, by which we all are one man, according to kind, is itself οὐσία, by which it becomes, also so that we all are ὁμοούσιοι, because that nature is common to all. Truly we are individuals, who by this nature subsist, and we are men, we are persons, distinct by our qualities, and incommunicable. For Peter cannot be Paul. Yet this is the distinction as far as we are distinct among ourselves in this way, so that we may be indeed divided and hence the number is many men. However in God it is not thus. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are certainly distinct amongst each other so that one does not become another. Yet they are not entirely divided, but are united. Thus it is that there are not three gods, but one God. From where does this distinction come? Because we are finite creatures, and consequently, not whole, human essence is not the same number in each individual man. But these three are not creatures and they are not finite, but each is infinite, each one immense, and thus that the Father is in the Son, the Son in the Father, and so from the Holy Spirit: since the οὐσία is indivisible. Therefore because the same οὐσία is of all, and because of their infinity and immensity, they are unable to be separated: and for the same reason they are not able to be called many gods, but one God, which we will later show more fully at the end. For the present, this must suffice for an explanation of the distinction between our persons and divine persons.

Lastly, from all of this it becomes clear what the Fathers understood by the phrase τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος:¹³¹ the number of these three persons, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is three, is understood as the number of persons, distinct from one another, however not a τριάδα¹³² of gods. The reasoning being that they are not divided amongst themselves, nor can they be, for there is no material there, and they are thus perfectly ὁμοούσιοι. When truly they say unity, they understand a

¹²⁹ ἀγέννητον – unbegotten

¹³⁰ ἐκπορευτός – proceeding from

¹³¹ τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος – of the holy Trinity

¹³² τριάδα – a triad

unity of essence, and the same one God, but not a unity of persons, as if there were only one person, who is signified by three names, like Sabellius taught. We say the same ἔνωσις,¹³³ union of persons, because they are conjoined and indivisible, but we are not able to say ἐνότης,¹³⁴ unity of persons, because, in fact, the three are distinct. And, from these words, οὐσία, ὑποστάσεις, τριάς, ἐνότης the true meaning of these words must be said. I come now to the individual propositions, which must be explained and confirmed.

¹³³ ἔνωσις – a union

¹³⁴ ἐνότης – a unity

Chapter Three

There is only one God, true ὄν, the cause of all things. And how these things ought to be understood and ought to be examined.

First Thesis:

THE TRUE GOD IS ONLY ONE, AND NOT MANY GODS IN NUMBER.

When I speak of and name God, I understand him to be eternal, invisible, immortal, most simple, most perfect in all ways, τὰ ὄντα.¹³⁵ Whom the Scriptures call Jehovah, by whom (through himself existing) all other things also are and exist, and through whom (through himself abiding) they are ruled, and all things are derived; and in whom we live, move and have our being; who spoke through the prophets, gave the Scriptures, and who, in these last days, manifested himself in that man, who is called Jesus and the Christ. Indeed, God clearly revealed himself as three distinctions within himself at once, even as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—by signs at the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus. But neither do we here define God, seeing indeed that it is not possible for God to be defined; nor will we describe him, seeing that it is also not possible for God to be perfectly and clearly described. We only briefly show this much from the Scriptures: what we call God.

But when I add ‘true,’ I say this for two reasons. First, so that I distinguish him from the false gods, which living men invented for themselves at various times; of which the Apostle wrote in the epistle to the Corinthians, “For although there are those who are called gods, either in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords (certainly for the Gentiles) to us there is only one God, who is himself the Father from which all things are.”¹³⁶ Then the word ‘true’ encompasses all the divine perfections and attributes, which necessarily are required in order that he might be the true God, such as eternity, immensity, omnipotence, omniscience, infinite goodness, mercy, justice and whatever else is made known about the true God in the Scriptures. For unless they all are in God, he cannot be the true God.

However when I say ‘one,’ I understand one in essence, which the Greeks called οὐσίαν, and by this, truly one in number. For although I count three persons, nevertheless there is only one God, in number; first, because the infinite essence of all the persons is one, and second because all the persons are consequently inseparable from one another. Thus by this word, the number ‘one,’ I refute those who say that God is one in essence, but only in the same manner by which many men are one (for those also are said to be “one man” in essence, yet meanwhile there are many men). So too they also want these three persons, that are one God in essence, that is, in nature, but in fact to be three gods in number. Therefore, in order that I might oppose this error, I include the negative statement, “and there are not many gods in number.” For there are therefore many people, by

¹³⁵ τὰ ὄντα – being

¹³⁶ 1 Corinthians 8:5-6

number: because just as they are distinct from one another, they are also divided and separated from one another: and this is, therefore, because (since they are created) they are also finite. The persons in God, however, are inseparable from each other. Therefore, they are all only one God in number (although this will be more broadly explained in a later proposition). Presently, I only say generally about God, that he is one in number, and I maintain this along with the early Fathers against the multitude of the gods of the Gentiles and of the ancient heretics, Gnostics, Manicheans, Valentinians, Marcionites, and others.

II. Truly this thesis is confirmed by the testimonies of the Scriptures, and by the arguments of the Fathers and the Philosophers. Moses, when he spoke of God, spoke only of one, such as in Genesis 1, when he (in the singular number) created by the word. Also, God, when he spoke with the Fathers, always spoke of himself as one. Likewise when the Fathers poured out their prayers, they called upon “the Lord your God” just as if he were only one. The same is clear from the command of God, for he commanded that he alone be acknowledged as God. “I am Jehovah, who led you out of the land of Egypt. You will have no other gods before me.” It is also proved by the symbol of the unity of God, for he wanted for there to be no more than one tabernacle and one altar in his Church so that it may indicate that he is only one God. The same is proved from the prophecies, for he foretells by these clear words, that he is one and no other one is before him.¹³⁷ Therefore, Moses and the patriarchs and the prophets always acknowledged one God, and prayed to the same one. In the same manner Christ and then the Apostles never taught or preached many gods but precisely one God that ought to be worshipped and prayed to perpetually. Such as in Matthew 4, “You will worship your Lord God, and serve him alone,” and so all of the Evangelists have always taught.¹³⁸ Nor did the Fathers teach or the Church of Christ believe anything else, from the beginning until now, that is, from the times of the Apostles, all the way up to this day; and at all times all men, by one and the same mouth, strongly and firmly condemn and refute the multitude of gods, as much against the heretics (such as the Gnostics, the Marcionites, Cerdonians, Valentians, and Manicheans), as against the idolatrous nations.

I will point out several authors and passages. Ignatius, in epistle 9 to the Antiochians,¹³⁹ clearly derives and confirms this from the Scriptures, that a plurality of gods cannot be admitted, and that there is one God. Justin Martyr has a most beautiful and faithful sermon called *Exhortation to the Gentiles*, which is full of learning. There he convincingly argues against the pagans: first that there is only one God, and next that this one, since he is an invisible Spirit, and by no means corporeal, therefore he ought not to be worshiped by means of images nor by carnal worship, but by

¹³⁷ Deuteronomy 4:3, 6:4, 32:39, Joshua 2:11, Psalm 18:32, 1 Samuel 2:2, 1 Kings 8:23, 2 Kings 5:15, 1 Chronicles 17:20, Isaiah 37:16, 41:4, 45:5, 46:9, 48:12, Daniel 3:29, and Malachi 2:10

¹³⁸ Romans 3:1, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 4:2, and 1 Timothy 2:5

¹³⁹ Now attributed to Pseudo-Ignatius

spiritual worship. This, however, he proves by the plain testimonies of the Scriptures. Then he establishes this by the authorities of both the wisest poets and philosophers among the pagans. Likewise, he writes the book *On the Sole Government of God* in which he most effectively demonstrates from the pagans themselves the same thing: that there is only one God, and the many gods which the pagans honor are themselves empty. Clement of Alexandria also brought forth the same argument most learnedly and most elegantly in his *Exhortation to the Heathen*, and it is well worth reading. Tertullian made the same argument in his *Apology*, addressed to the Gentiles, mocking the gods and the religion of the pagans, and demonstrating that there is only one God, whom the Christians worship. He makes the same argument in the book *On Idolatry*. He does the same in Book 5 of *Against Marcion*, in which he strongly refuted Marcion's other errors, but especially his doctrine of two gods, one of the Law and the other of the Gospels. And in the book *Against Praxeas*, the Christians preferred to suffer any torture whatsoever rather than to say that there are many gods. Lactantius' teacher, Arnobius, who wrote under Diocletian (the cruellest enemy of all to the Christians), put forth the same argument. Although, he wrote seven books of *Against the Heathen*, in which he sharply and elegantly refuted their follies about the multitude of gods, the eighth book is without a doubt not that of Arnobius, but rather of Marcus Minutius Felix, once a Roman solicitor. For Lactantius cites this in book I, chapter II of his *Divine Institutes*. Therefore, Marcus Minutius Felix, in the book titled *Octavius*, also mightily refuted, with the most elegant and acute brevity, the pagans' multitude of gods. Cyprian wrote a treatise, which I count as his fourth. It has the title *On the Vanity of Idols*. Here he first quickly refutes the folly of the pagans, concerning their many gods. Then he shows, not only out of the Scriptures, but also out of the testimonies of the Philosophers, that there is only one God. Then to these he adds the confirmation of the same doctrine with various arguments of analogy drawn from men and from other living creatures, by which he makes it clear that just as for each and every kingdom there is only one king, so too of all things which are contained in the heavens and on earth, God is the one king, and there is none besides him. From this, he truly concludes that Christ is one God with the Father. The treatise is short, but most worthy to read. Lactantius Firmianus, in book I, called *On False Religion*, most elegantly and brilliantly refutes the religion of the pagans of many gods and he shows that there is only one God, not only by the testimonies of the prophets, but also of the Poets and the Philosophers and the Sybils, from chapter 2 all the way to chapter 20. Then he refutes their sacrifices and rituals all the way to the end. Next, however, idols. Eusebius of Caesarea later makes the same argument in those most elegant books which he wrote, *On the Preparation for the Gospel*. Augustine in book 5 of the *City of God*, refutes in many passages the same multitude of gods, see also book 3 of *On Faith, to Peter*, chapters 4-5, and also book 6 of *Against the Manicheans, On Faith*, chapter 7, as well as book 1 of *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*. Therefore the Apostolic Churches also, after the death of the Apostles, acknowledged that there is one God. Also, the wisest among the secular authors, the Poets as well as the Philosophers, only acknowledged one, and confessed him to be God. Orpheus, Homer, Sophocles, Pythagoras, Plato (who also called God one τὸ ὄν, for although he

sometimes admitted that they are many gods, he did this from fear of hemlock, as Justin says), Aeschylus, Philemon, Euripides, Menander—if anyone wishes to see their testimonies, he ought to read Justin's books, his *On the Sole Government* and his *Exhortation to the Gentiles*. If anyone also wants more, he ought to read the books of Agostino Steuco, *The Perennial Philosophy*. Why would one fight against reason to establish many gods? For God, by his nature, is always infinite and immeasurable; for one cannot be God, who is not infinite and immeasurable, and who does not fill heaven and earth. For that is the nature of God. But, there cannot be multiple immeasurable and infinite beings. Therefore, there are not many gods. And if there were many gods, it would be necessary for them to be delimited; for where there was one, another could not be. However, one who can be delimited, cannot be God. And this is because his nature is immeasurable, filling heaven and earth. Therefore, there cannot be many gods.

If, also, there were many gods, there should be some essential difference between them; they should be separated by some division, one from another. If, however, there were some essential difference between them, such that one has something which the other does not have, they therefore could not be perfect. Because one cannot be God, unless he is complete in every way.

Next, to each and every kingdom, only one King is fitting. There is, however, only one kingdom of God, which is contained by heaven and earth. These and other arguments can be read in Athanasius in his *Speech Against the Idols*.¹⁴⁰ And this ought to be enough for proving that there is only one God and for refuting the errors in general of the pagans and the heretics concerning the multitude of gods. However, in what way this doctrine of the unity of God fits with the doctrine of the three persons, we will explain later. For we will show that although there are three persons, yet there are not three Gods, but only one.

¹⁴⁰ [especially pages 27-28]

Chapter Four

On the Three Persons

Second thesis:

THAT THERE WERE ALWAYS THREE DIVINE THINGS AND THEY ARE ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΕΙΣ IN THE HEAVENS, WHOM THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS ACCUSTOMED TO CALL PERSONS, TRULY FATHER, ΛΟΓΟΣ OR SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I use the word ‘hypostasis,’ because the Apostle also uses this word in the same sense.¹⁴¹ However what ὑπόστασις might be has already been made known. Clearly it is a thing or substance subsisting through itself, individual, incommunicable; additionally, it is one who is understanding, living, doing, that it might be a true person. But I also add to the name of the Son the word λόγος; I do this, in order to make it very clear, lest anyone suppose we perhaps understand λόγος as Servetus understood it. For the word ‘Son’ expresses the substance itself better than the word λόγος. I do this also that I might oppose those who deny Christ was the Son of God from eternity before he was conceived in the virgin’s womb. For Christ himself said he had gone forth from the Father and come into the world; therefore, he was the Son of God the Father before he took on flesh. However, when I say ‘these three are in heaven’ I understand this κατά ἐξοχὴν,¹⁴² according to the custom of Scripture, which says God is in heaven, and heaven is the seat and throne of God. Thus we pray to the Father “Our Father, who is in heaven, etc.,” since he obviously is in heaven and has made himself more clearly known in heaven than on earth. And he more perfectly reigns there than here. Nevertheless, I do not enclose these three in heaven itself, but I say that they are everywhere, since each of them is immeasurable and infinite in as much as God is. For instance, “‘But do I not fill heaven and earth?’ says Jehovah.”¹⁴³ However, these three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are nothing other than Jehovah himself, as we will explain later. Now, therefore, it remains that we must demonstrate this: certainly, both that there are three in heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three are three things or substances subsisting through themselves, understanding, desiring, individuals, and therefore true persons.

II. Who, I ask, does not know who created heaven and earth and all that is contained within the extent of heaven and earth? Is he not the true substance subsisting through himself, understanding, desiring, acting? But these three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are that *Elohim*, who created heaven and earth, of whom Moses said: “In the beginning *Elohim* created heaven and earth.”¹⁴⁴ No one will

¹⁴¹ Hebrews 1:3

¹⁴² κατά ἐξοχὴν – by virtue of prominence

¹⁴³ Jeremiah 23:24

¹⁴⁴ Genesis 1:1

deny that this is rightly attributed to the Father. It is also proved to be true of the Son in many places, but especially when Hebrews draws a reference to the Son out of the Psalms: "And you, Lord, in the beginning, established the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands."¹⁴⁵ So I will omit other testimonies for the present. Just as it is clearly evident of the Son, so too of the Holy Spirit. Because, if the Holy Spirit did not create heaven and earth, he would not be considered God on earth. For thus spoke Jehovah through Jeremiah, "The gods who did not make heaven and earth, ought to be destroyed from the earth."¹⁴⁶ But the Holy Spirit is called God in the Scriptures, just as would become clear later. Nevertheless, God is not such a one who ought to be destroyed from the earth. What else is Moses saying about the Spirit of the Lord when he says "the Spirit of the Lord hovered over the waters,"¹⁴⁷ and thus maintained and sustained all things, if not that he was along with the Father and the Son the creator of the world and therefore a true person?

Then just as the one who says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness"¹⁴⁸ is a person, so too it is necessary that those to whom he said it are also persons, or things understanding and subsisting through themselves. For how could he speak and say in such a way (that is, in the divine manner) "Let us make" unless, he was a thing, understanding and subsisting through itself? How could those to whom he spoke hear and collaborate each in their own way to make man in their own likeness, unless they were substances subsisting through themselves and understanding?

But that one who spoke is the Father, and those to whom he spoke were the Son and the Holy Spirit, one and the same God with the Father. For he did not speak to the angels, nor did he exhort them to create man, since man was made not in the image of the angels, but of God. Therefore, the Son and the Holy Spirit were always substances, subsisting through themselves, understanding, desiring, acting, just as much as the Father was. We also see this in what Jehovah said, "Then come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."¹⁴⁹ For those several who descended were not angels, but God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. For Moses recorded: "Therefore the Lord scattered them from that place."¹⁵⁰ Who, however, denies that he whom Isaiah saw in such glory and majesty, to whom the Seraphim sang "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Sabaoth,"¹⁵¹ who soon spoke to Isaiah, saying: "Go and say to these people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive,'"¹⁵² who, I say, denies that this was a thing subsisting through itself, understanding,

¹⁴⁵ Hebrews 1:10, cf. Psalm 102:25

¹⁴⁶ Jeremiah 10:11

¹⁴⁷ Genesis 1:2

¹⁴⁸ Genesis 1:26

¹⁴⁹ Genesis 11:7

¹⁵⁰ Genesis 11:8

¹⁵¹ Isaiah 6:3

¹⁵² Isaiah 6:9

desiring, since he both was and is Jehovah? But it was the Father, as all confess, and it was the Son, as John teaches,¹⁵³ and it was the Holy Spirit, by the testimony of Paul in Acts.¹⁵⁴

III. No one doubts that the Father is the most perfect substance and subsisting through himself, but this is not the case, however, regarding the Son and the Holy Spirit; therefore, many testimonies ought to be collected, by which the same can be concluded particularly of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Solomon wrote this about the Son; Wisdom (that is the Son of God) says there: “By me, kings reign.”¹⁵⁵ He also says, he was always with the Father.¹⁵⁶ And he concludes, “He who finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord; he, however, who sins against me, wounds his own soul.”¹⁵⁷ But do not all of these teach that he is a true person? Furthermore, he who wrestled with Jacob and spoke the blessing, this was a person subsisting through himself and understanding. It becomes clear from the actions, that these could not be brought about unless by a thing subsisting. For whose, unless a true person’s, could these actions be, wrestling, speaking, blessing? Hosea teaches that that was truly not a created angel.¹⁵⁸ The angel of Jehovah, therefore, is Jehovah, that is, it was the Son, as also the most ancient Fathers, Irenaeus, Justin, Tertullian, and afterward Ambrose and others explained. By these manifestations, therefore, by which the λόγος, or the Son of God, appeared to the Fathers and spoke with them having assumed the form of a man, it is clear that he was a true hypostasis, who took on and maintained that human form. The same is clear from the actions which he brought about before he took on flesh, such as that he accompanied and nourished the people of God and offered them water to be drunk in the desert. Moreover, the Apostle teaches to the Corinthians that this was Christ: Whom also the unfaithful tested, as the Apostle himself says.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, it is apparent and clearly demonstrated from these that ὁ λόγος was not at all something empty and without substance, but true ὑψιστάμενος, true substance, and finally a true person subsisting, individual, understanding. Solid arguments will never refute that the word *Elohim* joined with Jehovah signifies a plurality of ὑποστάσεις or persons in God, just as the most ancient Hebrews also explained, (more on this later).

However, this ὑπόστασις of the Son, or πρόσωπον was always in heaven with the Father. This is clear from the Old Testament because it says, “The Lord possessed me from the beginning of his ways: before his works, then I was: from eternity, I was established,”¹⁶⁰ that is, I had

¹⁵³ John 12:41

¹⁵⁴ Acts 28:25

¹⁵⁵ Proverbs 8:15

¹⁵⁶ Proverbs 8:30

¹⁵⁷ Proverbs 8:35-36

¹⁵⁸ Hosea 12:3

¹⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:9

¹⁶⁰ Proverbs 8:22-23

preeminence¹⁶¹ and so on. And these few examples from the Old Testament are enough. These are more clearly proved, however, from the New Testament. “In the beginning was the λόγος,” says John, “and the λόγος was God.”¹⁶² Who, therefore, does not see that the λόγος was always a person subsisting with the Father in heaven? For he could not be God unless he were eternal, and subsisting from eternity. How is the Son truly begotten of the Father, if he is not a substance subsisting through himself? However, he was always and from eternity the Son of God the Father. From this it is clear, and so I will omit other testimonies.

That which God always wanted from his people was to be called on by the name of the Father, and to be known as the Father.¹⁶³ But to whomever he was the Father, he was on account of the λόγος, insofar as all were chosen in him. All were adopted in him, and all were bestowed with his sonship, as the Apostle teaches.¹⁶⁴ And this is the reason, why he first calls himself, then us as well, sons of God; and first calls God his Father, then our Father.¹⁶⁵ For certainly, on account of Christ, both we and all others from the creation of the world were made sons of God, and this was communicated to us by the only-begotten sonship. Just as John proves, and it is said, “He gave the power to them to become the sons of God, to those who believe in his name.”¹⁶⁶ And the Apostle, when writing to the Colossians, calls him πρωτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως:¹⁶⁷ begotten, certainly, of the Father, before anything was made.¹⁶⁸ Since, therefore, the λόγος was always the Son of God, who does not see more clearly by this light that the λόγον, about which John spoke, that he was always a person in heaven, or ὑπόστασις, a thing subsisting through itself?¹⁶⁹ How else could the Apostle say, “Through whom all things subsist,” if the Son does not subsist through himself?¹⁷⁰

The Apostle also proves that Christ was πρωτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως from creation. For he says everything was established through him. And we must carefully note what the Apostle said – Christ was begotten, everything else was established or created. For it is the word ἔκτισται:¹⁷¹ the Son therefore is not made or created, but begotten, of the substance of the Father; everything else was established through the begotten Son and created out of nothing. If therefore the λόγος was

¹⁶¹ *habui principatum*

¹⁶² John 1:1

¹⁶³ Malachi 2:10

¹⁶⁴ Galatians 4:5

¹⁶⁵ John 20:17

¹⁶⁶ John 1:12

¹⁶⁷ πρωτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως - firstborn over all creation

¹⁶⁸ Colossians 1:15

¹⁶⁹ John 1:1; John 1:5 ff; 1 John 1:1; 1 John 1:5; 1 John 1:7

¹⁷⁰ Colossians 1:17

¹⁷¹ ἔκτισται – “the have been created” (cf. Colossians 1:16, τὰ πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται: “All things have been created through him and for him.)

begotten out of the substance of the Father and through the begotten Son, everything else was established, how could he himself not be always a ὑπόστασις, and a person subsisting? What did the Apostle say to the Hebrews about the Son of God? “For surely it is not angels (that is the form, or the seed of the Angels) that he takes on, but he takes on the seed of Abraham.”¹⁷² If he performed the action of taking on, then he who performed that action must be one who subsists, distinct by this action of taking on.¹⁷³ So the λόγος was made flesh, because he took on flesh. So too in another place, “Who, since he was in the form of God,” and so on.¹⁷⁴ Therefore, even before he had taken on the form of a servant, Christ existed in the form of God, and by this, he was a divine thing subsisting.

Christ also, before taking on flesh, ruled the people of God: he accompanied them through the wilderness, he fed them, he gave them something to drink. How could these things have been performed by him, if he were not a thing subsisting through himself? He who reconciled men with God, who ruled, who represented, who saved, who takes their prayers into the sight of the Father: it is necessary that he is a person. But does not Christ truly bring about these things for the elect, even before the incarnation? For he reconciled them to the Father, justified them, regenerated them, lived in their hearts through faith, saved them, remitted their sins, and offered their prayers to the Father. For these are the duties of the Mediator and of the high priest Christ: just as can be abundantly shown from the Scriptures, especially in the epistle to the Hebrews. “Christ, however, is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”¹⁷⁵ Yesterday, meaning the entirety of time past, from the earth’s foundation; today, meaning the present; forever, meaning the entire future. In other words: Christ, who saves his faithful today, reconciles them to the Father, restores them, rules over them. He also is the one who saved, reconciled, justified, regenerated, all who are saved from the earth’s foundation all the way to the end of the world. He is the same one who does this duty, always himself saving the faithful. For he always is, was, and will be the same mediator Christ and high priest; not idle, but always working in those who are his, displaying his power. However, how could he have brought forth these things, have brought them about, have worked them, if he were not a thing subsisting through himself?

For he himself also spoke thus with the Father, “Father, glorify me by the glory, which I had from you, before the world existed.”¹⁷⁶ He therefore existed himself before the world existed; if he had once previously had that glory for which he now here, as a man, asks. Truly, how many times did he say that he came from the Father, and came into the world? He came, however, when he was made flesh. Before, therefore, he was ὑφιστάμενον. And what is that? “Before Abraham came to be,

¹⁷² Hebrews 2:16

¹⁷³ John 1:14

¹⁷⁴ Philippians 2:6

¹⁷⁵ Hebrews 13:8

¹⁷⁶ John 17:5

I am?”¹⁷⁷ How could he say this truly, if he was not a substance existing through himself, before Abraham was born? It does not escape my notice that these passages and many arguments are addressed by the heretics; we will respond to these exceptions in a later part. Let this be enough for the present; τοῦ λόγου ὑπόστασιν,¹⁷⁸ is confirmed, by such passages as are enough for the truth to be understood by the pious and learned.

IV. Let me now include something concerning the ὑποστάσις of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is true God, as we will later explain, therefore he is a true ὑφιστάμενον.¹⁷⁹ He appeared, descended, and rested on Christ in the form of a dove; he was, therefore a hypostasis who took on and sustained the form of a dove. He descended on the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues; he was, therefore a ὑφιστάμενον.¹⁸⁰ The Apostle accurately wrote this of the Holy Spirit: “The word of wisdom was given to one through the Holy Spirit; to another, the word of knowledge through the same Spirit; to another faith, by which certainly he can perform miracles through the same Spirit; to another prophecy; and to another various kinds of languages. However, one and the same Spirit performs all of these, apportioning to each as he desires.”¹⁸¹ How could the Holy Spirit perform these things unless he were a true ὑφιστάμενον? How could he apportion according to his desire, if he were not a person understanding and desiring? For this phrase, “as he desires,” should be carefully noted. This is not, therefore, an act of God, but God acting, nor the power of God, by which he acts, but the substance, which acts on account of his own free will.

The Apostle says the same: “Take heed to yourselves,” he says, “and to your whole flock, in which the Holy Spirit placed you as overseers to rule the Church of God.”¹⁸² If the Holy Spirit established them, and not others, in the Church, how could this have been done, unless he was a person gifted with judgment and a will? “Those who are the sons of God,” says Paul, “are led by the Spirit of God.”¹⁸³ The Spirit, therefore, is a person gifted with judgment, who acts by his own power, and rules the elect according to his own judgment. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”¹⁸⁴ Why are these called the fruits of the Spirit? Because the Holy Spirit brings forth those fruits in the faithful ones themselves. If we live in the Spirit, then the Spirit, therefore, is the Life-Giver. If he seals the faithful, he

¹⁷⁷ John 8:58

¹⁷⁸ τοῦ λόγου ὑπόστασιν – the hypostasis of the Logos

¹⁷⁹ Matthew 3:16

¹⁸⁰ Acts 2:3

¹⁸¹ 1 Corinthians 12:8-11

¹⁸² Acts 20:28

¹⁸³ Romans 8:14

¹⁸⁴ Galatians 5:22-23

therefore knows his own.¹⁸⁵ He also gives grace; grace therefore disperses from the Holy Spirit, because this is from him.¹⁸⁶ For this reason, the Apostles also asked for grace and peace for the Churches, as much from the Holy Spirit as from the Father and from Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, the Holy Spirit is no less a person than the Father. He teaches the faithful the same thing.

Christ says, "The Holy Spirit will teach you in that hour what you should say."¹⁸⁸ Also, "You are not," says Christ, "the ones who speak, but the Spirit of your Father, who speaks in you."¹⁸⁹ That is, he who gives that you might speak. Thus in Acts, "They began to speak in various tongues, just as the Holy Spirit gave utterance to them."¹⁹⁰ If the Holy Spirit gave this to the Apostles and to others according to his own judgment, that they might speak in other tongues, he is therefore a person understanding and desiring. Also, "He convicts the world of sin."¹⁹¹ How? Externally, through the Apostle, but internally through himself, entering hearts. The Apostle says we do not know what we seek; however, the Spirit himself intercedes for us.¹⁹² That is, he works in such a way that we might know and that we might intercede. He is, therefore, a person understanding and doing, in order that we might understand.

Judgment is expressly attributed to the Holy Spirit by the Apostles when they say, "It seemed to the Holy Spirit, and to us."¹⁹³ The Holy Spirit therefore is no less gifted with judgment than the Apostles. Cognition is attributed to him. "No one knows," says Paul "the things of God, besides the Spirit of God."¹⁹⁴ Hearing and declaring are given to him, "What is from me," says Christ, "He will receive, and will declare to you."¹⁹⁵ Also: "Whatever he hears, he will speak."¹⁹⁶ The foreknowledge and prediction of future things are attributed to him as well. "The things which are coming," says Christ, "he will report to you."¹⁹⁷ So Peter says, "The Spirit of Christ foretold in the Prophets what sufferings were coming."¹⁹⁸ So too the deliberate distribution of gifts was attributed to the same one,

¹⁸⁵ Ephesians 4:30

¹⁸⁶ Acts 2:38

¹⁸⁷ Revelation 1:4; 2 Corinthians 1:2

¹⁸⁸ Luke 12:12

¹⁸⁹ Matthew 10:20

¹⁹⁰ Acts 2:4

¹⁹¹ John 16:8-9

¹⁹² Romans 8:26

¹⁹³ Acts 15:8

¹⁹⁴ 1 Corinthians 2:11

¹⁹⁵ John 16:14

¹⁹⁶ John 16:13

¹⁹⁷ John 16:13

¹⁹⁸ 1 Peter 1:11

as we said before. “There are distributions of gifts,” says the Apostle, “but the same Spirit.”¹⁹⁹ However, he also apportions to each according to his desire. The apostle makes a clear distinction between the Spirit who distributes according to his own choice and his gifts which are distributed by the Spirit himself. Therefore, by these qualities of acting and desiring, he is a substance. Authority among men is attributed to him. For the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”²⁰⁰ Who, however, can command, unless he is a person understanding, desiring, gifted with authority? He also anoints and sends. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (as a man), because he has anointed me to preach to the poor.”²⁰¹

How could these qualities occur in a thing which does not subsist through itself, does not understand, does not desire, does not act? Nothing is more certain than this principle of philosophers. Actions are actions of supposita, that is of ὑφιστάμενον. Christ did not call him comfort, but the comforter, and so the Spirit is another – distinct from Christ, even as the Paraclete.²⁰² Certainly he was to them a substance, living, acting, comforting, no less than Christ himself was a person comforting and teaching. Likewise, the creation of human nature in Christ is attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Gospels.²⁰³ How, though, could the creation of a subsisting thing be attributed to a thing not subsisting?

Furthermore, John teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all witnesses of the same kind, when he says: “For there are three that give testimony in heaven, the Father, the λόγος, and the Holy Spirit.”²⁰⁴ Therefore, as the Father is a true person, and as the λόγος Christ is a true person, so too it is necessary that the Holy Spirit is a true person. Finally, by the symbol of the covenant, which is Baptism, we are sealed in the same way to the Holy Spirit as to the Father and the Son. For clearly we are baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit with the same form of words and by the same element of water and by the same action by which we are also baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son.

Therefore, as the Father is a true person, and the Son, Jesus Christ, is a true person, so too it is fitting that the Holy Spirit be a true person. For we are received into the covenant by the one who seals us with the symbol of the covenant. It is our divine duty and is required of us that to be received by him into the covenant, we must be sealed to him by the sign of the covenant. Thus the people of God in the Old Testament, certainly Abraham and his seed, were not sealed, nor were they allowed to be sealed by the sign of the covenant, that is circumcision, unless it was of Jehovah, by whom also they were received into the covenant. Truly the same stipulation applies to us that

¹⁹⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:4, 11

²⁰⁰ Acts 13:2

²⁰¹ Isaiah 61:1

²⁰² John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7

²⁰³ Luke 1:35

²⁰⁴ 1 John 5:7

applied to them in this regard, that is in the substance of the covenant: we are not exempt from this precept by which they were commanded, that is to be sealed by the symbol of circumcision of Jehovah alone, except that circumcision is changed into baptism.²⁰⁵ In this way it is made clear that we cannot be sealed by the symbol of the covenant unless we are sealed to him by whom we are received into the covenant. What folly is it to say, that we have been received for eternity into this covenant of everlasting life by a thing which does not subsist, which does not live, which does not act, which is not gifted with will and understanding? For he who receives us into the covenant calls himself יהוה and שדי and אלהים and אל;²⁰⁶ he lives, he speaks, he promises, he says, “I am the Lord your God, and of your seed after you for everlasting generations.”

Therefore, either no one ought to be baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit, or it necessarily ought to be confessed that the Holy Spirit is no less a substance, eternal, living, gifted with will and understanding, and therefore a true person and also אל, than the Father and the Son. For how is he joined with the person of the Father and of the Son in the same form of baptism if he is not a person in the same manner? If, truly, the Spirit of the Father is a person, distinct from the Father, why was he not also a true person, distinct from the λόγος, who is the Son of the Father, even before the Son took on flesh. I believe that this argument is enough to prove the ὑπόστασιν, καὶ οὐσίαν αἰώνιον²⁰⁷ of the Son and of the Spirit to every pious man and lover of truth. For one to best understand this, they do not need many more arguments. Indeed, thus the deity of both the Son and Spirit is established by this proof, such that it can in no way be refuted by the heretics. Therefore I will not add more here. If, however, anyone requires the faith and confession of the ancient and catholic Church (he who despises this faith is so unworthy that we ought not to speak with him, and he should be sent away), let him read Irenaeus in book I, chapter 2. Let him read ἔκθεσιν πίστεως, περὶ τῆς ἁγίας, καὶ ὁμοουσίου τριάδος²⁰⁸ in Justin, and the books of Tertullian, *On the Trinity* and *Against Praxeas*. Those are the oldest Fathers, the disciples of those who heard the Apostles, and hence they cannot relate anything to us besides the faith, which the Apostles declared. But concerning the three persons, enough thus far.

²⁰⁵ Colossians 2:12

²⁰⁶ יהוה *Yaweh* [as transcribed by Zanchi], שדי *Shadai* [Almighty], אלהים *Elohim*, and אל *El* [God]

²⁰⁷ ὑπόστασιν, καὶ οὐσίαν αἰώνιον – hypostasis and eternal essence

²⁰⁸ The exposition of the faith concerning right agreement, or concerning the holy and consubstantial Trinity

Chapter Five

Concerning the real and true distinction of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit between themselves.

I. Afterwards it was fully shown by the Prophets, and especially shown to us from the sacred Scriptures that he, who is called the Father and he, who is called the Son, or Λόγος, and he, who is called the Holy Spirit, are neither empty things, nor without understanding and reasoning, but are true substances subsisting through themselves, living, understanding, and desiring and gifted with free will and judgment, and by the same, are true persons. Someone like Noetus, Sabellius, or Praxeas could accept whatever proofs we have drawn out of Scripture and understand them to be concerning one and the same person, who merely is called sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the Holy Spirit. They do not deny that he is a true person, yet they do not continue on to confess that God is three things distinct amongst themselves, and hence do not believe that they ought to be arranged such that there is one who is called the Father, and another who is called the Son, and a third who is called the Holy Spirit. Therefore it ought to be demonstrated by us at present that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whom we have shown to be subsisting things, also are truly and really distinct amongst themselves, such that one is not the other. Therefore, the thesis of this chapter will be concerning this matter.

Third Thesis:

THESE THREE, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT, ARE TRULY AND REALLY AMONGST THEMSELVES DISTINCT SUCH THAT ONE IS NOT THE OTHER.

II. When I say they are really and truly distinct, I do not intend to say that they are distinguished with regard to essence (for they all have one and the same essence) but with regard to personhood. It is just as if you say one person is not another: the Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Holy Spirit, in the same way that Peter is not Paul, and Jacob is not John. But we must note the difference between the distinction of human persons and the distinction of divine persons: that men are distinct from one another such that they are entirely divided from one another, and thus are not only many persons, but also many men. Why is this? Because they are created and finite. However the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are only distinct, they are not divided. Therefore, each one of these is himself infinite and immeasurable. And so there are multiple divine persons, but not multiple Gods, as we will demonstrate. However, this thesis is the clearest.

III. First, whenever the Holy Scriptures mentions these three simultaneously, it clearly signifies that these three are distinct amongst themselves. For, if they are many, they are also therefore distinct. Otherwise if one were another, they would not be many, but one. For example, “Let us make man in

our image and likeness.”²⁰⁹ Likewise, “Let us go down and confuse their tongues.”²¹⁰ And, “Behold, Adam has become one of us.”²¹¹ I maintain that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all contained within the passages we have cited. For they are *Elohim*. One of which is introduced speaking, but the others listen. But it is necessary to distinguish he who speaks from those to whom he speaks. Therefore the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinguished among themselves. Truly testimony of this kind occurs in the New Testament more clearly and frequently. Therefore we will briefly run through several clear passages from the New Testament about the distinctions of the divine persons. In Matthew, the Father reveals himself by voice, saying: “This is my Son.”²¹² Then the Son is revealed by flesh, for he is there in a human body. The Spirit truly is there in the form of a dove. And so he cannot be one and the same who reveals himself simultaneously by voice, by human flesh, and by the form of a dove. Therefore how is this clear distinction not apparent here? Christ truly promises in the writings of John that he will send the Holy Spirit from the Father.²¹³ However, he cannot be both the sender and the sent. This distinction was no less clearly indicated when Christ instituted Baptism and commanded believers to be baptized expressly in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.²¹⁴ However, the Apostle writing to the Galatians put it this way: God (namely, the Father) sent the Spirit of the Son into your hearts;²¹⁵ previously he said: God sent his Son born from a woman.²¹⁶ Here it is also clear that the Father is one who sends, and the Son is another, who is sent, just as well as the Holy Spirit.

John likewise expressly teaches this distinction of persons when he says, “There are three that give witness in heaven, Father, Λόγος, and Holy Spirit.”²¹⁷ Afterwards he combines this divine testimony with the testimony of man and says: “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God (that is, of the three) is greater.”²¹⁸ Who could not see that the apostle distinguishes these three witnesses one from another, just as three human witnesses are distinguished one from another? For he wants to bring about the conclusion that, just as every word is established by the speaking of two or three human witnesses,²¹⁹ so too the heavenly testimony is the truest because it is by the number of three witnesses. Since each of them is distinct from the others, they may all testify of one and the

²⁰⁹ Genesis 1:26

²¹⁰ Genesis 11:7

²¹¹ Genesis 3:22

²¹² Matthew 3:16-17

²¹³ John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7

²¹⁴ Matthew 28:19

²¹⁵ Galatians 4:6

²¹⁶ Galatians 4:4

²¹⁷ 1 John 5:7

²¹⁸ 1 John 5:9

²¹⁹ Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 1 Corinthians 13:1

same thing. Likewise the Lord Jesus clearly once taught the same thing when he said he was not the only one who bore witness of himself, but the Father also gave testimony concerning the same.²²⁰ And hence he proved that his witness was valid because it was not of one but of two witnesses. There are infinite passages of this sort in the Scriptures where the Father is distinguished from the Son, and from the Holy Spirit, and again one from the other. For what is clearer than this passage where John writes, “the Λόγος was with God” (specifically the Father) and then writes, not this God whom the Λόγος was with, but “the Λόγος himself became flesh.”²²¹ Therefore, the Λόγος always was distinct from and other than the Father, even before he took on flesh. Finally, throughout their books, all the Apostles and Evangelists so clearly related this distinction which is between the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that I could not wonder enough who could become like Noetus, Sabellius, and Praxeas; but they did not see this distinction but devised such confusion as if they wanted to suppress the bright light.

