



Gregory of Tatev

Book of Questions

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Gregory of Tatev
(Grigor Tat'ewac'i)

Book of Questions

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For learning about wisdom and instruction,
For understanding words of insight,
For gaining instruction in wise dealing...

(Prov. 1:2-3)

Contents

Foreword	xvii
Preface	xxv
Introduction: Grigor Tat'ewac'i's <i>Book of Questions</i>	xxxi
Book of Questions	3
Preface to These Holy Writings	5
Contents of Volume One of This [Book of] Questions	11
Chapter One of the Major Contents and Section One of This Volume: Against those who speak of necessity and fortune	15
Section Two of This Volume: Against those who say fortune and fate in ten objections	19
Section Three of This Volume: Against those who say that good and evil are from God in twelve objections	24
Section Four of This Volume: Against the Manichaeans in ten points	35
Section Five of This Volume: On good and evil	37
Chapter Two of the Major Contents and Section Six of This Volume: On knowing God	42
[Chapter Three] Against the lost nation of Saracens who are the forerunners of the Anti-Christ and are new heathens with the heresy of Arius and Cerinthus	47
[A]. [The first error of the Saracens]	48
B. The second error of the Saracens	51
C. The third error of the Saracens	59
D. The fourth error of the Saracens	64
E. The fifth error of the Saracens	69
F. The sixth error of the Saracens	71
G. The seventh error of the Saracens	74
H. The eighth error of the Saracens	78
I. The ninth error of the Saracens	81

J. The tenth error of the Saracens	85
K. The eleventh error of the Saracens	87
L. The twelfth error of the Saracens.	90
M. The thirteenth error of the Saracens	93
N. The fourteenth error of the Saracens	96
O. The fifteenth error of the Saracens	98
P. The sixteenth error of the Saracens	100
Chapter Three of the Major Contents and Section Seven of This Volume: Against Jews	103
Contents of My Second Volume and the Schism of Arians in Twenty Sections	109
Chapter Four of the Major Contents and Section One of My Second Volume: On the digression of schismatics	113
Chapter Five of the Major Contents: Objections of the followers of Eunomius and Arius; Refutations and remonstrances of Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus] from four writings	121
Section and Question One	121
Section and Question Two	122
Section and Question Three	124
Section and Objection Four	124
Section and Objection Five	125
Section and Objection Six	126
Section and Question Seven	126
Section and Question Eight	129
Section and Question Nine	130
Section and Objection Ten	131
Section and Explication Eleven	132
Section and Explication Twelve	134
Section and Explication Thirteen	134
Section and Question Fourteen	136
Section and Question Fifteen	137
Section and Explication Sixteen	138
Section and Question Seventeen	139
Section and Question Eighteen	140
Section and Explication Nineteen	140
Section and Explication Twenty	141
On God's Name	142

[Christ] Denominated Son in Four Articles	142
[Christ] Denominated Word in Ten Articles	143
[Christ] Denominated Shepherd in Ten Articles	143
[Christ] Denominated Priest with the Same Order as Melchisedec in Ten Articles	144
[Christ] Denominated Son of Man and Man	145
About the Ways by Which the Blowing Is Defined	145
Chapter Six of the Major Contents: On the Holy Spirit	146
I	147
II	148
III	149
IV	149
V	150
VII	151
VIII	151
IX	152
X	155
XI	156
XII	160
XIII	162
Chapter Seven of the Major Contents: Against the Nestorians who only acknowledge the humanity of Christ—those who say that the Word dwelt in the body as if in a temple	171
Section One: Refutation from the studies of the Scriptures	171
Section Two: Questions of the Dyophysites who deny that the one Christ was God become man, and through separation say [Christ was] perfect God and perfect man	174
Section Three: Testimonies from the Holy Scriptures that Christ is true God	177
Section Four: How is our Lord Jesus Christ and God one with the body born of the Virgin	180
Section Five: On the unification of Christ	183
Section Six	184
Section Seven	186
Section Eight	187

Section Nine	187
Section Ten	191
Section Eleven	192
Section Twelve	192
Section Thirteen	193
Section Fourteen	194
Section Fifteen: The question of the Dyophysites to us—those who say that [Christ is] one person and two natures divide Christ	198
Section Sixteen: The questions of the Orthodox to the Dyophysites	201
Section Seventeen	208
Section Eighteen	209
Section Nineteen: Questions of Gēorg	212
Section Twenty: The Dyophysites divide the humanity of the Word	215
[Contents of] Volume Three of Our Questions:	
The Theology of St. Dionysius	227
Volume Three: On the Theology of Saint Dionysius	230
Chapter Eight from the Major List	230
Section One	230
Section Two	231
Section Three: On unity and separation	232
Section Four	236
Section Five	237
Section Six	240
Section Seven	242
Section Eight: On being and nonbeing	243
Section Nine: On the paradigm	244
Section Ten	246
Section Eleven: How is God timeless and everlasting	248
Section Twelve: On eternities	250
Section Thirteen: On life	252
Section Fourteen: On the vision of God	253
Section Fifteen	256
Section Sixteen	257
Section Seventeen	259
Section Eighteen: On theological modes	260

Section Nineteen	263
Section Twenty: [On] How is God called the sun	264
Section Twenty-one: On the astonishment and jealousy of God	268
Section Twenty-two: On love and good	270
Section Twenty-three	271
Section Twenty-four: Alpha and O[mega]	271
Section Twenty-five	272
Chapter Nine	274
On Angels	274
Section One	274
Section Two	274
On the Appearance of the Angels	276
Section Three	276
Section Four	277
Section Five	278
On the Classes of Angels	279
Section Six	279
On the Orders of the Classes of Angels	280
Section Seven	280
On the Names of Angels	283
Section Eight	283
On the Commonalty and Property of Angels	284
Section Nine	284
On Hierarchy	285
Section Ten	285
On Graces	288
Section Eleven	288
Differentiation of the [Human] Spirit and Angel	289
Section Twelve	289
On the Numbers of Angels	290
Section Thirteen	290
On the Movement of Angels	292
Section Fourteen	292
Section Fifteen	293
On the Movement of Love and Loving	293
Section Sixteen	293
On the Names of Angels	295

Section Seventeen	295
On the Praises of Angels	295
Section Eighteen	295
On the Conversation of Angels	296
Section Nineteen	296
On Devils	298
Section One	298
On the Fall of Devils.	298
On the Transgression of Satan	300
Section Two	300
Section Three	303
Section Four	304
Section Five	305
On the Fiery Dragon	306
Section Six	306
Section Seven	308
Index of Biblical Verses	487
Index of Nonbiblical Personalities	503
List of Illustrations from the 1730 print of the <i>Book of Questions</i>	
Title page	xv
Tat'ewac'i and his disciples	xxix
The first page of volume one	xxxi
The first page of volume two	107
The first page of volume three	225