IV. It is clear that this has always been the doctrine of the whole Church, from (besides the Scriptures already cited by us) the writings of all the Fathers and from the symbols of the Churches, the Apostolic, Nicean, that of Constantinople, Athanasian, and all the others. But it is unnecessary to recite these or relate the witnesses of the Fathers at this point, so that we might not delay ourselves too much on a clear matter. I will only point out two of the oldest Fathers, who treat the argument directly.

First is Justin Martyr in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*. For there he demonstrates explicitly by the clearest testimonies of Scripture, that this one who is other from the Father is also God. For he says thus: “but he, by the phrase ‘another God,’ understands a person who is God.” For it ought not to be thought there were two Gods according to Justin, since he vehemently teaches the opposite in his *Exhortation to the Gentiles*, in the book *On the Sole Government of God*, in the book *On the Trinity*, and elsewhere always. Therefore, he calls the Son himself another God, because he is another person distinct from the Father, and yet that person is God indeed. The other is Tertullian in the book *Against Praxeas*. For there he zealously refutes the heresy of Praxeas, who was saying that those who were called by the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were the same person.

Therefore this doctrine ought to be maintained, concerning the true and real distinction of the divine persons between themselves: and by such a distinction, by which the Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit; nor, in turn, is the Son the Father or the Holy Spirit; and thence the Holy Spirit himself is neither the Father nor the Son.

²²⁰ John 8:18

²²¹ John 1:1

Chapter Six

Concerning the deity of the three persons, and especially concerning the deity of the Father.

The fourth thesis:

OF THE THREE, FATHER, SON (OR ΛΟΓΟΣ, WHO IS CHRIST), AND HOLY SPIRIT:
EACH IS TRUE GOD.

When I say the Father, I understand the particular Father of Christ, first in *Jehovah* יְהוָה and a person. For *Jehovah* is not only one יְהוָה or grammatically יהוה but plural *Elohim*; just as can be clearly seen throughout the writings of Moses and the Prophets. The Λόγος, God manifested in the flesh, that is Christ, later openly revealed the number and name of them, teaching that those *Elohim* are three – the Father one, the Son another, and the third the Holy Spirit – so that John the Baptist, not without cause, said, “No one has ever seen God. The Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has declared him to us.”²²² For he ἐξηγήσατο,²²³ that is he explained that there is not only one God *Jehovah* who is *Elohim* and his will is that which he has accomplished from the beginning of the world, but also he revealed how many *Elohim* there are and what are their names. This was especially fulfilled when he himself was made known to us in the flesh.

Therefore, by the name of the Father I understand primarily יְהוָה, the particular Father of Christ. This must be carefully noted. For although all the heretics confess with much fanfare that God is a true Father, if they are questioned whom exactly they call God the Father, they respond, the actual common divine will of all and God, that is *Jehovah*, from whom, through whom, and in whom all things are, and hence, who is the Father of everything. However, they will certainly not admit that there is a certain person, who is God, who is a particular Father of Christ. Just as they do not actually concede that Christ is the particular Son of a certain person, who is God, and who is called by the particular name ‘Father.’

This is abundantly clear because they contend that only the Father of Christ is true God. Yet, Christ always appears throughout the Gospels teaching that the Father is not an abstract divinity but a certain person in heaven, his own particular Father, and through Christ the Father of all the other the elect. And also for the reason Christ calls himself the only begotten Son. And here they see all the testimonies which he brings forth concerning his Father. In summary, when the heretics say the Father of Christ is true God, they are in agreement with us with regard to the predicate (if I might speak scholastically), but they disagree with us with regard to the subject, since they do not accept that by the name of the Father there is a certain person in God who is the Father of Christ, but in general, as I said, they understand that he is the whole divine will and *Jehovah*. Nevertheless,

²²² John 1:18

²²³ ἐξηγήσατο – “he interpreted it”

in this divine will Jehovah, also the Son and the Holy Spirit are included, not only the Father. Just as also by the word “souls” not only faculty of understanding, but truly also of perceiving and of growing are understood. Now we uphold the one whom we understand by the word “Father,” and this “Father” in this thesis we will declare is God.

II. That which pertains to the second person, I expressed by the three distinct names of Λόγος, Son, and Christ, because he is also called by those three names everywhere in the Scriptures. Therefore when I bring forth testimonies from the Scriptures, by which I will confirm his Deity, it ought to be observed that this person is signified by these three names, although there is also a certain distinction between these names. For those first two are eternal to this person, since he was always the Λόγος and Son of the Father. The third, however, because it is the name of his office, is particularly fitting to him after he took on our flesh and was made man and was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, by the Holy Spirit. When therefore we call him Christ, we understand the Λόγος, or eternal Son, begotten of the eternal Father, but now made man. Therefore when we explain that this Christ is true God, our proofs ought not to be distorted by this, as if we were only proving that Christ, who was made man, is God, as Servetus and his disciples do. For they themselves teach this Jesus first is the Messiah, then the Son of God, and finally God. But what kind of Son of God? A Son by the grace of adoption, and only on account of his conceived flesh from the Virgin, by the power of the Most High. However, certainly not begotten of the substance of the Father from eternity. Also, what kind of God do they say he is? God-made, God-temporary, God through privilege, as they themselves say, who before the incarnation was nothing of substance nor subsisting, and therefore was not true God. However, when we say that Christ is true God, we understand that he who is now made man, is thus now God, so too when he was only the Λόγος, he was always true God.

III. It ought to be finally noted by this phrase “True God” that we include all the perfections of God, or all which are attributed to God in the Scriptures, without which God cannot exist, so that, besides the others, he is eternal, infinite, omnipotent, and the rest of that kind, for he cannot be true God unless he is eternal, infinite, omnipotent. Finally, we understand this one, who is God by nature, as opposed to those (as the Apostle says in Galatians 4) who are not gods by nature. Hence when we will explain that the Son and the Holy Spirit are true God, at the same time we want it to be demonstrated by the same testimonies, that each one of them is, with the Father, by nature God eternal, infinite, omnipotent, coeternal through all, so that one is not greater or more perfect than another.

IV. Now I come to the Confirmation: I will demonstrate with the firm testimonies of the Scriptures what we have now set forth, first concerning the Father, then concerning the Son, finally concerning the Holy Spirit. The particular Father of Christ is true God. It is unnecessary to bring forward many testimonies concerning the Deity of the Father, when this is already in everyone’s confession that he

is the true God. Therefore we ought to be content with a few passages which I will cite. John thus begins his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Λόγος and the Λόγος was πρὸς τὸν θεόν."²²⁴ There the particular Father of Christ is understood by the name of God, as 1 John 1 explains. The Father is therefore true God. And Christ is in the Gospel of John: "Thus God," he says, "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," and so on.²²⁵ Here also, by the name of God, the Father of Christ is understood. And elsewhere: "I ascend," he says, "to my Father and your Father, my God and your God."²²⁶ Therefore the particular Father of Christ, who also became our Father on account of Christ himself, is true God. Finally in his speech, the same Christ, speaking to his particular Father, says thus, "And this is eternal life, that they know you to be the only (that is, the sole) true God."²²⁷ The Father is therefore the true Jehovah, whom the Prophets declared was the only God, and thus is true God, as he is the fount of the entire Deity. All the Scriptures teach this. Also the whole Church confessed the same above and before all, certainly that the Father of Christ is true and eternal God, just as is also most clearly taught in all the Symbols of the faith which have ever been written down. Therefore let us go on to the rest, which on account of the Heretics they have need of a greater confirmation.

The End of the First Book

²²⁴ πρὸς τὸν θεόν John 1:1 - before God

²²⁵ John 3:16

²²⁶ John 20:17

²²⁷ John 17:3

PART ONE

Book Two

On The One True God, Eternal Father, Son, And Holy Spirit

Just as Ὁ ΛΟΓΟΣ, Jesus Christ, is the Angel of Jehovah, so too he is true Jehovah, drawn from the Old Testament.

Chapter One

How useful and necessary is the doctrine concerning the true and eternal deity of Christ. By what reasoning this doctrine ought to be confirmed. The explanation of the first argument, drawn from creation, is from the passage Genesis 1 for the proof of this doctrine.

I. While we have said that it was redundant to prove with many examples that the Father is true God, because there is no man who could dare to deny this, nevertheless this point concerning his Son, Christ, ought to be demonstrated by us with many testimonies and arguments. The Devil has from the beginning exerted his every effort through all the heretics and Antichrists at this one point, that he might drive Christ away from his own throne and dispel him from our hearts by opposing, no less fiercely than tenaciously, at one time his divinity, at another his humanity, and sometimes his office. This is the lying spirit in the Antichrist of whom John says: "Who is this liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son."²²⁸

Our Antichrists certainly do not simply deny the Father, that is to deny that there is a God. But rather, insofar as they deny that Christ the Son is begotten out of the substance of the Father, and therefore true and by nature God, they also necessarily deny that God is truly the Father; for he is not properly the Father if he does not have the Son who is begotten from his own substance and who is, by this fact, God himself. Moreover John adds to this, saying that whoever does not have the

²²⁸ 1 John 2:22

Son, also does not have the Father.²²⁹ So it happens that those who deny that the Son is by nature God, do so (so the deceivers say) because they want to ascribe deity and glory to the highest and true God and do not want to allow these things to be given to another (as if by attacking the Son in this manner they are doing a pleasing thing for God the Father). I say that by these things they deny the Father and nothing could be more loathsome to God than that they deny that God has any Son, begotten eternally from his own substance. And indeed while they attack the Son they also make war against the Father, because by denying that Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal God they simultaneously deny that God the Father is true and eternally the Father. Consequently they strip him of his own true and eternal qualities and indeed of his deity. For there is not God where there is not the Father, who has a Son, in whose οὐσία he always remains, as the Father is always in the Son and the Son in the Father.

Therefore those who think that they have ingratiated themselves to the Father because they have protected his glory against the Son, leave themselves with neither the Son, nor the Father, establishing themselves instead as enemies. For John says that whoever denies the Son does not have the Father.²³⁰ Therefore, in order that we might have the Father let us not deny the Son; rather let us confess not only his humanity but truly also his divine nature, and declare his office of Prophet, Priest, and King against all Antichrists, and let us defend fiercely against the enemies of the Church, as is necessary.

At present his true and eternal deity ought to be defended by us. Thus by clear testimonies from both the old and new covenant, next by clear and firm arguments drawn from both the Old and New Testament, we will demonstrate that Jesus Christ, in whose name we are baptized, is not only the Son of man (as our opponents say) and is therefore true man, but also is the true and eternal Son of God and is himself the true and eternal God Jehovah.

II. Passage 1, from Genesis 1:1

אלהים ברא בראשית²³¹

I believe that it will be most profitable if I start at the beginning of Genesis and thus make a start of our discussion and explanation from where Moses says, “In the beginning אלהים created (from the word of God) heaven and earth.”²³² And here I ask the Arians, Samosatensians, and Servetians whether he who created heaven and earth was the true and eternal God, or was he not? They admit this. For the one who is called *Elohim* here, is called Jehovah in the following chapter. But not only

²²⁹ 1 John 2:23

²³⁰ 1 John 2:23

²³¹ אלהים ברא בראשית – in the beginning *Elohim* created

²³² Genesis 1:1

the Father, but also the Son, who is called the Christ (as for now I am silent concerning the Holy Spirit), is himself the one who created heaven and earth. This is clearly shown in the Holy Scriptures.

In a thing of such great importance neither do I wish to know either by human reasoning or by the judgments of men, nor truly also by the testimonies of Scripture which are not clear and sure. So then, I omit how Targum Jerusalem interprets “God the Father created heaven and earth בראשית” to mean “with wisdom.” And many understand that to be the λόγος or Son of God. And they therefore understand that this means that God the Father created according to this principle; or by means of this principle, that is the λόγος, the Son of God, everything was created. And I omit that Cabalistic mystery, which some make so much of, namely that בראשית means nothing other than the second principle, for ב is the second letter of the alphabet, which indicates a second one, and ראשית is the principle and head. This second principle is Christ. There is also another Cabalistic mystery that I know of, which I do not accept, in which they say that from the three letters of the verb ‘to create’ ברא the three persons of God are indicated. The Son from the first letter, since the Hebrew word for ‘son’ is בן, which begins with the letter ב. The Holy Spirit is from the second, which is the beginning of the noun רוּחַ. And the Father, who is called אב, from the last letter א. Even though I could deduce from these interpretations that many among them, as well as among the Chaldeans and Hebrews were learned men, in so far as they, along with us, perceive something in this text about the Son of God. Nevertheless, these interpretations are such that a firm argument could not be drawn from them by which one could prove either a trinity of persons in God or that all things were established by the Father through the Son.

III. That which other most learned men have deduced from the word in the plural number, by which Moses here calls God, namely אלהים, is more certain. They maintain that there are plural persons in that Jehovah, who is said to have created heaven and earth. And hence not only by the Father but also by the Son and through the Son and through the Holy Spirit everything was created, brought to life, sustained, and still is sustained. Some of the Hebrews write that God was called by the plural name *Elohim* for the sake of respect, or in order that it might signify his many perfections. But this is frivolous since it is not supported either by the authority of Scripture or by reason.

Rather, do we not find several passages of Scripture, in which it is clear that by the name *Elohim*, when it is used for Jehovah, that it indicates a plurality of ὑποστάσεις in God? Just as we have already partly proved this in the last book, we will more fully illustrate this in the refutations. And many arguments are available, which support this conclusion. Among which arguments, this is not least – by no means can we think that that Moses was ignorant of him who was the efficient cause of creation, nor was he silent about what he had seen, just as the Prophets and Apostles both knew and preached. Especially since we read that God never spoke with anyone more familiarly or made himself more clearly known than to Moses. And it should be beyond dispute among everyone that the Prophets and the Apostles were the interpreters of Moses.

However, it is clear, that the Son (as we will soon show) and the Holy Spirit (as will be demonstrated in its own place) were declared by the Prophets and the Apostles to be the creator of all things, as much of those things which are contained in the heavens as of those which are contained in the earth. Both the Son and the Spirit are openly called God, and such a God, who should not be destroyed from the earth, but rather worshiped by all, and prayed to; as we will make clear in the appropriate place. Jeremiah says, “The gods who did not create heaven and earth should be destroyed from the earth.”²³³ Therefore, he cannot be God, who did not create heaven and earth.

On the contrary, Moses himself plainly teaches that the Holy Spirit was the creator of heaven and earth, when he says that it was hovering at the beginning over the first material and the creation, which he signified by the noun ‘waters,’ and somehow preserved it and conserved it until everything was formed from it by the power of the Word. The one who preserves these things, he also created those same things, since it is necessary that both be the work of the same and only God. Concerning the Son, whom he signifies by the word יהוה מלאך, he indicates the same thing clearly, (as I will now show), such that this cannot be doubted concerning the Son without doing injury to Moses and even to the Holy Spirit. It is therefore manifest, since Moses writes that *Elohim* was the originating cause of the world, that he understood by the name *Elohim* not only the Father, but also the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For who and how many are these *Elohim*, Christ finally explained, when he commanded men to be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.²³⁴

I do not doubt that with these three names Christ explained the meaning of the word *Elohim*, since it was not allowed through the law of God that any man be sealed by any other sign of the covenant except that of Jehovah *Elohim*, by whom all things were established, the people were redeemed from Egypt, the law was handed down, and the covenant declared. But Christ commanded that all be sealed by the new sign of the covenant, to one and the same God Jehovah (for he is still one) to whom alone the Jewish people were previously sealed. But not to one person, but to three distinct ones: to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Does he not teach, clearly explaining the name *Elohim*, that a plurality of persons have been indicated, and these are three, neither greater nor lesser of whom the first is called the Father, the second is called the Son, the third is called the Holy Spirit? So that John the Baptist did not inaccurately say, God has never been seen by anyone. The Son who is in the bosom of the Father has shown him to us.²³⁵ Therefore, Christ was the manifestation of the divine will, as well as of the divine persons. And this argument has such great weight with me, that I might be content with this alone, and I am unable to be moved from this opinion. But I will write more for the sake of others, not for myself. There are more clearer

²³³ Jeremiah 10:11

²³⁴ Matthew 28:19

²³⁵ John 1:18

testimonies that should be brought forth by which the Son, who is later called Christ, is confirmed also to have created heaven and earth along with the Father.

IV. We ought to examine these passages, in which something is said concerning the creation of all things, and where those passages are either particularly understood to be about Christ, or are applied to Christ himself by the Apostles. But let me first confirm, with one or two proofs from Holy Scripture, what I just said about *Elohim*; certainly, by this expression, Moses signified multiple persons in God, who created heaven and earth. “Thus says Jehovah (says Isaiah) עשׂיך your makers.”²³⁶ And elsewhere, “עשׂיך בעליך your husbands, your makers, his name is Jehovah Sabbaoth.”²³⁷ And in the Psalms, “Let Israel rejoice, כעשׂיך, in their makers.”²³⁸ I will omit that which Abraham said, “And it was, when אבי מביית אלהים אתי התעו,” that is, “Gods caused me to wander from the home of my father.”²³⁹ He was indeed speaking of the creator of all, Jehovah. Certainly unless anyone wants to be purposefully and willfully contentious and to draw a shadow over the shining sun, these clearly confirm that there are multiple persons in God, whom Moses signified by the word ‘*Elohim*,’ and who created heaven and earth.

Add also to these those things which are separately attributed, with respect to creation, to the Son and then again to the Holy Spirit. For instance: “Who helped the Spirit of Jehovah” (specifically, in creating)?²⁴⁰ Isaiah clearly distinguishes between Jehovah and his Spirit and refers to the Spirit as Creator; just as Moses himself also taught that the Spirit was the same creator, maker, and preserver of all things. There are innumerable passages contained in the Scriptures concerning the creation of things through the Son, of which here I submit certain ones, from Moses and the Prophets, but interpreted by the Apostles. For just as the Prophets were the most faithful interpreters of Moses, so too the Apostles were the most faithful interpreters of Moses and of the Prophets.

The one who led the people out of Egypt, accompanied them through the wilderness, gave the law to them, and was tempted by them, he, when he declared his law, clearly said, “He created heaven and earth in six days, however on the seventh he rested from his works.”²⁴¹ Moreover, Moses not only calls him Jehovah but also the Angel of Jehovah. This word, ‘Angel’, cannot signify the Father, since he is, of course, not an Angel, nor a created Angel, as we will see a little later. Instead the Apostle himself expressly says that the Angel of Jehovah was Christ, when he commands, “Do not test Christ, as certain Israelites tested him in the desert.”²⁴² And it is not reasonable to

²³⁶ Isaiah 44:24

²³⁷ Isaiah 54:5

²³⁸ Psalm 149:2

²³⁹ Genesis 20:13

²⁴⁰ Isaiah 40:13

²⁴¹ Exodus 20:11

²⁴² 1 Corinthians 10:9

understand this to mean that we are not to tempt Christ, as they once tempted him, (him who was not Christ, but rather the Father Jehovah), as a certain scoundrel has corrupted the words of the Apostle to mean. After all, who does not see the violence that is being done to the words of the Apostle by this interpretation? For the Apostle teaches that we do not sin less if we now test Christ than they once sinned by tempting *whom*? Certainly the very same Christ. For if the Apostle wanted to make this distinction between him whom the Israelites tempted in the desert and Christ (whom he exhorted us not to tempt), he would have added the name of God, instead of Christ, saying: "Just as some of them tempted God." Then if the Apostle had understood that Christ was not Jehovah, who was tempted in the desert by the Israelites, but was pure man, then he would not have made equal the temptation by which Christ was tempted and the temptation by which Jehovah was tempted. What, after all, is the relative proportion here between mere creation and creator? Let him not indicate that this is a sin, to tempt Christ. For the precept would never appear, that we not tempt a creation, but only that we not tempt God. The Apostle indeed made allusion to the precept of God: "You shall not tempt Jehovah, your God: as you tempted your God in Massah."²⁴³ Thus Paul says: "Let us not tempt Christ, just as some of them tempted him," namely the very same Christ. But since Moses has Jehovah, the Apostle, the interpreter of Moses, said 'Christ,' so that he might clearly indicate that Christ was he who was tempted by the people in the desert, and from this that Christ was the Angel of Jehovah, as well as Jehovah, who led the people out of Egypt, who finally, as he said, accomplished all his work in six days, creating everything, and rested from his works on the seventh day. What reason is there for those who turn their backs in a matter of such clarity? But depraved men, because they do not want to assent to the doctrine of the Apostles, therefore always search out new ways of escape. Truly, for the sake of the elect, I must persevere in this task.

V. In Psalm 102 David begins thus: "Hear my prayer, Jehovah." Later, in verse 26 he says, "In the beginning you laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands."²⁴⁴ Here he did not ascribe the creation of things to anyone except Jehovah. However, the Apostle attributed this to Christ.²⁴⁵ Therefore in this psalm David either, according to the Apostle's opinion, truly acknowledged Christ as the Creator of the heavens and earth, or the Apostle was misusing this passage. I would have no business with anyone who would say this, as I would have no business with a blasphemer, a treacherous person, a fool, and a denier of the first principles. Therefore amongst all the faithful this passage proves that Christ is contained in the name *Elohim* when Moses says in the beginning *Elohim* created the heavens and earth. For it is of the highest impudence to deny that the Apostle rightly applied these words of David to the Son; and they were in fact spoken by David for

²⁴³ Deuteronomy 6:16

²⁴⁴ Psalm 102:25

²⁴⁵ Hebrews 1:10-12

that very purpose, as it is proved by the context of the whole chapter. For the beginning of the chapter also said the world was established through Christ. Therefore in his proof he brought up this passage of David. The cause for this explanation is that he might show that everything was established through Christ, that he is one with the Father, that he is the author of all things, and that he is the efficient cause, not an instrumental cause. He made it.

Hence not only the Apostle but also David (if the Apostle was a true interpreter of him) recognized that by the word *Elohim*, Moses wanted to indicate not only the Father but also the Son. Therefore, the Son was the Creator of heaven and earth as much as the Father. The passage from the Son of David, in which introducing the wisdom of God, a ὑφισταμένον, among other things, she says this “When he himself (Jehovah, my Father) was establishing the heavens, I was there,” etc.²⁴⁶

In sum, he teaches that the wisdom of God, that is, ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ,²⁴⁷ together with the Father created everything, just as we will more broadly explain later. We will also refute the objections which are brought up, so that it may be evident that it is pure impudence to contend that this passage is not to be understood to be about Christ – since even Arius himself never dared to deny this. Therefore, I will now move on to other testimonies.

VI. He who said in Isaiah, “Every knee shall bow to me,”²⁴⁸ also said in the same place that he had made the earth and created man over it, and stretched out the heavens with his hands, and commanded their hosts.²⁴⁹ From this passage it is clear that the creator of everything was the same one who will be the Judge of all, and to whom all will bow their knees. But the Apostle recites this saying as if it was about Christ, and explains: “We will (he says) be set before the judgment seat of Christ, because it is written, ‘As I live . . . every knee shall bow to me.’”²⁵⁰ Therefore, does not Paul clearly teach that Christ, just as he will be the future Judge of the whole world, so too, he is the creator of the whole world? For it cannot be that the knees of all will bow to him, unless he is also the true creator of all. For one is inseparable from the other.

Neither can it be said that every knee should bow to Christ properly on account of himself,²⁵¹ but rather by an incidental property,²⁵² that is because to this man, on account of his suffering and obedience to the Father, was given, through grace, that every knee shall bow to him, as it is taught in Philippians.²⁵³ For, here in Philippians, Paul does not simply teach that we will bow

²⁴⁶ Proverbs 8:27

²⁴⁷ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ - “the word of God”

²⁴⁸ Isaiah 45:23

²⁴⁹ Isaiah 45:12

²⁵⁰ Romans 14:11

²⁵¹ *per se*

²⁵² *ex accidenti*

²⁵³ Philippians 2:9-10

our knees to him, but he proves from the Prophet that we must be brought before his judgment seat. Why? “Because it is written,” he says, “As I live . . . every knee will be bowed to me.”²⁵⁴ Who said this? Jehovah, the maker of heaven and earth. Every knee will not, therefore, be bowed to Christ as man, but as Jehovah, and as the creator of everything. For as Jehovah says in Isaiah, he, Jehovah, is one, beside whom there is no other.²⁵⁵ Thus, he also knows that he is the one creator of everything, as there is nothing else outside of him, and every knee will bow to him alone. They will bow to no one except him. But, so that that he might more effectively prove what I said, he swears by himself, which is permissible for no one except God. Therefore, in this passage it cannot be ignored that the Apostle did in fact understand that Christ was Jehovah himself, who is the only one who can swear by himself, to whom alone every knee will bow, who alone is Creator of everything, and therefore is the only true Jehovah. For when I say ‘the only,’ neither the Father nor the Spirit is excluded, because all are the same Jehovah.

Every knee will bow to the man Christ, however not simply, but insofar as that human nature has been ὑπόστατικῶς²⁵⁶ united with the divine. For it remains a certain precept that no one should be worshipped except Jehovah alone. From this it is also proved that Christ is the true maker of heaven and earth, because the Father in all the Scriptures puts him before us to be worshipped by us and by the Angels. “And let all his Angels worship him,” says David.²⁵⁷ The same Scriptures truly teach that only the one who made heaven and earth should be worshipped: as the angel says in Revelation.²⁵⁸ And in Romans, the Apostle condemns the nations who worshiped the creatures, disregarding the Creator.²⁵⁹ Indeed, God also gives this argument in Isaiah. For why, he says, will every knee bow to him? Because (as he had said before) he himself made the earth and created man over it.²⁶⁰ Therefore, one of two things is necessary: either we deny that Christ ought to be worshipped, or we earnestly confess that he is the maker of heaven and earth.

Consider this passage from Jeremiah: “The gods who did not make heaven and earth: they shall be destroyed from the earth.”²⁶¹ This is exceedingly clear and known to all. For even if one were to oppose the true God with idols, he gives the sign by which it can be discerned whether or not they should be worshipped as true by us. And yet he still gives the general teaching on the distinction between the true God and false gods. It is therefore necessary that either Christ is a false God (and certainly not to be worshipped but rather banished from the earth) or he is the Creator of heaven

²⁵⁴ Romans 14:11; Isaiah 45:23

²⁵⁵ Isaiah 45:5

²⁵⁶ ὑπόστατικῶς – hypostatically

²⁵⁷ Psalm 97:7

²⁵⁸ Revelation 14:7

²⁵⁹ Romans 1:25

²⁶⁰ Isaiah 45:12

²⁶¹ Jeremiah 10:11

and earth. The Apostles, the interpreters of the Prophets, teach that the Prophets understood thus concerning Christ. We therefore ought to listen to them.

VII. John relates three things *περὶ τοῦ λόγου*,²⁶² whom after being made flesh he calls Christ.²⁶³ He is eternal, because he was *ὁ λόγος* in the beginning. He is a person distinct from the Father, because the *λόγος* was with God. And he is true God, because *καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος*.²⁶⁴ He shows all this to be true, because everything was made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made. Further along he says similarly, the world was made through him. Here the Evangelist does not speak of some other creation of the world, but of the first (this will be clearly explained and demonstrated in its own place); for nothing has been created or restored besides the elect. Thus truly he says that everything was made through him; that nothing might be left out, when he says, “And without him nothing was made that has been made.” And not even the elect are perfectly restored, but their perfect restoration is still hoped for. John, however, says, everything already has been made through him, that is, whatever was created (as he explains) was not created without him, but through him. Nor is there any doubt that he alluded to the words of Moses in the beginning of Genesis and that he wanted to prove therefore that *τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον*²⁶⁵ was eternal, always with the Father, and therefore true God; for just as the Father created everything through him by saying, “Let there be...” and it was made, so without him, nothing was made by the Father that Moses said was made. Therefore John, the true interpreter of Moses, teaches that Moses also understood that *ὁ λόγος* was, together with the Father, the maker of everything.

Indeed Christ himself does not conceal this, but it is clearly confirmed when he says, “My father works up until now, and I work.”²⁶⁶ Also, “Whatever the Father works, the Son also works in like manner - *ὁμοίως*.”²⁶⁷ For he teaches that just as the Father created everything from the beginning and he sustains everything that is included in this, so too the Son working by the same means with the Father, created everything, sustains everything, and gives it life. But if anybody says that when Christ spoke concerning those works which he was then performing, that he does not say that “he had worked from the beginning of the world,” but that he says in the present tense, that “he is working,” then he who says this shows himself to be ridiculous. For he uses the same verb in the present tense as much for the Father as for himself. Therefore what he concludes concerning himself, the same should also be concluded concerning the Father. For you do not deny therefore that the Father worked before, do you? The phrase “up until now” demonstrates the continual work of God

²⁶² *περὶ τοῦ λόγου* - “concerning the word”

²⁶³ John 1:1

²⁶⁴ *καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος* - “and the word was God”

²⁶⁵ *τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον* - “the word of God”

²⁶⁶ John 5:17

²⁶⁷ John 5:19

the Father and Son, from the beginning of the world, all the way up until that time, in fact, all the way until the end of the world. For this proposition of Christ is true every day: “The Father works up until now, and I work.”

VIII. And let us hear another interpreter of Moses, Paul the Apostle. In his letter to the Colossians, he proves that Christ is the Son of God, begotten before the creation of the world, since he says that all things which are in heaven and earth were made through him, who is Christ and is *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*.²⁶⁸ For through him was established everything which is in the heavens and on the earth and so on. Paul clearly uses the same reasoning which John uses. For Paul uses the fact that all things were created through him to demonstrate Christ’s eternity and to show that he is not a creature, but that he is the Son begotten of the substance of the Father. Therefore, clearly, both Paul and John understood that everything was established through Christ, *ὁ λόγος*. Whence did they come to this understanding? Undoubtedly, Moses and the Prophets taught that Jehovah the Father created everything through his *λόγος* and through his wisdom, which is its own substance, and these are contained in the name *Elohim*. And Moses understood this, when he said, “In the beginning *Elohim* created heaven and earth.” Consider this harmony of the Apostles and the Prophets.

A certain dog tries, without reason, to mangle this passage thusly. He says that the Apostle does not speak of the first creation of things, but of the second; and the Apostle presents Christ not as the eternal Son, but as a man; the first and foremost creature, in worth and honor. This gibberish will be answered fully in its own place. For the Apostle does not call Christ *πρωτόκτιστον*,²⁶⁹ which he would have done if he wanted to present him to us as a creature; especially since he demands it by reason of comparison when he adds *πάσης κτίσεως*. But he calls him *πρωτότοκον*, thus distinguishing his divine and eternal birth from the creation of his human nature and of everything else. But more on this later.

It is certain from the larger context that the words of the Apostle are violently twisted and mangled too much if he is interpreted as speaking concerning the second creation rather than concerning the first. No indeed, this is incoherent. Everything, however, flows smoothly if we understand it according to that ancient faith, as all interpreters, both Greek and Latin, have always explained it until the arrival of these new versions of Aristarchus. The same doctrine is confirmed in the letter to the Hebrews, where the Apostle says that the whole world was also created through Christ.²⁷⁰ Therefore, the Apostle teaches that Christ existed before all time, and consequently before every creature. For it is more than certain that the Apostle speaks concerning the first creation of

²⁶⁸ *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* – “firstborn of all creation”

²⁶⁹ *πρωτόκτιστον* – “first created”

²⁷⁰ Hebrews 1:2

everything, as will be seen in its own place, and as this cited verse from the Psalms confirms: “You, Lord, established the earth from the beginning.”²⁷¹

The truth of our assertion is clear enough from all these passages. Christ, who is the λόγος of God the Father, is creator of heaven and earth, together with the Father; and Moses signified the former as much as the latter by the name ‘*Elohim*’ when he says, “In the beginning *Elohim* created heaven and earth.” And thus, Christ is the true Jehovah, and therefore the creator is only one (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), because Jehovah is only one. I candidly confess that I cannot see how these passages could be ignored, by which we have shown it to be true that Christ is the creator of the world, and I certainly cannot see how anyone could doubt concerning these things, much less attack them, unless he were moved by the spirit of the Devil, the chief enemy of Christ.

²⁷¹ Psalm 102:26

Chapter Two

An explanation of the rest of the passages and arguments, which were drawn from the book of Genesis regarding the deity of Christ.

I. Passage 2, from Genesis 12:1 and following, and Genesis 14:19

Jehovah appeared to Abram, and called him out of his land, and promised him a blessing. He then appeared to him once more in the land of Palestine and promised him the land. Abram moreover built an altar to Jehovah, who had appeared to him. If the opinion of the Fathers, (Justin, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Ambrose, and others) is true, the Father was not accustomed to appear to anyone, but it was always the Son or the Angels. They deduced that the Son was Jehovah himself, who appeared to Abram and to whom Abram built the altar, since no one was permitted to build an altar to a created Angel. Add to this the fact that he who calls him Abraham is the same one who formed an eternal covenant with him. However, the Apostle teaches that the author of the covenant was not only the Father, but also the Son, when he says, "The covenant, or the testament was confirmed by the death of the Testator."²⁷² Who has died, besides Christ, and by his blood established the covenant? God was manifest in the flesh,²⁷³ of whom the same Apostles says, "Did not God redeem the Church with his blood?"²⁷⁴

If we interpret the Old Testament by the New Testament, then we will always be pursuing true understanding. The Fathers combine these passages with that passage where Melchizedek blessed Abram, saying, Blessed be Abram to God Most High (that is by God Most High), who called you and received you into his grace and gave to you this present victory as a testimony of this thing.²⁷⁵ However, he speaks of this blessing with regard to its eternal quality. And again it is clear, as I said, that the author of the covenant was Christ with the Father. Therefore, we know that Abraham was blessed by no other blessing nor through any other person than the one by which and the one through whom the rest of the faithful would be blessed and are now blessed. In Christ indeed all are blessed, as was promised to Abraham and as the Apostle explains everywhere. In Ephesians he says, "God the Father blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ."²⁷⁶ Let us combine with these those passages which we will mention from the New Testament, that just as Christ is the Son of the Most High, he also is the Most High himself. John the Baptist was the Prophet and forerunner of

²⁷² Hebrews 9:16

²⁷³ 1 Timothy 3:16

²⁷⁴ Acts 20:28

²⁷⁵ Genesis 14:19-20

²⁷⁶ Ephesians 1:3

this Most High, whom John said was over all, and whom Paul calls blessed God over all.²⁷⁷ If the same Spirit of God was in Melchizedek and the other Prophets, who was also in the Apostles as Peter testifies, it becomes clear that when Melchizedek declared that Abraham was blessed by the name of the Most High, he meant not only the Father but also his Son, Jesus Christ. For the Son is never separated from the Father, because the Son is always in the Father.

Add those things which are written about Abraham, who is said to have believed the promise of Jehovah, and his belief was imputed to him as righteousness, that is, because he believed Jehovah, he was reckoned to be righteous before God.²⁷⁸ He was not reckoned to be righteous by any other faith than the one by which we are reckoned, as the Scriptures teach (especially in Romans 4). How are we reckoned righteous, except on account of faith in Christ? Therefore who was that Jehovah in whom Abraham believed, and that belief was imputed as righteousness, if that Jehovah was not Christ with his Father? Add that he who promised here and is called Jehovah is the same one who was called the Angel of Jehovah in Genesis chapter 22. This is Christ. They therefore believed that Jehovah and the Angel of Jehovah, Christ, were the same, and righteousness was received on account of faith in Christ.

Nor should it be omitted that, concerning the Angel of Jehovah, who appeared to Hagar, we read that he came to Hagar in the wilderness, and (among other things) said to her, "I will multiply your seed."²⁷⁹ And Hagar called him Jehovah. But Moses would not have repeated this without approving Hagar's title, that is, the name Hagar gave to the Angel. Therefore this Angel of Jehovah who appeared, promised, and was called Jehovah was none other than the Son of God. For the Father is not an Angel nor is he even called an Angel. Moreover, a created Angel is not Jehovah, nor worthy of that honor with which the Angel of Jehovah was treated by Hagar, the maidservant of Abraham.

II. Passage 3, from Genesis 17-18

No one doubts concerning the author of the covenant with Abraham, that this author was the true Jehovah, as was described in Moses' history. But besides these examples, which we have already pointed out from the Letter to the Hebrews, that Christ was foretold to be the author and guarantor of the covenant, this also ought to be examined: that he who made the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17 is the same one who appeared to him immediately after the covenant was entered into, as it is in Genesis 18. There that author of the covenant is called first the 'Angel of Jehovah,' next 'Jehovah.' At first, he says Jehovah appeared to him. Then Moses, explaining in which form he

²⁷⁷ John 3:31; Romans 9:5

²⁷⁸ Genesis 15:6

²⁷⁹ Genesis 16:9-10

appeared and by whom he was accompanied, adds “Behold, three men were standing by him.” Abraham addresses one of them with great reverence. The same one promises and confirms to Sarah an oath of surpassing grace, that of conceiving and bearing a son at an appointed time. The same one, whom Moses calls Jehovah, astonished at the laughter of Sarah, says to Abraham, “Why did Sarah thus laugh, saying, ‘Truly, will I bear a son? How can I, since I am old?’” Then, rebuking the faithlessness of Sarah, he says, “Is anything too difficult for God?” For which God, I ask? Clearly for him, the God who is speaking. He then immediately adds a confirmation of the promise and teaches that none of this is impossible with him who promised, saying, “I will return to you at the appointed time, at the time of life, and Sarah will have a son.” Who cannot see, that one of these three, who appeared in the likeness of men and were also called Angels, was the true Jehovah?

Then Moses adds that while two of the three men (that is, Angels) departed from there and set out towards Sodom, Jehovah remained with Abraham and had a long conversation with him. Abraham called him his Jehovah and the judge of the whole earth. In order not to see in this account that of those three Angels who appeared in the image of men to Abraham, one was true Jehovah, a man would have to be blind, defective, have his heart covered by a veil, and be an open enemy of the truth. Who could it have been besides Christ, who is repeatedly called the Angel of Jehovah? For the Father was nowhere called the Angel of God.

I will not repeat here what I mentioned before concerning chapter 20, where Abraham, speaking to King Abimelech about the one who called him from his own land into a foreign land, says, “And when *Elohim* made me wander from the home of my father,” and so on. For he joins ‘*Elohim*’ with the plural verb, הִתְעַו – “made me wander.” And the one whom Moses had called Jehovah, Abraham here calls *Elohim*. Can it be that Abraham did not know that Jehovah was multiple *Elohim*? It is therefore necessary that besides the Father there is also another, who, just as he is *Elohim*, so also he is Jehovah. Whom will we say this is, if we deny that this is his Son (excepting, of course, the Holy Spirit)?

III. Passage 4, from Genesis 22:1-2 and following

The true God ordered Abraham that he lift up his own son, Isaac, and offer him there to him as a burnt sacrifice. When Abraham had already led his son up the mountain, and with the knife drawn, stretched out his hand so as to sacrifice him, Moses says that at that moment the Angel of Jehovah called from heaven and forbade Abraham from raising his hand against the boy, nor to do him any harm. And giving the reason, he said that “I now know that you fear God, because you would not spare your son, on account of me.” And a little later, the Angel of Jehovah called from heaven to Abraham a second time and said: “By myself I have sworn (נֹאֵם יְהוָה).²⁸⁰ Because you have done this

²⁸⁰ נֹאֵם יְהוָה – says the Lord

thing and would not spare your son, your only son, blessing I will bless you . . . because you obeyed my voice.” This is the Angel of Jehovah. It is clear from this passage of Moses, that he, whom Moses calls the Angel of Jehovah, was not a created Angel, but God. For who forbids Abraham to kill his son? It is the same one who also first commanded that his son be offered to him as a burnt sacrifice. This however was the true God, as is clear. Therefore the Angel of Jehovah who forbade was Jehovah *Elohim* who commanded.

Now you might object that the Angel forbade in the name of Jehovah. But this is not expressly stated, nor does it fit with the rest of this passage of Moses. For, giving the reason why he did not want Isaac to be sacrificed, this Angel says, “I know that you fear God, because you did not spare your son on account of me.” He did not, however, say, “On account of him,” meaning God, whom Abraham feared. Nor did Abraham spare his son on account of a created Angel, but on account of God. Next the same Angel of Jehovah swears by his own self, which is blasphemy for any creature. So does he say, “יהוה נאם,” that it might signify that he is not the one who swears, but only one who brings the oath of Jehovah? Surely we cannot admit that these are the words of a created Angel. Not only could this claim be from Moses that it was Jehovah (who had taught him and who had spoken thus with Abraham), but also these words could be from Jehovah himself by which by means of his oath he gave it authority, as he was often accustomed to doing, especially in the Prophets. Also he says, “Because you obeyed my voice.” Therefore since our interpretation is supported by all of the passages regarding this event and indeed is consistent with all of Scripture, there is no reason, nor can there be, why it ought to be rejected. Therefore it is clear that he, who is there called the Angel of Jehovah, was certainly not an Angel from the category of those who are called the Ministering Spirits. The Father is never called an Angel, since he cannot be such a one. Therefore this was the Son, and consequently true God.

Now combine these things which Moses here relates concerning the promise made to Abraham through this Angel and which were confirmed by the oath, with those which we touched on from chapter 20, where Abraham calls God, who led him out of his land, ‘*Elohim*,’ and with the verb הִתְעַו which teaches that he is plural, which you also have in chapter 24 verse 7, when he speaks of the same God, who had summoned him, saying in the singular, “Jehovah, God of the heavens, who led me from the home of my father and from my homeland,” and so on. Put all of these things which we have just explained together, and you will see that there is a consistency with the other passages of Scripture we have explained, as when we spoke about the calling of Abraham (the command, the prohibition, the oath, and the promise made to Abraham through the Angel of Jehovah). These things were all done only by the kind of Angel who is Jehovah, since Jehovah himself is multiple *Elohim*, who called Abraham from his land and led him out. Thus it is apparent what kind of God Abraham knew and served—undoubtedly such a one who was one Jehovah and many *Elohim*, who were truly subsisting, calling Abraham, speaking to him familiarly, leading him from his land, justifying, making a covenant with him—and thus it was not only the Father, but also his Son, as well as the Spirit of both; who are nevertheless all one, because Jehovah is one; and he is

called the one God of Abraham, who called, who justified, who blessed, and who made the covenant with Abraham. Therefore, not the Father alone, but also the Son, who was later called Christ, along with the Holy Spirit is that God who, in the Scriptures, was first called God, Creator of heaven and earth, then the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

IV. Passage 5, from Genesis 26:2

Nor did Isaac serve another God than the one whom Abraham had—Jehovah, *Elohim*. Therefore that Angel of the Lord, who had sworn to Abraham through himself and had blessed him and had made the promise, as we have already seen. The same God appears to Isaac, he confirms the same oath and promise made to Abraham, and he is simply called Jehovah. Isaac builds an altar to him and prays to him, to none other than the one to whom his father previously had also prayed and built an altar. The one to whom Abraham built the altar was called the Angel of Jehovah, whom we have demonstrated was Christ himself.

Therefore in chapter 27, when Isaac blesses Jacob he invokes this same blessing for him from Jehovah *Elohim*. For first he calls upon him whom he called Jehovah, then he calls him *Elohim*, testifying in this regard that the one whom he acknowledges as his own God is the one Jehovah and multiple *Elohim*. He says, “May *Elohim* give to you of the dew of heaven. . .”²⁸¹ Now combine this prayer of Isaac with the prayers of the Apostles, and you will see who these *Elohim* are, whom his father Isaac asked for a blessing of temporal and eternal things for Jacob. The Apostles prayed for grace and peace for the faithful from the Father and from his Son, Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of both and often expressly by the name of the Holy Spirit, as is clear in the New Testament. If the Patriarchs had the same God as the Apostles, and the Apostles prayed for grace and peace (by which two terms all spiritual and temporal goods are included) from the same Jehovah and the same *Elohim*, from him (God) and from them (*Elohim*) the Patriarchs themselves also prayed for spiritual and temporal blessings for their children. The Patriarch Isaac makes it clear that he means by the name *Elohim* not only the Father but also his Son Jesus Christ, when he says, “May *Elohim* give to you of the dew of heaven. . .” And thus, Christ was true Jehovah to Isaac, just as the Father was.

V. Passage 6, from Genesis 31, v. 11 and following

We now come to Jacob, and let us see whether he himself knew such a God, and whether he considered Christ to be true God. However, I will not mention the passage about the ladder that is revealed to Jacob in his sleep. It extended from heaven all the way to earth and reached at its top

²⁸¹ Genesis 27:28

Jehovah; and Angels were ascending and descending upon it. We might grant that by this vision God wanted to show to holy Jacob his power, by which he remains in heaven and yet does not abandon earth (especially his own people), but reigns through his holy Angels. Nevertheless, the chief part of the power of God is contained in this, that God might communicate his blessings to us through Christ, as through the true Mediator, the way, and the ladder, and thus lead us into heaven. Therefore, I do not doubt that this ladder was not so much a type of the power of God as it was a figure of Christ. All faithful interpreters agree to this; even Christ indicates the same, when he says to Nathanael, “Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these... Verily, verily, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”²⁸² Clearly in this testimony, when he says that “I am the only begotten Son of God,” and therefore true God, and in the same way true man, he is saying that he is the one through whom alone, just as through the true ladder, the entrance into heaven is open to men; and also in the same way through this same ladder alone the graces and divine blessings are brought down through Angels to men. Thus Christ clearly reveals that he was this ladder at whose top was Jehovah.

This ladder seems to me to signify three things about Christ. His deity, by touching the heavens at the top. His humanity, in the lowest part, which touches the earth. And his office of Mediator, through whom alone both the heavenly Father is reconciled to us, and he communicates his grace to us from heaven. Thus an entrance is opened for us into heaven to the Father. These seem to me to be the most certain things in this mystery of the ladder. Add that Jehovah was standing at the top, as he says to Jacob in that vision: “I am Jehovah אלהי of Abraham your Father and אלהי of Isaac.” Although God said this to Jacob before it had been revealed that the God of Abraham and Isaac was not only the Father but also the Son and Spirit of both, they are signified by the name *Elohim* (on account of multiple persons) and by the name Jehovah (because there is one and the same essence of all). Moreover Jacob, because of the mystery of the ladder, said the place is holy, a house of God, and a gate of heaven. On account of his office, Christ often said that he was the gate, the door, and the way.²⁸³ Indeed he also spoke as if he were a house in which the fullness of the deity dwells bodily, and a holy place, that is, the temple of God, in which the Father is prayed to. Thus, the entirety of Christ was most excellently revealed to Jacob in this ladder, revealing both his person and his nature as much as his office.

Truly since the enemies, impious men, and despisers of the mysteries of God will laugh at this whole mystery, and will repeatedly shout that we should make nothing of this, I will quickly move on to other arguments, by which I would show that Christ was acknowledged as God even to Jacob himself as he was to both Abraham and Isaac. I will then add to this first foundation an argument from this passage which we are now considering, namely that the one to whom Jacob

²⁸² John 1:50-51

²⁸³ John 10:7; 14:6

made a vow (after the mystery of the ladder and after the promise was received and the stone was consecrated) was Jehovah, who hereafter from that place where he appeared to Jacob was called the God of Bethel. Therefore in chapter 31 the Angel of Jehovah appears to Jacob in his sleep and says that he is that אֱלֹהֵי בֵּתֵל, God of Bethel, where Jacob had anointed the stone and where he had made a vow for himself. Who does not here see that this Angel was not a created angel, but was that Jehovah and אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל who had previously appeared to Jacob, and to whom Jacob had made the vow? Neither would a holy, created Angel of God have given this honor to himself, in order that he might deceitfully say that he himself was the God of Bethel, to whom Jacob made a vow. Therefore the Angel of Jehovah was Jehovah. Nor is this why Arius says that a created Angel appeared to Jacob, but spoke in the name of Jehovah. For why would you suppose that a created Angel would appear to the holy Patriarch, yet God himself appeared to the idolater Laban? For Moses says in verse 24 that God came to Laban, and forbade him to harm Jacob. But, you might say, God himself did not appear to Laban, only an Angel in the name of God. You might say so, but this is not what Scripture says. Then Jacob himself testifies that the God of his father and the fear of Isaac (that is, God, whom Isaac feared and worshipped) was the one who restrained Laban so that he did not harm him. Therefore there is no reason for blasphemous men to search for darkness in full light.

VI. Passage 7, from Genesis 32:9 and 32:24 and following

Jacob calls the Angel of Jehovah, who appeared to him in Bethel, Jehovah, and he prays to him as Jehovah. Do we not also read here that the Angel was wrestling with Jacob, and after wrestling, he blessed him; and for this reason that place was called פְּנֵי־אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל²⁸⁴ by Jacob. Because (as he himself explains) did he not see God face to face? Does he not confess with these words who appeared to him and with whom he wrestled, that this Angel was not a created spirit but God? And so that the enemies of Christ cannot find any escape, Hosea, an interpreter of Moses, confirms what we say. For having briefly recited this account, he adds who this Angel of Jehovah was, indeed Jehovah, saying, הַצְּבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה וַיְהוֶה זָכְרוֹ יְהוָה.²⁸⁵ Jacob likewise built an altar, with this title: “The Mighty God of Israel,” to this same Angel, with whom he had wrestled.²⁸⁶ For he alluded to that which he had heard from the Angel: “You will be called Israel, because if you were strong against God, how much more will you prevail against men?” Why? Because God himself explains, who that Angel was. For in chapter 35, Moses writes, “And God said to Jacob, ‘Get up; go up to Bethel, and live there; and you will make an altar לַאֲלֹהֵי יְהוָה, to God, who appeared to you, when you fled from the face of Esau, your brother.’” Jacob also teaches that this Angel, who had appeared to him, was himself God, saying, “Get up, and

²⁸⁴ פְּנֵי־אֱלֹהֵי – the face of God

²⁸⁵ הַצְּבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה וַיְהוֶה זָכְרוֹ יְהוָה, Hosea 12:4-5 – “And the Lord, God of hosts, the Lord is his name [memorial]”

²⁸⁶ Genesis 33:20

let us go up to Bethel, that we might build an altar there לאל, to God, who heard me in the day of my distress.” Moses himself also adds his interpretation, saying, “And he built an altar there, and called the name of that place Bethel: because there האלהים appeared to him.” He calls that Angel who had appeared ‘*Elohim*.’ However, one single Angel is never called *Elohim* in the Holy Scriptures, but the divine persons are called *Elohim*, either altogether or one at a time, on account of the same essence by which all are united inseparably. Moreover, note the following example from the same chapter, verse 9. “And *Elohim* appeared to Jacob again, when he had returned from Padan Aram, and he blessed him. And *Elohim* said to him, ‘Your name, etc.’” And afterwards he says, “I am אל שדי.” From these, as well as those which follow, it is clear – the Angel, who had appeared from the beginning and had wrestled with Jacob, was not a created Angel, but true God. However neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit are ever called by the name of Angel, but only the Son, ὁ λόγος, both the wisdom and envoy of the Father. Therefore it is certain that Christ was to Jacob the true אל, true Jehovah, and true אל שדי.

VII. Passage 8, from Genesis 48:15 and following

Finally, we should examine the culmination of Jacob’s understanding of God, in the passage where Jacob, as he is about to die, blesses the sons of Joseph. We acknowledge that those things spoken close to death, should be considered sincere, because they are from the heart and without hypocrisy. Jacob therefore prayed for a blessing on them from *Elohim* and from the Angel of Jehovah who had appeared to him and who was present with him, saying, “This *Elohim*, in whose sight my fathers walked, Abraham and Isaac; this *Elohim* who fed me all my life, all the way to this day; that Angel who rescued me from every evil; let him bless these boys.” Who, I say, was that Angel, whom he asked for the blessing on the sons of Joseph? He could not be one of the created ones. For we are not allowed to ask for a blessing from any of these created things. Moreover, he regards this one as equal to God, when he both prays to and beseeches a blessing from this Angel, as much as God. Next, it is fitting that he who freed Jacob from every danger and every evil was not a created Angel, but God, as we have seen above. This Angel of Jehovah was therefore Jehovah, Christ.

This can also be confirmed by the testimony of the Apostle who says, that Christ was he who always accompanied and protected the people in the wilderness.²⁸⁷ Why would he not therefore also have accompanied and protected Jacob? We should note here both of the offices that Jacob attributes to this Angel – first, that the Angel had freed him from evil, and second, that the Angel blesses him. Both are offices appropriate to Christ, since he has freed us from evil, sin, death, Satan, and all other evils, and he blesses us by bestowing all grace and peace on us. This prayer of Jacob is also consistent with that which the Apostles were accustomed to pray when they asked for grace and peace from

²⁸⁷ 1 Corinthians 10:4

God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore it cannot be doubted except by enemies of the truth that Jacob acknowledged that Christ, as much as the Father, is true Jehovah. And this is enough from Genesis concerning the God of the Patriarchs.

Chapter Three

An interpretation of the testimonies of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, by which it is demonstrated that Christ was acknowledged by them as true Jehovah.

The same God did not make himself any less clearly known to Moses and the Prophets than he did to the Patriarchs. For all of them worship entirely the same God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Therefore we ought to examine other testimonies from the books of Moses and the Prophets concerning the deity of the Son, who is often called the Angel of Jehovah and Jehovah.

I. Passage 9, from Exodus 3:2 and 20:2

Moses recorded several things written about the Angel of Jehovah and Jehovah, who appeared in the bush, who said that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who sent Moses to free the people from Egypt, who gave the Law, who led the people through the desert, and who finally also was tested by the people themselves. And we clearly demonstrated above from the testimony of Paul that these things ought to be understood to be about Christ. Now we may add other testimonies, some from the words of Moses himself, others from the testimony of Stephen (I omit here the testimonies of the fathers).

First, it is established from the context of the words of Moses that the Angel of Jehovah (who appeared to him in the bush) and Jehovah (who saw Moses turning aside to see how the bush was burned but not consumed) and *Elohim* (who called from the middle of the bush to Moses and said “I am the God of Abraham...”) were the same one. Not a single word can be found there, not even one iota, by which we might be forced to make some kind of distinction in essence between the Angel of Jehovah (who appeared in the bush) and Jehovah or *Elohim* (who saw and spoke from the bush). Rather, Moses plainly teaches that the ones who appeared, who saw, and who spoke were the same. Therefore since Jehovah and *Elohim* signify the same God, the Angel of Jehovah is also the same God who is both Jehovah and *Elohim*; this is made clear by them sharing the same work. There is no good reason why he would attribute these three works of appearing, seeing, and speaking to different beings, and not rather to one and the same being. Therefore that Angel was not from the created order, but he was the Son, the Angel of the Father Jehovah, and by virtue of that he was both Jehovah and *Elohim*.

Next the one who appeared and spoke with Moses says that he himself is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However we saw that the God of the Patriarchs was not only the Father but also the Son, the Angel of Jehovah, and Jehovah, to whom Jacob prayed for a blessing on the sons of Joseph. Besides that, Moses says that he hid his face because he was afraid to look אל האלהים, “on that God.” Who appeared and made himself visible to Moses besides the Angel of Jehovah?

Moses therefore teaches that that Angel on whose face he did not dare to look was that Jehovah *Elohim*, who spoke to him. Moreover, he says that this Angel of Jehovah and Jehovah *Elohim* saw the suffering of his people, and therefore came down (that is from heaven) that he might free his people from Egypt, and lead them into a land flowing with milk and honey. Who was this Redeemer of the people? Was it not Christ (as Job recognized, in Job 19)? Was it not he who is said to have come down from the heavens for us and for our salvation? And of whom the Angel said to Mary, “He will save his people from their sins”?²⁸⁸ Our Savior is the same as the Savior of the Israelite people. This also relates to what he calls himself, namely אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה, “I will be who I will be.” Similarly, he says, “You shall say to the sons of Israel, אֲהִיָּה sent me to you.” I am aware of the fact that there are different interpretations, such as, “You will know who I am by the things I do.” Nevertheless, no one can rightly condemn the interpretation I will provide, that is that by this name, full of mystery, from which the name of Jehovah comes, the ‘Angel of Jehovah’ expresses both his two-fold nature and office. With the phrases, “I will be who I will be,” and “I will be” he signifies God’s divine nature and his eternal and immutable essence. The meaning is this: I am always and eternally the same, because just as I always am the one who I am, thus, I will always be the one who I will be, as he is honored in the book of Revelation when he is called ὁ ὢν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος.²⁸⁹ Thus it is necessarily proven that this Angel is the eternal God.

Next, by the same name he signifies his other nature, namely his humanity. For he promises that he would be in the future that which he is not, which would be, a man. These words, “I will be who I will be,” signify a particular promise. The single word אֲהִיָּה, “I will be,” more clearly indicates the same thing. What did God become at a particular time, which he was not ever before and was not from eternity, besides man? For he was always God, but in time he was made man.

Finally, it indicates his office of Mediator and Redeemer; that he would take on flesh, in order that by that he might atone for the sins of his people and redeem them from the slavery of sin and death. The Egyptian redemption was a type of that redemption. Is not this thing itself made true in Christ? Surely it is. Has God not either openly foretold it, or vaguely indicated it with enigmas and types of things still to come? He has indicated it. There is no good reason for anyone to condemn the mystery concluded from the words of the Angel, since this matter is self-consistent and is indicated by the text itself.

Next consider this: he who led the people out of Egypt by Moses is the same one who also gave the Law at Mount Sinai, and who was accustomed to speak familiarly with Moses. Who was this? Moses calls him Jehovah; Steven calls him an Angel.²⁹⁰ There is no one whom both the name ‘Jehovah’ and the title ‘Angel’ can fittingly describe besides Christ. Neither is there any justification for you to say that Stephen spoke about a created Angel through whom God gave the Law and spoke

²⁸⁸ Matthew 1:21

²⁸⁹ Revelation 1:4

²⁹⁰ Acts 7:38

with Moses. For, as far as I know, Moses never says that an Angel gave him the Law and spoke with him at Mount Sinai, but he always says it was Jehovah. Therefore by the name ‘Angel’ Stephen did not understand some created being, but the one who is also constantly called ‘Jehovah,’ namely Christ. And the words of Stephen in his sermon ought to be understood thus; that is, that he meant God. The Father appointed Moses to be the savior of the people, by the hand of the Angel, that is, by the leading of Christ and through Christ, through whom the Father has always worked and still works all things. The Apostle to the Corinthians teaches that Christ was the leader of both Moses and the people.²⁹¹

And if the authority of the ancient Fathers (Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and others) has any power, they also understood it this way. Justin clearly writes in *Second Apology to Antonius* that he who appeared to Moses in the bush was the Son of God.²⁹² It is the same in *Dialogue with Trypho*; in his opinion, the Son was always the one who spoke with Moses.²⁹³ Also, Christ was the one who led the people out of Egypt.²⁹⁴ Irenaeus also concluded that the Son was God with the Father, who spoke with Moses in the bush, who said, “I am the God of your father...”²⁹⁵ Therefore, he says, the one who was worshiped by the Prophets as the living God, this is the God of the living and his word, who spoke with Moses, who refuted the Sadducees, revealing both the resurrection and the Lord. Lastly, therefore, Christ himself along with the Father is God of the living, who both spoke with Moses and was made manifest to the Fathers. Next, Tertullian discusses in *Against Praxeas* how God is said to be invisible, since nevertheless he appeared to and was seen by the Fathers.²⁹⁶ There he treats this matter generally. This is the summary which we gather from Justin and Irenaeus – the Father is always invisible, because he never takes on a form in which he could have appeared to and spoken with anyone. Thus it is that, “Nobody has ever seen God...”²⁹⁷ Moreover, it was forbidden for Moses to see the face of God the Father. He saw the Son in another form; he conversed with him as with a friend, yet he could not see the Father. The Son, when he appeared in visions and spoke in dreams, took on human bodies; when Moses is said to have spoken face to face with God, and in turn God with Moses, it indicates the Son and, through the Son, the Father. He explains the same question in *De Trinitate*.²⁹⁸

²⁹¹ 1 Corinthians 10:4

²⁹² [p. 180]

²⁹³ [p. 122]

²⁹⁴ [127]

²⁹⁵ [bk. 4, chap. 11]

²⁹⁶ [p. 414]

²⁹⁷ John 1:18

²⁹⁸ [p. 623]

II. Now combine with these things that which God says about himself in Exodus 20, and which are then repeated by Moses, who describes God thus: "I am Jehovah *Elohecha*, who led you from the land of Egypt." He says in a plural number, '*Elohecha*,' that is, 'your Gods.' But what is this plurality of *Elohim*, of Gods, in Jehovah other than that which Christ expressed (namely, the plurality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are all one Jehovah)? Can it not be seen therefore in the deliverance of the people from Egypt and in the giving of the law, that Christ is true Jehovah? Thus then Moses always observed that description which God himself had revealed when he said, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah *Eloheni*, Jehovah is one." Where, it should be noted, he did not afterward say, "*Elohim*" or "*Eloah* is one," but only "Jehovah is one." He therefore taught that *Elohim* are plural, but Jehovah is only one, and hence each of these *Elohim* is Jehovah.

Given that Jehovah desires that he alone be acknowledged as true God, and he calls all the rest of the gods 'foreign gods,' and does not want them to be acknowledged before him as gods; therefore, in which category does Christ belong, whom the Apostles call 'God'? Either he ought to be considered among the foreign gods, or acknowledged as Jehovah. First, the Antichrists themselves do not dare to say that he should be recognized by us as true Jehovah, just as he was recognized by Moses. And yet it is certain that it is not forbidden for the name of any god to be taken in vain, or blasphemed, other than the name of Jehovah *Eloheni*; and it is certain that the curse is restricted to blasphemers of this name alone. But does not Paul teach that he had been a blasphemer, because he persecuted the name of Christ and denied that Jesus was God and Christ?²⁹⁹ He confirms, upon coming to his senses, that such was his blasphemy. For afterwards he preaches concerning Jesus that he was both Christ and most-blessed God.

Therefore, Christ is included in this commandment, "You will not take the name of Jehovah *Elohecha* (your Gods) in vain." And he is included in this curse, "the blasphemer, who blasphemeth the name of Jehovah. . ." Jehovah also says in the same place, "You all saw that I spoke with you from heaven."³⁰⁰ The Apostle to the Hebrews teaches that he who spoke from heaven was Christ, just as Moses spoke on earth. He clearly says that the voice of Christ shook the earth.³⁰¹ And the Apostle alludes to this passage in Exodus where we read that there was thunder and lighting and the noise of trumpets and the smoking mountain, and all the people were stirred up, when Jehovah gave the Law. Therefore he taught that Christ was the one who gave the Law on Mount Sinai. Nor should we overlook the fact that Jehovah says to Moses, "My Angel will go before you and lead you to the Amorites."³⁰² The Father promises that the Son will be the leader of Moses. Who was that

²⁹⁹ 1 Timothy 1:13

³⁰⁰ Exodus 20:22

³⁰¹ Hebrews 12:26

³⁰² Exodus 23:23

Angel, the one who led Moses and all the people? It was Christ, according to the witnesses, Stephen and the Apostle.³⁰³

III. Passage 10, from Numbers 12:6 and following

Moses certainly knew that Jehovah was the one who promised that he would speak by the Prophets, in both dreams and visions—I say he knew just as much as Peter, Paul, and the Apostles did. Peter says that this was done by the Spirit of Christ.³⁰⁴ Paul, however, says it was Christ himself who also spoke in him.³⁰⁵ For the same Jehovah spoke as much in the Apostles as in the Prophets. For the words of the Prophets are called the word of God, just as much as the words of the Apostles. From this it is easily understood that when the Apostle says to the Hebrews that long ago God spoke by the Prophets, but most recently by the Son, by the name of God he meant not only the Father, but also the Son and Holy Spirit.³⁰⁶ For these are that Jehovah *Elohim*, who promised that he would speak by the Prophets. Afterward the same God spoke by the Son who was made manifest in the flesh. For the Father was always in the Son, and the Son in the Father; and the fullness of deity dwelt in the man Christ and still dwells in him. I do not see in what way it could be doubted whether Moses knew that Christ was true God; nor should it be doubted. Especially since Christ himself says, “If you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote about me.”³⁰⁷ He therefore teaches that these things which Christ wanted to be believed concerning himself were written by Moses, and therefore known by Moses. What did Christ preach and want to be believed concerning himself? Some of these things he preached and taught through himself and some through the Apostles—namely that, besides other things, he was the true, proper, and only-begotten Son of God the Father, and by this true God, the most-blessed God, God manifest in the flesh, our great God and Savior, our Lord and our God (as Thomas confessed), that is, Jehovah *Elohenu*, just as we will later see clearly in the following books. Therefore Moses recorded for us in writing those things concerning the seed of the woman that would crush the head of the serpent, *Shiloh* who would come, the Prophet that would be raised up, and other things of this sort, by which he described both the humanity and the office of Christ. Thus, Christ teaches that this seed, *Shiloh*, and Prophet ought to have been understood in such a way that they could not refer to anything other than Jehovah, who by his deity gave power to the flesh and blood of the seed, to the redemption and pacification of *Shiloh* himself, and to the prophetic doctrine that would be written in the hearts of the elect.

³⁰³ Acts 7:38; 1 Corinthians 10:4

³⁰⁴ 1 Peter 1:11

³⁰⁵ 2 Corinthians 13:3

³⁰⁶ Hebrews 1:1

³⁰⁷ John 5:46

IV. Passage 11, from Joshua 1:1 and 24:19

It is easy to understand from this passage that Joshua also knew and worshipped God, and the holy Judges followed him, as did Samuel. This God was certainly Jehovah *Eloheanu*, who is not only the Father, but also the Son and Holy Spirit; and, therefore, Christ was acknowledged by them as true Jehovah. For the same Jehovah spoke with Joshua and the rest of the Judges who had also spoken with Moses, as Joshua describes at the beginning of his account. And at the end of the book of Joshua, he also called his God “Jehovah יהוה קדשים אלהים,” (he is holy Gods), knowing the Son himself was also Jehovah. And he commanded the Israelites to serve Jehovah alone, and no one besides him. The Apostles were led by this same Spirit, and spoke by the same Jehovah who had spoken through Joshua. These same Apostles served Jehovah himself, and taught others to serve Christ, whose servants (that is, worshippers) they called themselves. Joshua therefore also knew that Christ was true Jehovah, whom he taught should alone be served.

V. Passage 12, from Judges 2:1 and 4:14

“The Angel of Jehovah arose from Gilgal to Bochim and said, ‘I led you out of Egypt, and I led you into the land, of which I swore to your fathers ... And you did not obey my voice...’” I know that it is often a custom of the Angels to relate the words of God using this form of speaking, as if it were Jehovah himself who is speaking. Nevertheless, because it was demonstrated earlier by the witnesses (both Paul and Stephen) that Christ was this Angel, who promised Moses that he would lead the people out of Egypt, and by whose leadership first Moses ruled the people and then Joshua lead them into the land, the interpretation of the Fathers, who wrote that this Angel was Christ, cannot be said to be absurd. Nor is it a problem that he is said to come from Gilgal, instead of from the heavens. For Christ, clothed in human form, was seen whenever and wherever he desired. This passage, which is in chapter 4, explains this, where Deborah says to Barak: “Does not Jehovah go out before you?” Where the Hebrew text has “Jehovah,” the Targum has the paraphrase “Angel of Jehovah.” Barak also, as the Septuagint says, had previously said, οὐκ οἶδα τὴν ἡμέραν ἐν ἣ εὐδοοῖ Κύριος τὸν ἄγγελον μετ’ ἐμοῦ.³⁰⁸ These passages teach that this Jehovah who went before Barak was Christ, the Angel of Jehovah, that is, the Angel of the Father, and hence, this is he who, just as he led Barak, so too earlier had led Moses, Joshua, and the entire nation. Especially since the Apostle and Stephen proved these to be about the leading of Christ, as we saw above.

³⁰⁸ “For I do not know the day when the Lord may bless me with his Angel. ” – Judges 4:8 (LXX)

VI. Passage 13, from Judges 6:12 and following

Nor should we pass over in silence what we read concerning the Angel who appeared to Gideon. When Gideon asked, “is Jehovah truly with us?” and lamented that they had been deserted by Jehovah, he answered not as a created Angel, but as Jehovah himself. Gideon then calls him Jehovah. So we read in verse 14, “Jehovah turned back to him and said...” Also verse 16, “Then Jehovah said to him, ‘Because I will be with you.’” And thus the Angel is called Jehovah throughout all of chapter seven. I know the subterfuges with which the adversaries can hide themselves, but from those passages, which have already been cited from Genesis and Exodus concerning the Angel of Jehovah, it is clear that this passage is certainly not distorted if we understand Christ by the name of this Angel. And hence let us conclude that Christ is the Angel of Jehovah who is Jehovah himself. In sum, nothing can be found in the books of the Judges and Kings which opposes our opinion that Christ was also acknowledged as true Jehovah by the faithful Judges and Kings.

Chapter Four

An explanation of the testimonies which were selected from David, Solomon, and Job, concerning the eternal deity of Christ.

I come now to David, who observed that Christ was the natural Son of God, such that he prayed to, worshipped, and honored him as true Jehovah. It was clearer than light to those who were attentively reading his Psalms in those days and it becomes more and more clear to those who diligently combine the Psalms with the books of the New Testament.

I. Passage 14, from 2 Samuel 7:23 and following

David did not acknowledge only one אֱלֹהִים as the elector of the people and their redeemer out of Egypt, but multiple *Elohim*. This is also indicated by the inclusion of the plural verb “they went.” For these are his words, “Who is like your people, like Israel, one nation on earth: לַפְדוּת אֱלֹהִים הֲלָכּוּ אֲשֶׁר לֹא לְעַם, to whom Gods went (plural) so that they might redeem them as a people...” Therefore David knew, that Jehovah, the elector and redeemer of all the Israelite people was one, but this was not only the Father but also the Son. For if they were plural, who else could they be besides those whom Christ distinguished by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

II. Passage 15, from Psalm 2:7, “My son...”

Either this passage was twisted by the Apostle or it proves that Christ was acknowledged by David as the eternal Son of God, ὁμοουσιῶν with the Father, and the creator of all things. For the Apostle cites these words in order that they, having previously been spoken regarding Christ, might now be confirmed, that he surpasses the Angels, not as the most excellent created being of all, but as the Son of God (thus the only begotten, as was said to him alone by the Father, “You are my Son,"); as heir of the universe; as maker of all the Angels; as the splendor of glory and the express image of the substance of the Father; as he who sustains everything by his mighty word; finally as God whom the Angels were commanded to honor and whose throne is forever and ever. Therefore let us disregard human interpretations when we have the Apostle as our faithful interpreter. For the Scriptures could not be distorted by Christ, the one by whom the Apostle spoke. Additionally, neither the promise, nor the following exhortation, nor the sum total of the Psalm could coincide in any simple creature. Therefore this passage was also cited in Acts concerning the resurrection of Christ. This was done because his eternal generation from the Father was most greatly revealed at that time. When anything was declared, it was the custom of the Scriptures to say, “so it was.” Therefore this Psalm

cannot be understood to be about David except to the extent that he was a type of Christ, and only partially. For Christ himself teaches that this passage ought to be understood as referring to Christ, when in Revelation he alludes to this Psalm, saying that power has been given to him from the Father that he might rule the nations with an iron rod and crush them as if they were clay pots.

III. Passage 16, from Psalm 45:1, “My heart overflows...”

This Psalm was sung by Solomon for no other reason than that he was a type of Christ; it ought to be properly and completely understood to be about Christ. The confirmation from the book of Hebrews places this beyond controversy. What is said there of the Messiah? Besides other things, “Your throne, O *Elohim*, in eternity and beyond,” or, as the Apostle has it, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” It is not, as you might say, by reason of the office alone and on account of the fullness of gifts that Christ is here called God, as other kings are elsewhere. For the Apostle, in his letter to the Hebrews, where he interprets these words concerning Christ, calls Christ the maker of the world, and applies to him that which was preached of Jehovah in Psalm 102. Therefore this passage of the present Psalm cannot be understood to be about Christ without it also being understood that the Prophet acknowledged and called him *Elohim* by nature.

IV. Passage 17, from Psalm 68:7 and following

This Psalm is sung by the Israelites to the true God. Besides other things, the Prophet says to him, “O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, the earth trembled, the heavens poured rain from the face of God. Sinai itself (that is, the mountain), from the face of God, who is God of Israel.” Then he supplies in verse 18, “You went up on high, you lead the captive into captivity; you received gifts among men.” The Apostle interpreted these words to be about Christ. Therefore if the Apostle did not misuse the words of the Prophet, or do any violence to them, then it is clear that David acknowledged Christ as the true Jehovah who is the God of Israel, who led the people out of Egypt, who led them through the wilderness, who gave the law on Mount Sinai, as we proved earlier from Moses, by the interpreters Stephen and Paul. Who (besides someone completely blind to the just judgment of God) does not see the total and perfect harmony of the entire Holy Scripture, as much of the Old as of the New Testament in the matter of the true and eternal deity of Christ, which ought to be preached? Nor are these things found only once in Scripture, but throughout. Let us desire to listen to the Scriptures with great diligence and faith in Christ, and so interpret the Prophets through the Apostles. Nothing can be more certain or more excellent than this interpretation.

V. Passage 18, from Psalm 95:7 and in the following

The Prophet exhorts the people to magnify Jehovah, to pray to him, and to worship him. Besides other things, he says, “Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart...” The Apostle interprets these words of Jehovah as the speaking of Christ. For he teaches that Christ is the one in whom we ought to believe and whose voice we ought to obey, if we wish to walk in peace. Therefore we ought not harden our hearts when we hear the voice of Christ, as the Holy Spirit teaches, saying, “Today, if you hear my voice,” and so on. Does not this passage clearly teach that Christ was Jehovah to David, and against this voice the Israelites once hardened their hearts? In Psalm 102, the Prophet says to Jehovah God, “From the beginning you, Lord, established the earth.” And the Apostle interprets this to be about Christ, as was noted before several times. I say the same of Psalm 106, where it says, “God was tested in the wilderness.” The Apostle teaches this was Christ; this was also revealed above. What could be more clearly demonstrated from these passages than that the true and eternal deity of Christ had been observed by David?

VI. Nor was this any less acknowledged by his son Solomon, for he calls Christ wisdom and the Son of Jehovah; thus he vividly describes him in such a way that you might be able to envision the Son of God himself, existing with the Father in heaven from all eternity, speaking, fashioning the world, working all things.

Passage 19, from Proverbs 8:22 and following

All of the ancients thus interpreted with one consensus that this passage was about Christ, so that not even Arius himself could doubt that wisdom, which is described here, was Christ himself, who established all things with the Father. For they knew that he whom John calls τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ³⁰⁹ was the one whom Solomon had called the wisdom of Jehovah. Concerning this wisdom, they preached that it was eternal, and equal to God, begotten of God, workman of all things with the Father, was always and still is with the Father, most valuable to the Father; and then, embraced men with the highest love, dwelt with them, finally took on flesh for the sake of our salvation, and will always be with the elect.

At the beginning he thus says, יהוה דרכו ראשית קנני “Jehovah possessed me at the beginning of his way”; that is, he always had me with himself, nor did he ever lack me, even before the creation of the world. The “way of the Lord” is what he calls the works of God, by which works it is as if he comes

³⁰⁹ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ - “the word of God”

to us, and the “beginning of his way” is the first creation of things. And Eve also used the verb קנני when she gave birth to her first son, Cain. But in order that you would not think that wisdom began to be with God at the creation of the world, he supplies מאז מפעליו קדם,³¹⁰ as if he were saying, “Now from before all his works, that is, from eternity.” For before the works of creation there was nothing besides eternity. Therefore he concludes that wisdom is eternal. This is consistent with that which John says, “In the beginning was *ὁ λόγος*.”

Next he says, “From eternity, גנכתי, I was established (certainly at the beginning, or “I was set up as prince”) and from the beginning, from the oldest days of the earth,” that is, before the primordial earth. That word, נגן, means to establish one as Prince and King. The Targum has, “I was anointed,” namely, as King. The sense is that before the world was created, and from eternity, “I had power equal with God the Father, but received from him.” This power was equal, therefore, to the Father, and so he is God with the Father. This is in harmony with passage from John, “And the *λόγος* was God.” This wisdom was begotten of God the Father, and is therefore the eternal Son of God the Father, as he clearly teaches (from verse 24 to verse 27). For הוללתי, “I was formed,” that is, specifically, “I was conceived, and I was begotten.” He teaches that additionally this wisdom was present when the Father planned all things, before they were created: and wisdom both ordered and created all things with him. This is in harmony with that which John says, “All things were made through him.” Additionally wisdom teaches that it was with the Father in that it was brought forth with him. And John says this: “He was with God.” Add to this that he was also most beloved of the Father, for he says, “I was his delight daily, and I rejoice before him each day.” He is depicted in the likeness of a small child who is always in the view of his Father, playing before him, and is his delight.