Hübschmann-Meillet Transliteration System for Armenian Characters

Ա	ա	Ա	ա	Յ	յ	Յ	յ
Բ	բ	Բ	բ	Ն	ն	Ն	ն
Գ	գ	Գ	գ	Շ	շ	Շ	շ
Դ	դ	Դ	դ	Օ	օ	Օ	օ
Ե	ե	Ե	ե	Ը	չ	Ը	չ‘
Զ	զ	Զ	զ	Պ	պ	Պ	պ
Է	է	Է	է	Ջ	ճ	Ջ	ճ
Ը	ը	Ը	ը	Ր	ր	Ր	ր
Թ	թ	Թ	թ	Տ	տ	Տ	տ
Ժ	ժ	Ժ	ժ	Վ	վ	Վ	վ
Ի	ի	Ի	ի	Տ	տ	Տ	տ
Լ	լ	Լ	լ	Ր	ր	Ր	ր
Խ	խ	Խ	խ	Ց	ց	Ց	ց‘
Ծ	ծ	Ծ	ծ	Ո	ո	Ո	օ
Կ	կ	Կ	կ	Փ	փ	Փ	պ‘
Հ	հ	Հ	հ	Ք	ք	Ք	կ‘
Ճ	ճ	Ճ	ճ	Օ	օ	Օ	օ
Ը	լ	Ը	լ	Ֆ	ֆ	Ֆ	ֆ
Ծ	ճ	Ծ	ճ	ՈՒ	ու	ՈՒ	օվ
Մ	մ			և			եվ



ԳԻՐՔ ՀԱՅՈՑ ՄԱՆՅԱ

Երեսէրանեալ Սրբոյ Տօրոն Աերոյ
Կրիտորի Տաթևացւոյն:

Տպագրեցեալ Օդնականուք Աբյն
Թատէոսի Առաքելոյն, և Աբյն
Կրիտորի մերոյ և ուսանորչին:

Խճայրնուե Աբյն և Ճմածնի և ու
սակառոյց Աթուոյն, Օ էյթունցի
տն Արագի Երիցուերանեալ Սրբոյն
և Իշխանի Աթղկսի ամ Հայոց:

Աւ կՊատրիարքուե Աբյն և զէմի
Կանակոյի Տեղեցն, տն Կրիտորի
Սրբոյն և Իշխան Արդպահ:

Կ Ալուստերնո այսին Կիոջորի:

Հ րամանաւ նորին Սրբազնան Պատ
րիարքի, տն Օօչաննու Իշխան
և Կրասիկ և Տօնասիկ Արդպահ:
Կ թէին Հայոց, ու Ճ՛ՏԵ:



Foreword

This volume is the product of a project initiated by the late Fr. Dajad Davidian in 1997.

Our intent, at the time, was to translate the first four volumes of Gregory of Tatev's *Book of Questions*, but the looming potentiality of our geographical separation after Fr. Davidian's retirement as pastor of St. James Armenian Church in Watertown, Massachusetts, prompted the writing of the following joint preface covering the first three volumes. Fr. Davidian moved to Armenia; I relocated in Monterey, California; and the work remained unpublished.

Before his passing away in 2018, Fr. Davidian authorized me to take the necessary steps to revise and publish the work.

Originally, we had also planned to include Sen Arevšatyan's preface, or a summary of it, in our work, but upon Dr. Sergio La Porta's gracious agreement to write a new introduction, I decided to present here only key excerpts from Arevšatyan's preface relating to Tat'ewac'i's place in Armenian religious-philosophical thought in general, as well as aspects specific to the three volumes included in this book in particular.

Arevšatyan states:

The voluminous *Book of Questions* of Grigor Tat'ewac'i—the bestowed monk and the illustrious philosopher and theologian of the Armenian Church—is uniquely distinguished from his numerous other works by its comprehensive philosophical nature . . . It is the sum of Armenian philosophical, theological, and physical thought, and rightfully stands up to comparison with similar monumental works by Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great,

and other great thinkers of the Middle Ages, both in content and in format.

. . . In his colossal work, as in his many other books, . . . Tat‘ewac‘i acts not only as a successor to the best traditions of Armenian philosophical and theological thought, but also as a scholar well-versed in contemporary Western European philosophy and as a critic of the theoretical and doctrinal principles of Catholicism.¹

Arevšatyan goes on:

Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i touches in his *Book of Questions* upon the most significant theological and doctrinological issues brought up by the Christian Church fathers beginning from the earliest periods and discussed throughout the Middle Ages. These are the relationship between God and the world; the matter of creation, necessity, and fate; the creation of man and his association with God; and the most important issues discussed in the Pentateuch and other parts of the Holy Book. The *Book of Questions* presents, in its entirety, the analysis of the issues mentioned above with the versatile, deep-penetrating power of the mind of a philosopher-theologian based on the ideological positions of the Armenian Church and possessing the knowledge of the millennium-long history of Armenian philosophical thought.

It is beyond coincidence that Tat‘ewac‘i named his work *Book of Questions*. His well-planned book is saturated with issues that have been the subject of intense debate for centuries within Christianity and among ideologists of various religions. These issues had essential significance in terms of defending the fundaments of Christianity; refuting diverse Christian teachings, sects, schisms, and heretical movements; and providing substantial answers regarding fundamental contradictions that existed between official teachings and churches.

¹ Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i, *Girk‘ Harc‘manc‘* [Book of Questions] (Jerusalem, 1993), i.

In this regard, one could have rightfully titled Tat‘ewac‘i’s work as *Book of Answers*, rather than *Questions*, because here, naturally, the scholar-ideologist of the Armenian Church dedicates more space to providing profoundly analyzed answers to briefly formulated questions by applying the progressive positions of his profession of faith and the science of his time.

Tat‘ewac‘i resolves the question of God and the world and the relationship between the spirit and nature from an idealistic position. God inarguably “is the beginning of all beings, because the essence of all visible and invisible things has come forth from him.” . . . This main proposition crosses like a red thread through all of Tat‘ewac‘i’s philosophical and religious-doctrinal works. . . .

God created the universe, all of nature, the animals, and human beings. The four elements—fire, air, water, and earth—form the foundation of the existence of nature and constitute its entire diversity. According to Tat‘ewac‘i, these elements exist eternally. He agrees with ancient Greek philosophers who claimed that something cannot proceed from nothing. This does not contradict the teachings of the Church, because there are two kinds of nonbeings. One [kind] is always nonbeing because it exists neither effectively (*nergorcowt’eamb²*) nor potentially (*zōrrowt’eamb*); nothing can be created from such nonbeing. There is, however, a second kind of nonbeing, which does not exist effectively but exists potentially, and it is from this second kind of nonbeing that everything is created. God created the world from such nonbeing. . . .

. . . According to Tat‘ewac‘i, this potential nonbeing is primarily God’s mind, where the world existed until the act of creation. Second, matter without quality³ also falls under

² The Armenian word *nergorcowt’iwn* (ՆԵՐԳՈՐԾՈՎ) means “activity,” “energy,” “operation,” and “influence.” In this book, it is rendered as *operation* primarily.

³ Tat‘ewac‘i uses the word *anorak* (անորակ), which means both “without quality” and

the [category of] nonbeing, and God created nature by giving matter shape and quality. Consequently, the “ancient” philosophers rightfully claimed that something cannot be created from nothing; after all, God created the world from his mind and from matter without quality. The Church also was rightful in claiming that God created the world from nothing, because God’s proto-idea, His mind and matter without quality, belong to the kind of nonbeings that potentially exist and constitute the basis of creation. . . .