Finally, he explains with these words, “I rejoice on the globe of his earth, and my delight is with the sons of men.” By this, it indicates that after the earth was established Wisdom was in the custom of moving among men in the form of a man and was delighted with the fellowship of men. Hence Wisdom also shows that it resolved to become man, so that it might dwell among us and always be with us. Thus it clearly signifies its love toward us, and indicates the mystery of redemption. That which Baruch says is consistent with these things concerning the substantial wisdom of God, as he says, “Afterward [Wisdom] was seen on earth and dwelt with men.” The Apostle also calls Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God. Thus this passage is clear concerning the eternal deity of Christ. Those arguments which our adversaries have collected are explained by this passage.

VII. Passage 20, from Proverbs 30:4

³¹⁰ מאז מפעליו קדם – “before his works of old”

Solomon writes the same thing elsewhere about this Son of God in these words. “Who established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is the name of his Son, if you know?” He teaches first that Jehovah God always had a Son, and therefore the Father is eternal and his Son is eternal. Next he teaches that his Son was of the same immeasurable and incomprehensible essence with the Father, and therefore true God with the Father. For there is nothing which cannot be explained and encompassed by any single name except for the divine essence itself. Therefore when he says that this was unknown by the name of ‘Son’ (just as much as it was unknown by the name of ‘Father’), that is, since both share this unfathomable essence, he clearly teaches that both are God and of the same incomprehensible and inscrutable essence. We should note here what the Hebrews said, namely that the name of Jehovah was ineffable; and also note that which Christ says, “No one knows the Father besides the Son, nor the Son, besides the Father.”

VIII. Passage 21, from Job 19:25 and following

Now I ought to explain this passage from Job. If you read the various opinions of the Rabbis and many other interpreters, it seems to be a very difficult passage. But, if you interpret the words themselves, even the Hebrew words by their plain meaning, and translate it according to the analogy of the faith without any forced interpretations, it is perfectly clear and manifest that this passage is about the eternal deity of Christ. At the beginning (in verse 23 and 24), Job calls for the greatest attention to what he is about to say, since it is most worthy of faith, full of great mysteries, and the memory of it ought never to perish. “O, that my words might be written down, that they might be noted down in this book, let them be inscribed with an iron stylus in lead or rock, so that they might remain forever.” He is about to speak about the mystery of Christ, about his deity, humanity, and office, and therefore about the gift of redemption through Christ. The final part of his gift is the resurrection from the dead and the everlasting vision by which we will see Christ in heaven, even with our bodily eyes, and we will enjoy him forever. So too, the Apostle, about to speak concerning this same mystery, calls for attention in these verses, “This is a faithful word, and worthy of all acceptance: that Christ came into this world, to save sinners.”³¹¹ The prophets were accustomed to do the same, just as Job does here.

Therefore he says, גאלי ידעתי ואני הוּי, that is, “And I (as if he speaks along with all the other saints) know (by faith and from the Spirit of God; next I supply אשר) that my Redeemer lives (that is, that he is the true, eternal, and ever-living God).” For it is an attribute of God to live, through himself and in eternity. And אלי is a redeemer. That is, it specifically signifies one who is near and familiar to him and to whom the right of redemption falls, according to the laws of consanguinity,

³¹¹ 1 Timothy 1:15

just as is explained in Leviticus.³¹² He therefore teaches that he believes and acknowledges that Christ is not only the living God, but will also become a man, and be our kinsman, to whom the right of redemption falls, by reason of his consanguinity and his assumption of our flesh. Thus he recognizes that the Mediator cannot be the true Redeemer unless he is both the living God and man, joined to us by blood.

Lastly, he says יקום עפר על ואחרון, that is, “And (I know that) at last (that is in the latter days) he will rise,” and he will stand upon the ground as the conqueror of death, that is the גאל. Speaking by means of a synecdoche, he encompasses the whole mystery of redemption with the resurrection of Christ alone. For if he rises again, that is from the dead, upon the earth, it is therefore necessary for him to have died and been buried, and so to have been a true man. If one follows the simplicity of the words, it is clearer than light that he speaks about the resurrection of Christ the Redeemer (I need not even mention the consensus of all the faithful interpreters). From the prophets to the Apostles, that time in which Christ was made man and redeemed us has been always and clearly signified by the phrase “in these latter days.” Thus he first confessed that he knew Christ was the true, living God because חי, he lives, and he lives of himself. Similarly, he will soon call him ‘Eloha,’ then he will become man, and kinsman to us, because he is גאל. But it is more clear by saying that he will rise again.

Indeed, the mystery of redemption is conveyed because he will rise above the ground, namely from the tomb, upon the earth. Therefore as true man, first he will die for our redemption and be buried. Through Christ, two special and final fruits of redemption follow, which contain all the rest in themselves: first, the resurrection and second, eternal life beholding our Savior. Concerning the first, he says זאת נקפו עורי ואחר, that is, “And afterward my skin (אשר ‘which’) they destroyed (using the past for the future) or consumed (namely, those who devour, that is, sicknesses, and finally death and worms), this (that is, this skin) which you see now almost worn off.” The preceding verb, יקום, ought to be understood, ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ,³¹³ as ‘he will rise again;’ therefore, just as his Redeemer will live, so too he, Job, will live. Thus, he argues from the cause to the effect, and from the head to the limbs. For he teaches that which the Apostle explains: therefore we will also rise again, because Christ first rose again.³¹⁴

The second fruit is eternal life beholding God and Christ himself, the Redeemer, even with our bodily eyes. Therefore he says, אחזה ומבשרי אלוה, that is, “And in my flesh, I will see God.” So that he might better explain both who this God is, whom we will see, and what kind of resurrection ours will be, he adds, זר ולא ראו ועיני לי אחזה אני אשר, that is, “Whom (God) I will see for myself (that is, in my good and eternal blessedness), and my eyes observed (for, ‘they will observe’) and not a

³¹² Leviticus 25

³¹³ ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ - “from the common (way of speaking)”

³¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:22; Colossians 1:18; and elsewhere

foreigner (that is, I myself will see this with my own eyes, and I will observe).” This was the faith of Job concerning the person of the Redeemer, and the office and blessings of the future redemption.

And let us speak of this person: first Job then confessed that he himself well knew that his Redeemer lives. This Redeemer could be no one other than Christ. Therefore Christ existed then, and he was living. For Job could not be speaking of the Father alone, because afterward he says that he himself will see with his bodily eyes his Redeemer in the flesh. Therefore he knew that Christ was the living God. Next, he knew that Christ was this living Redeemer, that is God, who would become man, and dwell with men, finally die, and rise again, because he says, “He will rise above the ground.” Who has accomplished this except Christ? This is also what Baruch says, “After this he was seen on earth, dwelling with men.”³¹⁵ And the Apostle, “God was manifest in the flesh.”³¹⁶ And John, “The Son of God came in the flesh.”³¹⁷

Moreover, he whom he first calls the Redeemer, he later plainly calls *Eloha*, God. He finally says that he will see this God with his own eyes. The essence of God, however, cannot be seen, and hence, neither the Father nor the Son can be seen. Therefore, Christ whose humanity will be seen by us, with our own eyes, that is, of our bodies, is God himself, and the Redeemer of whom Job spoke, saying that he would see him with his own eyes. Accordingly, it was acknowledged by Job that Christ was true and eternal God, and would become man. Could this testimony be any clearer, unless anyone wants to needlessly complicate the matter and distort the words of holy Job? Thus it is clear that the Latin Vulgate did not wander from the intention and meaning of Job, although the words are different to some extent. And we ought to note this particular conjunction ꝛ, “And I knew,” namely, together with all the rest of the faithful. Therefore does he not teach that this was the faith of all the holy ones who ever were? And it was also the future faith of all the elect, all the way to the end of the world. Thus, it is clear that this doctrine of the true and eternal deity of Christ is not new, nor contrived by the antichrist (as the demons falsely accuse), but this doctrine is catholic, received from the Prophets and the Apostles. Rather, it is contrary to the doctrine of the antichrist, as the antichrists are, in fact, all those who deny that Christ is the true and eternal God. For, necessarily, along with this, they are denying that Christ is the true Redeemer. For Job did not acknowledge as Redeemer anyone besides God, who inhabits eternity. And such is the faith of the entire Holy Church of Christ, as we will see more clearly later. Therefore let the apostates carry on, and let them treasure the impious barkings of the dog Servetus, and let them say that he was unjustly burned.

³¹⁵ Baruch 3:37

³¹⁶ 1 Timothy 3:16

³¹⁷ 1 John 4:2

Chapter Five

An interpretation of the testimonies which were collected from the Major Prophets, regarding the deity of Christ.

I. Now we ought to go through the Prophets to see whether they had the same God as the Patriarchs (Moses, Job, David, and Solomon), that is, Jehovah *Elohim*; of which *Elohim* the Father was one, the Son another and the Holy Spirit the third. Although, we will talk about the Holy Spirit separately.

Passage 22, from Isaiah 6:1 and following

Who could doubt that it was the true and eternal God whom Isaiah saw, to whom the Angels sang, saying “Holy, Holy, Holy, Jehovah Sabaoth,” who said to the Prophet, “Go, harden the hearts of your people,” and whom the Prophet himself calls אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה? John the Evangelist, the interpreter of Isaiah, says that that was Christ; his glory was seen by the Prophet, and the Prophet spoke about Christ.³¹⁸ The enemies of Christ turn their backs on this. But they can neither evade nor escape this passage, as will be seen in the text. If John is the true interpreter of Isaiah, then Christ was certainly present, whose immediate glory Isaiah saw in person; and to that immediate presence those that were present sang. For it is necessary that the Seraphim give due glory to God alone.

II. Passage 23, from Isaiah 7:14. “Behold, the virgin shall conceive...”

He prophesies about the advent of the Messiah, who will be born of a virgin and will free his people from their sins and from eternal death. Regarding this, he says, “And his name will be called *Emmanuel* which means, ‘God with us.’” Therefore it was necessary that this Messiah was not only man, but also God, and that for good reason—for otherwise he could not have redeemed his people from their sins and from death. And such was Jesus, according to the testimony of Matthew and Luke, indeed, as the Angel testifies in each of these books.³¹⁹ The adversaries try to evade this passage, but they do so by confessing that Jesus was God only after he was conceived and born. But John the Evangelist explains how he became *Emmanuel*; when he was only אֱלֹהִים he took on flesh and became *Emmanuel*. Therefore he did not become אֱלֹהִים, but man, that he might be with us, and אֱלֹהִים in our nature. And thus teaches John, saying, “In the beginning was the *λόγος*.”³²⁰ And here the *λόγος*, God, אֱלֹהִים, was made flesh. Nor did Isaiah understand that *Emmanuel* would be any other than he who

³¹⁸ John 12:39-41

³¹⁹ Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31

³²⁰ John 1:1; 1:14

was לָא, having taken on flesh from the virgin, and who would finally become *Emmanuel*. Just as we will show from other passages in Isaiah.

III. Passage 24, from Isaiah 8:13, “You will sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth: let him be your fear, and let him be your dread...”

What the prophet here writes, he writes about the true Jehovah. For he says in the beginning of the verse, “You will sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth.” Throughout the writings of the Apostles, these things are set forth about Christ; he is the stone of offense and the rock of stumbling, on whom the Jews especially were dashed. Simeon said to Mary about Christ, “Behold, this one is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel.³²¹ He says “for the rising,”³²² namely of the elect, and “for the falling,” indeed of the unfaithful reprobate. This is what Isaiah indicated by the sanctuary and by the rock of destruction. Let the Apostle to the Romans also be read about this thing.³²³ And Peter says that Christ was made a stone of offense.³²⁴ Therefore the one whom Simeon received in his arms was not only man, but also true Jehovah.

IV. Passage 25, from Isaiah 9:6. “A child is born...”

Here Isaiah writes about the Messiah, that he will be called אֵל גִּבּוֹר, mighty God; he is אֲבִיעֵד, the eternal Father. It is certain that the Prophet looked forward to Christ, in whom the kingdom of David would be continued forever, and therefore he prophesied concerning the Son. He says that he will be called אֵל גִּבּוֹר first. He says, “He will be called,” not, “He will be.” Therefore Isaiah indicates that he already was mighty God, but then will first openly be acknowledged as mighty God when he, having become man, will advance his kingdom forever by conquering his enemies: sin, death, Satan. It is further indicated that by ascending into heaven, he will show himself to be over everything; everything in heaven, on earth, and under the earth will bow the knee to him. Thus Isaiah teaches that Christ is God—not having been recently made God, but existing from eternity—even though this was not openly known, as it would be when he was later made manifest in the flesh. For a simple creature could be called ‘god’ on account of his office, but could never be called the ‘mighty God,’ that is, the all-powerful God. Add to this that which we find in Psalm 24, where the King of glory is

³²¹ Luke 2:34

³²² *resurrectionem*

³²³ Romans 9:33

³²⁴ 1 Peter 2:8

called יהוה גבור. But the Lord and King of glory is Christ, as the Apostle also teaches.³²⁵ Hence it becomes more obvious that Christ was called אל גבור because he is true and all-powerful God.

Next he says that he will be called the eternal Father. He is certainly called the Father, not because the Son is the Father, but because he is both the creator of all and the redeemer of the elect; and this begetter³²⁶ is Christ. Eternal, because he rules and sustains everything forever, and his grace extends itself even unto eternity. Therefore if he is both simply the true and mighty God, and he is also simply the eternal Father (and by that the creator of all), then it is fitting that the Son be the true God by nature and the Father, that is both the eternal God and the man recently born as a child.

V. Passage 26, from Isaiah 25:7 and following

The Prophet glorifies the name of Jehovah, on account of his deliverance of the people, not merely from the Babylonian captivity, but especially from sin and death through the Christ to come, and on account of all the astonishing things which he was to fulfill on Mount Zion. The Prophet writes, as well as other things, this, “And he will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering, cast over all the people, and the veil by which all the nations are covered. He will destroy death forever, and יהוה אדני יהוה, the Lord Jehovah, will wipe away the tears from all faces...” I understand that these things are initially interpreted to be about deliverance from shame, as if from death, by which all the Israelites were covered, during the Babylonian captivity. But because this was a type of the deliverance from sin and death through Christ, therefore the Prophet fittingly here was lifting up his eyes. Hence he includes the name of this place, where the Lord will have done these astonishing things, namely, on Zion. But the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity did not happen on Zion. Next, the shame of this captivity does not pertain to anyone besides the Israelites, yet the Prophet speaks about that which was over all the peoples and all the nations. Therefore the covering, the veil over all the peoples and nations was sin and death, by which all the peoples were covered; however, as is set forth in Romans, Christ took away both the veil and the covering on Mount Zion, by his own blood, death, and resurrection.³²⁷

Therefore he prophesied this properly concerning the redemption from sin and death through Christ on the future Mount Zion, whose perfect fulfillment will be at the end of the age, when we will arrive at the heavenly mountain. For then death will be completely swallowed up, and all tears will be wiped away from the eyes of the saints. Hence, what Isaiah here writes regarding what Jehovah will be, the Apostle rightly applies to Christ. Paul teaches that Christ is the one

³²⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:8

³²⁶ *regenerator*

³²⁷ Romans 5

through whom death will be swallowed up.³²⁸ Therefore, those things recounted in Revelation, concerning the wiping away of all tears from our faces, as it will be in the heavenly Jerusalem, confirm that Christ is Jehovah, to whom Isaiah gives thanks on account of these mercies.³²⁹ For Christ is he who destroyed death by dying and renewed life by rising again, who gives eternal life to his sheep, and wipes away all tears, and takes away shame from all. He crowns all the elect with honor and glory.

VI. Passage 27, from Isaiah 35:4-5 and following

Isaiah promises joy, exultation, and the highest happiness to the people of God, after their deliverance from captivity. And besides other things about Jehovah the Redeemer, he thus says, “Say to those who tremble in their heart, ‘take courage, that you may not fear. Behold, the avenger will come; the one making retribution, *Elohim* himself, will come and will save you.’” Then he adds a number of specific mercies which this coming God will offer, saying, “Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped...” Christ interprets this prophecy to be about himself. When two disciples had been sent to him from John the Baptist to ask whether or not he was the Messiah, who had been expected to come, since he had performed many miracles and enlightened many with the Spirit, Christ answered with these words: “Go, report to John the things which you hear and see. The blind see, the lame walk...” Silently implying to them that he was the one about whom Isaiah had earlier prophesied these things. Why should this be ignored, and empty interpretations employed? We have Christ himself as our interpreter. Who could doubt that he well and aptly answered the question which was set forth? Therefore Christ himself concludes that he is that God, at whose coming the enemies (death and sin) would be destroyed through him, as through the avenger. And also, through him, the elect themselves would be enlightened by the light of the Spirit, and be taught the Gospel, raised by the grace of regeneration, that they might walk in the way of the Lord. The external testimonies of this spiritual mercy are the illumination of the blind, the opening of deaf ears, the walking of the lame, and the consolation of those who are cast down.

VII. Passage 28, from Isaiah 40:3, 10, 12, and following

In this chapter, there are three clear prophecies by which the same doctrine is confirmed that Christ is true Jehovah. One is about the forerunner of the Messiah, who would exhort the people to prepare the way for the God Jehovah. He writes this way about him: “A voice crying out, or a voice of one

³²⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:54

³²⁹ Revelation 7:17; 21:4

crying out, in the wilderness: prepare the way of Jehovah; make straight the path in the wilderness לאלהינו, for our God.” All the Gospels write that John the Baptist was he of whom Isaiah prophesied.³³⁰ And they firmly teach that Christ was he for whom John the Baptist, as the forerunner, prepared the people, by preaching repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore who does not see that Isaiah understood Christ by the name of Jehovah and *Eloheanu*, just as he understood John the Baptist by the phrase ‘the voice crying out in the wilderness’? We have cited the four most faithful interpreters of Isaiah: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Thus we see, if we interpret the Prophets through the Apostles (and no method of interpretation can be more certain or true), then Christ is easily found in the Old Testament to be true Jehovah. Therefore, he was acknowledged by the Prophets as the true Savior.

The next prophecy is where he commands Jerusalem that it might declare to the cities of Judah saying: “Behold, אדני יהוה will come with power, and he will rule by his arm for himself (that is, he will rule through himself). Behold, his reward...” If we read the accounts of the Apostles (who, as I said, are the interpreters of the Prophets), we will see even more clearly how well these words agree with the preceding arguments. First, John the Baptist prepared the people for Christ, Jehovah, and *Eloheanu*. Then Christ began to do his work as Shepherd. For he began to preach and feed his flock by the word, gather his sheep by his arm, by his hand, and by his power. Concerning this he said, “Nobody is able to snatch them from my hand.”³³¹ Do not these things, which John wrote about Christ the Shepherd, openly teach that Christ was he about whom Isaiah here prophesied? Additionally, Christ himself says so in Revelation, saying, “Behold, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me.”³³²

What the Prophet adds in verses 12 and 13 agrees with these. For he teaches that Jehovah was the Creator of heaven and earth through himself, and that he made everything by his wisdom, without any counselor. And in the following verses he says, “Who directed (that is, instructed) the Spirit of Jehovah?” The Greek has Τίς ἔγνω νοῦν Κυρίου.³³³ The Apostle urges the Corinthians that they interpret this to be about Christ.³³⁴ For first he says (according to the LXX): “Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν Κυρίου,”³³⁵ that is, “of Jehovah?” as if he were saying, no one through himself. Next he adds, ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν,³³⁶ as if he were saying, but we, who believe in Christ, possess his mind. Similarly, therefore, the Apostle had the mind κυρίου (that is, of Jehovah) and the mind of Christ. And by this he understood that, according to the Prophet Isaiah, Christ was Jehovah. From

³³⁰ Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23

³³¹ John 10:28-29

³³² Revelation 22:12

³³³ Τίς ἔγνω νοῦν Κυρίου – “who has known the mind of the Lord”

³³⁴ 1 Corinthians 2:16

³³⁵ Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν Κυρίου – “For who has known the mind of the Lord”

³³⁶ ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν – “but we have the mind of Christ”

this it becomes more clear that Isaiah spoke about Christ in this chapter (as we now see). Thus the Prophet proclaimed that Christ was Jehovah, Creator of heaven and earth.

VIII. Passage 29, from Isaiah 43:10-11 and 23 and following

Jehovah says that just as he alone is Jehovah, so is he alone the Savior (as we often read elsewhere). Throughout the New Testament, Christ is both truly and properly called the Savior. Whereupon, the Samaritans said, “Now we know ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου, ὁ Χριστός.”³³⁷ They proclaim two things. First, that Christ, or the Messiah, must truly be the Savior of the world. From whence did they know this, if not from the books of Moses and the Prophets? Second, that this Jesus is that Christ, and by that, truly the Savior of the World. Moses and the Prophets always insisted upon the fact that this Savior was none other than Jehovah. Hence they usually joined the name of Jehovah with the name of the Savior. Therefore how could Christ be said to be the true Savior if he were not Jehovah?

Consider as well the significance of the definite article, ὁ σωτὴρ, (namely, *the* Savior, the one who was accustomed to speak through the Prophets); he alone is the Savior. For if you were to say that the only reason that Christ is called the Savior is that he was the instrumental cause through whom God saved the world—you would be saying nothing. For thus he would never have been ἀληθῶς³³⁸ Savior, but only improperly so. Combine with these verses that which Jehovah adds concerning himself in verses 23 and 24, where with an elegant antithesis he says to his people, “I have not caused you to serve me with an offering, nor did I weary you with frankincense. But you caused me to serve you in your sins, and you wearied me in your iniquities. I, I myself, blot out your transgressions, for my own sake.” I know what the interpreters say that Jehovah speaks according to human custom and through certain ἀνθρωποπάθειαν.³³⁹ But these passages would never have been fulfilled, unless this prophesy is fulfilled in Christ, and therefore this passage ought to be understood to be about the same Christ.

For Christ, while he was in the form of God, emptied himself for us, and was made man, taking on the form of a servant; that is, he truly was made a servant, and truly saved us on account of our sin; and was made obedient to the Father, even unto death.³⁴⁰ Then he himself pardoned our sins which were atoned for by his own blood, not on account of our merit but on account of himself, that is, on account of his own merit, passion, and death. Thus these two things, which here the

³³⁷ ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου, ὁ Χριστός – “that this man truly is the Savior of the world, the Christ,” John 4:42

³³⁸ ἀληθῶς – truly

³³⁹ ἀνθρωποπάθειαν – a state of being subject to human experience (i.e. humanity)

³⁴⁰ Philippians 2:6-8

Prophet predicts about Jehovah, first that he would save us from our sins and second that he would forgive them for his own sake, are wonderfully fulfilled together in Christ. Because, when God was manifest in the flesh, he both saved us in our sins (that is, on account of our sins), and blots out our iniquities in account of himself (that is, on account of his own blood and merit, not another's). Moreover, if Christ is pure man and not also Jehovah, how could what Jehovah says be true, when he says that he blots out our iniquities on account of himself, since it is clear in the Scriptures, that they were blotted out on account of Christ? Therefore is it not necessary, that either what Jehovah said is false (that he himself apart from everyone's merit, forgave iniquities on account of himself), or that Christ is himself Jehovah, who on account of himself – that is, on account of his own obedience and servitude, by which he, as a man, saved us from our sins – blots out our sins?

This is consistent with the sacred writings, where we read that Christ washed us in his blood,³⁴¹ and gave himself up for the Church³⁴² (consider the servitude of Christ for our sins), that he might sanctify her after he had cleansed her, and so on. Behold, the blotting out of our iniquities on account of himself, that is, on account of his blood. God likewise redeemed the Church with his blood³⁴³ and there are many other examples of this sort, which teach both that Christ was made a servant and served on account of our sins; and that he blots them out on account of himself, that is, on account of his death. And by this accounting do these passages not perfectly agree with one another, and do they not elegantly bring forth the harmony of the Old and New Testaments? And if, according to the rule of Christ,³⁴⁴ we thus search out the Scriptures, so that we might seek Christ and find the one we seek through the guidance of the Apostles in these Scriptures; what man is then able to reject and condemn such an interpretation of Scripture? For this is the end and goal of all of Scripture – Christ.

IX. Passage 30, from Isaiah 44:6. “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and her Redeemer: I am the first and I am the last...”

How, I ask you, could this be understood to be solely about the Father, such that Christ might be excluded? Christ is called the King of Israel and her Redeemer in the New Testament. And Christ never himself denied that he was the King of the Jews, but affirmed it. Truly, he was not the sort of king as he was accused of being by the Jews; rather, he was a spiritual king, an eternal king, whose rule is not according to this world. And so it was that according to the providence of God, despite

³⁴¹ Revelation 1:5

³⁴² Ephesians 5:2

³⁴³ Acts 20:28

³⁴⁴ *regula Christi*

the pleading of the Jews, Pilate would not change the title where he had written that Jesus of Nazareth was the king of the Jews.³⁴⁵

In Titus, the Apostle teaches that what David had promised by prophecy concerning Jehovah (when he says “and he himself redeems Israel from all her iniquities”³⁴⁶) was fulfilled when he says that Christ appeared to redeem us from all our iniquity.³⁴⁷ Job, as we saw earlier, openly called his Redeemer – Christ, God, who would be made manifest in the flesh, who would rise upon the earth, and whom he said he would see with his own eyes. What shall I say about the name of God? The Apostles declare everywhere that Christ is God, true God, great God, most blessed God over all, God made manifest in the flesh, God who redeemed the Church by his blood.³⁴⁸ Christ says the same thing about himself in Revelation that Jehovah says (“I am the first and the last...”), and he clearly uses the same words. Therefore how could these things, which Isaiah here writes about Jehovah, be understood to be solely about the Father? How could there be no God except the Father? Or is Christ not called “true God”? If Christ is God only because of his office or because of the fullness of his gifts and participation in the deity (in the same way that Peter says we are partakers of the divine nature³⁴⁹), then he is not true God, and John speaks impiously when he calls Christ “true God.”³⁵⁰ However, if he is true God, he is therefore not excluded from the name of Jehovah, nor is the Father alone Jehovah, but Christ is also Jehovah.

X. Passage 31, from Isaiah 45:22 and following

What else could the Prophet have said that would be more weighty, excellent, or splendid than that which (by writing about the oath that the Lord swore that every knee shall bow to him) he foretold, that Christ, as Savior and Judge, is true Jehovah?³⁵¹ If the Apostle Paul is a true interpreter of Isaiah, then it is clear that all these things which the Prophet says here about Jehovah come together in Christ; therefore, Christ is true Jehovah, Savior of Israel.

I omit what the Prophet replies to God in verse 15, “Truly you are a hidden God, God, Savior of Israel.” This fits with Christ being the Savior of Israel; therefore, he is also their God. But he was a hidden God, who afterward (as Paul teaches) was made manifest in the flesh.³⁵² For Christ

³⁴⁵ John 19:19-22

³⁴⁶ Psalm 130:8

³⁴⁷ Titus 2:14

³⁴⁸ 1 John 5:20, Titus 2:13, Romans 9:5, 1 Timothy 3:16, Acts 20:28, and Revelation 22:13

³⁴⁹ 2 Peter 1:4

³⁵⁰ 1 John 5:20

³⁵¹ Romans 14:11

³⁵² 1 Timothy 3:16

was not then known to all (that is, that he was both true God and Savior), just as now he is not known to all but rather hidden from many, to the extent that even our life, which he obtained for us, is hidden with Christ himself in God, as the Apostle says.³⁵³ However, just as he promised he would do, he manifests himself to whomever he desires, that is, to the elect and to his true disciples, who rest on his word and who love him. I omit, I say, this saying of the Prophet, which is most excellently completed in Christ. And I omit that which Jehovah says, “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth...” This is what Christ (who was God at first hidden then made manifest in the flesh) also said: “Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, (namely, with sins), and I will restore (that is, I will save) you.”³⁵⁴ There is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved, besides the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.³⁵⁵ He is the only Savior; therefore, he is one with God the Father. I say, I also omit this.

But that which follows, and that which the Apostle adds about Christ, I cannot disregard. “By myself I swear (says Jehovah), a word will go out from my mouth in righteousness, and will not return (that is, my judgment is just and certain, and irrevocable).” And what is it that he swears? That, “Every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will confess.” We know this to be his meaning: I will bring it about that everyone will acknowledge and worship me as his true and only God. And every tongue will confess this, and they will bind themselves to me with an oath. Everyone, I say—namely, the elect from every nation. This however begins to happen only when they have received the Holy Spirit. The Apostles proclaimed Christ throughout the whole world, and all nations bowed the knee to him, acknowledging him as the one true God and Savior; in the sacrament of baptism they bound themselves to him by oath, being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one and the same Jehovah. But this will be fulfilled and receive its final end when the people of all nations and of all the ages stand before the judgment seat of Christ at the end of the age, in order that all might give an account of their deeds, as to a judge. At that time, everyone, even those who now blaspheme him, will be compelled, whether willing or unwilling, to acknowledge him and confess that Christ is both God and Jehovah. And the Apostle looked back to this passage, when he referred the words of the Prophet to Christ; just as back at the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, when he said it was given to him that every knee should bow to him.³⁵⁶ What therefore could be more obvious, than that Christ is that same Jehovah, about whom Isaiah spoke, who indeed created the heavens, who formed the earth, who created man upon it, who is the hidden God, who swore by himself?

Add to this what follows in the prophesy, “He will say, ‘Only in Jehovah I have righteousness and strength;’ everyone will come to him and everyone who provoked him to anger shall be

³⁵³ Colossians 3:3

³⁵⁴ Matthew 11:28

³⁵⁵ Acts 4:12

³⁵⁶ Philippians 2:9-11

confounded,” and so on. What else, then, did the Apostles teach than that Christ alone is our justification, our strength, and our might, and that only in him are we able to boast? For this reason all who wish to be justified come to Christ; that is, all the elect, signified by the name of Israel; Christ therefore is the true Jehovah. For which reason they will see, what our הַנְּחָרִים³⁵⁷ did, who sneer at Christ, acknowledging and declaring him to be only a man. For the Prophet spoke thus concerning these things, “And all the הַנְּחָרִים³⁵⁸ will be confounded.”

Neither is it the case what the carping critics interject. They say that when the Apostle wrote this concerning Christ to the Philippians, that he was saying that it would be given to that man that every knee would bow, not because he is Jehovah God, but on account of his obedience.³⁵⁹ For it is fitting that the Apostle, by this saying, “bending knees,” wished to express the true adoration by which God is worshiped. Just as also in Romans when he introduces God as saying: “I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bent their knees before Baal,” that is, who have not taken the adoration and reverence owed to me and given it to idols.³⁶⁰ However, this whole debate is meaningless, if Christ was pure man, since adoration would neither be fitting nor owed to him. Therefore the Apostle did not think that every knee would bow to Christ on account of Christ’s obedience as a mere man. But he says that the one who was exalted is the one who, when he was in the form of God, emptied himself, and was made man, and was obedient to the Father even unto death. However, who exactly was this? God manifest in the flesh. Therefore, the Apostle said that he was exalted, that is, not only was his flesh raised from the dead, glorified, taken up into heaven and placed above all the angels, such that the knees of all bow on account of his divine nature ὑπόστατικῶς³⁶¹ joined to him (and they must bow to him), but also and chiefly, that the person of Christ (who, existing in the form of God, had put off his glory for our sakes) was exalted, that is, declared and made known to be the Son of God and true God.

XI: Passage 32, from Isaiah 54, verse 1 and following

Jehovah promises that he is going to take up anew the remnant of the Jews, who had been rejected on account of their infidelity, and lead them into a new marriage; and by her, as a new bride, he will beget far more children than by the one who was before rejected. It begins like this, “Rejoice O barren one, who does not bear, break forth in song, you who are not in labor: because the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the married, says Jehovah.” Below, verse 5 says this,

³⁵⁷ הַנְּחָרִים – “those who are incensed”

³⁵⁸ בּו הַנְּחָרִים – “those who are incensed against him”

³⁵⁹ Philippians 2:9-11

³⁶⁰ Romans 11:4

³⁶¹ ὑπόστατικῶς – “hypostatically”

צבאות יהוה עשיר בעליך כי אכל הארץ יקר אלהי ישראל קדוש וגאלך שמו

that is, “For your husbands are your makers (he alludes to the plural *Elohim*) Jehovah Sabaoth is his name. And your Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel, is called God of the whole earth.” By these words and others in the same place it is plainly evident that Jehovah God promises that he himself will be the bridegroom of the Church, who, after the Jews had been rejected, would collect the remnant to the last; and continually he calls himself גאל, Redeemer. But all the Scriptures of the New Testament propound that Christ is the bridegroom of the whole Church, who has already been gathered and will continue to be gathered from the Jews, as much as from the Gentiles. John the Baptist testifies this, and Paul as well.³⁶² Certainly they all continually call him Redeemer, and σωτήρα.

XII. Passage 33, from Isaiah 62:1 and following

The Prophet rouses the Church of Zion, as she was lying in the dust in Babylon, and exhorts her to rise and clothe herself in the splendor of true redemption, freedom, and salvation. This redemption was to be ultimately through Christ, but a type of it was prefigured by the redemption from Babylon. But it is clear that the Prophet speaks about that true redemption, which was accomplished through Christ, because he says that at the same time that they themselves would be free, the Gentiles also from all parts of the world would fly to Zion to share in the light and Salvation. It is however beyond all controversy that the calling of the Gentiles was not to have happened until after the coming of Christ. Afterwards, he calls him Jehovah who redeems from the spiritual captivity of death, sin, and Satan; and he calls this redemption the glory of Jehovah. I do not see how any doubt remains that Christ, the author of this redemption, is true Jehovah, especially taking into account those testimonies which were given before from Job and from this same Prophet about the Redeemer and Savior of the Church.

Although this most excellent Prophet proclaims to us throughout that Christ is true Jehovah, and seems almost to show him to us as with a pointed finger, so that the Fathers had good reason to say that Isaiah was like a fifth Evangelist, nevertheless I will say no more. What we have already brought forward, I judge to be more than sufficient for the forming of faith in the saints. Moreover, I judge that Isaiah himself saw the true and eternal Deity of Christ. And so Christ was no less the true Jehovah than the Father was; indeed, he himself is one and the same Jehovah, the God of Isaiah, along with the Father and the Spirit of each. The same thing was also noted by other prophets in their writings, so that if the glory of Christ is sought in them, it is easy to find it there.

XIII. Passage 34, from Jeremiah 9:23 and following

³⁶² John 3:29; Ephesians 5:31

Here Jehovah first forbids us to glory in any created things, then commands us to place all our glory in Jehovah himself, because our salvation is founded on him alone. For he alone is the one who performs mercy, justice, and righteousness. By these three names, wisdom, strength, and riches, he captures the three kinds of goods, into which the philosophers also divide all good things: goods of soul, body, and fortune. Therefore he does not desire that we might glory either in our own wisdom (that is, in any good of the soul, all of which by συνεκδοχικῶς³⁶³ he encompasses within that name of the higher good, wisdom). Nor should we glory in the strength of the body (that is, in any bodily good, whether appearance or health, all of which he understood by the term of the higher good, strength). And finally, we also should not glory in riches or external goods. He therefore excludes all glory and confidence in all created things. But afterwards he commands that we glory in Jehovah and in the knowledge of him, because he alone is merciful to us and saves us from our sins through his mercy, because he performs righteousness by defending his own and justice by punishing the impious. The Apostles (especially Paul) always glory, and teach that we ought to glory in Christ alone and in our knowledge of him, that through him we might pursue mercy and salvation.³⁶⁴ These testimonies occur throughout the New Testament. Nor is it doubtful that Jeremiah and Paul knew the same thing. Did not, therefore, both Jeremiah and Paul openly indicate that Christ is true Jehovah, in whom alone (once he is known by us) we ought to glory?

XIV. Passage 35, from Jeremiah 23:14 and following

“Behold, the days are coming (he speaks about the time of the New Testament),’ says Jehovah, ‘and I will raise up a righteous shoot for David (this is Christ), and the king will reign and deal wisely, that he might execute justice and righteousness on the earth. In his days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely (that is, peacefully) and this name, by which they will call him, is צדקנו יהוה.”³⁶⁵ It is undisputed among all the saints that this passage is about the Messiah, that is, about Christ; indeed, almost all the Jews confess it. He is, after all, that just shoot which was to be raised up for David, since no one born from the family of David was truly just and did not wander greatly from the way that David walked (as is seen in the books of the Kings), besides Christ.

He writes about two particular points concerning Christ – his person (consisting of two natures, human and divine) and his proper office. He describes Christ’s human nature when he says “I will raise up a shoot for David.” Therefore, he is from the seed of David according to the flesh. And what kind of man will he be? Righteous, utterly without sin. Therefore he says, “the righteous

³⁶³ συνεκδοχικῶς – “by way of synecdoche”

³⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17; Galatians 6:14

³⁶⁵ צדקנו יהוה – “Jehovah our righteousness”

shoot,” that is, when he would begin to be the shoot of David (that is, a man), he would be righteous. He describes his divine nature when he says, “And this is the name by which they will call him, יהוה,” that is, he will be recognized to be true Jehovah. That is the Prophet’s first point about Christ.

He then teaches that his office is that he saves the elect, rules them always, and bestows them with blessed life. Therefore, first he says “The king will reign and deal wisely” – that is, he will do all things with the utmost prudence and wisdom, because he will do all things according to the will and plan of the Father. Then he adds, “He will execute justice and righteousness on the earth.” This describes the other virtue essential to every ruler – namely, equity and righteous judgment. What follows from this? Salvation for his people and security, not the defective one of the flesh, but the salvific security of the Spirit. Therefore he adds, “In his days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely,” that is, she will live with tranquil conscience until she at last enjoys the highest peace in heaven; for by justification through Christ, tranquility and peace of conscience arise and we achieve eternal life.

Besides this, he says that he will be called צדקנו, our righteousness. This detail also pertains to his office, for it describes through whom and by what means we are justified, of course through Christ, insofar as he shares his own righteousness with us. Indeed, he is our righteousness and sanctification (as the Apostle teaches).³⁶⁶ Therefore this passage is important for the Deity of Christ: not only because he is openly called Jehovah, but also because he is and is called “righteousness” – justifying us, pardoning our sins, sanctifying, regenerating, and stirring up zeal for righteousness. For who is able to fulfill these things, except God? Therefore, in the first part, he rightly calls him “Jehovah,” and then “our righteousness.” In the same way, as much by the word צדקנו (which is the word for Christ’s office), as by the word יהוה (which is the word for the divine essence), we can rightly conclude that Christ is true God, Jehovah. The exceptions (by which the antichrists contend that Christ was called Jehovah improperly and merely by reason of his office) are refuted, and will be demonstrated by this passage to be most vain.

XV. Passage 36, from Jeremiah 31:31 and following

Jehovah promises that he is going to make a new covenant between himself and his people, saying, “Behold, the days are coming,” says Jehovah, “and I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,” and so on. No one doubts that this is the prophecy of the New Testament which was confirmed by the blood of Christ and which consists of the remission of sins on account of Christ and of regeneration through the Spirit of Christ, because the Apostle cites this passage in

³⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:3

Hebrews to that effect.³⁶⁷ Next, Jeremiah plainly teaches that Jehovah is he who promises to make this new covenant. For Jehovah speaks and says, “I will cut...” and so on. In Hebrews, however, the Apostle does not so much call Christ the Mediator of the New Testament, as he teaches that he is the Testator, whose death was needed to confirm and establish the Testament as certain.³⁶⁸ For so the Apostle says: “Therefore, on this account, he is the Mediator (Christ) of the new covenant, such that they might receive the promise by his interceding death. For where there is a testament, it is necessary that the death of the Testator occur.

Do you not see here that Christ is called the Mediator and is demonstrated to be the Testator of the New Testament? Otherwise, if he were not the Testator himself, the argument of the Apostle (by which he concludes that it was necessary for the confirmation of the New Testament to be by the death of Christ) would not have strength.

For the Apostle’s argument is thus: Wherever there is a testament (even more so if it should be certain and established), there it is also necessary that the death of the testator occur. For the testament is established in death, seeing that the testament is not yet effective while the testator is alive. But here we have the new Testament of the remission of sins, of the law to be written in our hearts, and of the eternal inheritance to be had, just as it was promised through Jeremiah. This minor detail he put in chapter 8 above. Therefore, in order that this testament should be firm, it was necessary for the testator to die, and by his own blood and death make the testament certain and eternal. If this concludes the argument of the Apostle, it follows by necessity that Christ is not only the mediator, but also the testator, the author of this new covenant, which was promised, and therefore he is true Jehovah.

XVI: Passage 37, from Ezekiel 16:60 and following

Jehovah, after he had accused his people of grave sins and vile ingratitude and had threatened a number of afflictions, finally in verse 60 begins to console the elect, saying that nevertheless he will remember his covenant which he made with her in the days of her youth (that is, when he led her out of Egypt), and he will establish his covenant and make it to be everlasting. He speaks about a new covenant, about which Jeremiah previously prophesied.³⁶⁹ The words of the prophet are these, “And I (nevertheless) will remember my covenant (which I made) with you, in the days of your youth. עולם כרית לך והקימותי - And I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.” And he repeats the same in verse 62 saying: “And I myself will establish (or confirm) my covenant with you, and you will know that I am Jehovah;” that is, and when you know that my covenant (along with my

³⁶⁷ Hebrews 8:8

³⁶⁸ Hebrews 9:15

³⁶⁹ Jeremiah 31:31

promises) is confirmed among you, then at last you will recognize that I am in fact true Jehovah, who loves you in this way, and that I am faithful to my promises, so that I would not wish to destroy you, even though that would have been well deserved. He who promises the confirmation of the covenant is therefore true Jehovah. And Christ himself is he who confirmed the covenant, established it with the elect, and made it be everlasting (as the Apostle taught and as has been demonstrated already).³⁷⁰ Nor was Ezekiel ignorant of this; for who, besides Christ, confirmed this by his death? Therefore Christ, together with the Father, is this Jehovah who promised through Ezekiel that he would confirm and establish his covenant and testament in eternity.

And this will become clearer if we consider what is the substance of this covenant and therefore what makes it eternal. This is the remission of sins and the regeneration through the Holy Spirit, which is signified by the writing of the law on our hearts. The substance of the new covenant is found in these two things, and by these two things it becomes eternal, as is clear from Jeremiah 31 and Hebrews 8. For, where all sins are pardoned and the Holy Spirit is given eternally (by which we become new creations), there the eternal covenant remains. Surely if the cause by which the covenant is cancelled has been removed, then also the effect of that cause (that is, the very cancellation of the covenant) has also been removed. Thus, it is necessary that the covenant endures forever. Our sins are the cause of the destruction of the covenant. Therefore where there is the remission of sins and where obedience has already begun, there the eternal covenant remains.

But who is he who took away the sins of the world and gave the Holy Spirit, by whom we are regenerated and live to righteousness? Christ is he, as Peter teaches, saying, "He himself bore our sins on the tree that we might (first) die to our sins and (second) live to righteousness."³⁷¹ Therefore it is certain that Christ is Jehovah who promised through Ezekiel that he would establish and confirm a covenant in eternity with his people. For if you say that the Father promised this, and he confirmed it through the death of Christ, then I will respond with the Apostle that no testament is established unless it is confirmed by death, not the death of another, but by the death of the Testator himself.

Although our adversaries do not acknowledge that Christ is true Jehovah, this is because they do not perceive in themselves, through the death of Christ, the covenant confirmed with them of the remission of sins and of the writing of the Law on their hearts. For only those who acknowledge that Christ is Jehovah perceive through Christ that their sins are forgiven by him and that they are reborn through the Spirit of Christ; and they know this because these things cannot be fulfilled except by the one who is God and true Jehovah. Therefore Jehovah rightly adds this detail, "And you will know that I am Jehovah," that is, when you see and perceive from the remission of sins and the renewing of your heart that the covenant was confirmed through me, by the power of my death and blood, then you will know that I am Jehovah. Therefore, it is evident that those who do not yet

³⁷⁰ Hebrews 9:15

³⁷¹ 1 Peter 2:24

know that Christ is true Jehovah are not yet reborn, nor do they perceive that their sins are remitted through the death of Christ.

XVII. Passage 38 from Ezekiel 36:22 and following

Jehovah promises that he will gather his people from all the lands (that is, the elect, scattered among the nations) and lead them into the land which he also gave to their fathers. He will also give his Spirit to them, by which they will be able to walk in his precepts. So he says, “Therefore speak to the house of Israel, thus said the Lord Jehovah, ‘Not for your sake, house of Israel, do I act but for the sake of my holy name, which you profaned among the nations to whom you went...’” (all the way to verse 29).

Jehovah promises four particular things with these words: First, that he will gather all the elect from all parts of the world into one body and into one Church. Second, that he will cleanse them from all their sins. Third, that he will give them his Spirit, through whom, having cast off the old man and been made into new creations, they will begin to keep the law and walk in the precepts of God. Fourth, that he will finally cause it to happen that they might dwell in the land which he gave to their fathers, that is, in heaven (as the Apostle explains in Hebrews).³⁷² Who, I ask, fulfills these things? Is it not Jesus Christ?

Concerning the first point, Christ is the one who gathers all the elect from all parts of the world into one sheepfold, one Church, one body, when he makes them members of himself by the power of his death. John, interpreting the words of the high priest—“It is better for you that one should die for the people, and that the entire nation not perish”—teaches this, saying, “he did not say this of his own accord, but since he was High Priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die on behalf of the nation (Judaea), and not only for the nation, but that he might gather the sons of God (that is, all of the elect who were dispersed among the nations throughout the earth) into one.”³⁷³ And I say that the one who gathers them is Christ himself. Do you not see that Christ fulfills what Jehovah had promised in Ezekiel? Therefore, he compares himself to a hen who gathers her chicks under her wings.³⁷⁴

Now concerning the second point, that Christ also cleanses us from sin, John teaches this same thing, saying, “The blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin.”³⁷⁵ And more clearly in Revelation: “He cleansed us from our sins by his own blood.”³⁷⁶

³⁷² Hebrews 11:16

³⁷³ John 11:50, etc.

³⁷⁴ Matthew 23:37

³⁷⁵ 1 John 1:7

³⁷⁶ Revelation 1:5

Christ also fulfills the third promise of Jehovah. For he imparts to us his Spirit, by which we are able to walk in the precepts of God, as John the Baptist teaches, saying, “We all receive of his fullness (that is, the Spirit who is in Christ without measure).”³⁷⁷ Who is this, who leads the elect into heaven and causes them to dwell there forever? Christ. “No one ascends into heaven. . .”³⁷⁸

Also, Christ leads all the elect into heaven, saying, “Come, you who are blessed. . .”³⁷⁹ Therefore since we see clearly in the New Testament that Christ is the one who fulfills the entirety of the promise in Ezekiel, and since the one who promised all this is true Jehovah, he who fulfills the promise ought to be altogether the same one who also promised that he would fulfill these things. Who cannot see that Christ, together with the Father, is this Jehovah who spoke through Ezekiel? He adds at the end, “I will be your God,” and so on. Did not Christ become our God, and we his people? In John, Thomas says “My God.”³⁸⁰ And in Matthew 1, “He will save his people,” and so on.³⁸¹

XVIII. Passage 39, from Daniel 2:1 and following

In his dreams, Nebuchadnezzar the king had seen a great statue, whose head was gold; chest and arms, silver; stomach and thighs, bronze; shins, iron; and feet, partly iron and partly clay. Afterward he saw a stone, cut out from a high mountain, which struck the statue and destroyed the whole thing and scattered it, and the stone itself grew into a great mountain.

Daniel, when explaining the dream, teaches that all the kingdoms of the world (which would be divided into four kingdoms until the time of Christ) are signified by this statue. He understood that this stone is Christ, that he would overturn the kingdom of the Romans, and so finally all the kingdoms of the earth having been destroyed, he would establish his own kingdom in eternity. Why is Christ compared to a stone cut out without hands from a high mountain? Because of his divine nature. The descent to earth signified his incarnation. For the Son of God himself wanted to appear to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a stone—not of a simple stone taken from the earth, but of a stone cut out from a high mountain without hands—in order that he might show that he is not from this earth, but from heaven (which is why he said, “I am from above...”³⁸²), and while all the kingdoms of this world are from the earth (from which gold, silver, bronze, and iron are mined), the

³⁷⁷ John 1:16

³⁷⁸ John 3:13

³⁷⁹ Matthew 25:34

³⁸⁰ John 20:28

³⁸¹ Matthew 1:21

³⁸² John 8:23

kingdom of Christ is heavenly and from heaven. Therefore insofar as he chose to appear in the form of a common stone, he wanted to signify his humility in the flesh, and that his kingdom would be humble, common, and cast down in the eyes of the world and of the princes of this age, while the other kingdoms seem magnificent and powerful (gold, silver, bronze, and iron). But insofar as he appeared in the likeness of a stone, not taken from the earth, but cut out without hands from a high mountain, he wanted to show without any doubt that his origin is from the Father, from whom he was begotten without corruption; and therefore he wanted to make clear that he is true God, of the same nature with the Father.

John explains all of this, saying, “In this, the Son of God appears that he might destroy the works of the Devil,” that is, the stone from the mountain appears, that he might destroy the kingdom of the Devil, the prince of this earth.³⁸³ Listen to what Paul says in Philippians: “Who, since he was in the form of God (the stone in the mountain), emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant (the descending of the stone from the mountain),³⁸⁴ was made obedient unto death, by which he destroyed him who had the power of death (the destruction of the statue).”³⁸⁵ Because of this the Father exalted him (the stone, which grew into a great mountain). Yet it does not escape me that strong arguments cannot be gathered from prophetic visions of this sort (especially such as we have now discussed) such that they can be affirmed as doctrine. Accordingly, I have not alleged this so that I might prove against the Arians that Christ is the one God, but only in order that the spirits of the saints should more and more be established in the truth. Indeed, for them all things work together for good; and even in prophetic visions, Christ presents himself that he might be known to them. However, I return to stronger arguments.

³⁸³ 1 John 3:8

³⁸⁴ Philippians 2:6-7

³⁸⁵ Hebrews 2:14

Chapter Six

The testimonies and arguments of the Minor Prophets which demonstrate that Christ is the eternal God, Jehovah.

I. It still remains for us to hear the other Prophets, and to see what they believed concerning the Deity of Christ, and how that agrees with the analogy of Christian doctrine and with the rest of the Scriptures.

Passage 40, from Hosea 1:7

Jehovah says: "I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them in Jehovah their God," that is, "I, Jehovah, will save them through Jehovah their God." Since it is manifest that whomever the Father saves, he saves through Christ, what violence is done to the Prophet if we interpret these words such that Christ is that Jehovah through whom (or in whom) he saved us, and through whom the Father has compassion on us? And are we not interpreting consistently with the rest of Scripture and with the analogy of faith?

Passage 41, from Hosea 2:19 and following

Jehovah, after he had said that he would restore the covenant with his people (meaning with the elect), then adds these words: "And I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness..." But in the New Testament we see everywhere that Christ is the bridegroom of the Church.³⁸⁶ Therefore Christ is true Jehovah, who spoke through Hosea.

II. Passage 42, from Hosea 6:1 and following

He prophesies of redemption from death and hell through Christ. He then introduces the remnant of the Jews, that is, the elect, who exhort one another to repentance and to faith, saying, "Come and let us return to Jehovah..." And then, "After two days, he will revive us, and on the third day, he will raise us up, and we will live in his sight." I know what is the direct (as it is termed) and natural sense of these words. But since all redemptions (whether the one from Egypt or from Babylon) were types of the final one, which was accomplished through Christ, it is not doubtful that the Prophets inclined their eyes towards this redemption, while they spoke about others; therefore, I do not doubt that Hosea prophesied with these words about the raising up and bringing back to life by which

³⁸⁶ John 3:29

Christ rose from the dead on the third day, made us to rise with him (as the Apostle says), and will make us alive.

Neither do the Hebrews speak falsely when they say the Prophet speaks about the third day, that is, the third redemption, which was to be through the Messiah; since the “first day” was when they were liberated from Egypt, and the “second day,” from Babylon. I say that they speak truly as long as they understand this redemption to be both spiritual and accomplished through Christ, although it has not yet received its complete fulfillment in us.

Certainly the Apostle in Colossians and elsewhere says that we have been resurrected with Christ; indeed, we now sit with him in the heavenly places, and there live in his presence.³⁸⁷ It is therefore consistent with the holy scriptures that this prophesy of Christ be about our quickening and resurrection through Christ. But who was it that was to accomplish this? Hosea says it was Jehovah. Therefore, according to the Prophet, Christ was Jehovah.

III. Passage 43 from Hosea 12:3 and following

Speaking about Jacob, he says, “In the womb he grasped his brother’s heel, and in his strength he prevailed against *Elohim* (that is, God); and he prevailed against the Angel, and he overcame him...” Indeed, he who appeared to Jacob at Bethel is called Jehovah and יהוה , from which came the name of Israel. Hosea calls him an Angel, but immediately after calls him Jehovah. From these passages, taken both from Genesis and from Hosea, it is clear that this Angel who wrestled with Jacob and then appeared to him at Bethel was true Jehovah. But he could not be anyone besides the Son, as was shown above.

Passage 44, from Hosea 13:4 and 13:14

First he says, “I am Jehovah your God from the land of Egypt; you will know no other God besides me. And you will have no other savior besides me.” From this passage we gather that only Jehovah should be acknowledged as the savior, but we acknowledge Christ (and are commanded to acknowledge him) as the savior. Then Jehovah promises with these words that he will free the people from the hand of death and from the grave: “I will free them from the hand of the grave, I will redeem them from death...” The Septuagint thus translates this passage, $\text{Εκ χειρὸς ᾗδου ῥύσομαι αὐτοῦς, καὶ ἐκ θανάτου λυτρώσομαι αὐτοῦς. Ποῦ ἢ δίκη σοῦ θάνατε, ποῦ κέτρον σοῦ ᾗδη.}$ ³⁸⁸ Who, I ask, is the one who says this and promises that he will do this? Jehovah, as is clear from the

³⁸⁷ Colossians 3:1; Ephesians 2:6

³⁸⁸ “I will lead them out from the hand of Hades, and I will redeem them from Death. Where is your penalty, O Death? Where is your sting, O Hades?”

context. But the Apostles relate that Christ is he who redeemed us from death and from hell, and who will raise all the dead to life. And Christ himself affirms this: “Just as the Father raises the dead, so too the Son gives life to whomever he desires.”³⁸⁹ These words of Jehovah in the Prophet, together with the translation of the Septuagint, are cited by Paul to pertain just as much to Christ, *πρὸς τοῦ θανάτου, τὸ κέρρον*, and so on. “Thanks be to God, who gave the victory to us through Jesus Christ.”³⁹⁰ For the Apostle teaches the future resurrection of the dead through Christ, and thus the faithful will have victory over death, that they might be able to insult death and say, “Death, where is your sting?”³⁹¹ And so on. The Apostle also says in Timothy that Christ abolished death.³⁹² And in Hebrews he says that Christ, through his death, destroyed him who had power over death, that is, the Devil.³⁹³ What else is this than to say that Christ fulfilled that which Jehovah promised through Hosea when he said that he would be the plague and the destruction of death? Therefore Christ is that Jehovah who promised the resurrection of the dead through Hosea. And by this, we more powerfully confirm the words of the Prophet, because this Hebrew verb, *קָדַשׁ* that is, “I will free them from the hand of Hell,” properly means, “to redeem with a price,” *λύτρον*. So the Septuagint fittingly translates the verb *קָדַשׁ* with the verb *λυτρόω*, saying, *καὶ λυτρώσομαι αὐτούς*. Who is the one who redeems us with a price besides Christ?³⁹⁴

IV. Passage 45, from Hosea 14:2 and following

The prophet exhorts the Israelites to repentance and says, “Return, O Israel, to Jehovah...” Afterward he teaches them what they ought to pray to God, saying, “Take up words with you and return to Jehovah, and say to him (Jehovah), ‘Take away all iniquity...’ The verb is *נָשַׁן*, which specifically means “to lift up a burden for someone.” For we are oppressed by sin as by a heavy burden. Therefore when God forgives sins, he is said to lift the burden from us. Therefore from this passage we learn that it is the specific office of God Jehovah to take away iniquity from us. But John attributes this to Christ, saying, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”³⁹⁵ And the Greek verb is *αἴρων*, which has the same meaning as the Hebrew verb *נָשַׁן*. Therefore who does not see that Christ is that very Jehovah, to whom the Israelites were commanded to say, “Take away our iniquity”?

³⁸⁹ John 5:21

³⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:57

³⁹¹ 1 Corinthians 15:55

³⁹² 2 Timothy 1:10

³⁹³ Hebrews 2:14

³⁹⁴ 1 Timothy 2:6

³⁹⁵ John 1:29

V. Passage 46, from Joel 2:28 and following

Jehovah, speaking of the time of the New Testament, says that he will pour out his Spirit on all flesh. But in John, Christ promised that he also would do this.³⁹⁶ And Peter teaches that Christ fulfilled Joel's prophecy, because he sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to the Apostles.³⁹⁷ Therefore, this is Christ. Surely Joel foresaw that the thing which he prophesied and promised that Jehovah would do would be fulfilled by Christ pouring out his Spirit.

VI. Passage 47 from Obadiah 17 and following

In Obadiah, we have an obvious prophecy of the deliverance and salvation of the Church through the Messiah, and by this, a clear testimony of Christ and of his spreading kingdom, even according to Hebrew witnesses. Indeed, in the final verse he says, "And saviors מושעים will ascend Mount Zion to judge the Mountain of Esau," that is, to judge all the ungodly through the Gospel. He uses the plural 'saviors'; by that name he signifies Christ first and foremost, but also the Apostles and the other Fathers and ministers of the word of God, insofar as their works are used in the conversion of the world through the Gospel. But afterward he calls this Messiah Jehovah, when he says "the kingdom will be Jehovah's," ליהוה. For the Prophet concludes that finally the Messiah will reign on Mount Zion and that his kingdom will grow (just as he earlier indicated that it would grow), until the Messiah rules over all. Therefore it is evident from the words of the Prophet that by the name Jehovah not only the Father but also Christ himself must be understood. For is not Christ the King of Zion? He himself testifies this in Revelation from Psalm 2.³⁹⁸ Therefore he is the Jehovah about whom Obadiah prophesied.

VII. Passage 48, from Micah 2:12

He introduces Jehovah, who promised that he would gather his people from all the lands of the nations, in which the Israelites were scattered. However this gathering of the ten tribes was not to have happened apart from Christ, since he, by the power of his own death and through the preaching of the Apostles, gathered all the sons of God who had been scattered, just as John

³⁹⁶ John 15:26

³⁹⁷ Acts 2:33

³⁹⁸ Revelation 2:27

declared.³⁹⁹ These are the words of Jehovah, “By gathering, I will gather you all...Their King will pass through before them, and Jehovah will be at their head.” However, this is Christ. For he promises that he will gather all of Jacob, that is, all of the elect. Who gathered them? Christ, as was explained in John. In what manner did he promise that he would gather them? Just as a shepherd gathers all his scattered sheep into one sheepfold. Therefore he says, “I will set them together, as a herd of Bozrah and as a flock in the middle of its sheepfold.” The sheep of Bozrah are said to be the most beautiful and dainty sheep, from the pastures in Bozrah, the fertile region of Edom where they are grazed. So Christ gathered his people as a Shepherd gathers his sheep into one sheepfold. Therefore he said, “I have other sheep who...”⁴⁰⁰

What then happens when the elect Israelites were thus gathered? He says, “They will make a tumult on account of the people,” that is, on account of the multitude of people who will fervently contend to enter into the Church, a great tumult will appear in the Church. Was this not fulfilled in the time of the Apostles, when, through them, Christ gathered the elect from everywhere? Whereby Christ in Matthew says, ‘From the time of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence. . .’⁴⁰¹ Therefore in Acts the Apostles are often accused of disturbing the whole world with their preaching and stirring up a tumult. That which the world does is attributed to the Apostles – just as Elijah responds to Ahab, “You are the one who stirs up Israel.” Finally, in that tumult, Jehovah promises victory through Christ. Therefore he says, “The one who breaks will go up before them.” This is Christ. For he is said to be the one who breaks, because by his power he broke open the gates of Hell, overcame the Devil, and against the Devil’s will, led out all his captives, released them to freedom, and continues to do so. Is not this description most consistent with Christ? Finally, he says, “And Jehovah will be at their head,” that is, he will be the head of the Church. But who is the head of the Church besides Christ? The Prophet was certainly not ignorant of this. Therefore he knew that Christ was true Jehovah.

VIII. Passage 49, from Micah 4:1 and following

An extraordinary prophecy appears here concerning the kingdom of Christ that is to be gathered from the remnant of the Jews and from the Gentiles and spread throughout the whole world by the preaching of the Gospel through the Apostles. Afterward he says, “In that day, said Jehovah, I will gather the lame. . .” First, Jehovah promises that he will gather the elect of his people, even from the far off, widely scattered places in which they were dispersed. Did Christ not accomplish this?⁴⁰²

³⁹⁹ John 11:52

⁴⁰⁰ John 10:16

⁴⁰¹ Matthew 11:12

⁴⁰² John 11:52

Second, he says that Jehovah himself will reign over the people. Here it ought to be noted that Jehovah does not say, “And I will reign,” but he says, “And Jehovah will reign.” Therefore Jehovah speaks of another Jehovah and says that this other Jehovah will reign over the people. For the Father speaks about the Son, who certainly is Jehovah. However, first he said, “I will gather them,” because that which Christ did, the Father also did through the Son. Therefore, Christ is true Jehovah.

Third, concerning place, he says that Jehovah will reign on Mount Zion, partly because the beginning of the kingdom of Christ would be on Mount Zion, and thence would spread to the nations everywhere, as we see in Luke 24:47 (therefore he said, “The Law will go out from Zion”). This is also partly because the whole Church, wherever it might be found, would be Mount Zion itself, about which the Apostle in Hebrews said, “But you have come to Mount Zion. . .”

Fourth, concerning time, he says, “And he will reign from that time and forevermore.” Therefore Jehovah promises that he will reign over the Church forever. The Angel plainly explained this to be about Christ when he said, “And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.”⁴⁰³ So too Daniel spoke of the kingdom of Christ, and said that it would be without end.⁴⁰⁴ Here, in one passage, the Prophet says that Jehovah will reign on Mount Zion, that is, over the house of Jacob, forever; in another passage from Luke, the Angel interprets this to be about Christ, that he would reign forever over the house of Jacob. Therefore, who does not see that Christ is this Jehovah, concerning whom Micah prophesied?

IX. Passage 50, from Micah 5:2 and following

We have a clear testimony about the restoration of the kingdom of Israel through Christ, whom Micah says would be born in Bethlehem. This detail means that this passage can only be understood to be about the Messiah. For even the Jews interpreted this passage to be about the Messiah when they responded to Herod that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, according to the prophecy of Micah.⁴⁰⁵ These are the words of the Prophet, “And you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are small among the thousands of Judah, nevertheless from you will come forth a ruler for me in Israel and his origins are from the beginning, from the days of old.” That is to say, “And you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, although you are small among the provinces of Judah (since the people were divided into thousands and each thousand made up one province), nevertheless from you shall come forth for me one who is to be a ruler in Israel, and his origins are from the beginning, from before the ages.”

⁴⁰³ Luke 1:33

⁴⁰⁴ Daniel 7:23-27

⁴⁰⁵ Matthew 2:6

Here we have three truths about the Messiah. First, that he was to be a man from the seed of David and to be born in Bethlehem. Second, that he was true God begotten of the Father from eternity. Therefore after he had spoken concerning the second ‘origin’ according to the flesh, (saying “from Bethlehem” or, rather, “From you, O Bethlehem, will come forth for me...”), he then speaks of the first ‘origin’ (saying it is of eternity and from the Father, or, rather, ‘And his origin is from of old,’ that is, from eternity). The Apostle, alluding to this passage, expresses each nature of Christ in the same way—human first and divine second.⁴⁰⁶ Of Christ’s human nature, the Apostle says, “Christ is from them (the Jews), according to the flesh.” Of Christ’s divine nature, he adds, “Who is God, blessed forever,” that is, eternally. See how the Apostle is the interpreter of Micah. Third, we have his office, that he would be the true ruler, leader, and king of Israel.⁴⁰⁷ What kind of ruler? Matthew explains this from the translators of the Septuagint, saying, ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαὸν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ.⁴⁰⁸

X. Passage 51, from Micah 7:18 and following

After he comforts the people with the promise of the Church being restored, he adds a prayer to the end. Speaking on behalf of all the people, he prays to Jehovah with these words, “Who is a God like you, who takes away iniquity and passes over the transgression of the remnant?” and so on. First he proclaims the goodness of God in the forgiveness of sins, and shows, by this action, that he alone is true God, saying, “Who is a God like you,” and so on. This is the proposition: There is no one like to you, O Jehovah; that is, you alone are true Jehovah, true God. The argument: Because “you (alone) take away iniquity, and you (alone) pass over the transgression of the remnant of your inheritance,” that is, you cover our sin, you do not impute it to us. And the verb is ἔσθω, to take up, to lift the sins from someone. However, John the Baptist says this is about Christ; “Behold, the lamb who takes away the sins...”

Second, he teaches in what way he forgives sin: by taking away, that is, by lifting it up from us and onto himself. This is unique to Christ. “God put our iniquities on him...”⁴⁰⁹ And Peter, “He bore our sins...”⁴¹⁰

Third, that he might take away iniquity from them, namely, from the elect; therefore, he says, “the transgression of the remnant of your inheritance,” not of everyone. Christ also said: “I do

⁴⁰⁶ Romans 9:5

⁴⁰⁷ Matthew 2:6

⁴⁰⁸ “Who will shepherd my people, Israel.” – (Matthew 2:6)

⁴⁰⁹ Isaiah 53:6

⁴¹⁰ 1 Peter 2:24

not ask this for the world, but for them.”⁴¹¹ Also, “This is the blood which is poured out for many...”⁴¹²

Fourth, he indicates the motivating cause for the remission of sins. It is certainly not our merits, but only his kindness and mercy – because of these he says, “He does not retain his anger forever...” And Christ has this same motivating cause. Therefore it says in Galatians, “...who loved me and gave himself for me.”⁴¹³ At this time, his promise to the Fathers was fulfilled. Therefore he says, “You will give truth to Jacob, mercy to Abraham...” From this we confidently conclude that Christ is true Jehovah, because he himself actually takes our sins from us onto himself.

XI. Passage 52 from Haggai 2:9 and following

Jehovah had promised that he would cause the glory of the second temple (which they had already begun to build) to be greater than the glory of the first. But in Hebrews the Apostle cites this passage in reference to Christ and shows us these two things.⁴¹⁴ First, that the Prophet was not speaking of the glory of the Temple that consists in external structure and physical ornamentation, but of the spiritual glory of the Church of Christ, which consists of this: that she had Christ in the flesh, speaking to her, teaching her, and redeeming her from true captivity. And hence the one speaking should not be despised. Second, using this same passage from the Prophet he teaches that the old priesthood and temple were to be abolished, that it might give way to Christ and his eternal sacrifice.

What remains to be shown, namely, that Christ is true Jehovah, is easily concluded from this same passage. Just as he shook the earth when he gave the law on Mount Sinai, so too he later shook heaven along with the earth, when he preached the Gospel. For the intention of the Apostle was to exhort us to listen to Christ preaching the Gospel to us from heaven. These are the words of the Apostle, “See that you do not reject him who is speaking.” Whom? Christ – about whom he spoke before, that his blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. For the blood of Abel spoke, that is, demanded vengeance from God; but the blood of Christ demands forgiveness of sins, compassion, and remission. Next he says, ‘See that you do not reject...’ Therefore this passage is about Christ.

Further up, he compares Christ to Moses, and he speaks of Moses as the one who spoke by the name of God on earth, but he teaches that Christ is the one who is from heaven and speaks from heaven. Therefore this entire passage is about Christ. And so he says, “Do not reject him who speaks,” that is, Christ.

⁴¹¹ John 17:9

⁴¹² Matthew 26:28

⁴¹³ Galatians 2:20

⁴¹⁴ Hebrews 12:26

An argument is derived from the punishment which falls on those who despise the words of Christ; it is an argument from comparison. For if they did not escape who rejected him who spoke in the name of God on earth (that is, Moses χρηματίζοντα;⁴¹⁵ but χρηματίζειν⁴¹⁶ here means he delivered to the people that which he had received from another, that is, from God. Moreover, he says Moses had spoken on earth, firstly since he himself was from earth, secondly because the law considered in itself, and compared to the Gospel, was earthly), how much more will we be punished if we reject him who is from heaven, because he is God? And this glory of the second temple is greater than the first, because the first Church had Moses and the earthly teaching of Moses, but the second Church has Christ and his heavenly teaching. The Apostle adds: “Whose voice at that time shook the earth, but now he promises again, saying...” Whose voice? His, of course, about whom he spoke in the preceding verse, and whom he said should not be rejected when he speaks. But who is this? Christ. The Apostle therefore makes Christ to be him who spoke through Haggai when he said “Yet, once more,” and the one who on mount Sinai gave the law, with the shaking of the earth.

XII. Passage 53, from Zechariah 2:8 and following

“Thus says Jehovah of hosts: After glory (that is, after your glorious deliverance) he sent (that is, will send) me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the pupil of his eye...” Also he says, “And you will know that Jehovah of hosts sent me.” Even if the Jews and all the enemies of Christ grumble, it is necessary that they confess that two are introduced here, each of whom is Jehovah: one is the Father who sends, and the other is the Son who is sent. For this is a clear prophecy of Christ’s coming in the flesh to redeem his people from the captivity of sin and Satan, a captivity signified by the type of the Babylonian captivity and which closely resembled it. For at the beginning Jehovah says that he himself was sent by Jehovah. Therefore there are two here, each of whom is Jehovah.

However there are not two Jehovahs, οὐσία, because Jehovah is one. Therefore there are two persons, the Father and the Son. The Apostles also clearly teach that the Son was sent by the Father. Then the Jehovah who was sent says, “Exult and rejoice, daughter of Zion, for behold, I come (the coming of Christ in the flesh) and I will dwell in your midst, says Jehovah.” This is what John added after he had said that the λόγος was made flesh (that is, this is he came to us), when he said, “And he dwelt among us.” And who is he? Indeed he who was to come and dwell among us calls himself Jehovah sent from Jehovah. Therefore what nonsense do the windbags talk when they say that Christ never called himself God?

⁴¹⁵ χρηματίζοντα – “was the one speaking the message”

⁴¹⁶ χρηματίζειν – “to speak a message”

However what follows concerning the calling of the Gentiles into the Church also teaches that this passage ought to be understood as being about Christ. This did not happen until after the coming of Christ in the flesh. Thus the Jehovah who was sent says through the Prophet, “And many nations will join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and they will be my people.” They will join themselves to Jehovah, that is, to the Father. Therefore the one to whom they join themselves is Jehovah, and the one who says, “They will be my people,” is Jehovah. This is the Son; therefore the Son is Jehovah. And since he spoke of another, that is, of the Father, “And many nations will join themselves to Jehovah,” it seems that afterward he ought to say of the same one, ‘And they will be his people.’ However, he said, “And they shall be my people.” Therefore he shows that the nations are gathered not only to the Father but also to the Son, and they become as much the Son’s people as the Father’s. And hence the Son and the Father are only one Jehovah – not ὑπόστασει, but οὐσία.

XIII. Passage 54 from Zechariah 3:1 and following

“And then he (Jehovah, as we know from Zechariah 1:20) showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his (Joshua’s) right hand that he might oppose him,” that is, that he might accuse him (under whom the Temple was rebuilt) as unworthy, so that he might hinder the rebuilding of the Temple. And Jehovah said to Satan, “May Jehovah rebuke you (that is, restrain you), O Satan! May Jehovah who chose Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this one (Joshua, with the remnant of his people) a firebrand (that is, like a firebrand) plucked from the flames?” The meaning is this: nearly all the people in captivity, were consumed, as if in a fire, like a great tree cut down and cast into the fire. This one (like a scorched firebrand) was plucked from the flames, that is, from captivity, and this was on account of my mercy—and you desire that this remaining firebrand be entirely consumed? It is as if he were saying, “I will not do such a thing.”

This passage is notable for demonstrating not only the Deity of Christ but also the plurality of persons, of the Father and Son. First, he says that Joshua stood before מלאך יהוה.⁴¹⁷ Who is this Angel of Jehovah? Christ—as is evident enough. For we never read of Satan accusing anyone before just any angel, but the Judge of all. Next he says, “And Jehovah said to Satan, ‘May Jehovah rebuke you, O Satan.’” Who is this Jehovah who speaks? He who was earlier called the Angel of Jehovah, namely, the Son. Yet this Jehovah speaks of another Jehovah, saying, “May Jehovah rebuke you, O Satan.” Therefore, who is this other Jehovah? The Father. Indeed, he repeats this and says, “May Jehovah who chose Jerusalem rebuke you!”

And let no one here take issue with me that this Angel of Jehovah, who is later called Jehovah, is the Angel Michael, based on what Jude says, that the Archangel Michael said to Satan, “God rebuke you.” For Jude speaks there of something else—namely when Michael himself fought

⁴¹⁷ מלאך יהוה – “the Angel of Jehovah”

with Satan about the body of Moses. Here, however, Zechariah speaks of Satan's accusation, when in a vision he accused Joshua the high priest. Therefore Jude is not an interpreter of this passage. I readily grant that Michael the Archangel used the same words that Jehovah used here, but it does not follow that Michael is the same one as this Jehovah. For they are two different accounts.

XIV. Passage 55 from Zechariah 12:10 and following

Here, Jehovah is speaking, and certainly he is speaking about the time of the New Testament. Among other things, he promises his Spirit to the Church, saying, "And I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication, and they will look upon me whom they have pierced and they will mourn over him, according to the mourning (which occurs) over an only begotten child, and they will be afflicted with the bitterness (with grief, that is, they will be afflicted according to the bitterness) with which one is afflicted over a firstborn." It is necessary that the one who speaks here is both God and man, or at least one who was to be a man (in the future). He is God, both because in the preceding verses he is called Jehovah, and because he promises that he will pour out the Holy Spirit, which is an act of God alone. But he is also man, because he says that he was pierced. The past is used for the future, that is, he was going to be crucified.

Indeed, the Gospels cite this passage with reference to Christ, and teach that it was fulfilled in Christ. "For these things were done so that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'Not one of his bones will be broken,' and again another Scripture says, 'They will look upon him whom they have pierced.'"⁴¹⁸ And in Revelation, John, speaking about Christ, says, "Behold, he comes with the clouds of heaven, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him (before him). Even so, Amen. I am the α and ω , the beginning and the end,' says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the almighty."⁴¹⁹ Does not John expressly call Christ Lord God, eternal and almighty? For there is no doubt that by saying $\acute{\omicron}$ $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ he alludes to the customary name of God יהוה אלהים , which we see in Zechariah in this chapter. Therefore Christ is this Jehovah who spoke through Zechariah.

And this is confirmed since he himself sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other inhabitants of Jerusalem. Wherefore we also have both Christ's person (consisting of two natures, divine and human) as well as his office described here. His divine nature is indicated because he is called Jehovah and because he promises that he will pour out his Spirit of grace and supplication, which is an act of God alone. However his human nature is indicated because he says, "and they will

⁴¹⁸ John 19: 36-37

⁴¹⁹ Revelation 1:7-8

look upon me whom they have pierced,” by which phrase he portrays the kind of death that he will undergo, namely, death on a cross.

His office is also revealed. It is, first, to die for the sins of his people; second, to regenerate them with his Spirit and make them acceptable to God, and to grant that they might pray to God and acknowledge him. He portrays death with the word “pierced”; the giving of the Spirit when he says “I will pour out my Spirit on them. . . .”; and the gift of faith and knowledge of God when he says, “and they will look upon me...” For this is the meaning: I will pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication on all my elect, that they might see, (that is, know) who I am— that I am their true God, made man, and crucified for their sins. This knowledge of Christ, that he is true God, made man, and crucified for us—this was brought about by his Spirit, whom he promises through the Prophet. Therefore, those who do not acknowledge that the one who was crucified is true God have not yet received the Spirit of grace and supplication.

This passage is also notable for confirming the deity of Christ, which the Arians may grumble and snarl at, but will never escape. For in Revelation John all too clearly interprets it to be about Christ and calls him both Lord God, that is, Jehovah *Elohim*, and him who is, who was, and is to come, that is, the eternal one, and *παντοκράτωρ*, that is, “the Almighty.”