As a philosopher, Tat‘ewac‘i strives to reconcile religion with science, alleviate their contradictions with his theory of two kinds of nonbeings, and establish the fundamental tenets of theology, despite accepting two forms of cognizance—*natural* and *granted*—in accordance with the divide between the realms of science and faith, philosophy and theology. By adhering to the theory of *duality of truth* prevalent during the Middle Ages, he claims that “Man has dual knowledge. First, natural. Second, granted. Now, natural [knowledge] has three qualities. First, intelligence lowers itself and levels with intelligible things that are before him. Second, it mingles with them. Third, it is divided and diversified in many, and thus, by wandering it finds the truth. Such is the natural examination of philosophers. The granted [knowledge], however, contradicts these, for it rises to divine knowledge through simple and single intelligence.” . . . This “granted” intelligence coincides with faith that comprehends the divine truths directly through revelation, “with single understanding,” without the participation of the senses and the mind; whereas “natural” understanding recognizes nature with their [senses and mind] active participation only.⁴

* * *

^{“without form.”}

⁴ Tat‘ewac‘i, *op. cit.*, iv–v.

The section on Muslims, which was added to the copy reproduced in Jerusalem in 1993, warrants some context by referencing Bishop Babgēn Kiwlēsērean’s foreword.

Kiwlēsērean relays that in 1905, while confronted with the need to compare the published text of *Girk‘ Harc ‘manc‘* with that of a manuscript of the same, he accidentally discovered that the section in question had been excluded from the published version. The exclusion most likely was intentional and politically motivated given its publication in Constantinople, the seat of the Ottoman sultan, where expressions interpreted as anti-Muslim risked severe punishment. The situation was not different in the early twentieth century, when the discovery of the omission of the section in question was made. Kiwlēsērean waited until 1930 to publish the omitted section as a booklet, in conjunction with a study on Islam in ancient Armenian literature in Vienna.⁵

Justifying his decision not to disclose his discovery in 1905, Kiwlēsērean states in his foreword:

The reason for that concealment was the formidable censorship established against the freedom of the press during the time of Sultan Hamid; therefore, the multilingual press in Istanbul, regardless of race, language, and religion, was obliged to exert the most delicate cautiousness to . . . prevent in publications the slipping of any word that could trouble the sultan, the Turk, and Islam. Hamid’s censorship of the Armenian press was harsher and graver, because the entire Armenian nation was considered suspicious by the “caring” government, and I, during two years of editing *Loys*,⁶ had

⁵ Babgēn Eps. Kiwlēsērean, *Islamə Hay Matenagrowt‘ean Mēj—A. Grigori Tat‘ewac ‘woy Ənddēm Tačkac‘*; B. *I K‘ašownē K‘alacow* [Islam in Armenian Literature: A. Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s Against Muslims; B. Anthology Gathered from Kashun] (Vienna, 1930).

⁶ The periodical *Loys* (Lnu) was established in Constantinople as a bimonthly national, literary, scientific, and political publication in 1897 under Vahan Vardapet Ter Minasean as proprietor and M. Sowlt‘anean as editor-in-chief. Later, it changed editors and focus, and while it had Kiwlēsērean as editor-in-chief from January 1905 through December 1906, it was published as a religious, literary, philological, and political weekly. Kiwlēsērean had a contract with the proprietor to publish the periodical as an ecclesiological weekly for an experimental period to last no more than two years.

lived a martyrdom of mind and heart, and for that very reason I had ceased publishing the periodical. Again, for that reason, I have not been able to write and publish in *Loys Armenian* topics and studies on national-ecclesiastical history.⁷

The translation of the section on Muslims is based on Kiwlēsērean's booklet, which was added to the reprinted *Girk' Harc'manc'* of 1993. In his booklet, Kiwlēsērean mentions that after examining three different manuscripts (the first, most elaborate, identical with the copy edited by Tat'ewac'i himself and copied in 1413; the second, abridged and undated, but seemingly as old as the first manuscript; and the third, undated, taking the middle road between the abridged and nonabridged versions),⁸ he decided to select the abridged version as a base text, reasoning that, first, the abridgments were perhaps made with Tat'ewac'i's knowledge and, second, it was easier to show the differences between the versions in footnotes.⁹

Kiwlēsērean also reasons that the abridgment was probably done to moderate the severity of the apologia, not to excite the Muslim government and people against Armenians. To support his supposition, Kiwlēsērean points out that in the abridged manuscript, the word *Tačik* [Muslim] is replaced with *aylazgi* [gentile] predominantly.¹⁰

Kiwlēsērean goes on to make an important point, by stating,

At the time Tat'ewac'i was writing his *Ənddəm Tačkac'* [Against Saracens¹¹], modern day Turks did not exist [in historic Armenia]. Tat'ewac'i wrote that book having in mind the Tačiks (Arabs, and perhaps also Persian and Tatar Muslims). One needs to be aware that he wrote it as an apologia and as a writing that facilitates religious debates . . .

⁷ Kiwlēsērean, *op. cit.* 3–4.

⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹¹ The choice of referring to Muslims as Saracens was a preference of Fr. Davidian, which I decided to honor, since the word *Saracen*, despite the transformation of its meaning throughout the ages, denoted Muslims primarily when Tat'ewac'i was writing his book.

Foreword

since in those times, people of different religions and beliefs, regardless of their class and position, engaged in debates, each armed with the facts and evidence of his Holy Book. . . .

A careful reading and unprejudiced study of the text of *Against Saracens* shows that Tat‘ewac‘i wrote not with the intention to offend Islam but rather to bring forth the religious truth and defend it, as he did in other sections of the *Book of Questions*. . . .

Of course, the biting style of such *apologia* is both very regrettable and very noteworthy. But this is not a phenomenon unique to Tat‘ewac‘i’s pen: Polemic writings, no matter in which language, reflect a sarcastic or stinging spirit, which emanates from not only the pretensions of the apologetics in skill and knowledge but also the excessive fervency of their orthodoxy.¹²

* * *

I would like to express my gratitude to the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund for funding this project and to Dr. Sergio La Porta for writing the introduction.

I would also like to acknowledge Father Dr. Krikor Maksoudian’s help in clarifying sentences that seemed ambiguous.

Words of profound thankfulness are also due to my wife, Barbara, who lent me valuable assistance during the final stages of revising the original translation.

Vatche Ghazarian, Ph.D.

¹² Kiwlēsēean, *op. cit.*, 9–11.

Preface

Gregory of Tatev, the Armenian theologian, philosopher, educator, and author—also known as Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i (1346–1409)—is one of the most prominent theologians of the Armenian Church. The *Book of Questions*—the *Summa Theologica* of the Armenian Church and the master work of Tat‘ewac‘i—was completed in 1397, when the theologian was in residence in the monastery of Tatev, Armenia. During this period, the Armenian Church was confronting both the intrusion of Islam and the appeal of Catholicism being spread in some parts of Armenia proper through missionaries. The chaotic sociopolitical conditions of the era served as fertile ground for the rise of schismatic thoughts and doctrines contrary to the doctrine of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

In his *Book of Questions*, Tat‘ewac‘i examines Islam, Catholicism, and many heresies and schisms, and attempts to redefine the cornerstone of Armenian orthodox teaching, based on the first three Councils of Nicea, Constantinople, and Ephesus—the belief in one Godhead with three countenances. These are God the Father uncreated, not born, and without beginning; God the Son begotten of the Father; and the Holy Spirit as proceeding from the Father. Also discussed is the belief that Jesus Christ, the incarnate God the Word, is perfect God and perfect man in spirit, in mind, and in body, one person, one countenance, and one united nature, and that God became man without change and without any alteration, with no beginning to his divinity and no end to his manhood.

The scope and the universal nature of the *Book of Questions* make it comparable to the works of Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) and Albert the Great (d. 1280).

Tat‘ewac‘i demonstrated a familiarity with the works of these famous theologians and refers to them in his work. The colophons of the original manuscript of the *Book of Questions* indicate that the ground work for this master work was laid in the 1380s, when Tat‘ewac‘i taught at the seminary of Aprakunis, under his friend and mentor Yovhan Orotnec‘i (John of Vorodn, 1315–1386). In 1390, upon an invitation from Prince Ōrbelean, the ruler of Siwnik‘, Tat‘ewac‘i assumed the position of rector of the University of Tatev in Siwnik‘, Armenia, where the *Book of Questions* was completed.

Orotnec‘i, the founder of the University of Tatev, was a great theologian and philosopher in his own right. His commentaries on the philosophical works of Aristotle, Philo of Alexandria, and Porphyry were transcribed for posterity by Gregory of Tatev, his most promising student and colleague. Orotnec‘i offered a new dimension to the works of Aristotle in medieval Armenia and greatly influenced Tat‘ewac‘i and his other followers.

Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Book of Questions* represents some of the highest achievements of the theological and philosophical teachings of the fathers of Christianity, and particularly of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Throughout the book, Tat‘ewac‘i quotes from or references the works of theologians and philosophers such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Philo of Alexandria, Albert the Great, Porphyry, St. Cyril, and others. It is evident, however, that Tat‘ewac‘i treats Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian), Aristotle (the Philosopher), and Dionysius Aeropagis or Pseudo-Dionysius with special reverence.

The original manuscript of Gregory of Tatev is housed in the Matenadaran, the depository of Armenian manuscripts named after Maštoc‘ in Yerevan, Armenia. It is identified under the registration number 3616. Other manuscripts, copied from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries, are also deposited at the Matenadaran. One of these was copied in 1407 by T‘ovma Mecop‘ec‘i under the supervision of Gregory himself and bears the registration number 9247.

The multitude of copies of the *Book of Questions* made throughout the ages indicate that the book was not only extensively used by the Armenian clergy but also read by the educated class of laypeople. The continuous demand for this book prompted Grigor Dpir of Merzifon¹ to attempt to print it in 1720. Unfortunately, Grigor Dpir was unable to accomplish the project. Astowacatowr of Constantinople took on the project of printing the book in 1729 and brought its production to completion on May 1, 1730, in Constantinople (Istanbul).

However, because of political and religious considerations and restrictions of the time, this edition of the *Book of Questions* left out the section in which Tat‘ewac‘i refutes the teachings of Islam. This missing section was finally printed in 1930 in Vienna as a separate booklet by Bishop Babgēn Kiwlēsērean.²

The translation found in this volume is based on the photoreproduced copy of the 1729 text³ and the aforementioned complementary booklet of Bishop Kiwlēsērean.

In his introductory remarks of the reproduced copy, Dr. Sen Arevšatyan, director of the Matenadaran, states that he compared the printed version with the original manuscripts of Gregory of Tatev and T‘ovma Mecop‘ec‘i and that “the published text is identical with the original and, textologically speaking, is perfect.”⁴

The version on which this translation is based divides the *Book of Questions* into ten volumes. It includes a reproduction of Tat‘ewac‘i’s colophon, which explains in detail the motivation for his undertaking. Also included is an index of major subjects.

¹ In 1729 Merzifon (Marzowan [Մարզուան] in Armenian) was a thriving Armenian town located in historic Lesser Armenia; today it is a town in Turkey.

² Babgēn Eps. Kiwlēsērean, *Islamə Hay Matenagrowt‘ean Mēj—A. Grigori Tat‘ewac‘woy Ənddəm Tačkac‘, B. I K‘aşownē K‘ałacow* [Islam in Armenian Literature: A. Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s Against Muslims; B. Anthology Gathered from Kashun] (Vienna, 1930).

³ Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i, *Girk‘ Harc‘manc‘* [Book of Questions] (Constantinople, 1729). Although the printing was completed in 1730 according to the publisher’s colophon, the year 1729 appears on the cover page.

⁴ Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i, *Girk‘ Harc‘manc‘* [Book of Questions] (Jerusalem, 1993), iii.

The ten volumes are titled as follows:

- I. Against those who speak of necessity and fortune.
- II. On the falsehood of schismatics.
- III. On the theology of St. Dionysius.
- IV. On the operation and creation of God.
- V. On the making of man.
- VI. The five books of Moses; that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- VII. The collection of Joshua, Judges, and the four Kings.
- VIII. About the humanization of the Savior.
- IX. Diverse questions on the new law and the church.
- X. On the life to come and the changing of man.

This first known effort to translate the classical Armenian text into English presents the first three volumes of the *Book of Questions*, including the section on Muslims. In order to accurately reflect the predominant atmosphere of the time and place in which the book was originally written, we have tried to be as literal as possible in translating Tat‘ewac‘i’s masterpiece.

We have chosen *The Septuagint*, which is closest to the Armenian version of the Holy Bible, from which to quote the citations of the Old Testament. As for the citations from the New Testament, we used the *New Oxford Annotated Bible* as a model. It should be noted that Tat‘ewac‘i rarely specified the sources of direct quotations, whether from the Bible or from other works. We tried to locate and identify the specific citations from the Bible, but we did not attempt to do so for the nonbiblical references, many of which Tat‘ewac‘i paraphrased.

We are confident that volume one of the English version of Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Book of Questions* will lead to the completion of the entire work in a second volume, and more importantly, we hope it will elevate Gregory of Tatev to his rightful place among the great theologians of all time—from Gregory of Nazianzus to Thomas Aquinas and beyond.

Dajad Davidian† and Vatche Ghazarian



ԱՅՆ ԵՐԵՄԱՆ ԵՎ ԱՐՄԱՆ ՅԱԿԱՐ

Մեծի հօրն սբ.յ՝ Արքանելոյն Յօհաննու Որոտեցւոյ՝
Ընուսոյց աշակերտի, և Պարգևեին Լուսահորդի։
Այն Պարգևորի Տաթևացւոյ, Ծափան Արդպատի,
Ռուն իմաստասիրի և խստակրօն ճշնահորի՝ Արարեալ
զմբգիրս Հարցմանց, ՚Ի Տերքում աղանդից ամենայն
Տերձունածողաց Խնչի լուծումն բաղմազան բանից ճըշ
մարտուեն, ՚Ի փառս միոյն Լոյց և յօդուտ ու զղափառ
մանկանց Աթղեէ Հայաստանեց սբ Ակեղեցւոյս Բի.

Introduction

GRIGOR TAT‘EWAC‘I’S *BOOK OF QUESTIONS*

Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Girk‘ Harcmanc‘* or *Book of Questions* was the prominent monastic teacher’s second most popular work, surpassed in surviving copies only by his *Sermonaries*.¹ Well over one hundred copies of the text or portions of the text have been preserved, including the autograph, manuscript 3616 of the Matenadaran (Mashots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts) in Yerevan. Tat‘ewac‘i completed the work in 1397 and wrote it at the insistence of his pupil, Atom, who had been vexed by the topics treated in the book. As it was intended to be used by students at his school, Grigor wrote the work in a direct or simple classical Armenian (*grabar*), rather than an overly sophisticated one.²

As Tat‘ewac‘i’s own work demonstrates, the *Book of Questions* provided its user with material suitable for homilies and for exegetical enterprises. Numerous passages from the *Book of Questions* appear *verbatim* in Grigor’s sermons. Sometimes, he changes the ordering of his answers to better suit the specific topic at hand. Likewise, he reemploys passages that have been modified from his earlier works in the *Book of Questions*. Grigor also often addresses issues of biblical exegesis, providing various

¹ The *Book of Questions* was published in Constantinople in 1730, although the title page reads 1729, see R. Işxanyan, “Grigor Tat‘evac‘u ‘Girk‘ harc‘manc‘i’ afajin hratarakut‘yunə,” *Ējmiacin* 9–10 (1963), pp. 51–55. This text was then reprinted by the Armenian Patriarchate of Sts. James in 1993.