XV. Passage 56, from Malachi 3:1 and following

Here we also have a clear prophecy of Christ, even according to the witnesses of the Jews themselves. At the end of chapter 2, when the Jews ask, “Where is the God of justice?” Jehovah responds thus: “Behold, I send my Angel (messenger), and he will prepare the way before my face. And the Lord, *האֱלֹהִים*, whom you seek will come immediately to his temple. And the Angel of the Testament (covenant) whom you desire, behold, he comes,” says Jehovah of hosts.” It is Jehovah who speaks here, as is clear from the context. Indeed he says that he will send the messenger who will prepare the way before his face. And soon the Angel of the Testament will come to his temple. But the Evangelists cite this passage in reference to John the Baptist and Christ. In reference to John the Baptist, that he is this messenger and forerunner who must prepare the way of Jehovah, who sent him, by summoning the people to repentance and teaching them faith in Jehovah. And the Evangelists cite this passage in reference to Christ, that he is the one for whom John the Baptist was preparing a way, and who must soon be coming to his Temple, not so much a material temple as a spiritual one, that is, to the Church. Therefore who does not clearly see that Christ is this Jehovah who promised that he would send John the Baptist?

Christ is thereafter honored with two titles by which the same thing is confirmed, the names *האֱלֹהִים* and *מלאך הברית*. It is plainly taught by these that this quote was spoken about Christ, who was customarily called both Lord and Angel of the Covenant by the Prophets because he was to be both King and restorer (and guarantor) of the covenant. Since it is beyond controversy that John the

Baptist was indeed the Angel of Christ, and since he is here called the Angel of Jehovah because he was sent by Jehovah, then it is necessarily proven that by the words "Lord" and "Angel of the Covenant" the same thing is understood which is also understood by the name "Jehovah." Additionally, Christ, this Lord and Angel of the Covenant, is said to be coming to his temple. However whose Temple was this and whose was it said to be except Jehovah's? And when was he going to come? After John the Baptist had come before and prepared the way for his Jehovah, by whom he had been sent ahead. Indeed he said of Christ, "He who comes after me was before me." Therefore he taught that Christ was this Jehovah by whom he had been sent.

Unless someone wanted, of his own free will, either to be blind all together or dim their own eyesight, he would clearly see from these testimonies and prophecies of Christ, which we collected from the Old Testament in this second book, that Christ is true Jehovah and was acknowledged as such by Moses and the Prophets. But now I come to the New Testament.

PART ONE

Book Three

On The One True God, Eternal Father, Son, And Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ is neither bare man nor purely creature.

Chapter One

The enumeration of those things that ought to be asserted from the New Testament about the deity of Christ. And the confirmation of the first proposition from several passages of Paul and the Evangelists.

I. Now it remains that we confirm this same doctrine of the eternal deity of Christ, by testimonies and accounts drawn from the New Testament. Since there is almost no page in the books of the New Testament which does not contain some testimony concerning this matter, and this would be an excessive and immeasurable labor if we wanted to enumerate each one separately, still more so to examine them singularly (and even then it would be confusing), therefore for the sake of summary and proper order, I will reduce all these into three chapters.

The first will contain the sort of testimonies that teach that Christ is neither pure man nor mere creature, but besides his human nature there is something divine in him, which is not accidental but essential.

The second will include those testimonies which especially demonstrate that Christ is the true, eternal, and natural Son of God, begotten of the substance of the Father, and therefore of the same nature and Deity as the Father.

The third will include the clear testimonies and arguments by which I will more closely approach my main point and make it clear that Christ is true God, and called true God, God over all, great God. Thus there will be three propositions: First, Christ is neither pure man nor mere creature. Second, Christ is the natural Son of God. Third, Christ is true and eternal God.

II. As to the first proposition which concerns us: The Scriptures of the New Testament deny that Christ is pure man and openly teach that besides his human nature, there is something divine in

him, that it is both natural and essential, and that it was always in him, even from the beginning of his conception.

The first argument by which the Scriptures establish this is drawn from those passages where Christ is said to be from the Patriarchs according to the flesh. The Apostle says that he was set apart for the Gospel of God, which God had promised before concerning his Son, who was begotten of the seed of David, according to the flesh.⁴²⁰ Also, “From whom (the Patriarchs), according to the flesh, is the Christ.”⁴²¹ These two passages, and others similar to them, teach that Christ indeed received flesh (that is, his human nature) from the Jewish Patriarchs, but that something else was also in him, greater than the flesh, which he did not receive from the Patriarchs. What is this other thing? Doubtless a divine nature, just as the Apostle teaches by adding a contrasting statement. For after he had said, “...who was descended or begotten from the seed of David, according to the flesh,”⁴²² he soon juxtaposes this, “Who was declared in power to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness.”⁴²³ He contrasts the Spirit of holiness with the flesh; indeed he understands by the word “flesh,” as has been noted, that human nature which Christ took on.

Therefore what did the Apostle understand by the term “Spirit of holiness” except his divine nature? For we read in John that, “God is Spirit.”⁴²⁴ Here, with the word “Spirit,” a most simple and incorporeal thing—that is, the divine nature—is understood and is contrasted with the body. The Spirit is said to be of holiness with respect to the flesh, regarding which the Apostle says that Christ was of the seed of David, because his human nature was made holy and as it were, deified, by the same divine nature through the hypostatic union, while the qualities of each nature remained in essence, and still retained their unique properties. Therefore when the Apostle says that “Christ is of the seed of David according to the flesh,” or “from whom he was, with respect to the flesh” he then immediately adds “Who was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness,” he clearly denies that Christ is pure man, and asserts that the nature in him is divine. Thus after he had said in Chapter Nine, “From them is Christ, according to the flesh,” he soon added the juxtaposition, “Who is God...blessed forever.”⁴²⁵ This contrasting statement explains that higher nature, and by using the word “Spirit” the Apostle teaches that he understood the divine nature. For in each passage Paul wanted to briefly describe what Christ is—certainly not just a man, but also God.

This interpretation is also confirmed by the witness of Tertullian in the book *Contra Praxeam*, “He who was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh—he will be a man and the

⁴²⁰ Romans 1:3

⁴²¹ Romans 9:5

⁴²² Romans 1:3

⁴²³ Romans 1:4

⁴²⁴ John 4:24

⁴²⁵ Romans 9:5

Son of man. He who was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness—he will be God and the word, the Son of God.”⁴²⁶ And Ambrose says about this passage of the Apostle (Romans 1) that he who was the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, that is, according to God, was made flesh in like manner. So too Peter, speaking of Christ, says, “he was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit.”⁴²⁷ Here is this same, clear juxtaposition. Indeed, by the word “flesh,” Peter understands human nature; and with regard to the flesh, Christ was put to death. However by the word “Spirit” Peter understands the divine nature; and with regard to the divine nature, or by the power of this, he says Christ was made alive—that is, he was raised from the dead. So when Peter says, “Therefore since Christ suffered in the flesh...”⁴²⁸ he indicates that something was in him according to which he did not suffer. What was this? His divine nature.

Thus when John says, “Christ came in the flesh, and he who denies that Christ came in the flesh is the antichrist,” he clearly teaches that there was something else in Christ besides the flesh, that is, besides his human nature. What is this other thing, but the divine nature? For in these passages the Apostle distinguishes one nature from the other nature, since he teaches that Christ was born of the seed of David according to one nature and also suffered according to this same nature, but according to the other nature, he did not suffer. Therefore, since he understands Christ’s human nature by the word “flesh,” it is fitting that by the word “Spirit” he understands the divine nature. But this is sufficient for me at present: that in all of these passages where this distinction, “according to the flesh,” is stated, Scripture denies that Christ, with respect to his essence, is pure flesh (that is, man), but something else, more excellent than this nature, stands in Christ.

III. But if anyone were to object that if we can conclude from this phrase, “according to the flesh,” that Christ is not pure man, then we must also infer that the Israelites were not pure men because it is written of them, “What then will we say Abraham our forefather gained according to the flesh;”⁴²⁹ “...who are my kinsmen according to the flesh;”⁴³⁰ “Consider Israel according to the flesh;”⁴³¹ “We regard no one according to the flesh;”⁴³² and finally, speaking of Ishmael, “He was born according to the flesh.”⁴³³ But who does not see here ὁμωνυμία⁴³⁴? For in the passages about Christ which were given above, “flesh” is taken to mean his human nature, as is clear from the juxtaposition with the

⁴²⁶ [towards the bottom of page 427]

⁴²⁷ 1 Peter 3:18

⁴²⁸ 1 Peter 4:1

⁴²⁹ Romans 4:1

⁴³⁰ Romans 9:3

⁴³¹ 1 Corinthians 10:18

⁴³² 2 Corinthians 5:16

⁴³³ Galatians 4:29

⁴³⁴ ὁμωνυμῖαν – homonym; each of two words having the same spelling but different meanings and origins

“Spirit” and from the context. In the passages which I gave concerning the Israelites, there are other meanings of this word “flesh.” In Romans 4, “flesh” is used for Abraham’s nature and consequently for the works done by Abraham, considered on his own, apart from his justification by faith. For the sense is this: What payment did our forefather Abraham find (that is, receive) from God, according to the flesh, (that is, for the merit of his own nature and for the works that he performed)? For the Apostle explains it thus, adding, “For if Abraham was justified by works, he has glory, but not...”⁴³⁵ However, this example, “who are my kinsmen according to the flesh,”⁴³⁶ refers to the connection through blood, or to the blood-relationship—just as Laban said to Jacob, the son of his sister: “You are my bone and my flesh,” that is, you are my kinsman...⁴³⁷ And in the next example, “Consider Israel, according to the flesh,”⁴³⁸ “flesh” here refers to their external institutions and ceremonies, which the Apostle in Hebrews calls “institutions of the flesh,”⁴³⁹ that is, whatever cannot penetrate all the way to the spirit and cleanse the conscience. Therefore “Israel according to the flesh” is every man who is devoid of faith and bound to and trusts in merely outward ceremonies and works.

Consider also this example, “I regard no one according to the flesh.”⁴⁴⁰ “Flesh” should be understood in the same sense as in the passage before—that is, “flesh” signifies the external works and gifts of God. For this is the meaning: the Apostle esteems no one by his outer virtues or considers him as a Christian on account of external works and ceremonies which are only presented to the eyes of the flesh. But if anyone is truly in Christ through living faith, he would acknowledge him and consider him as a Christian and esteem him greatly. Indeed, he says, I do not even regard Christ according to the flesh. What flesh? Not Christ’s true and human form (for the Apostle knew that Christ was true man), but this outward appearance of which he spoke.⁴⁴¹ For this is the meaning: Before in Judaism I judged that Christ, that is, the Messiah, would be of the Jewish Kings according to the flesh, and that he would free Israel, but only in the flesh. Now I no longer regard him this way, but I know him as the spiritual King and he who redeems us spiritually from sin and Satan’s captivity.

However the example, “he was born according to the flesh,”⁴⁴² merely indicates the ordinary way of nature to beget, and is contrasted with the promise. The Jews who are not from Abraham according to faith and the Spirit are compared to this, but only according to the flesh, that is, those

⁴³⁵ Romans 4:2

⁴³⁶ Romans 9:3

⁴³⁷ Genesis 29:14

⁴³⁸ 1 Corinthians 10:18

⁴³⁹ Hebrews 7:16

⁴⁴⁰ 2 Corinthians 5:16

⁴⁴¹ Our translation here follows the 1589 edition, revising the earlier editions which read: “What flesh? Not Christ’s (for the Apostle knew him to be a true man) but according to the flesh, namely “mine,” that is, according to the Apostle’s fleshly judgment.”

⁴⁴² Galatians 4:29

who glory in only external ceremonies and the merit of their blood. However the faithful who depend on the promises of God are compared to Isaac.

But in the passages which I cited recently, “flesh” is understood as human nature, in the same way that it is used in John, “And the word became flesh,”⁴⁴³ that is, assumed human nature, to the extent that it is contrasted to the divine nature. Therefore the aforementioned passages brought up by our adversaries do not weaken our presentation of arguments drawn from this phrase: that Christ is of David, according to the flesh. Therefore, he is not pure man.

IV. But suppose someone objects saying, “We also consist of flesh and Spirit, for the Apostle says, ‘We ought not to walk and live according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.’”⁴⁴⁴ And so they say, “It does not follow from this that we are not pure men, but consist of a divine nature. Wherefore neither does what you claim follow from these passages about Christ that you have mentioned.” We have a ready refutation: the account is very different, since the meaning of these words “Spirit” and “flesh” is not the same when applied to Christ and us. For “Spirit,” among other things, sometimes means the most simple nature, that is, the divine, or the incorporeal essence of God.⁴⁴⁵ And when “flesh” is contrasted with “Spirit,” “flesh” means the whole human nature, as much the soul as the body. That is what it means in those passages about Christ, which we gave earlier. Thus the argument clearly follows, that Christ is from the Patriarchs according to the flesh. Therefore, he is not pure man. Sometimes “Spirit” means the highest part of the soul, which is called νοῦς,⁴⁴⁶ as in “Now may the God of peace, sanctify you completely, that your whole Spirit, and body...”⁴⁴⁷ However, “flesh” means the body, as in, “in my flesh I will see my Savior...”⁴⁴⁸ This meaning also applies to Christ. But when he is said to be of the seed of David according to the flesh, the “flesh” cannot there mean the body only, for he is from the Patriarchs also according to the other part, the soul and the mind, since as he did not receive from them the flesh, apart of the soul and the mind, but united with them.

Sometimes “Spirit” also means the renewed part of man, or the man himself, insofar as he is regenerated through the Holy Spirit. The flesh however means the corrupted man, or corruption, which is also called sin by the Apostle. Christ says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.”⁴⁴⁹ The Apostle also says, “The fruit of the Spirit is joy, peace...

⁴⁴³ John 1:14

⁴⁴⁴ Romans 8:4

⁴⁴⁵ John 4:24

⁴⁴⁶ νοῦς – “mind”

⁴⁴⁷ 1 Thessalonians 5:23

⁴⁴⁸ Job 19:26

⁴⁴⁹ John 3:6

The works of the flesh are fornication...⁴⁵⁰ “Flesh” cannot be applied to Christ with this meaning, because he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. But all who are born again consist of such a Spirit and such flesh. And this is what Paul meant when he said, “We ought not to walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”⁴⁵¹ For which reason, since the meaning of these words is different when spoken of Christ and when spoken of us, the line of reasoning (inferred from the different meanings of “Spirit” and “flesh”) must also be different. Therefore, the necessary conclusion stands, that Christ is from the seed of David according to the flesh. Therefore, it indicates that he is not bare man, but a divine nature is also in him.

V. Finally, someone might object and say, “Even if you show another nature, that is a divine one different from the flesh, in Christ, it still does not follow that he is not pure man. For there is also in the regenerate another nature besides the flesh, namely a divine nature. Consider that Peter teaches that the faithful are made partakers of the divine nature.⁴⁵² However, it still does not follow that we are not pure men, but also God himself.”

Here is that same fallacy of *ὁμωνυμία*: For the divine nature is sometimes understood as the *οὐσία* (or the divine essence). And so we cannot be called partakers⁴⁵³ of the divine nature, as the impious Servetus was teaching—that the divine essence has been poured into us, just as he was also contending that it was poured into Christ. Sometimes it is understood as the new quality of divine virtue, by which we become new creatures and like God. And that is how Peter understands it in the passage cited above. For he explains himself when he says, “Having escaped the corruption, which is in the world.” Therefore he understands the divine nature as that renewing of the Spirit, which opposes the corruption of the flesh and the World, about which John writes, “All which is in the World, the desire of the flesh. . .”⁴⁵⁴

But when we say that another nature besides the flesh is contained in Christ, it is not possible for this to mean simply this new quality, but rather it is necessary to understand a divine essence. For the Apostle did not distinguish in Christ a nature (a human essence) from a divine quality, but from another nature (another essence). Neither is it on account of a new quality that Christ is able to be called the Lord of David, such that he is not also simply his Son. Therefore since by the word “flesh,” the Apostle understood a nature (that is, a substance and a human essence, and also a soul and body in Christ), and he said that according to this flesh he is of the Patriarchs, it follows that he indicated that there is another nature (that is essence) in Christ other than the natural

⁴⁵⁰ Galatians 5:19-22

⁴⁵¹ Romans 8:4

⁴⁵² 2 Peter 1:4

⁴⁵³ *consortes*

⁴⁵⁴ 1 John 2:16

(that is other than the human essence), and therefore he understood him with regard to essence (or οὐσιωδῶς⁴⁵⁵), not to be bare man, but to be of another nature and essence besides human.

However what is this nature? It isn't angelic, is it? On the contrary, he is not a created Angel, through whom all other Angels were created. For the Apostle says, through πρωτότοκον, who is the image of God (with respect to essence) and who is before all created things and through whom all things were created, whether in heaven or on earth, and therefore also all the Angels.⁴⁵⁶ Therefore he himself is not a created Angel. Since there is another nature included in Christ besides his human nature, it must be a divine nature. For no other λογική⁴⁵⁷ nature is found, besides human, angelic, or divine. For which reason the argument drawn from the words of Paul is strong: Christ is of the seed of David and of the Patriarchs according to the flesh. Therefore he is not pure man, but of another higher, more excellent nature, namely divine. For our whole argument depends on Christ's argument: David calls the Messiah his Lord, therefore, the Messiah is not the Son of David.⁴⁵⁸ However this does not entirely negate the statement, but only negates it in one respect. It is as if he said, according to the flesh he is the Son of David, but there is also something else in the Messiah according to which he is not the Son of David.

VI . This is also clear in Galatians. "Paul, an Apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ..."⁴⁵⁹ He denies that he was made an Apostle through any man and affirms that he was made an Apostle through Christ. Therefore he either denies that Christ is man *simpliciter* or he denies it in a certain respect, that is, that he is only man. Because Paul everywhere acknowledges and preaches that he is true man and was crucified, he cannot be denying that Christ is man *simpliciter*. Therefore he denies that he is man in a certain respect—that is, pure and simple man. And hence he indicates that in Christ there is also another more excellent nature than his human nature—namely, a divine one. Also, in Revelation John says that no one was found in heaven or on earth or under the earth who could open the Book or look into it.⁴⁶⁰ When he says, "No one," he excludes every creature, that is everything which was only creature. Nevertheless he says that Christ (whom he calls the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, and the Lamb as though slain) opened the Book. Therefore Christ is not numbered among mere and bare creatures. Therefore he is not bare and mere man, but something in him is more excellent and more divine.

⁴⁵⁵ οὐσιωδῶς – "with regard to essence"

⁴⁵⁶ Colossians 1:15

⁴⁵⁷ λογική - "rational"

⁴⁵⁸ Matthew 22:45

⁴⁵⁹ Galatians 1:1

⁴⁶⁰ Revelation 5:2

But if anyone were to object that by the word “no one,” no creature but Christ is intended, he makes this phrase meaningless. Because the context of the passage will not support this interpretation, as we will show.

VII. Christ had also prophesied of his passion to the Apostles; but shortly afterward he, comforting them, said that he was not only going to be resurrected, but that he would also return in glory with his Angels. Indeed, he said that there were some among them who would not taste death before they would see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. But after six days he wished to show them a sign and offer them a taste of his future glory, of which he had spoken earlier. Therefore, taking three disciples, he went up on a certain mountain and was there transfigured, so that his face shone like the sun and his garments became like snow and light.⁴⁶¹ Moses and Elijah came and spoke with him. A voice was heard from the cloud, “This is my beloved Son...” It is consistent with the preceding verses that Christ manifested such glory and put it forth in his person because he wished to do so. But if he had been a mere man, where did he get such great power? And how can he be a creature, through whom everything was made, and without whom not one of them was made that was made?⁴⁶²

Chapter Two

Concerning the divine names which are attributed to Christ in the New Testament, which demonstrate his preeminence before all created things.

I. The very same proposition is proved by the many excellent and divine names with which Christ is rightly adorned in the Scriptures of the New Testament. Since these names speak of a certain divine element which has a greater dignity than any human, or even angelic, nature or power. And Christ is not called by these names rashly or wrongly, but fittingly, from which it is clear that there is definitely another nature in Christ besides a human nature. I omit at present those two names “Son of God” and “God,” because I treat both of these separately in two other chapters. The rest ought here to be considered and thoroughly examined by us.

First, he was called Jesus; for the Angel said to Mary, “You will call his name Jesus.” And he adds an *αἰτιολογία*,⁴⁶³ drawn from the etymology.⁴⁶⁴ “For (he says) he will save his people from their sins,” thus also from death.⁴⁶⁵ But who is able to do this, if he is merely man? Freedom from sins is

⁴⁶¹ Matthew 17:2

⁴⁶² John 1:3

⁴⁶³ *αἰτιολογία* – “aetiology; origin”

⁴⁶⁴ Luke 1:31

⁴⁶⁵ Matthew 1:21

accomplished by four means. First, payment of debt, or satisfaction for sins. Second, pardon through mercy, such that sin is not imputed. Third, actual freedom from the servitude of indwelling sin, such that it does not dominate or reign in our mortal bodies, that we might not obey its lusts.⁴⁶⁶ And this is done through the Holy Spirit given unto us, by which we are servants of righteousness freed from our sins. Fourth, and lastly, perfect redemption from the indwelling sin—and this is done through resurrection to the life eternal, and immortal, when God will be all in all, such that nothing more remains in us of sin, but all will be divine.⁴⁶⁷

Certainly it is not possible for this fourfold liberty to be accomplished by a mere creature. However, Christ in all these ways freed his people from sin. First, with his payment of the price,⁴⁶⁸ and λύτρον⁴⁶⁹ of his blood. But from whence comes this power of the blood of Christ if he was bare man? Therefore it was not without cause that it was said, “God redeemed the Church through his own blood.”⁴⁷⁰ Second, by mercy, or by remission. But how is this possible, if he was a mere creature? But the Jews said, “Who is able to remit sins, except God alone?”⁴⁷¹ And the Apostle said, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, by not imputing their sins to them.”⁴⁷² Therefore in Christ there was and is something other than a mere human nature. Third, by liberation from the servitude of sin, so that it may not reign in us, that we might not obey its lusts. By the power of Christ’s death, we are dead to sin, and by the power of his resurrection, we live for righteousness and God. Thus the Apostle testifies, “Even so, reckon yourselves dead to sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ.”⁴⁷³ But how could Christ do this, and transmit the Holy Spirit, if he only had a human nature? Lastly, by redemption from indwelling sin, from all corruption of nature, through the blessed resurrection to heavenly life. This is also done through Christ. Therefore, he is called “the first fruits of those that sleep.”⁴⁷⁴ But how will Christ be able to raise the dead to that heavenly life, if he is bare man? For only God can resurrect the dead. Therefore, this name, Jesus, according to its etymology, wonderfully fits Christ, on account of the office which he has performed, because he freed us from our sins. This clearly demonstrates that Christ is not ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος⁴⁷⁵ (as the Heretics call him) or mere creature. To this add what the Apostle said, “It is given to him

⁴⁶⁶ Romans 6:12

⁴⁶⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:28

⁴⁶⁸ In the 1589 edition “persoluto precio” and in 1572 “persoluto pretio.” Here we translated “pretio” instead of “precio.”

⁴⁶⁹ λύτρον - “ransom”

⁴⁷⁰ Acts 20:28

⁴⁷¹ Luke 5:21

⁴⁷² 2 Corinthians 5:19

⁴⁷³ Romans 6:11

⁴⁷⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:20

⁴⁷⁵ ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον – “mere man”

(that is, it is fitting and honorable), the name which is above all names, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, in heaven, earth, and below the earth.”⁴⁷⁶

II. Consider also the name by which the Prophet foretold the Messiah himself (Christ) would be called *Emmanuel*, which means, “God with us.”⁴⁷⁷ Matthew proclaims this well, saying, “All this took place that it might be fulfilled what had been said by the Lord through the Prophet...” after he had recorded what the Angel said to Mary and had faithfully explained the reason given by the Angel.⁴⁷⁸ He teaches two things by this interpretation of the name ‘Emmanuel.’ First, he teaches that the one whom he commanded be called ‘Jesus’ would not be pure man, but God incarnate (or manifest) in the flesh. Second, he teaches that if Jesus were pure man, but not also God and therefore the Emmanuel, he could not fulfill his office, which was to redeem his people from sin.

III. Χριστός,⁴⁷⁹ משיח,⁴⁸⁰ and “Anointed One,” all mean the same thing. Thus the name ‘Messiah,’ is a proper epithet of Jesus himself. For this reason Matthew says, “From whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.”⁴⁸¹ Hence we gather that Christ is not mere man. For the Prophets recognized the Messiah, and proclaimed that he would not be pure man, but the Son of God, and God himself, as is proven from those testimonies we have gathered from the Old Testament (chiefly from the Prophets). This is why Caiaphas also joined the two [terms], Christ and Son of God, when he said, “I adjure you by the living God that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”⁴⁸² And the Apostles do the same, as we see in Matthew and John.⁴⁸³ Therefore why does it not shame those who call themselves Christians to call him Christ and yet to allege that he is a mere creature? For Caiaphas did not acknowledge that the Messiah was to be the Son of God by adoption, for by the Jews’ own judgment they themselves were sons of God by adoption, as in fact are all the saints.

Next, he was called Messiah, or Christ, since he was anointed as Prophet, Priest and King. But what kind of Prophet? The greatest of all.⁴⁸⁴ For all others from the foundation of the world learned whatsoever they knew of God from Christ himself, as John testifies, saying, “No one has ever seen God...”⁴⁸⁵ Moreover, others taught only externally, but Christ internally, by his Spirit. What

⁴⁷⁶ Philippians 2:9

⁴⁷⁷ Isaiah 7:14

⁴⁷⁸ Matthew 1:22

⁴⁷⁹ Χριστός – “Christ”

⁴⁸⁰ משיח – “Messiah”

⁴⁸¹ Matthew 1:16

⁴⁸² Matthew 26:63

⁴⁸³ Matthew 16:16; John 20:31

⁴⁸⁴ Luke 7:16

⁴⁸⁵ John 1:18

kind of High Priest? According to the order of Melchizedek,⁴⁸⁶ who by a single sacrifice has forever made satisfaction for all sin.⁴⁸⁷ Who might be able to accomplish this? Finally, what sort of King? A spiritual and eternal one, as he himself testified, “My kingdom is not of this world.”⁴⁸⁸ And the Angel Gabriel confirms the same thing to Mary, “And he will rule over the house of Jacob forever.”⁴⁸⁹ Who could do this, if he was a pure man? For how is he able to rule in the souls of men? Therefore Christ is not a mere man. For how is he pure man, who yesterday and today is always one and the same Christ, King, and High Priest, through whom is saved whosoever is saved?⁴⁹⁰

IV. All the remaining epithets of Jesus pertain to these three names: Jesus or Savior, Christ (by which name is signified that he was and is a Prophet, Priest, King), and Emmanuel (by which name the Deity and humanity of Christ and redemption through Christ are indicated). This is because they either refer to his person, that is, Christ’s human and divine nature (which refers to Emmanuel), or to his office, either of Priest, Prophet, or King (which refers to the name of Christ). For which reason, since these three names have been clearly explained to show that Christ is not mere man, it is apparent enough that the same is demonstrated by the remaining names. Nevertheless, because it is interesting to see with what other names Christ is adorned, and it is also useful that we be strengthened by any means in the doctrine of Christ’s Deity, I therefore will not be reluctant to recount the other names also.

V. Therefore he is called the Savior of the World, as it is in Luke: “I bring you good news of great joy... for a Savior has been born to you,”⁴⁹¹ chiefly a Savior of souls, then also of bodies. In John, he is called the Savior of the World.⁴⁹² But God everywhere in the Prophets emphasizes that there is no Savior except himself.⁴⁹³ Moreover, no man is able to either destroy or save souls. “For there is only one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.”⁴⁹⁴ And, “Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul...”⁴⁹⁵ Therefore how could Christ be the Savior of the world if he were pure

⁴⁸⁶ Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6; Hebrews 7:15ff.

⁴⁸⁷ Hebrews 10:12

⁴⁸⁸ John 18:36

⁴⁸⁹ Luke 1:33

⁴⁹⁰ Hebrews 13:8

⁴⁹¹ Luke 2:10

⁴⁹² John 4:42

⁴⁹³ Isaiah 43:11

⁴⁹⁴ James 4:12

⁴⁹⁵ Matthew 10:28

man? For the same reason, he is called σωτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ,⁴⁹⁶ because “my eyes have seen σωτήριον σοῦ ...”⁴⁹⁷

VI. What does it mean that Scripture repeatedly calls Christ the wisdom of God? What kind of wisdom is this? Undoubtedly, this is the kind which Solomon described, possessed from eternity by the Father, begotten of the Father, made Mistress of all by the Father, all of which she created with the Father, who considered this with delight, since she was with men.⁴⁹⁸ Certainly, Christ is not this kind of wisdom, insofar as he is man, because he, Christ as man, was not begotten of the Father before the world was created. Nor is this the wisdom which was revealed in the Scriptures, namely the Gospel, for this did not create everything with the Father. Nor is the Father himself this wisdom, for he did not beget himself. Therefore it is Christ, insofar as he is God.

Nor is he called only wisdom, but also λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ⁴⁹⁹ and λόγος τῆς ζωῆς.⁵⁰⁰ What kind of λόγος? The kind described in John, which was already existing when the world was created (indeed, through whom everything was made) and who was God and was afterward made man. This is also such a λόγος as the kind described in Revelation, “I saw heaven open, and there a white horse and the one who was sitting on the horse was called Faithful and True...and he had a name written on him which no one knew except he himself...and his name is called ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.”⁵⁰¹ If he is called such a name, then what is that name which no one knows except he himself unless it is the name of Jehovah (which is said to be ineffable, since no one can comprehend the essence of God except for God)? He who is described in such a way cannot be pure man or mere creature, particularly since John says, “Through him all things were made and without him, nothing was made that was made.”⁵⁰² He is a creature because the λόγος was made flesh, yet he is not a creature because all things were made through him.

He is also called the power of God, because through him God the Father did, created, ruled, sustained all things,⁵⁰³ and he moves in the elect, raises the dead. Finally, he always has done and does all things through Christ as through his own power, and by this he created and sustains everything. Therefore Christ is not pure creature.

⁴⁹⁶ σωτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ – “the salvation of God”

⁴⁹⁷ Luke 2:30

⁴⁹⁸ Proverbs 8

⁴⁹⁹ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ - “the word of God,” John 1:1

⁵⁰⁰ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς – “the word of life,” 1 John 1:1

⁵⁰¹ Revelation 19:11

⁵⁰² John 1:3

⁵⁰³ Hebrews 1:2

VII. Nor should we omit that Paul calls him an Apostle (of the Father) and of our confession.⁵⁰⁴ He is an Apostle of the Father because he was sent by the Father and he was a messenger of the Father. He is said to be an Apostle of our confession, that is, of the doctrine of the Gospel, because he himself brought it from heaven to us. However, he was always an Apostle of the Father, even before the incarnation, because he is the one who had come already to men from the beginning and declared the will of the Father to them, and revealed it. For this reason, He was also said to be the Angel of Jehovah and the Angel of the Testament by Moses and the Prophets.⁵⁰⁵ And the words of John the Baptist pertain to this, when he said, concerning Christ, “Nobody has ever seen God; the Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, made him known to us,”—to us, that is, to men, however many there have been from the creation of the world. If he was already sent from heaven by the Father, from the beginning, and if he was the Apostle of the Father, even before he was made man, how could he be mere man?

VIII. Consider also that he is called our only Teacher and Doctor.⁵⁰⁶ Why is he called our only Doctor? Because all other Doctors, whoever at any time have known about God, were taught by this one. “No one has seen God. . .”⁵⁰⁷ However, Jesus listens to the Father alone. And because he is the only one to teach perfectly, not externally only, but also internally, by sealing the doctrine in souls through his Spirit, “We receive the Spirit of Christ. . .”⁵⁰⁸ The same thing is also said in Matthew, “No one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.”⁵⁰⁹ But how does he reveal him? Through his Spirit. Therefore all who are taught by this teacher, because they are taught through the Holy Spirit, were called θεοδίδακτοι⁵¹⁰ by the Prophet.⁵¹¹ No man is able to do this—only Christ is able to accomplish this. Therefore he is rightly called the only Teacher and Doctor. For this same reason he is also called the Great Prophet.⁵¹² For only he, as it was said, teaches internally through the Holy Spirit. For which reason, he is not able to be a mere man.

⁵⁰⁴ Hebrews 3:1

⁵⁰⁵ Malachi 3:1

⁵⁰⁶ Matthew 23:10

⁵⁰⁷ John 1:18; 8:55

⁵⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 2:12

⁵⁰⁹ Matthew 11:27

⁵¹⁰ Θεοδίδακτοι – “taught by God”

⁵¹¹ Isaiah 54:13

⁵¹² Luke 7:16

He is also called the Faithful and True.⁵¹³ Indeed, he calls himself truth⁵¹⁴—because he is neither able to be deceived, nor to deceive, neither is any deceit found in his mouth. Yet, every man is a liar; only God is true.⁵¹⁵ So just as it is with the title ‘life,’ so it is with the title ‘true’—it does not fit unless he is God. Therefore, ‘truth’ is among his names. For how is a mere creature able to be called properly Truth Itself, or Life?

IX. Next, in several ways we can reason that Christ is not mere man because he is called a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. First from his role as High Priest. For he was High Priest before he became man and before he took on the body which he was to offer up. For the Apostle introduced him as such, from a Psalm of David, as the one who came into the World from heaven through the incarnation, talking to the Father, and promising his voluntary future obedience. Yet, also at the same time this one teaches us that for the expiation of our sins it was necessary that he who was the eternal Son of God in heaven, take up our flesh and take it onto himself, so that by the flesh sanctified through his Deity and by the bestowed ability to expiate sins, he is able to be offered up for our sins.⁵¹⁶ Therefore, thus the Apostle says, “Consequently, coming into the World, he said, ‘You did not desire sacrifice and offering, but you have prepared a body (that is, this human nature) for me, O God.’” When he said ‘coming into the World,’ he demonstrates him to have been outside of the World before, namely, in heaven, and in a far different state than a human one. But when he says, “you have prepared for me,” he teaches that even before he took on flesh he was a true ὑφιστάμενος. For who does not know that there is a distinction between that which has something adapted and appropriated to it and that which adapts and appropriates itself to something else?

And at the same time he teaches that human nature was like a garment, as it were, for Christ, when he became man. Then before he took on flesh, not only was he true ὑφιστάμενος, but also without a beginning in time, that is, he was eternal. For Melchizedek was a type of this one; indeed it says he neither had a beginning of days, nor an end, because it is not recorded when he was born, or when he died.⁵¹⁷ But the Apostle teaches that this is most true of Christ, because Christ, in fact, did not have a beginning of days, for he is eternal and from before the foundation of the world. Neither does he have an end, because he did not die, but remains forever. Nevertheless, insofar as he was human, he had a beginning. Therefore there is some other nature in him besides his human one, according to which he did not have a beginning. For this reason, just as Melchizedek is called ἀπάτωρ καὶ ἀμήτωρ⁵¹⁸ (because it does not say who his father and mother were), so too Christ, in

⁵¹³ Revelation 3:7

⁵¹⁴ Revelation 19:11; John 14:6

⁵¹⁵ Romans 3:4; Psalm 116:11

⁵¹⁶ Hebrews 10:5; Psalm 40:6

⁵¹⁷ Hebrews 7:3

⁵¹⁸ ἀπάτωρ καὶ ἀμήτωρ – “without father and without mother”

fact, was ἀπάτωρ according to the flesh, καὶ ἀμήτωρ according to the Spirit and according to his other nature.

Then this same thing is confirmed by the means of the sacrifice to be offered—“Through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself.”⁵¹⁹ But what is that eternal Spirit of Christ, through which he offers his very self? Clearly that which the Apostle juxtaposes with the flesh in Romans, saying that Christ is of the seed of David, κατὰ σάρκα,⁵²⁰ but the Son of God κατὰ τὸ πνεῦμα,⁵²¹ that is, according to his Deity and the eternal power of that eternal Deity.⁵²² Then, the same is proved by the power of his sacrifice. For other priests, because their sacrifices were ineffectual, had to gather many sacrifices to offer repeatedly. But Christ offered his sacrifice only once, and by this one offering made satisfaction for all. Thus, the Apostle says, “But Christ through his own blood entered into the holy places once. . .”⁵²³ But what is the reason for this difference, that all others were forced to repeat sacrifices, but this one obtained redemption with one sacrifice? Because those were mere men, but this one is not a mere man. And therefore, his sacrifice was of infinite power, but the rest of them were of finite power and were therefore ineffectual.

X. Consider also that he is called the only Mediator between God and men.⁵²⁴ But the Mediator cannot be effectual unless he partakes in both natures, so that from one of them he might have that which he offers up, and that from the other he might have infinite power, by which the sacrifice might be effectual for the atonement of sins. Therefore Christ could not be a mere man if he was and is a perfect mediator between God and men. And this is what the Apostle argues everywhere, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Additionally, because there is only one mediator of all the elect of mankind, he was such from the beginning of the world (as the Apostle also says in Hebrews), even though at that time he was not a man.⁵²⁵

Let us also consider the title “Advocate” which is given to him by John, when he says, “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (and therefore an effectual Advocate).”⁵²⁶ For that reason he is not mere man. For just as if he were pure man, his humanity would not be sufficient for and capable of atoning for sins, as we just demonstrated—therefore he was indeed effectual because he was not mere man but also God. For that reason it is said that God redeemed the Church “with his own blood.” By that phrase, we are taught that unless he were God,

⁵¹⁹ Hebrews 9:14

⁵²⁰ κατὰ σάρκα – “according to the flesh”

⁵²¹ κατὰ τὸ πνεῦμα – “according to the spirit”

⁵²² Romans 1:4

⁵²³ Hebrews 9:12

⁵²⁴ 1 Timothy 2:5

⁵²⁵ Hebrews 13:8

⁵²⁶ 1 John 2:1

he could never have redeemed the Church with that mere and only-human blood. And in Hebrews we read that he offered himself through the eternal Spirit;⁵²⁷ so too, he could not be an effectual Advocate with the Father if he were mere man.

XI. Also, how could he be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world if he were of finite power?⁵²⁸ But any creature, whatsoever, is of finite power. We also ought to reference John: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”⁵²⁹ The sins of the world could not be taken away by one who is (as Ebion claimed) bare man. For Hosea teaches us to pray to God and say to him alone, “Take away our iniquity.”⁵³⁰ Besides all this, the Scriptures teach that Christ is our passover lamb who has been sacrificed.⁵³¹ Peter explains how he was sacrificed: “He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.”⁵³² And, “Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh for us...”⁵³³ Therefore there is something else in Christ besides the flesh according to which he neither suffered nor died. For Christ is entirely our Passover, by whose power we were freed from the slavery of Egypt (that is, of sin, Satan, and death), and by whose power we escaped the hand and sword of the Angel (that is, the wrath of God). But he was put to death only according to the flesh, and so the power of his sacrifice came from somewhere else.

XII. Why is he also called our peace?⁵³⁴ Since through him we are reconciled and made to be at peace with God the Father. Since through him, having removed hostilities and broken down the dividing wall of the law, He made one people from the two. Since he pacified our consciences. Finally, because he himself is our righteousness, by which we are just; even so, he is our peace, by which we are made to be at peace and reconciled to God the Father. How might this be fitting to one, mere man? For as Jeremiah says that Jehovah is our righteousness, even so, he is also our peace.⁵³⁵

Likewise, let us also consider the name ‘our hope,’ for this is what the Apostle calls him,⁵³⁶ since we are able to depend on none but Christ for the hope of eternal life. For among us there is nothing upon which the hope of eternal salvation can depend, since everything is contaminated by sin. Outside of us, no creature is found upon whom we can hope for salvation, since none can

⁵²⁷ Acts 20:28; Hebrews 9:14

⁵²⁸ 1 John 2:2; Romans 3:25

⁵²⁹ John 1:29

⁵³⁰ Hosea 14:2

⁵³¹ 1 Corinthians 5:7

⁵³² 1 Peter 3:18

⁵³³ 1 Peter 4:1

⁵³⁴ Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20

⁵³⁵ Jeremiah 23:6

⁵³⁶ 1 Timothy 1:1

bestow it (since they are not God), or properly merit it (since all are sinners or at least are of finite power), and, moreover, we labor out of obligation and are helpless slaves. On the other hand, God is more than sufficient in his essence and nature. But he, although he is able, nevertheless does not wish to bestow salvation, unless his justice be satisfied with regard to our sins. What hope is then left to us? Christ. For he made satisfaction for us by his obedience unto death, even a death of crucifixion. Therefore, he is rightly called our hope, since in this alone is our salvation. If, however, he were a mere man or mere creature, our hope could not depend on him. For throughout the Psalms we are commanded to hope in God alone, and God is called our hope. Therefore this name of Christ, ‘our hope’, also teaches that he is by no means a mere creature.

He is also called ‘our life.’ For example, “When Christ appears, who is our life”⁵³⁷ and “I am the Life.”⁵³⁸ This is for two reasons: first, since he is the life by which the body lives; second, since Christ is the means by which we understand. In him was the life (the true and eternal *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ*⁵³⁹ of all things, namely, Christ the *λόγος*, who is called *λόγος τῆς ζωῆς*⁵⁴⁰) was *τὸ φῶς*⁵⁴¹ of men—that is, by his effective power, men not only have life (like the rest of the living creatures), but also are bestowed with the light of reason and intelligence.⁵⁴² For Saint John teaches that *ὁ λόγος* is the efficient cause in men, both of his entire and excellent life, and of all light and intelligence, and hence calls *τὸν λόγον—καὶ τὴν ζωὴν, καὶ τὸ φῶς, τῶν ἀνθρώπων*;⁵⁴³ not as I say formally, but efficiently. This is because the thing itself is such formally in itself, that is, the thing itself, and *οὐσιωδῶς*.⁵⁴⁴ Therefore, he cannot be a mere creature.

XIII. What is that which is often said to be the true light of the world? As John says, “He is the true light, which enlightens...”⁵⁴⁵ and, “I am the light of the world.”⁵⁴⁶ Given these two sayings, I observe that Christ is called the light in a two-fold way. First, insofar as he is one with God the Father, he is the purest and holiest essence, in whom there is no darkness, dwelling in unapproachable light. For God is most properly light, about which John writes, “God is light...”⁵⁴⁷ And the Apostle says, “He

⁵³⁷ Colossians 3:4

⁵³⁸ John 14:6

⁵³⁹ *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ* – “and the life”

⁵⁴⁰ *λόγος τῆς ζωῆς* – “the word of life”

⁵⁴¹ *τὸ φῶς* – “the light”

⁵⁴² John 1:4; John 1:1

⁵⁴³ *καὶ τὴν ζωὴν, καὶ τὸ φῶς, τῶν ἀνθρώπων* – “both the life and the light of men”

⁵⁴⁴ *οὐσιωδῶς* – “after the manner of existence”

⁵⁴⁵ John 1:9

⁵⁴⁶ John 8:12

⁵⁴⁷ 1 John 1:5

dwells in unapproachable light.”⁵⁴⁸ This is Christ, and in accordance with this meaning John writes about him, “The true light was...”⁵⁴⁹ How is he true? Since he shines by and through himself, and his splendor is not shared by others; although whatsoever he has, he has from the Father. For this reason, although angels and men are sometimes called light, they are not the true light; since whatever light they have, whether natural or spiritual, they do not have it of themselves, but they have received it from Christ. Thus John adds about the light of Christ, “Which enlightens every man...” Every man, he says, without exception, at least when he comes into the world, that is, when he is born. It is evident that this is not a reference to the enlightenment which leads to eternal salvation. For not all, when they enter into this world, are enlightened unto salvation. Therefore what is this enlightenment, which he says enlightens every man through Christ when he comes into this world? It is the imparting of mind, judgment, and rationality. For when all men come into this world, they come endowed with soul, rationality, and judgment. And all have engraved in them the judgment of the just and the unjust. This judgment and intelligence he calls enlightenment, and light. From whom do they have this? From Christ, the creator, as John teaches. For he enlightens every man coming into this world with the rays of his wisdom, intelligence, and judgment.

How can this be attributed to a pure creature, since he must be “the light, which enlightens...”? Angels also are light, as Paul testifies in Hebrews, “Who makes his angels the Spirit, and his ministers a flame of fire.”⁵⁵⁰ And men are light, insofar as they partake of the divine light. But who was ever such a light that could enlighten every man, but Christ? And since it enlightens every man coming into the world, that light was always there from the beginning, and itself enlightened Adam, and all men who existed at that time. Thus it shines forever, so that it can enlighten all. Next, he is called the light of the world, insofar as he is the savior, and the salvation of the world. Matthew cites a verse from Isaiah 9 according to this meaning, “The people, who walked in darkness...”⁵⁵¹ This is also why it says in Luke, “the light rising from on high,” by which it is shown that Christ’s origin is from on high, that is, from the heavenly Father.⁵⁵² Then he adds this testimony of Isaiah, “that he should appear to them who are in darkness...” And Simeon calls Christ “a light for revelation to the Gentiles,” since he says, “my eyes have seen...”⁵⁵³ And according to this meaning Christ said of himself, “I am the light of the world.”⁵⁵⁴ And because of this saying the Jews understood that he was making himself the savior of the world, and God, who is properly light. Thus they said, “You offer testimony about yourself...” Therefore, according to this second

⁵⁴⁸ 1 Timothy 6:16

⁵⁴⁹ John 1:9

⁵⁵⁰ Hebrews 1:7

⁵⁵¹ Matthew 4:16; Isaiah 9:2

⁵⁵² Luke 1:78

⁵⁵³ Luke 2:32

⁵⁵⁴ John 8:12

meaning, it is apparent that Christ is not a mere man, since he is the true light and the light of the world. For Christ was God in the flesh, as a light in a lantern, who emitted his rays to whomever he wished, as in the transfiguration and when he appeared to Paul.

XIV. But why is he called the bridegroom of the Church both in spirit and in body? As he is called in Matthew, “The day is coming, when the bridegroom will be taken from them.”⁵⁵⁵ And he says the same in John, “He who has the bride is the bridegroom.”⁵⁵⁶ Therefore it is not possible for him to be mere man, since in the time of the Old Testament, Jehovah God always was the bridegroom of his Church, and he also promised he would be the future bridegroom to those who would be gathered after the coming of the Messiah, as many from the remnant of Israel as from the Gentiles (as is seen in Hosea and other places).

Next, because of these things which the Apostle writes about the office of the bridegroom of the Church and their union, necessarily Jesus cannot be the bridegroom of the Church if he is a pure man. For the Apostle says in Ephesians, “The husband is the head of the wife, like Christ is the head of the Church, and he is the one who gives salvation to the body.”⁵⁵⁷ How does he give salvation to his body? Through his own Spirit, the power by which he communicates this to the body, as the Apostle explained earlier.⁵⁵⁸ How is this possible, if he is a mere creature? Then he says, Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her, so that he might sanctify her to himself, cleansing her by the washing of water through his word. But whose task is it to sanctify and cleanse the Church from her filthy sins? Only God’s. Thus, whence comes such power of Christ’s blood if he is pure man? Therefore, we must always remember that saying in Acts, “God redeemed the Church with his own blood.”⁵⁵⁹ Moreover he said, Christ cleanses his Church such that he restores her to himself glorious, without spot, without wrinkle, and without fault.

But this also is not possible if he is mere man. For this sanctification is accomplished through the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of God and called the Spirit of Christ.⁵⁶⁰ Certainly no man, who is mere man, is able to communicate this Spirit and sanctify souls with it—but God alone. Earlier, he says Christ has joined the Church to himself, such that she becomes his flesh, just as of a man and his wife, “The two were one flesh.”⁵⁶¹ It is not possible for this our union with Christ and one another, to be such that all are one body with Christ and one flesh, except through the binding of

⁵⁵⁵ Matthew 9:15

⁵⁵⁶ John 3:29

⁵⁵⁷ Ephesians 5:23

⁵⁵⁸ Ephesians 4

⁵⁵⁹ Acts 20:28

⁵⁶⁰ Romans 8:9

⁵⁶¹ Genesis 2:24

that same Spirit of Christ, as the Apostle clearly teaches in Corinthians.⁵⁶² And since ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι⁵⁶³ all are baptized into one body. Neither is he who is mere man able to accomplish this, but only God—for God alone communicates his Spirit.

It is also said that Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church, as his own flesh. How does he—who is in heaven—do this if he is a mere creature? For he nourishes and cherishes the Church with the food of his body and the drink of his blood. But neither the flesh nor the blood of Christ is shared with anyone, except through the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, as the Apostle teaches in Corinthians. “We all (he says) have been baptized into one Spirit,” that is, through the same Spirit.⁵⁶⁴ For that phrase ought to be repeated which is found at the beginning of the verse, ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, since the meaning is this, just as through one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, so also through one Spirit we are made to drink into one Spirit (by the blood of Christ)—that is, such that we all are not only one body, but also one Spirit with Christ. For which reason it is certain that Christ is not able to communicate to us his own flesh and his own blood, unless he is God, because these things are not able to be communicated except through the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, the Apostle adds this, Christ thus unites us to himself, such that we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. How are we of his flesh and of his bones? Do we not receive our flesh and our bones from Christ’s flesh and Christ’s bones? This saying was most truly said concerning Eve, because she was of Adam’s (her husband’s) flesh and of Adam’s bones. But the fact that we are of Christ’s flesh (although it is true), is not easily understood. For it seems rather that Christ is of our flesh and of our bones, that is of the Church, since he receives flesh from us. Which is why the Apostle says in Hebrews, “Since the children (that is us) are sharers of flesh and blood, likewise he himself also was made to share. . .”⁵⁶⁵ Therefore how are we of Christ’s flesh? We can understand our flesh and blood in two ways. First, according to substance. Of course, we are not only of the flesh of Christ in this way, but we are flesh and blood from the flesh and blood of our parents and principally of the flesh of the first Adam. And in this same manner the flesh of Christ is also of our flesh and of our bones, since he received it from the flesh and bones of David, of Abraham, and of Adam. Second it can be understood according to the holy and good character which we achieve through Christ, since of course our flesh is sanctified through the Spirit of Christ and made one with Christ. And thus it is made like another flesh, not a flesh full of sin, but holy flesh; not earthly flesh, but somehow flesh of heaven. And thus Christ is a man of heaven, like the Apostle said in Corinthians.⁵⁶⁶ In this way we are of the flesh and bones of Christ (if our flesh is of the flesh of Christ not according to substance, but according to quality, that is, holy) due to the

⁵⁶² 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁵⁶³ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι – “by one spirit”

⁵⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁵⁶⁵ Hebrews 2:14

⁵⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:47

sanctification of Christ's flesh, by the power of the spiritual marriage bond between Christ and us. Likewise every wife (excepting Eve), insofar as she is human and a woman, is not flesh from the flesh of her husband, but is the flesh and bone of the flesh and bone of her own parents. But insofar as she is his wife, she is of the flesh of her husband, according to that passage, the two shall become one flesh, on account of the matrimonial bond.⁵⁶⁷ So we, insofar as we are human, are not flesh of the flesh of Christ, but on the contrary Christ, insofar as he is man, is flesh of our flesh. But insofar as we are Christians and the brides of Christ, through the Spirit of Christ, sanctified by Christ himself, made clean, formed into one body, we are now of his flesh and of his bones.

And this is a mystery about which the Apostle wrote, the two shall become one flesh, and this is a great mystery.⁵⁶⁸ If a mystery, this is therefore a mystical and spiritual union by which we are one with Christ and of his flesh and of his bones. Why a mystery? Because it is accomplished through the Holy Spirit unknown to men on earth. And this is the chief point that we ought to consider about the union of Christ and the Church: this union of ours (clearly of our souls and of our flesh) with the Spirit and the flesh of Christ, through that same Spirit of Christ that is poured into us, sanctifying and cleansing our flesh, is such that our flesh somehow becomes like another flesh, and our bones become like other bones on account of regeneration.

We easily conclude from these things that Christ is not mere man. For if Christ were bare man, this union would not be possible. This happened because since he was God, by that same Spirit of sanctification (by which his flesh was holy from the moment of his conception) he also sanctifies our flesh, joins it to himself, and makes it another flesh. In summary, our birth is twofold: one of the flesh from men, the other spiritual from God. Pertaining to the first, our flesh is not of the flesh of Christ; pertaining to the second, it is of the the flesh of Christ because it is regenerated through the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit is communicated to us by Christ's flesh, as it is in John, "On account of his fullness we all receive grace."⁵⁶⁹ Therefore it is of the flesh of Christ not directly, but mediately through the Holy Spirit.

XV. But why does the Apostle call him the "end of the law?"⁵⁷⁰ There are three reasons for this name. The first reason is because Christ perfectly fulfilled the law, regarding observation of the commandments. This observation was the end of the law, as there was finally one who observed it perfectly. Otherwise the chief end would not have been accomplished. The second reason is because all the curses of the law fell upon the one Christ when he suffered the punishments of the law for the sins of all of us and of all of the Elect who have transgressed the law from the beginning of the world. This was the second end of the law, that finally all the curses would fully and perfectly fall

⁵⁶⁷ Genesis 2:24

⁵⁶⁸ Ephesians 5:31

⁵⁶⁹ John 1:16

⁵⁷⁰ Romans 10:4

upon one man and would have their fulfillment. The third reason is because all the blessings, that is, the promises of the law, come to their fulfillment in Christ. Hence the Apostle says, “However many promises of God there are, in him (Christ) they are yes and Amen, to the glory of God.”⁵⁷¹ That is, all the promises were made manifest and fulfilled in Christ when he performed his office on account of his obedience and on account of the curses of the law which were fulfilled in him; he prepared the heavenly inheritance for us. And this was the third end of the law, that these promises were finally fulfilled.

For there is nothing in the law except commandments, curses, or blessings (that is, promises). Christ kept all the commandments; Christ took all the curses on himself; all the promises had their fulfillment in Christ. And in Matthew, Christ, speaking of all these things, says, “I have not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them,” that is, in all respects, because he keeps every part of the law.⁵⁷² Therefore he adds, “Amen and amen, I say to you, until when...” He shows here that he will keep all the precepts and that he will take all the curses on himself, which Paul bears witness to in Galatians. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us,” and thus by his obedience and passion, he would bring it about that all the promises also would have their fulfillment.⁵⁷³ And so the whole law and all the Scriptures look to Christ as their end and goal. Therefore Christ is the end of the law.

Nor is he simply the end of the law, but the end for righteousness to everyone who believes. For the law, with its severity and its curses, is against transgressors and looks to this as its end and goal – that all those transgressors, forced in desperation, are compelled to run to him. He is the one who pardons past transgressions through his mercy, who frees them from the curse of the law through his righteousness, and, finally, who gives strength to them by which they keep the law through his Spirit. By this, he circumcises their hearts, and gives them eternal life without the works of the Law, so that by true faith alone they might believe in him. Who is this one? Christ. Therefore he is rightly called the end of the law for righteousness (that is, for the remission of sins, for regeneration, for the true circumcision of the heart, and finally for receiving eternal life) to everyone who believes.

However, how could Christ be the end of the law in these ways if he were given only a human nature? For no man could, by his own obedience, satisfy the law for himself, and still less could he do so for all those believing in him. Nor could he become the curse such that on account of the curse which he had sustained, others could be free from the curse. Nor, finally, could he obtain the promises such that they have their fulfillment not only in him, but also in all the others. Why so? Because the obedience of a mere man and the curse which he received would have always been of finite power. The same thing is clear in Deuteronomy, where Moses promises and explains this end

⁵⁷¹ 2 Corinthians 1:20

⁵⁷² Matthew 5:17

⁵⁷³ Galatians 3:13

of the law. For there Moses does not act as a lawgiver, but as a prophet of the death and resurrection of Christ and of the righteousness prepared for us through him and through the faith possessed by us—just as the Apostle interprets in Romans.⁵⁷⁴ For after Moses had set forth the laws, numbered the curses, and enumerated the promises, he finally says in chapter thirty, “Therefore when all these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, you will call to mind. . . .”⁵⁷⁵ Who is this, of whom Moses says, “When all these things have come upon you. . . .”? Could it be the people of Israel without Christ? Certainly not. For all the blessings did not come upon Israel, nor did all the curses. And yet Moses says, “When all these have come upon you, the blessing and the curse.” Therefore Christ, the head of all the people, with all his body, is the one upon whom every curse and every blessing is prophesied to come. For all these came upon him, and consequently, they come upon the whole body, that is, on all the true Israelites, insofar as he bore all curses for all of our transgressions, and insofar as he fulfilled the law for all by keeping it, that the blessings of the law might also come upon him and upon us. Then finally all the true Israelites turn to the Lord because of Christ, and they receive the Holy Spirit, by whom they obey the law of God. At this point, the Lord will circumcise their hearts and at last lead them into the land promised to their fathers, that is, into heaven.

And this is the promise of righteousness of which Paul writes in Romans, which has a twofold significance in him, so that we might not doubt that Christ died for our sins and that he took these curses upon himself, of which I wrote earlier; and so that we might not doubt concerning the resurrection on account of our justification and that after the resurrection, all the blessings fell on him, and by consequence, on us.⁵⁷⁶ Who is he to whom the elect turn, who circumcised them, and who led them into the promised land? Is this not Jehovah, to whom the law directs the people through its threats and its promises? And is he not the one who circumcised them and to whom they turn? Without a doubt. And so Jehovah is the end, the one to whom the Law directs the people. But this is also Christ, “For the law was the tutor until Christ.”⁵⁷⁷ And as Hosea says, “Afterward the children of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king,” that is, the Messiah.⁵⁷⁸ To this, Jeremiah adds, “This is the name which they will call him, ‘The Lord Jehovah, our righteousness.’”⁵⁷⁹ This passage from Romans also pertains to this, adding, “And in this way all of Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion. . . .’”⁵⁸⁰ Who is this Deliverer who comes from Zion? Christ. For the Apostle says, “In him (Christ) you were

⁵⁷⁴ Romans 10:4

⁵⁷⁵ Deuteronomy 30:1

⁵⁷⁶ Romans 4:25

⁵⁷⁷ Galatians 3:24

⁵⁷⁸ Hosea 3:5

⁵⁷⁹ Jeremiah 23:6

⁵⁸⁰ Romans 11:26

circumcised...⁵⁸¹ However, Moses said that Jehovah is the one to whom the children of Israel will turn, and, besides other things, will circumcise their hearts. Yet the Apostle in Colossians teaches that Christ is he who circumcises hearts. And he calls it the circumcision *of Christ* on account of him who performs it, since Christ is the one who circumcises. Moreover, Jeremiah says that Jehovah will be our righteousness; and the Apostle says that Christ is not only this righteousness but also the end of the law for righteousness to every believer,⁵⁸² since he is the one who by his own righteousness justifies those who believe in him.⁵⁸³

Therefore it is clear that if Christ is the end of the law, then he is not bare man, since he perfectly kept the whole law, not so much for himself as for all the elect; and he took all its curses on himself, not so much for himself as for the elect and for the sake of all their sins; and finally, he accomplished these things such that all the promises would have their fulfillment in him and in all the elect. A mere creature certainly could not fulfill this. Therefore it is abundantly clear that Christ is not pure man if he is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer: first, because he who justifies believers in this way is God; second, because he who is righteousness for believers is God; finally, because he who circumcises hearts is God. All these are clear enough from the prophecies of the prophets.

XVI. Neither is it without reason that he is called holy and just. But how is he holy? Not simply as others are, but holy, in that he makes holy those who believe in him. “That he might sanctify her (the Church), cleansing her by washing...”⁵⁸⁴ But this, as I said before, can only be done by God alone.

In the same way he is called just; not only in himself, but also because he justifies others. He is called this in Acts, “Who announced beforehand the coming of the Just One, (Christ) whose...”⁵⁸⁵ John also calls him this, saying, “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just.”⁵⁸⁶ But how is he just? He is just because he justifies the ungodly. For this reason he is also called our righteousness, since he justifies us by his own righteousness.⁵⁸⁷ But whose function is it to justify, except God alone? Yet, this is often attributed to Christ in the Holy Scriptures, as in Isaiah, “My righteous servant will justify many...”⁵⁸⁸ But this is the function of God alone, as the Apostle testifies

⁵⁸¹ Colossians 2:11

⁵⁸² 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁵⁸³ Romans 10:4

⁵⁸⁴ Ephesians 5:26

⁵⁸⁵ Acts 7:52

⁵⁸⁶ 1 John 2:1

⁵⁸⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁵⁸⁸ Isaiah 53:11

in Romans, “That he might be just, and the justifier...”⁵⁸⁹ And who it he who condemns? It is God who justifies.

XVII. It is also not without reason that he is called the glory of the people Israel. In Luke, after Simeon says that Christ is a light for revelation to the Gentiles, that is, salvation to the Gentiles, he also calls him the glory of the people Israel, and their Savior.⁵⁹⁰ He calls Christ glory, since Christ is the one through whom the true and heavenly glory is to be shown to Israel, and the one through whom the second house will be more glorious than the first, as the Apostle says in Corinthians.⁵⁹¹ Therefore he is the glory of Israel, since in him the Israelites truly have reason to glory. And we are to glory in God alone, as Jeremiah and the Apostle teaches, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.”⁵⁹²

What shall I say about the names of Rock, Foundation, and Cornerstone, which are found throughout the Scriptures? He is called the Rock, upon which the Church is established,⁵⁹³ and the Foundation of the Church, “No one is able to lay another foundation...”⁵⁹⁴ But if Christ is *ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος*,⁵⁹⁵ this foundation would be exceedingly weak and frail, upon which the whole Church from the foundation of the world was established, and in whom the whole structure is firm, inasmuch as it leans upon him. But he is thus firm such that not even the gates of Hell can prevail. Indeed, if he were pure man, the Church could by no means be founded and built upon him. And he is called the Cornerstone,⁵⁹⁶ since by his Holy Spirit he joins both people together, and secures them firmly, in order that from all the elect, both Gentiles and Jews, there should be one building and temple in which he and the Father will dwell, as he himself teaches in John.⁵⁹⁷

Neither is he called the horn of our salvation in vain.⁵⁹⁸ For he is the one who with unconquered resolve and unbroken strength, having overthrown his enemies, sin, death, and Satan, established the spiritual kingdom of Israel forever.

But the most splendid of all is that name which he is given in Luke, *ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους*, “dayspring from on high” or “branch from on high,” that is, from heaven.⁵⁹⁹ This name is similar to

⁵⁸⁹ Romans 3:26; Romans 8:33

⁵⁹⁰ Luke 2:32

⁵⁹¹ 2 Corinthians 3

⁵⁹² Jeremiah 9:24; 1 Corinthians 1:31

⁵⁹³ Matthew 16:18

⁵⁹⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:11

⁵⁹⁵ *ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος* – “bare man”

⁵⁹⁶ Matthew 21:42; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6

⁵⁹⁷ John 14:20

⁵⁹⁸ Luke 1:69

⁵⁹⁹ Luke 1:78

that which the Apostle calls him in Corinthians, namely, the second and heavenly Adam.⁶⁰⁰ But certainly the flesh of Christ is neither from on high nor from heaven, but from the seed of David in the womb of the virgin. Therefore, there is in him something else, according to which he is given these names.

XVIII. What significance has the name Prince of Life, which Peter called Christ in Acts? It indicates that for all the elect, from the foundation of the world, Christ is the Author of life, both corporal and spiritual, and eternal. Concerning temporal life it is said in John, “In him was life,” namely of all that lives.⁶⁰¹ Concerning spiritual life, there is this, “Whoever eats my flesh, has eternal life.”⁶⁰² And, “I am the bread of life.”⁶⁰³ For the flesh of Christ also brings life. Hence he says, my flesh truly is food,⁶⁰⁴ that is that we might live, yet not through the flesh itself, but through something else, because it is ὑποστατικῶς⁶⁰⁵ united to the deity. Christ explains this to those who (since they did not acknowledge that Christ is God, but instead thought him to be a mere man) wondered that he had said, “Who eats my flesh. . .” since he had also said “The Spirit is the one who brings to life (that is, my deity). The flesh (on its own) profits nothing.” Therefore, if Christ was the prince of all things already from the founding of the world and he is the prince of life because he confers life, both corporeal and spiritual, and although he is the prince of all life, such that even his flesh gives life, nevertheless he does not receive this life insofar as he is man, but insofar as he is Spirit, that is, God—it is clearly apparent that he is not bare man.

XIX. The Apostle also calls him “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep,” that is, of those who sleep.⁶⁰⁶ The reason for this is two-fold: one, because he first rose to eternal life, no more to return to the tomb, as Paul says in Acts;⁶⁰⁷ two, because he is the cause of the resurrection of others. For the firstfruits which were offered to God were both themselves blessed and also were the cause of other fruits and things to be blessed and for a blessing. Therefore the Apostle, after he called Christ the firstfruits of those who slept, gave the reason why he called Christ the firstfruits of the dead, saying, “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” But to raise the dead is the office of God alone. “. . .the Father raises the dead. . .”⁶⁰⁸ “And God raised the Lord and will raise us up. . .”⁶⁰⁹ Also

⁶⁰⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:45

⁶⁰¹ John 1:4

⁶⁰² John 6:54

⁶⁰³ John 6:48

⁶⁰⁴ John 6:55

⁶⁰⁵ ὑποστατικῶς –“hypostatically”

⁶⁰⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:20

⁶⁰⁷ Acts 13:34

⁶⁰⁸ John 5:21

because if the Lord raised himself from the dead, as he had said he would do,⁶¹⁰ nevertheless he could not have done so unless he were God. Neither could he raise the others to life insofar as he was man, but only insofar as he was God. Therefore this name includes a clear argument that Christ is not mere creature.

In the same way, let us consider that he is also clearly called the resurrection and the life, as he says of himself in John: “I am the resurrection and the life.”⁶¹¹ For he is the efficient cause of the resurrection and of life for all of the elect.

Why is it that he is frequently called the beginning and the end?⁶¹² He is the beginning of all things, from whom are all things. He is the end of all things, in whom and through whom all things are. But this is God, from whom and through whom all things were made, “even the wicked for the day of trouble.”⁶¹³ For the Apostle also says this concerning God in Romans: “From him and through him and in him are all things.”⁶¹⁴ Therefore Christ is not pure creature.

Let us add to this the title “door,” which he called himself in John. “I am the door...”⁶¹⁵ He is the only door through which the approach and entry into the kingdom of heaven and eternal life stand open. He confirms this when he says, “No one comes to the Father except through me.”⁶¹⁶ Such a door has been open from the creation of the world; and all the elect and however many have been saved enter through this door. But however many try to enter into the kingdom of heaven apart from this door, all of them are thieves and robbers.

XX. Another title which he is called throughout the New Testament is “the good shepherd,”⁶¹⁷ and therefore our only shepherd. This did not come about without a good reason, which pertains to the present discussion. For Christ always was, is, and will be the shepherd of the Church, and the good—and therefore only—shepherd, because he is the only one who has always fed, cared for, governed, and governs the Church, first by the word, then by his Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. By this Spirit, he, departing, preached even to those spirits who were in prison.⁶¹⁸ And Peter says earlier, “The Spirit of Christ was in the Prophets,” and they prophesied through him those trials which

⁶⁰⁹ 1 Corinthians 6:14

⁶¹⁰ John 2:19

⁶¹¹ John 11:25

⁶¹² Revelation 1:8; Revelation 22:13

⁶¹³ Proverbs 16:4

⁶¹⁴ Romans 11:36

⁶¹⁵ John 10:9

⁶¹⁶ John 14:6

⁶¹⁷ John 10:11

⁶¹⁸ 1 Peter 3:19

Christ would endure in full.⁶¹⁹ Therefore how could Christ be mere man if he were such a shepherd? Does he not now direct our shepherds (that is, pastors) from heaven and feed his Church and rule over it, first by his word and then by his Spirit? And are there not very many other good shepherds in the Old Testament? Therefore why does he say of himself, “I am the (only) good shepherd?” Because not one of them is good like Christ. For the others were good by participating in the goodness communicated to them by God. However, Christ is good through himself and *simpliciter*. No one is good in this manner except God alone.⁶²⁰ However Christ is the kind of shepherd, who has the authority to lay down his life and to take it up again.⁶²¹ What bare man has this authority?

Christ is the kind of shepherd whom no one can kill unless he himself allows it. Therefore he says, “No one takes it from me...” He is the kind of shepherd who knows all his sheep, therefore he says, “And I know them.”⁶²² How could he know all the elect unless he were God? For, “The Lord knows those who are his.”⁶²³ He is such a shepherd and so strong that he protects all his sheep, nor does he allow anyone to snatch one of them from his hand. Therefore he says, “And no one will snatch them from my hand...”⁶²⁴ He is the kind of shepherd who gives eternal life to his sheep. But who can give this besides God? Finally, he is the kind of shepherd who is one with the Father and with him, the Father, rules over his Church, and he dwells in each of the sheep. He also says, “I and the Father are one,”⁶²⁵ and in another place, “The Father and I will come to him, and we will make our home with him.”⁶²⁶

Christ also calls himself the true vine.⁶²⁷ The vine is true because it lives forever. We are dry and infertile by our own nature unless we are grafted into Christ. The vine is also true because whatever sap is in us or was in any man from the creation of the world, flows entirely from Christ. For this is forever true, “Apart from me you can do nothing.”⁶²⁸ But if he were pure man, how did he, as a vine, live forever and have life in himself? How could those elect from the creation of the world, or we ourselves, be grafted into him? For the grafting did not occur with hands, just as the circumcision of hearts also did not,⁶²⁹ but it only happened through the Spirit of Christ, by which

⁶¹⁹ 1 Peter 1:11

⁶²⁰ Luke 18:19

⁶²¹ John 10:18

⁶²² John 10:27

⁶²³ 2 Timothy 2:19

⁶²⁴ John 10:28

⁶²⁵ John 10:30

⁶²⁶ John 14:23

⁶²⁷ John 15:1

⁶²⁸ John 15:5

⁶²⁹ Colossians 2:11

Christ unites us with himself, that we might become one Spirit with him. Therefore in Corinthians the Apostle says, “In one Spirit, we...were made to drink of one Spirit...”⁶³⁰

XXI. Moreover, since he will be the Judge of the living and the dead, as Scripture teaches everywhere, it is evident that he is not mere man.⁶³¹ For Jehovah is the judge to whom every knee shall bow.⁶³² This is also clear from the description of the majesty in which he, Jesus Christ our Lord, will come with his Angels to judge the world.⁶³³ For if he is such a judge, he must know the consciences of everyone and nothing will be hidden from him. Therefore in Revelation when Christ is described as the judge of the world, eyes of fire were given to him.⁶³⁴ And this—to know all things, to search into hearts, and to peer into every conscience—belongs to God alone. Moreover, the Apostle says in Romans that “God is he who will judge the world and render to each according to his works.”⁶³⁵ And, in Matthew, Christ says of himself, “It will be that the Son of man will come with the glory of his Father and with his angels and then he will render to each according to their deeds.”⁶³⁶ Similarly he says in Revelation, “Behold I come quickly, my reward is with me. . .”⁶³⁷

XXII. This is also why he is always called *κατ' ἐξοχήν* (that is, according to his rank) Lord, *ὁ κύριος*—and even Lord of all, and also of David—as if it was his own proper name. Therefore, Christ is not mere man, as Christ himself argues in Matthew, “Therefore how does David call him his Lord in the Spirit?”⁶³⁸ From this saying, because the Messiah was called Lord by David, Christ himself concludes that he is not merely the Son of David, neither is he mere man. Indeed that reasoning of Christ was so sound and well put that Matthew says none of the Jews were able to offer any response. Therefore, since Christ is called Lord throughout the Scriptures and since we always call him our Lord, no one will be able to condemn our reasoning if we also infer that he is not mere creature. This is because Christ is continually called the Lord not only of David, but also of all men, and Lord as much of bodies as of souls, as well as the Lord of Angels. In Matthew we read that “The Son of man sends his Angels. . .”⁶³⁹ But in Luke: “The savior of the world, who is Christ the Lord, is

⁶³⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁶³¹ Acts 10:42; Matthew 7:22; Matthew 13:41; 2 Timothy 4:1; Romans 14:10

⁶³² Isaiah 45:23

⁶³³ Matthew 25:31

⁶³⁴ Revelation 19:12

⁶³⁵ Romans 2:6; Romans 3:6

⁶³⁶ Matthew 16:27

⁶³⁷ Revelation 22:12

⁶³⁸ Matthew 22:43

⁶³⁹ Matthew 13:41

born to you.”⁶⁴⁰ Therefore the Angels called him Lord, namely their Lord. Therefore how can a mere creature be such and so great a Lord of all, especially since he rules in the very hearts of the faithful?

Neither is he only called the Lord of all, but also the Lord of glory, namely, of heaven, as it says, “They would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”⁶⁴¹ Therefore he is not mere man, but God. For what does it mean to be the Lord of glory? It means the same thing as to be God. For that reason, the Apostle says, Christ was crucified by the Jews, because it was not known, who he was—that is, the Lord of glory—but they only judged him to be man. Therefore from this passage we conclude that Christ was not bare man. For that reason, the Jews crucified him, because they took him for mere man, otherwise he would not have been crucified if they had known that he was not just a man, but also the Lord of glory, that is, God; for God is the Lord of his own glory and majesty. Therefore he says through Isaiah, “He will not give his glory to anyone.”⁶⁴² And in Psalms it says, “Who is this king of glory? Jehovah Sabaoth, he himself is the king of glory.”⁶⁴³ And in Acts, Stephen begins his sermon like this, “That God of glory. . .”⁶⁴⁴ Therefore among Hebrews it is common to signify God himself by the name יהוה כבוד, “the glory of Jehovah.” Also, we read in John, “We have seen his glory. . .”⁶⁴⁵ And so this name, by which Christ is adorned, namely the Lord of glory, testifies clearly of his deity. He is not mere creature, but also God. Thus, it is customary, especially for Paul, to give glory to him as much as to the Father. And the saints are rightly and not without cause accustomed to conclude all of the Psalms thus, “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was and is now and ever will be. . .”

XXIII. Another name pertains to this same truth, similar to the last one—the radiance of glory—which is the name given to him by Paul in Hebrews. He says, “He is the radiance of the glory of God. . .”⁶⁴⁶ This passage is notable for demonstrating that Christ is not pure man, but also true God. For the Apostle calls him thus for this purpose. What is that glory, whose radiance Christ is said to be? No one denies that the glory of God is understood by the word “glory,” that is, the eternal and immeasurable majesty and deity of the Father, of which Jehovah says in Isaiah, “I am Jehovah, and this is my name, and my glory I will not give to another.”⁶⁴⁷ This glory or deity is signified by the word “light”—and God dwells in this unapproachable light.⁶⁴⁸ Christ is of this divine majesty, which

⁶⁴⁰ Luke 2:11

⁶⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 2:8

⁶⁴² Isaiah 42:8

⁶⁴³ Psalm 24:8

⁶⁴⁴ Acts 7:2

⁶⁴⁵ John 1:14

⁶⁴⁶ Hebrews 1:3

⁶⁴⁷ Isaiah 42:8

⁶⁴⁸ 1 Timothy 6:16

is in the Father (as if a fountain of the whole deity); and Christ is called ἀπαύγασμα. What is ἀπαύγασμα? Resplendence, or radiance, shining forth from a light, like the radiance from the sun which shines on the whole world.

Therefore who does not see that all this follows from this name, according to the intention and opinion of the Apostle? First, that the whole glory of the Father shines in Christ, and hence he is of the same essence with the Father. For the Son is the radiance of the substance of the Father, and hence in the same passage he is also called the “χαρακτήρ⁶⁴⁹ of the substance of the Father,” and therefore of the same οὐσίας as the Father. For just as the radiance which shines on the whole world from the sun differs in nothing from the light which is in the sun with regard to essence, but is of the same essence as the sun; so the Son differs in nothing from the Father with regard to οὐσίαν, but is light just as the Father is light; indeed, each is one and the same light, just like the sun and its radiance.

Secondly, it follows that the Son is derived from the Father, just as the radiance of the sun is derived from the sun. Moreover, the Son is coeternal with the Father. For just as the sun was never without its radiance, even so the Father was never without the Son. It also follows from this that the Son is distinguished from the Father, even as the radiance of the sun is distinguished from the sun. We can then conclude from this passage that the Son is inseparable from the Father, and the Father from the Son; even as the radiance of the sun cannot be separated from the sun, nor the sun from its radiance. Hence Christ rightly says, “I in the Father, and the Father in me.”⁶⁵⁰

Finally, it follows from this that Christ is the mirror, in which we are able to know and see the Father, whom otherwise, outside of Christ, no one has ever seen or is able to see,⁶⁵¹ since he dwells in unapproachable light.⁶⁵² Just as in and by the radiance of the sun, we see the sun and whatever its strength and excellence is. Therefore Christ said to Philip, “He who has seen me has seen my Father,”⁶⁵³ as if he said, “This is not why you ask that you might see the Father outside of me, Philip; for the Father cannot be seen outside of me. But in me, having been made man, the entirety shines forth as if in a mirror—all his glory, majesty, goodness, and power. Finally, whatever is in the Father, all of it shines forth in me, who is his ἀπαύγασμα. Therefore whoever sees me with the eyes of faith, sees the Father also.”