² Tat‘ewac‘i provides information about why and how he wrote the *Book of Questions* in the colophon to the work, which is published in Levon Xač‘ikyan, *ŽD Dari Hayeren Jerāgreri Hišatakanner* (Erevan, 1950), pp. 616–17, as well as on pp. 772–73 of the Jerusalem printed edition mentioned above.

interpretations of specific words or verses.³

It has become common in recent years to refer to Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i as a scholastic theologian; for example, Archbishop Mesrop Krikorian, has several articles where he explicitly refers to Tat‘ewac‘i by that description.⁴ De Durand in his pioneering study of Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Book of Questions* portrays it as a “Summa” of Armenian theology; the comparison to Thomas Aquinas and scholasticism being implicit.⁵ Even if a direct comparison to scholasticism and Thomas Aquinas is not made, Grigor’s works are normally used as an encyclopedia, in which specific topics may be looked up in the index and read, removed from the greater context of the work, to be understood as a summary of the Armenian position on this or that theological question of his day. Rarely is the term “original” applied to his writings; rather, they are considered compilations and abridgements of the earlier medieval Armenian tradition into which he inserted bits of translated Latin material where he thought fit.

Even more rarely is the term “spiritual” employed in conjunction with his name; instead, Tat‘ewac‘i is often portrayed as a staunch defender of Armenian orthodoxy, primarily a dry theologian who attempted to use reason and dialectics to oppose those Latin doctrines that threatened the autonomy and tradition of the Armenian Church. His programmatic use, regardless of genre, of neatly ennumerated series of questions and answers, purportedly testifies to the cold rationalism and distanced stance of their author who may have been one of the more learned vardapets in Armenian history, but who is not normally ranked among her great spiritual masters to be compared with Grigor Narekac‘i, Nersēs Šnorhali, Nersēs Lambronac‘i, etc. While many of the above characterizations are

³ For example, in volume III, he explores the various meanings of the word “grace” (*šnorhk*) in the Pauline epistles, especially in 1 and 2 Corinthians.

⁴ E.g., M. Krikorian, “Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i: A Great Scholastic Theologian and Nominalist Philosopher,” in *Medieval Armenian Culture*, ed. T. Samuelian and M. Stone (Atlanta, 1984), pp. 131–41.

⁵ D. De Durand, “Une somme arménienne au XIV^e siècle,” *Études d’histoire littéraire et doctrinale*, 4e série (Montréal/Paris, 1968), pp. 217–77.

indeed accurate to a point, I would like to challenge the overall picture they create and put them into a different context.

Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i was not an intellectual scurried away in a monastery cut off from the problems of the world and of his times. As I indicated in the introduction to Vatche Ghazarian’s translation of part of Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Summer Sermonary*, Grigor was very much engaged with the concerns of his fellow Armenians; and this interest reflects itself in his writings.⁶ He shared the experiences of insecurity, conflict, and alienation that were felt by many Armenians at this time. His father’s story was one of exile and excommunication; he himself was born away from his ancestral homeland and he was raised abroad; his life was often itinerant, either by choice or on account of persecution. He battled with Armenians and non-Armenians over doctrinal and jurisdictional issues; he witnessed not only the ravages of Greater Armenia on account of Tamerlane, but also the disappearance of the kingdom of Cilicia by the Mamlukes. And yet, in this transient world of chaos, darkness and death he believed and upheld a faith that declared that God is good and His creation is good as well; a God of love, light and life. In the resolution of that seeming disharmony between the visible and invisible worlds rests much of the motivation for Grigor’s work; and in the communication of that vision, the basis of the love and admiration accorded to him by contemporaries. The structure and intent of his writing is not so much based on rationalistic principles or on the dialectics of logic, but on the dialectics of the Incarnate Logos who became manifest in the world for humanity’s salvation and revealed the mystery of God’s love that rested hidden within the treasury of scripture.

It appears that Tat‘ewac‘i is often called a “scholastic” or treated somewhat as a philosopher/theologian rather than as a spiritual master for two primary reasons. First, he, like his European contemporaries, injected a tremendous amount of Aristotelian speculation into his work. And secondly, the structure of his works—all of them constructed around the Question and Answer format—

⁶ Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i, *Homilies: seventy sermons from the “Book of homilies which is called summer volume,”* trans. V. Ghazarian (Monterey, 2018).

appears to correspond with the dialectical methodology prominent in the European schools. We should note from the outset that both of these characteristics have long histories within the Armenian tradition. It is indeed true that the monastic higher education system that Orotneč‘i inaugurated and that was continued and reformed by Tat‘ewac‘i bears the imprint of the *logica vetus* which was a course of study established by the Dominicans for their students in the middle of the thirteenth century.⁷ Nevertheless, the Aristotelian texts contained within that tradition—the *Categories* and the *On Interpretation*—plus the exegetical works of Porphyry, had been translated into Armenian in the fifth or sixth centuries and had generated a native commentarial tradition.⁸ Similarly, the question and answer genre stretches back to Classical times whence it was transmitted to late Antique and Patristic Christianity as well as to Armenian Christianity, where examples can be found ascribed to the 5th century.⁹ The appearance of such characteristics in Grigor’s writings, therefore, cannot be attributed solely to Latin influence as they are well-represented in the Armenian tradition that preceded him.

Moreover, the type of question and answer format employed by Tat‘ewac‘i does not correspond well to that which developed among medieval European schoolmasters in the thirteenth century. Formally, his methodology corresponds more closely to that of the twelfth-century monastic masters than to the scholastic methodology that

⁷ S. La Porta, “Armeno-Latin intellectual exchange in the fourteenth century: Scholarly traditions in conversation and competition,” *Medieval Encounters* 21 (2015), pp. 289–90.

⁸ A. Terian, “The Hellenizing School: Its Time, Place, and Scope of Activities Reconsidered,” in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period*, ed. N. G. Garsoian, T. F. Mathews, and R. W. Thomson, (Washington, DC: 1982), 175–86; see also V. Calzolari and J. Barnes, eds., *L’œuvre de David l’Invincible et la transmission de la pensée grecque dans la tradition arménienne et syriaque. Commentaria in Aristotelem Armeniaca – Davidis Opera. Volume 1* (Leiden, 2009).

⁹ G. Bardy, “La Littérature patristique des ‘Quaestiones et Responsiones’ sur l’Écriture Sainte,” *Revue Biblique* 41 (1932), pp. 210–36, 341–69, 516–37; and 42 (1933), pp. 14–30, 211–29, 328–52; R. Irvine, “Antecedents and Parallels to Some Questions and Answers on Genesis in Vanakan Vardapet’s *Book of Questions*,” *Le Muséon* 113.3/4 (2000), pp. 417–28.

reaches its apex in the thirteenth-century summae. Critical to the scholastic method was the dispute in which opposing arguments were also taken into account and refuted; we find no such consistent structure in any of Tat‘ewac‘i’s works. This is not to claim that Grigor has no parallels with thinkers from the European schools. They share many of the same patristic sources, and he was familiar with and borrowed from them. We must, however, be wary of importing European or Latin terminology to characterize medieval Armenian monastic thinkers as it skews our perception of them on account of the preconceptions these terms bring with them.

The general structure of the *Book of Questions* provides insight into Grigor’s spiritual vision as well as a fruitful point of comparison with contemporary Latin theological compendia. The *Book of Questions* is comprised of ten volumes (*hatork’*). The contents of the volumes are as follows: Volume I contains polemics against those who believe in fate and in the divine creation of evil, as well as against Manichaeans and Jews.¹⁰ This volume also contains a treatise against Islam which was intentionally omitted from the edition printed in Constantinople to avoid dangerous offense to the Ottoman Muslim authorities.¹¹ Volume II refutes various Christian heresies, including those that denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit [the *Pneumatomachoi*, the followers of Macedonius], Nestorians, and Dyophysites [Chalcedonians]. In volume III Tat‘ewac‘i discusses the nature of God and of angels and demons.¹² Volume IV is a description

¹⁰ On the polemic against Judaism, see S. La Porta “A fourteenth-century Armenian polemic against Judaism and its Latin source,” *Le Muséon* 122.1–2 (2009), pp. 93–129. T. Poladian, “Gregory of Tatew—Against the Manichees,” in *Review of Religion*, 9 (1945), pp. 242–53, has conducted a brief study of the section against Manichaeism.

¹¹ F. Kraelitz-Greifenhurst , “Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Wörter im Buch gegen die Mohammedaner des Gregor von Tat‘ew,” *Handes Amsorya*, 41 (1927), pp. 771–78; A. Jeffery, “Gregory of Tathew’s ‘Contra Mohammedanos,’ ” *The Muslim World*, 32 (1942), pp. 219–35; F. Macler, “L’Islam dans la littérature arménienne,” *Revue des études islamiques*, 6 (1932), pp. 493–522; S. Dadoyan, “Grigor of Tat‘ev: Treatise against the Tajiks,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 7/2 (1996), pp. 193–204.

¹² S. La Porta, “‘The Theology of the Holy Dionysius,’ Volume III of Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Book of Questions*: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary” (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 2001).

of the first six days of creation of the world. Volume V discusses the particular composition of man.¹³ Volume VI—the longest, with 82 questions—is a commentary on the Pentateuch; it also includes a brief explanation of the Book of Job, as Tat‘ewac‘i believed the biblical figure to be a contemporary of Moses.¹⁴ Tat‘ewac‘i continues his exegesis of the Old Testament in volume VII, which covers the historical books, Joshua through II Kings/IV Kingdoms. Volume VIII is a commentary on the New Testament and the nature of the Incarnation. Volume IX presents Tat‘ewac‘i’s explanation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy—i.e., why there is one Catholicos (the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church), what are the circumstances for excommunication and the release from the bonds of excommunication, etc.—as well as his interpretation of the rites or mysteries of the Church, that is, her sacramental theology.¹⁵ Grigor completes his encyclopedic work with a discussion of the eschaton and Resurrection.

The overall structure of the work evidences its systematic approach and displays a coherent theological program. Having first refuted incorrect beliefs in order to establish a solid orthodox foundation, the text proceeds chronologically through the Old and New Testaments to the workings of the Church and culminates in a discussion of the End time. Although there are some broad similarities between the *Book of Questions* and some Latin works, no exact correspondence has been discovered. The usual division of medieval Latin theological compendia is into four books following the division of Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*: the first is dedicated to a discussion of the Unity and Trinity of God; the second, to the

¹³ M. Ashjian, *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays* (New York, 1994), pp. 22–48; S. La Porta, “Additional Remarks Concerning ‘Man as the Image of God’ in Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Book of Questions*,” *St. Nersess Theological Seminary Review* 7 (2002), pp. 67–84.

¹⁴ S. La Porta, “Sorcerers, Witches, and Weasels: Armenian Definitions of the Magical Arts,” *Revue des études arméniennes* 28 (2001–2), pp. 171–214”; S. La Porta, “Concerning Job: Chapter 22 of the Sixth Volume of Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s *Girk‘ Harc‘manc‘*;” *St. Nersess Theological Review* 2. 2 (1997), pp. 131–65.

¹⁵ D. Tsaghikyan, “Grigor Tatevatsi and the Sacraments of Initiation” (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2015).

Creation and the nature of the angels; the third, to the Incarnation and redemption; the fourth, to the sacraments and last things.

A greater affinity with Tat‘ewac‘i’s arrangement, however, may be found in the Dominican Hugh Ripelin’s *Compendium theologicæ veritatis*, which was translated into Armenian and with which Grigor was familiar.¹⁶ Hugh divided his major work into the seven following books: Book I, on the Trinity; Book II, on the creation of the world; Book III, on the corruption of sin; Book IV, on the Incarnation; Book V, on Grace; Book VI, on the Sacraments; Book VII, on the Four Last Things. The correspondences between the structure of the *Book of Questions* and Hugh Ripelin’s *Compendium* are not accidental. Tat‘ewac‘i cites, although without attribution, from the *Compendium* many times in his work; and part of the structure of the *Book of Questions* is undoubtedly indebted to it. However, Grigor’s employment of Latin texts and incorporation of Latin ideas is very conscious and conscientious, and not at all haphazard.

A good example is provided by his use of Honorius of Autun’s *Elucidarium* which dates to the early twelfth century. In his discussion on the relation between the persons of the Trinity in volume III of the *Book of Questions*, Tat‘ewac‘i adopts a series of questions and answers taken straight from Honorius. The final question asks: “Why is the Holy Spirit not called ‘son’?” Grigor answers: “Because it is not an offspring, but an emanation, just as breath and life from our souls.” If we compare the same question in Honorius, we immediately notice how Tat‘ewac‘i has modified the question and answer. The dialogue in Honorius is as follows: “Student. Why is the Holy Spirit not called the son of both, so that one would be the father, the other would be the mother? Master. Because it proceeds simultaneously and equally from both and it is itself the bond of the entire divinity.”¹⁷ Grigor’s rephrasing cleverly

¹⁶ On this text in Armenian, mistakenly thought to have been composed by Albert the Great, see M. van den Oudenrijn “Das ‘Buch Albert’ in der armenischen Literatur,” *Divus Thomae* 18 (1940), pp. 428–48. See also de Durand, “Une somme,” pp. 233, 266–68; La Porta, “The Theology of the Holy Dionysius,” pp. 115–118. The text was translated into Armenian by the Dominican Peter of Aragon and the Unitor Yakob Kinec‘i in 1344.

¹⁷ Honorius, *L’Elucidarium et les Lucidaires*, ed. Y. Lefèvre (Paris, 1954), p. 362. No copy

avoids any possible reference to the Latin doctrine of *filioque*—i.e., that the Holy Spirit emanates from both the Father and the Son—rejected by the Armenians and in particular by his teacher Yovhannēs Orotneč‘i.¹⁸ Thus, while Grigor employs Latin sources for his work, he does not apply them blindly, but contours them to conform to what he considers to be consistent with Armenian tradition and belief. Similarly, the divergences between the structure of the *Book of Questions* and that of Ripelin’s *Compendium*, bear significance for the purpose of Grigor’s work as a whole.