Certainly this is not the least of the reasons why the λόγος became man, that we might be able to see God incarnate in his Son. Otherwise, not only would we not be able to see and know him in his immense majesty, but it would be perilous, for if we wished to test his glory, we would be absorbed by it. The saying of Solomon pertains to this, “He who seeks majesty will be overwhelmed

⁶⁴⁹ χαρακτήρ – “imprint”

⁶⁵⁰ John 17:21

⁶⁵¹ John 1:18

⁶⁵² 1 Timothy 6:16

⁶⁵³ John 14:9

by it.”⁶⁵⁴ Therefore he wished for his Son to be clothed with flesh, so that in him he might exhibit the whole majesty, glory, *φιλανθρωπίαν*,⁶⁵⁵ goodness, mercy, and his whole nature to be seen and touched, as it were, by us. Thus the Apostle rightly calls Christ the *ἀπαύγασμα* of the glory of the Father. And the church rightly affirms in the creed, “Light of light, very God of very God.” Hence this name is a clear argument that Christ is not only a man, but also eternal and true God with the Father. For Christ is the radiance of the Father’s glory of such an order that the Father made all things through him—therefore he is the *eternal* radiance of the Father’s glory. Thus, Christ teaches in John that his glory is eternal.⁶⁵⁶

In the same place the Apostle calls Christ *χαρακτήρα τῆς ὑποστάσεως πατρὸς*; that is, “the engraved form of the person of the Father.”⁶⁵⁷ For what is *χαρακτήρ*? It is the form of something, imprinted and engraved on something else; *παρὰ τὸ χαράσσειν*,⁶⁵⁸ just as the image and form of someone is engraved on a seal, or on gold, or some other material, which afterward is imprinted onto wax by means of the seal. In this way Christ is called the *χαρακτήρα ὑποστάσεως*⁶⁵⁹ of the Father, in order to show that he is not some image and likeness that is empty and without substance, like the form of a man reflected in a mirror, but he is the fully existent *ὑπόστασιν*, in which the *ὑπόστασις* of the Father is imprinted, such that he who sees the Son, sees the Father. And at the same time it shows him to be of the same essence with the Father, just as a form engraved in a gold seal is of the same substance with the seal. For this reason he is not called a form or likeness simply, but *χαρακτήρ*. If therefore Christ is such an imprint, that we see in him the engraved person of the Father, and behold in him, as it were, the countenance and face of the Father, how can he be pure man and not also God, and equal with the Father?

XXIV. This leads us to the name of “image.” Christ is frequently called the image of God, as in the second letter to the Corinthians and in Colossians, where the words are *ὅς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ αοράτου*.⁶⁶⁰ But how is he the image of God, and what kind of image is he? First, he is indeed the image of God insofar as he relates God the Father. And the Apostle even calls the whole person of Christ the image of God. He is therefore the image of the Father, and the *λόγος*, through whom all things were made and are held together. He is also the man, *ὑποστατικῶς* joined with the *λόγος*, through whose blood we have remission of sins, to the extent that he is described in this fashion in both places by the Apostle. Hence they are deceived who think that Christ is called the image of

⁶⁵⁴ Proverbs 25:27

⁶⁵⁵ *Φιλανθρωπίαν* – “philanthropy; love of mankind”

⁶⁵⁶ John 17:5

⁶⁵⁷ Hebrews 1:3

⁶⁵⁸ *παρὰ τὸ χαράσσειν* – “by engraving”

⁶⁵⁹ *χαρακτήρα ὑποστάσεως* – “an imprint of the substance”

⁶⁶⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15 – “. . . who is the image of the invisible God. . .”

God the Father only insofar as he is a man endowed with all the divine virtues of the Father. For the Apostle calls him the image of God in respect to another nature also, through which all things were made and by which the blood of Christ has power to expiate sins. Further on, insofar as he is man, he is the perfect image of God, but insofar as he is the λόγος, he is the most perfect image. Perfect insofar as he is man because the whole nature and inherent quality of the Father perfectly shines forth in Christ.

This image consists by virtue of qualities, not however in substance. For just as we say that a son, who resembles in face and manners the face and manners of his parent, is the true and perfect image of the father, so too the Apostle calls Christ the image of God, insofar as he is such a man, because in the man Christ, the face, nature, and quality of the Father was reflected, insofar as he is good, kind, merciful, loving to us, pure, holy, radiant. Thus also man is said to be made in God's image and to be the image of God, not on account of substance, but on account of the divine qualities that reflect in him and in which he was created—holiness, wisdom, justice. By this holiness, wisdom, and justice, he represented God's wisdom, justice, and holiness; therefore Christ, insofar as he is man, is the image of God the Father, because in him the whole nature of the Father shines. But insofar as he is the λόγος and the Son, he is the Father's most perfect image of all, such that it is not possible to imagine a more perfect one. Neither should anyone be angry with me because I say that Christ is the most perfect image of God the Father such that no one can imagine a more perfect image. For nothing can be found more similar to God the Father than the Son.

Certainly the similarity between God and the sun is great. After all, in the sky there are many stars and on earth there are many and various lights and all reflect in their own way from whatever part God (who is the most perfect light), nevertheless no light represents the divine light as perfectly as the sun does. God is one; the sun is one. God is the most perfect light; the sun shines most perfectly. God is such a light that no one can see and bear it; so also is the light of the sun that our eyes cannot face it. God is always like unto himself; and thus too the sun. God illumines all; the sun lights the whole earth. But the differences between God and the sun are also great. For the sun has a beginning, since it is created; God is without beginning, insofar as he is uncreated. The sun is ultimately mutable; God is always immutable. The sun is not everywhere; God is everywhere. The sun does not understand, given that it is ἄλογος and is without will; God is mind, understanding and willing all things. For these and other reasons, the sun cannot be called a true and perfect image of God.

But man, especially born again, is the image of God and reflects the heavenly Father in many ways. Nevertheless, we fall short in infinite ways, and are not like God. Hence we are not, nor can we be called, the perfect image of God. Christ, insofar as he is man, is a more perfect image of God than all the rest, but he, insofar as he is man, is not the most perfect. For Christ is the Image of God only according to the qualities, but not according to the substance.

Yet there is an image that is more perfect than that one which is consistent with the representation of the qualities. This is the image of the substance, which also represents the

substance itself. In Genesis, Moses speaks of this, saying, “Adam...begot a son for himself, in his own image and likeness, and he called him Seth.” Why “in his own image”? Not according to the likeness of their corrupted nature, but according to their image in the substance of nature. And this is more perfect than the former, for the image of the substance is more perfect than the accident. This is what Christ is, insofar as he is the λόγος and the Son of God – the image of the substance, and therefore the most perfect image of the Father, such that he is more similar to his Father than our children are to us. Therefore, if Christ is the most perfect image of the Father that can be conceived, then it necessarily follows not only that all the perfections and the natural imprint of the Father are in Christ, but also that he is of the same essence and nature with the Father. For unless he is such an image, a more perfect one could be conceived. Hence the Apostle, not without reason, calls him the Son and then adds the epithet “Image” in this passage in Colossians. This is the sense of this passage: since the Son is the most beloved of the eternal Father, therefore he is also the most perfect image of him; and hence he is of the same nature and essence with the Father, received from the very same Father.

There are three kinds of images. The first kind is of those which perfectly represent only the qualities and forms of those things of which they are images, since they are not of the same nature and essence with them. The second kind is of those which not only represent realistic forms of those things of which they are the images, but also are of the same nature and substance with them. Just as a duplicate golden statue of a golden statue is an image of the original; but nevertheless, the gold of the duplicate is not produced of the gold of the first. The third kind is of those images which not only realistically represent the qualities and forms of those things of which they are images, nor are they only of the same nature and of the *πρωτότυπα*,⁶⁶¹ but they are also generated from their substance—like a man’s son, who reflects the appearance, customs, and mind of his parent, and is of the same nature with his parent, received from his father. This is without doubt the most perfect image of the three. But who would be such an enemy of Christ that he would want him to be a less perfect image of his Father than we are of our parents?

In sum, the image of something is said to be that which is similar to it, either partly or entirely, and I say that the Son is the image of God the Father, because he is entirely and simply similar to the Father, and therefore he is of the same οὐσίας and equality with the Father, such that only this lies between them—that the Son is not the Father.

XXV. Since Christ is sometimes called the head of the Church,⁶⁶² it is proper that we conclude that Christ cannot be pure man. Why is he called the head of the Church? On account of the many similarities that he bears to the head of a human body that a pure man can by no means bear. First, that the head is in the more eminent place, above all the other members. So Christ is over the whole

⁶⁶¹ *πρωτότυπα* – prototype

⁶⁶² Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:23

Church, even from the foundation of the world, and thus even above the Angels. For the Angels are also part of the Church, “You have come (says the Apostle)...to a company of innumerable Angels.”⁶⁶³

Second, just as all the members and the whole body depend on the head, so all the Angels and men, and the whole body of the Church, depend on Christ. For all things are from him even from the foundation of the world. Besides this, as all members are subject to the head as Lord of the whole body, and its savior and governor, so the whole Church is subject to Christ as Lord, savior, and ruler, and this has been so from the foundation of the world.⁶⁶⁴ For Christ has always been the head of the Church. Otherwise, before the incarnation of Christ, the ancient Church was either without a head or had another head and therefore another Savior than we have.

Additionally, just as the head sees on behalf of the whole body, so the most wise Christ, watches over all his members and knows all of them, and searches the hearts and reins of each one, as he himself says, “I search the reins...”⁶⁶⁵ This belongs to God alone.⁶⁶⁶ Furthermore, as the head hears on behalf of the whole body, so Christ heard all things from the Father that pertains to our salvation, and he hears and understands whatever happens in the world. Next, as the head speaks for the whole body, so too Christ revealed the will of the Father even from the foundation of the world. Moreover, just as the head sends forth nerves to the individual members, by which nerves the head retains all the connected members to itself and so also pours into them the breath of life⁶⁶⁷ by which all members live and perceive, even so, Christ gives life to the Church by his Spirit⁶⁶⁸ and has always done so. And by the spiritual network of ligaments and nerves, he joined all members to himself and has preserved these ligaments in the past and does so at present. Finally, as the head nourishes and cherishes the whole body (for the head receives food and gives it to all the members and thus nourishes them and brings it about that the body grows), so Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church with his own flesh and blood, by the work of his Spirit, which he imparts to the Church.⁶⁶⁹ And thus he gives salvation⁶⁷⁰ to the body and he himself ensures that the Church is increased and matures. How could a bare man accomplish this?

For the Apostle himself teaches in Ephesians that God is the head of the Church, when he says, “God made known to us the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of time he might bring together all things (that is, he himself, as the head, might bring together all the elect

⁶⁶³ Hebrews 12:22

⁶⁶⁴ Ephesians 5:24

⁶⁶⁵ Revelation 2:23

⁶⁶⁶ Jeremiah 17:10

⁶⁶⁷ *Spiritum animale*

⁶⁶⁸ Ephesians 4:16, Colossians 2:19

⁶⁶⁹ Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 2:19

⁶⁷⁰ *Salutem* – thus could be rendered “health” or “salvation”

as if they were members torn asunder, in Christ, as mediator) both things in heaven and things on earth.”⁶⁷¹ Since therefore God is the head of the Church, who brings the members together, and Christ is also this head (for he is himself the head of the Church), it follows that Christ is true God. And this argument drawn from the head of the Church does not seem weak to me for establishing the eternal deity of Christ. For besides the fact that those duties prescribed to the head cannot be accomplished by a mere creature, I ask my opponents whether when the Scriptures say that Christ is the head of the Church, it means both from the foundation of the world and at the present time, or just at present, beginning from the death of Christ? If he is of old, then he is eternal. If he is only at present, I will then ask whether the ancient Church had a head or not? If not, it was therefore ἀκεφαλή⁶⁷² and thus without a savior. What could be more absurd and contrary to the Scriptures? If it had a head, and this was not Christ, it had a different head than ours, and thus, another savior. But this is absurd, and it would mean that there are two different churches, contrary to the scriptures. If the church is one and the same, it would have two heads. And if it had a different head from ours, that one would be either creature or creator God. It was not different, since the scriptures do not teach this, therefore God was the head. If God was their head, and a merely human Christ is our head, then our situation is worse than the first, which is contrary to what the scriptures teach since they praise this church which came after the Messiah over the first, and claim that the glory of this one is to be greater.⁶⁷³ In order to remove these absurdities, it should be confessed that Christ is God, such that God is the head of our Church, just as he was of the first; and that Christ is one with God the Father, lest there be one God of the old, and one of the new.

But you may object that Christ is not the head of the Church as pure man, but only insofar as God is with him. But if by this you understand the same thing as the Apostle when he says, “in him all the fullness of deity dwells bodily,” (such that according to this union of the indwelling deity and the inhabited humanity, a single person is formed, who is Christ), there is no need for dispute. For this is what we teach, that Christ is true God and true man, the only head of the Church. But if you understand this differently and want Christ to be pure man, your interpretation is untenable. For if by this arrangement God alone dwells in him, God would be the head of the Church, and not Christ himself. On the other hand, if Christ himself was the head of the Church, there would be two heads, God the first, and Christ himself the second. But both of these options are absurd. Against the first, Scripture says that Christ is the head, and indeed, is established by the Father over the whole Church. Against the second Scripture teaches that there is only one head, Christ. In sum, it is necessary that if Christ is pure man, he is by no means the head of the Church, but rather God alone; or if he were, the condition of our Church would be worse than that of the former, insofar as

⁶⁷¹ Ephesians 1:9

⁶⁷² ἀκεφαλή - “headless”

⁶⁷³ Haggai 2:9

it would have a pure man for its head and not God. And if God, with Christ, is the head, the Church would have two heads.

XXVI. Also relevant to this is the name King, to whom all things are subject. For in Revelation he is called the prince of the kings of the earth, and the king of kings, and Lord of lords.⁶⁷⁴ But what manner of reign does he have? Spiritual and heavenly—which the thief on the cross, speaking to Christ, taught when he said, “Remember me, when we come into your kingdom.”⁶⁷⁵ For what kingdom was he expecting after death, except a spiritual and heavenly one? Indeed, Christ reigns in the hearts and souls of the elect, and that forever. After he raises our bodies to immortality, he will then reign in us more perfectly. How could he have accomplished these things if he were a pure man and not also God? Certainly the kind of kingdom clearly indicates the kind of king. A heavenly, spiritual, and eternal kingdom fits none other than a heavenly, spiritual, and eternal king. At the end he is called by John ὁ ὢν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ.⁶⁷⁶ Does he not clearly teach that he is eternal—the one who was, because he is ὁ ἦν, and always is, since he is ὁ ὢν, and always will be, because he is ὁ ἐρχόμενος, and therefore he is rightly ὁ παντοκράτωρ? However, no creature is eternal, since all are made, and therefore are in time. Therefore it is the greatest impudence to say that Christ is ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος when even the names themselves by which he is adorned in Scripture oppose it. And surely this is enough about his names; for I pass over many others for the sake of brevity.

⁶⁷⁴ Revelations 1:5; Revelations 19:16

⁶⁷⁵ Luke 23:42

⁶⁷⁶ Revelations 1:8 – “. . . the one is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty”

Chapter Three

Certain other arguments drawn firstly from the place whence Christ came and to which he returned; next, from the time which was before he took on flesh; then from the works that he completed in the world; and finally from certain other attributes of his for the confirmation of his preeminent θέσις.⁶⁷⁷

I. Now I offer the argument that relates to the place first whence Christ came to us, second, to which he returns, and finally in which he is, reigns, and dwells. For from the details of these places we are able to obtain clear arguments by which it is proven that Christ cannot be pure creature. For before Christ took on human flesh, he was in heaven and he descended from there to us. Testimonies of this exist in several passages, such as when he is called ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους in Luke.⁶⁷⁸ John the Baptist adds to this, “He who comes from above is over all.”⁶⁷⁹ Christ himself says so, “I came down from heaven...”⁶⁸⁰ and, “What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?”⁶⁸¹ Therefore, before he became man, he was in heaven. In this passage, Christ emphasizes multiple times that he is the bread who came down from heaven. We also read of this in John, “You are from below; I am from above.”⁶⁸² And this, “knowing that he had come from God...”⁶⁸³ Paul also confirms this in Ephesians when he says, “In saying that he ascended, what does this mean but that he first descended?”⁶⁸⁴ He also confirms this in Corinthians when he calls Christ heavenly and a man from heaven.⁶⁸⁵ Therefore he is not pure man or mere creature, recently created. Indeed, he returned to heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, with the same majesty and dominion as the Father. But he received this, you may say, after the resurrection. He does receive these as a man, but even earlier he had them, even from all eternity and before the foundation of the world. So Christ said, “Glorify me, Father, with the glory that I had with you, before the world existed.”⁶⁸⁶ Therefore Christ is in heaven with respect to his body, and does not now descend from there in his body. Yet in the meantime, he is with us on earth, “Behold, I am with you...” and, “Where two or three are gathered...”⁶⁸⁷ Besides this, he dwells in the hearts of the faithful,⁶⁸⁸ lives in

⁶⁷⁷ θέσις – position

⁶⁷⁸ Luke 1:78

⁶⁷⁹ John 3:31

⁶⁸⁰ John 6:36

⁶⁸¹ John 6:62

⁶⁸² John 8:23

⁶⁸³ John 13:33

⁶⁸⁴ Ephesians 4:9

⁶⁸⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:47

⁶⁸⁶ John 17:5

⁶⁸⁷ Matthew 28:20; Matthew 18:20

⁶⁸⁸ Ephesians 3:17

them,⁶⁸⁹ speaks in them,⁶⁹⁰ and is everywhere, filling all things in the elect.⁶⁹¹ Yet all these actions belong uniquely to God.

II. We also have another kind of argument similar to the preceding. This argument is drawn from the time in which Christ existed before he was made man. For he existed before John the Baptist, before David, in the wilderness with the saints, indeed before Abraham, and from the time of Noah. Hence these words, “He who comes after me...was before me.”⁶⁹² And, “What if you see the Son of Man ascending there to where he was before!”⁶⁹³ And finally, “Before Abraham was born, I am.”⁶⁹⁴ Besides these, in Corinthians the Apostle says that Christ was that rock from which all drank.⁶⁹⁵ And he was tested by the Israelites in the desert. Therefore he is not pure man, first created at the time when he was born of Mary, as Ebion, Samosatenus, Photinus, and the Servetians have said. But what is this that the Apostle says—that Christ was rich and became poor, that we might become rich?⁶⁹⁶ When was Christ rich? Certainly never on this earth. Therefore somewhere else, and before he came into the world. Also this, “Coming into the world, Christ said...a body you prepared for me...”⁶⁹⁷ And, “he took on the seed of Abraham.”⁶⁹⁸ Next, that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets,⁶⁹⁹ and, “he preached in the Spirit to the spirits who were in prison.”⁷⁰⁰ Thus what do these passages show except that Christ is not pure man since he subsisted before he became man? Moreover, it is evident that he existed even before the world was created, as will be clear from these testimonies we are about to give. “In the beginning was the Word...”⁷⁰¹ And, “That which was from the beginning...concerning the word of life...”⁷⁰² “Who is the πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως,”⁷⁰³ that is, who is begotten before all creation. He is also before all things, and all things consist through him. Next, “Glorify me,” says Christ himself, “with the glory which I had with you, before the world

⁶⁸⁹ Galatians 2:20

⁶⁹⁰ 2 Corinthians 13:3

⁶⁹¹ Ephesians 1:23

⁶⁹² John 1:15

⁶⁹³ John 6:62

⁶⁹⁴ John 8:58

⁶⁹⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:4

⁶⁹⁶ 2 Corinthians 8:9

⁶⁹⁷ Hebrews 10:5

⁶⁹⁸ Hebrews 2:16

⁶⁹⁹ 1 Peter 1:11

⁷⁰⁰ 1 Peter 3:19

⁷⁰¹ John 1:1

⁷⁰² 1 John 1:1

⁷⁰³ Colossians 1:15, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως – “firstborn over all creation”

existed.”⁷⁰⁴ And, like Melchizedek, he was ἀπάτωρ καὶ ἀμήτωρ; so he had neither beginning of days nor end of life.⁷⁰⁵ He is ὁ ἀμήν, and ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ.⁷⁰⁶ Therefore how could Christ be mere man, if all these things are truly said of him and best describe him?

III. Other arguments can be drawn from the works which he performed and even now performs, which are nevertheless unique to God and can by no means be accomplished by a mere creature. He created the world and whatsoever is contained in the extent of heaven and earth, whether visible or invisible. For “All things were created through him.”⁷⁰⁷ Also, “He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him (namely, to be their creator).” Certainly if you should look at the external form of the body, the world knew Christ to be a man. Why then does he say, “And the world did not know him”? Because there is something else in Christ, besides his human nature, which the world did not know. But the Apostle says, “For through him all things were created, which are in the heavens...”⁷⁰⁸ The Apostle makes him both the efficient and final cause of all created things. And nevertheless, in the letter to the Hebrews he attributes both of these things to the Father, saying, “For it was fitting that he himself (God), δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα, καὶ δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα.”⁷⁰⁹

He also preserves all things, and rules them by his own command and will. In Colossians, after he had said that all things were created through him, the Apostle adds, “And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together,” that is, are preserved and sustained.⁷¹⁰ And in Hebrews it says that Christ bears, or sustains, all things τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως,⁷¹¹ that is, by his own powerful word or command, desire, will, and decree; just as a prince does all things by word, command, and decree, so that for them it should be enough for him to merely open his mouth.

Moreover, he performs miracles, and that by his own power, without invoking another divinity, but by his own command and word alone. All the rest, whether prophets or Apostles, performed their miracles by the power of another—the prophets by the invocation of Jehovah, the Apostles in the name of Jesus Christ. Therefore, since he heals all diseases and raises the dead, by his own power, as is manifest in the Gospels, it is clear that he is not a pure man. Neither does he only cure all diseases when he is present in the body, but also when he is absent. For Peter says to Aeneas

⁷⁰⁴ John 17:5

⁷⁰⁵ Hebrews 7:3

⁷⁰⁶ Revelation 3:14, ὁ ἀμήν, and ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ – “the amen and the origin of the creation of God”

⁷⁰⁷ John 1:3

⁷⁰⁸ Colossians 1:16

⁷⁰⁹ Hebrews 2:10, δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα, καὶ δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα – “for whom are all things and by whom are all things”

⁷¹⁰ Colossians 1:17

⁷¹¹ Hebrews 1:3, τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως – “by the word of his power”

the paralytic, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you.”⁷¹² Therefore Christ, existing in the heavens, healed the paralytic. Then he gives the ability to others, such as to the Apostles, to perform similar works: “Then, having called his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits...”⁷¹³ Some are indeed able to receive this ability and power from God, but they are by no means able to give that power to others, unless they are God.

I come next to the purely spiritual and divine works. He elects to eternal life whomever he wills. “I know,” he says, “whom I have elected.”⁷¹⁴ This certainly belongs to God alone. He cleanses the Church, by leading the elect into heaven, and by casting the ungodly into eternal fire. In Matthew, John the Baptist says about Christ, “Whose winnowing-fork (the gospel) is in his hand, and he will cleanse out the threshing floor.”⁷¹⁵ Every day he does this through the gospel, but he will do so perfectly in the day of Judgment. He baptizes with the Holy Spirit as John the Baptist testifies.⁷¹⁶ He circumcises hearts, without hands, by his Spirit alone, as the Apostle testifies in Colossians.⁷¹⁷ Yet, this task belongs to God alone, as Moses taught.⁷¹⁸ He gives rest to all who are weary, and gives true rest to their souls.⁷¹⁹ He forgives sins. “Take heart, son, your sins are forgiven.”⁷²⁰ He takes up the iniquity of the world, that is, of all the elect, onto himself, and frees them from all their guilt and punishment, then restores them blameless in the sight of God and himself. “Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”⁷²¹ He cleansed the whole Church with his own blood, and purified her, so that she might finally be without spot or wrinkle.⁷²² But this is proper only to God: “Clean water” says Jehovah in Ezekiel, “I will pour over you...”⁷²³ He sealed the elect, by the seal of his Spirit impressed in their hearts.⁷²⁴ But it is proper only to God to seal men by his Spirit, as Paul teaches in Corinthians, “But it is God who establishes us, who also sealed us, and gave us the guarantee of his Spirit in our hearts.”⁷²⁵ He pours out his

⁷¹² Acts 9:34

⁷¹³ Matthew 10:1

⁷¹⁴ John 13:18

⁷¹⁵ Matthew 3:12

⁷¹⁶ Matthew 3:10

⁷¹⁷ Colossians 2:11

⁷¹⁸ Deuteronomy 30:6

⁷¹⁹ Matthew 11:28

⁷²⁰ Matthew 9:2

⁷²¹ John 1:29

⁷²² Ephesians 5:26

⁷²³ Ezekiel 36:25

⁷²⁴ Revelation 7:2

⁷²⁵ 2 Corinthians 1:21

Spirit abundantly from heaven on the Apostles; indeed, over other believers as well.⁷²⁶ He gives wisdom to the Apostles and to whomsoever he wishes, and whenever he wishes, so that they cannot be contradicted by the world. “Be determined in your hearts not to premeditate how you are to respond. For I will give you what you should say.”⁷²⁷

He gives his own flesh to eat, even from heaven, while nevertheless he does not come back from heaven.⁷²⁸ Therefore he is not pure man. This is why those who did not know him, except as pure man, said, “How can he give us his flesh to eat?” He searches the hearts and reins of all, “And all the churches will know that I am he who searches reins and hearts,” as if he were saying, “I am God.”⁷²⁹ For this is appropriate for God alone, as we see from these examples. “You alone know the hearts of the sons of men.”⁷³⁰ And, “I, Jehovah, searching the reins and the hearts”—he gives to everyone according to his own works.⁷³¹ “And I will give to each of you according to your works.”⁷³² This is also only appropriate for God. “I Jehovah, searching the reins and examining the hearts, that I might give to every man according to his works.”⁷³³ He gives eternal life, “And I give them eternal life.”⁷³⁴ He destroys the devil, “Through death, he destroys him who has the power of death.”⁷³⁵ And, “Having disarmed the princes and authorities, he led them. . .”⁷³⁶ He built his house, the Church, and therefore he is worthy of a greater glory than Moses.⁷³⁷ He destroys every rule and power and authority.⁷³⁸ He will deliver the kingdom to God the Father, and he will subject all things to himself by the work of his own power.⁷³⁹ These are the particular works, which are attributed to Christ in the New Testament; it is clearly demonstrated from these works that Christ is not pure creature. For how could a mere man accomplish so many and such great works, which are proper to God alone?

⁷²⁶ Acts 2:4

⁷²⁷ Luke 21:14

⁷²⁸ John 6

⁷²⁹ Revelation 2:23

⁷³⁰ 2 Chronicles 6:30

⁷³¹ Jeremiah 17:10

⁷³² Revelation 2:23

⁷³³ Jeremiah 17:10

⁷³⁴ John 10:28

⁷³⁵ Hebrews 2:14

⁷³⁶ Colossians 2:15

⁷³⁷ Hebrews 3:3

⁷³⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:24

⁷³⁹ Philippians 3:21

IV. Another argument regards those things which he suffered according to Scripture: that is, what kind of passion and death he suffered.⁷⁴⁰ For his passion and death also testify that he was not pure man. For what he suffered, he suffered according to Scripture—indeed, whatsoever the Prophets foretold that the Messiah would suffer. However, the Messiah could not have been pure man, as Christ proved in Matthew from the Psalm.⁷⁴¹ Therefore his passion and death also testify that Christ was not pure man or mere creature. Especially since no man would be able accomplish that which Christ accomplished on the cross and in death. “He cried out with a great voice, when he gave up the Spirit. . . .”⁷⁴²—he did much, which I judiciously omit.

Christ declared with that outpouring of blood and water, acting as a visible symbol, that he is the one true expiation of sins and the true washing of believers. Yet such is not possible if he were pure man. Therefore, it is also more clearly revealed from those things which he suffered (since he suffered all of them in accordance with Scripture) that Christ is not mere creature. Hence, for good reason John (along with other witnesses who testified about Jesus himself) noted the blood, that is the kind of passion and death which Christ suffered.⁷⁴³ And in Acts, Paul demonstrates through these things which Christ suffered, that he is the true Savior, Messiah, Son of God, since while he suffered, he fulfilled the sayings of the Prophets which were written about the passion of the Messiah, the Savior of the world.⁷⁴⁴ And Christ himself reasoned the same, to those two disciples, who were offended by his cross and death—they seemed to doubt about him whether or not he was the true Christ. For by these things which he suffered he confirmed that he is the true Messiah. “Ought not (he said) these things be suffered by the Christ? And beginning at Moses and the Prophets, he interpreted for them the Scriptures which were about him”⁷⁴⁵—namely about his birth, captivity, flogging, crucifixion, death. And with these he strengthened his claim that the Christ ought to suffer what he himself suffered.

Therefore he himself is the Christ. For this was the argument of Christ. He is dull and slow in heart to believe who also does not believe that he was Jesus Christ, because he suffered such a death. For the contrary ought rather to be established, since all that was predicted that the Christ would suffer, Jesus suffered. And therefore it was fitting for him to suffer all these things. Yet, because he suffered such a kind of death, on that account you all do not believe that Jesus is the Christ. Therefore you are truly dull, etc. So that we will not be dull as well, rather than vary a nail’s breadth from faith in Christ’s deity on account of his death and passion, we should instead be confirmed in this faith by his passion and death.

⁷⁴⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:4

⁷⁴¹ Matthew 22:43; Psalm 110:1

⁷⁴² Mathew 27:50

⁷⁴³ 1 John 5:8

⁷⁴⁴ Acts 13:27

⁷⁴⁵ Luke 24:26

V. I now add to these the particular names which, taken alone in themselves, signify on first glance the weakness of Christ, but when joined with their predications, they confirm his power and deity. One such name is the Son of man—a name of weakness and low birth, as if Christ were so obscure that whosoever Son he was, it was unknown. Thus on account of humility he was called the Son of man, just as Ezekiel was also called.⁷⁴⁶ But if you combine this name with those things which were likewise predicated of him, you will see that the nobility, dignity, and deity of Christ are indicated by this name, such as when it is said that the Son of man will come in glory with his angels⁷⁴⁷ and that the Son of man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.⁷⁴⁸ Therefore Christ is the son of man, but he is such a son of man that he has the authority to forgive sins.⁷⁴⁹ He is the son of man, but such that he will come with the Angels in glory to judge the whole world.⁷⁵⁰ So too of the name crucified one. He was the crucified one, but he was the crucified one such that he is the power and wisdom of God.⁷⁵¹ He is so poor that he has no place to lay his head,⁷⁵² but he is poor in such a way that he made us rich.⁷⁵³ He is a curse, but he is such a curse that he redeemed us from the curse of the law.⁷⁵⁴ He is a servant, but he is such a servant that he set us free to liberty from the slavery of sin and Satan.⁷⁵⁵ He was under the law, but such that he redeemed those who were under the law and guaranteed the adoption of his sons.⁷⁵⁶ He is in the likeness of sinful flesh, but such that he condemned sin in the flesh,⁷⁵⁷ and he became our justification, sanctification, and redemption.⁷⁵⁸

VI. The argument from worship is also compelling. For the worship which is owed to God alone ought to be presented to Christ himself, as the Scripture commands. Therefore he is not pure man. For the first part of this worship is faith. But the Scripture commands that we believe in God alone, that we should trust in him alone, and that we should put all faith of salvation in that one; and it promises that those who believe in him will be saved. This is impressed upon us throughout

⁷⁴⁶ Ezekiel 2:1

⁷⁴⁷ Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:31

⁷⁴⁸ Mark 2:10

⁷⁴⁹ Matthew 9:6

⁷⁵⁰ Matthew 25:31

⁷⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 1:23

⁷⁵² Matthew 8:20

⁷⁵³ 2 Corinthians 8:9

⁷⁵⁴ Galatians 3:13

⁷⁵⁵ Philippians 2:7

⁷⁵⁶ Galatians 4:4

⁷⁵⁷ Romans 8:3

⁷⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:30

Scripture, especially in the Psalms; and this is contained in the first commandment. “Cursed is the man who trusts in man,” says Jeremiah.⁷⁵⁹ Therefore blessed is he alone, who trusts in the Lord.⁷⁶⁰ But the same scripture commands us to believe in Christ, and promises that those who believe in him will have eternal life. Therefore he is not a mere creature. For if he were such, he who believes in him would be cursed. But in Galatians the Apostle says those who believe in Christ are blessed.⁷⁶¹ Also, Scripture commands us to hope in God alone, and to expect salvation from this one. “Hope in the Lord your God always,” and “The salvation of the just is from the Lord.”⁷⁶² But the same scripture commands us to hope in Christ, because from this one is salvation, and it says this one is our hope.⁷⁶³ “Salvation is in no one else.”⁷⁶⁴ And, “In him will the Gentiles hope.”⁷⁶⁵ And, “We who first hoped in Christ.”⁷⁶⁶

Scripture also commands us to call on God alone, and promises that those who call on God will be heard. “In the day of your tribulation, you will call upon me...”⁷⁶⁷ And “whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”⁷⁶⁸ But the same Scripture also teaches that Christ ought to be called upon, and those who call upon him shall have their prayers answered. Stephen calls on Christ, saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”⁷⁶⁹ And, Ananias says to Christ, who appeared to him, “I have heard from many about this man, who has the authority even in this place to arrest all who call upon your name.”⁷⁷⁰ And in the same passage the whole church says, “Is this not the one who ravaged those in Jerusalem who called upon that name?” Moreover, the Apostles pray for grace and peace to the faithful, both from Christ and the Father. Finally, in Revelation, four living creatures sing a new song to the Lamb.⁷⁷¹ The scriptures command that God alone is to be worshiped. “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you honor.”⁷⁷² “Worship him who made the heaven and the earth.”⁷⁷³ But it also commands that we worship Christ. “Let all his angels worship him.”⁷⁷⁴ And in

⁷⁵⁹ Jeremiah 17:5

⁷⁶⁰ Psalm 2:12

⁷⁶¹ Galatians 3:9

⁷⁶² Hosea 12:6; Psalm 37:39

⁷⁶³ 1 Timothy 1:1

⁷⁶⁴ Acts 4:12

⁷⁶⁵ Romans 15:12

⁷⁶⁶ Ephesians 1:12

⁷⁶⁷ Psalm 50:15

⁷⁶⁸ Joel 2:32

⁷⁶⁹ Acts 7:59

⁷⁷⁰ Acts 9:13

⁷⁷¹ Revelation 5:13

⁷⁷² Deuteronomy 6:13

⁷⁷³ Revelation 14:7

Revelation the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fall to the ground and worship the lamb, and so on.⁷⁷⁵

Neither is it true what some have objected, namely, that Christ being a pure man is merely to be worshiped on account of a commandment of God, who commands it to be done. For God swore in Isaiah that he would give his glory to no one.⁷⁷⁶ And the commandment about worshipping God alone is repeated by Christ in Matthew.⁷⁷⁷ Glory is owed to God alone. “To the only wise God be glory through Jesus Christ.”⁷⁷⁸ “To the King of the ages, immortal and invisible, the only God, be honor and glory.”⁷⁷⁹ But the saints give the same glory to Christ also. “To him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages.”⁷⁸⁰ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures give glory to the Lamb and the Father equally forever.⁷⁸¹ It is not lawful to be baptized in the name of any single creature. For baptism is a kind of divine worship. For in baptism we both call upon, and promise our prayers, worship, devotion, and obedience to him in whose name we are baptized; just as we do to Jehovah, who receives us into his covenant. For this reason Paul says, “surely you were not baptized in the name of Paul?”⁷⁸² But we are baptized in the name of Christ, no less than that of the Father. Therefore, how is Christ, lacking a divine nature while he exists as a human?

VII. If anyone diligently considers the purposes for which Christ, having been sent by the Father, came into the world, he will clearly see that it is not possible that Christ was either bare man or any other pure and simple creature. For what reason is he said to have come? That he might save that which is lost;⁷⁸³ that he might gather all, both those in heaven and those on earth;⁷⁸⁴ that he might take on the seed of Abraham;⁷⁸⁵ that he might redeem us by the sacrifice of his body (which he had taken on) as if it were an offered λύτρον⁷⁸⁶ and pay our debt with the price of his own blood;⁷⁸⁷ that he might reveal God the Father (who no one else had ever seen), not so much with his words as in

⁷⁷⁴ Hebrews 1:6

⁷⁷⁵ Revelation 5:13

⁷⁷⁶ Isaiah 42:8

⁷⁷⁷ Matthew 4:10

⁷⁷⁸ Romans 16:27

⁷⁷⁹ 1 Timothy 1:17

⁷⁸⁰ Revelation 1:6

⁷⁸¹ Revelation 5:13

⁷⁸² 1 Corinthians 1:13

⁷⁸³ Matthew 18:11

⁷⁸⁴ Ephesians 1:10

⁷⁸⁵ Hebrews 2:16

⁷⁸⁶ λύτρον – “ransom”

⁷⁸⁷ 1 Peter 1:18

his own person, as if he were offering up the Father to be seen and touched,⁷⁸⁸ that he might clearly demonstrate the extent of the Father's love for us, in the most extraordinary way.⁷⁸⁹ And that way was this: the unique and only-begotten Son of God, made man, died for us. Therefore how could Christ be pure creature? He came that we might be made sons of God through grace, by means of his own sonship given to us.⁷⁹⁰

But how could he have accomplished this if he were not by nature the Son of God? He came to devour death.⁷⁹¹ But who is able to do this, unless he is by his own nature eternal life?⁷⁹² He came to take away indwelling sins. But who is strong enough to do this, except he who is justice itself? He came to destroy the works of the Devil, and to cast the Devil out.⁷⁹³ But who is able to accomplish this unless he is stronger than him, even the power of God itself? Therefore Christ is rightly called the power of God,⁷⁹⁴ righteousness,⁷⁹⁵ eternal life,⁷⁹⁶ the only begotten and unique Son of God,⁷⁹⁷ the splendor of his glory and the imprint of the substance of the Father,⁷⁹⁸ and finally the Savior of the World,⁷⁹⁹ since there is something in him beyond his human nature which is more excellent. On account of this he is worthy to be called not only man, but also wisdom, the power of God, the only begotten Son of God, the only Savior of the World, and God himself, true, great and blessed above all.

So far we have indicated not so much what he is as what he is not, by quickly running through the Scriptures which are written about him. Now we will more diligently examine the Scriptures and more precisely show what Christ is.

⁷⁸⁸ John 1:18; John 14:9

⁷⁸⁹ John 3:16; Romans 8:32; Romans 5:8

⁷⁹⁰ Galatians 4:5; John 1:12

⁷⁹¹ Hebrews 2:14

⁷⁹² 1 John 1:2

⁷⁹³ 1 John 3:8; John 12:31

⁷⁹⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:24

⁷⁹⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁷⁹⁶ 1 John 5:20

⁷⁹⁷ John 1:14

⁷⁹⁸ Hebrews 1:3

⁷⁹⁹ John 4:42