Three major divergences between the two texts are noteworthy. First, Tat‘ewac‘i prefaces his treatment of the nature of the Godhead by two volumes of polemics—the first against non-Christians; the second, against Christian heresies. While there is no shortage of polemics in Latin literature—and Grigor’s polemic against Judaism, for example, is culled from a fourteenth-century Latin source¹⁹—I am not aware of a scholastic compendium or summa that begins with such a discourse. Second, after treating the Creation, Ripelin turns to the corruption of sin. This corresponds to Grigor’s volume entitled on the creation of man. Third, and possibly most important, the contents of the volumes emphasize Grigor’s scriptural approach to his faith. Three volumes are dedicated to explicating salvation history through the lens of the biblical narrative. None of the Latin theological compendia, ultimately indebted to Peter Lombard, attribute such an explicitly significant role to scripture in the explication of the faith and the road to salvation.

Grigor’s prefacing the *Book of Questions* with two volumes of polemics may reflect the general emphasis in the Armenian tradition on the idea of penance and purification, found already in the *Teaching ascribed to St. Grigor Lusaworič‘*, in the apocryphal texts

of an Armenian translation of Honorius’s work has yet been identified.

¹⁸ S. La Porta, “The History of the *Filioque* Controversy in Armenia,” *St. Nersess Theological Seminary Review* 8 (2003), pp. 85–116.

¹⁹ Grigor’s information was ultimately derived from Raymond Martini’s *Pugio Fidei*, but this source was mediated through the *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios hebraeos* of the Genoese Carthusian, Porchetus de Salvaticis, completed in 1303. See La Porta, “A Fourteenth-Century Armenian Polemic.”

of the protoplasts and patriarchs and prophets, in the works of Grigor Narekac‘i, and in the medieval penitential literature. But it also brings the structure of the work into alignment with another arrangement quite important for Tat‘ewac‘i and for the Armenian spiritual tradition. This is the triadic structure of purification, illumination, and perfection made famous by Dionysius the Areopagite in his works, but already adumbrated for the Christian tradition by Origen and expounded by his student, Evagrius of Pontus.²⁰ If we look again at the overall structure of the *Book of Questions* we observe that the successive ten volumes may be grouped into this triadic framework in which the reader is first purified of impure beliefs, then illuminated to the truth of the nature of the Godhead, His creation, and salvation history; and perfected in the light of the Incarnation, the Church and the Final Resurrection.

Second, in the analogous place where Hugh Ripelin treats the subject entitled on the corruption of sin, Grigor dedicates a volume to the creation of humanity. While the difference in titles may not be indicative of any substantive difference in approach, a glance at the Latin tradition’s treatment of the topic compared with Tat‘ewac‘i’s is revealing. Latin compendia, of course, discuss the creation of humanity and how humanity was made in God’s image; but they also spend, as Hugh’s header suggests, a tremendous amount of time explaining the nature of sin and, not surprisingly, the particular Augustinian notion of original sin. By contrast, out of forty questions dedicated to the creation of man in the *Book of Questions*, only two are concerned with the Fall. This is not to say that Tat‘ewac‘i was not concerned with sin—he has a lot to say about it within the context of volume IX in his section concerning the Church—but this placement puts the notion of sin within the framework of its forgiveness, and not within one about the inherent nature of humanity. Rather, his explication on the creation of humanity focusses upon the way we are created in God’s image and how Christ through His resurrection demonstrated that we return to our pre-

²⁰ See, in general, A. Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition from Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981).

lapsarian state at our Resurrection.

Third, as mentioned, no Latin theological compendium devotes three books to the explicit exegesis of the Pentateuch, the historical books, and the New Testament. In addition to the profound centrality that scriptural interpretation played in the Armenian Church and especially in the medieval monasteries, the inclusion of these volumes endows the *Book of Questions* with a historical perspective that gives the reader the impression of going on a journey not only within the confines of the massive tome itself, but also through humanity's onward march towards salvation. There is a sweeping motion to the direction of the text that is missing from its Latin analogies as one progresses from the darkness of ignorance and heresy into the light of the Resurrection.

Lombard's quaternary division evokes the kenosis of the Son in the work's procession from the nature of the Godhead to the Incarnation and then the Church. Ripelin's arrangement adds to that downward gesture from the nature of the Godhead into creation and the Incarnation, the uplifting movement of grace. But Tat'ewac'i lingers here on earth a bit more, or at least in the physical manifestation of the Logos in the word of Scripture—the prism through which Grigor sees and understands the world. In doing so, the salvific verticality of Christ's descent and humanity's redemption is intersected by humanity's horizontal pilgrimage in the world as history and in the individual soul's pilgrimage as reader of scripture.

Further evidence for the centrality of this progressive spirituality in Tat'ewac'i's consciousness is provided by his homily for the feast of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, on the verse Isaiah 2.3: “Come, let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob.”²¹ Tat'ewac'i begins his homily by explaining that Isaiah summons us to Jerusalem because it is the way through which we gain entry into the heavenly kingdom, the place for which we

²¹ Sermon 136 of Tat'ewac'i's *Winter Sermonary*, *Girk' K'arozut'ean Or Koč'i Jmeran Hator* (Jerusalem, 1998), pp. 610–613; see also the introduction to Ghazarian's translation of a portion of the *Summer Sermonary* where I also discuss this sermon in relation to Grigor's ordination in Jerusalem.

naturally yearn. He then proceeds to sing the ten praises of Jerusalem which constitute an exhortation to pilgrimage. These ten praises commence with Adam and Eve and progress chronologically and geographically through the patriarchs and the Exodus, to the city of Jerusalem as the center of the world, to the economic activity of the Lord within the city, to the final judgement which takes place there. At each step of the way, the touchstone for the “praise” is a scriptural verse or passage whose full meaning is brought out by its inclusion within this pilgrimage. Grigor concludes: “Now if the place is worthy of being where God descends in just examination and all the angels and saints with Him, then it is worthy for everyone to run there, as if [running] before Christ, and to be physically face to face and to see Christ and the place of His Incarnation.”

Again, we observe a similar intersection of the verticality of the Incarnation with the horizontal passage through time and space. And again, this occurs both on the macro level of humanity as well as on the individual spiritual level. Each praise is punctuated by a biblical verse or set of verses that on the one hand was presumably meant to be read and meditated upon when the person was at that spot. On the other hand, Tat‘ewac‘i well knew that it was not possible for everyone to go to Jerusalem given the difficulties involved in trying to get there. So these scriptural markers also work in reverse: when one reads them, one is able to evoke and imagine, to re-present the places of God’s revelation, Incarnation, and economy, and so undergo an interior spiritual pilgrimage guided by the Bible while physically remaining in Siwnik‘.

This progressive movement through time and within space that parallels the reader’s movement through a work is not unique to the *Book of Questions*; its most famous precedent is to be found in Grigor Narekac‘i’s *Book of Lamentation* (*Matean Olbergout’ean*).²² Here, the primary movement occurs through liturgical space and time. The work is divided into three parts, explicitly associated with the narthex, nave, and altar of a church. As the reader moves through the

²² A. and J.-P. Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie. Matean Olbergout’ean, le Livre de Lamentation*, (Louvain, 2000), pp. 168–76.

text, he travels through the church, from the narthex to the altar within the temporal vortex of the baptismal rite of washing, communion, and anointment; and spiritually, from damnation to salvation. Once again we may be able to detect the Dionysian triad of purification, illumination, and perfection at play here.²³

The question remains, however, why Tat‘ewac‘i decided to adopt this mixture of approaches—on the one hand clearly indebted to Latin compositional structures; on the other, reshaped to conform to the Armenian spiritual tradition? In order to answer that question, we need to return to Grigor’s and his students’ historical circumstances. Contemporary Armenian life was incredibly uncertain. External developments such as the collapse of the Il-Khan empire that released the chaotic violence of Turkmen raiders; the collapse of the Cilician kingdom; and the Timurid invasions, coupled with the internal problems of the Armenian Church and the missionary activity of the Latin Church, took its toll on the faithful. We can only imagine the cognitive dissonance they suffered between what their faith told them about the workings of the universe and what they saw in front of them: there was little evidence of a Good God who ordered the Creation and revealed Himself to humanity. The advantage of the texts produced by the Latin scholastic movement is the ordered and stable picture they present through their “logical” program of systematic theology. Thousands flocked to Latin teachings, partially out of intellectual curiosity, but also because of the stability and certainty these texts offered. Undoubtedly, Grigor realized the technological advantage of the organizational principles of scholastic texts, and that explains the reason for his adoption of this methodology. We can see this in the *Book of Questions* itself which is probably one of the easiest texts produced until that time in Armenian to use. But while he appreciated and appropriated this tool, he also understood that the picture of stability such a “rational” universe provided was only partial and

²³ S. La Porta “Two Visions of Mysticism: The Corpus Dionysiaca and the Book of Lamentation,” *Revue Théologique de Kaslik* 3–4 (2009–2010), pp. 243–57, where I also point out significant difference between Narekac‘i’s spirituality from that of Dionysius.

Introduction

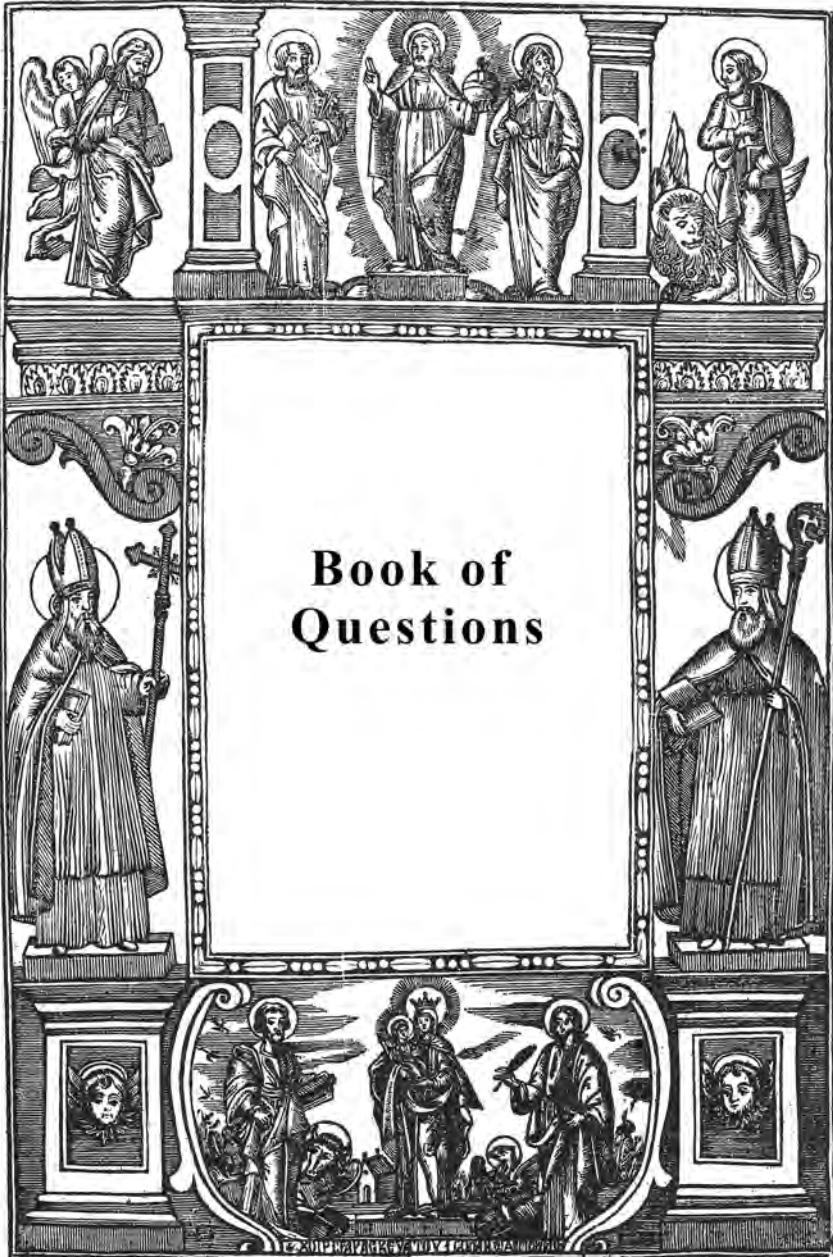
could not encompass the entirety of spiritual existence; for this, he needed to accommodate the flux of history, within which he and his brethren were caught, and explicate its extra-historical meaning.

So, was Grigor a scholastic theologian or a spiritual master? Tat‘ewac‘i read, understood, and adopted scholastic texts, but his own approach to them and to his work was guided by a spiritual vision that envisaged the life of humanity and that of the soul as a pilgrimage whose journey is long and difficult, but whose goal is attained in a single moment of a face-to-face encounter with the divine. In this, he seems to have been motivated by both the arc of his own life as well as out of concern for that of his flock. This vision and its actualization in the *Book of Questions* and in works such as his homily on the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem underscore that the division between “rationalism” and “mysticism” that emerged from the arguments between the schools and monasteries of Europe did not have a corollary in the Armenian tradition where they remained inextricably linked, each reflecting an essential part of the human being and the human experience. The power and attraction of Tat‘ewac‘i’s person and vision is probably best expressed by his student T‘ovma Mecopec‘i who remarks that Grigor “was generous and rich in speech, there not being [anyone] like him among any people, neither in the past nor present.... And those who saw him were blessed, for he had an awe-inspiring appearance, and many times we heard that Christ had come into this world in such a form.”²⁴

Dr. Vatche Ghazarian’s lucid translation of the first three volumes of the *Book of Questions* will hopefully inspire readers to delve further into the meaning of this critical work that helped shape and define the Armenian intellectual tradition.

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²⁴ T‘ovma Mecopec‘i, *Patmagrut ‘iwn*, ed. Levon Xac‘ikyan (Erevan, 1999), p. 47.



Book of Questions

Book of Questions

of our thrice blessed holy father Gregory of Tatev.

Printed with the help of St. Thaddeus the Apostle and St. Gregory our Illuminator. During the Pontificate of thrice blessed Lord Karapet of Zeitun,¹ the theologian and Most Reverend Catholicos of all Armenians of the Holy See of Ējmiaçin built of light. And during the Patriarchate of Lord Gregory the Theologian and Most Reverend Vardapet of the Holy Places of Holy Jerusalem trodden by Christ.

In the city of Constantinople

By order of His Beatitude the Patriarch, Lord Yōhannēs Vardapet the Theologian, the bibliophile and the lover of liturgical observances.

In the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight [1729] of the Armenian calendar.

O Most Holy Trinity, be my helper, as you guide many to the good always, since being extremely immature and inexperienced in this profession, I, who am darkened by sin, initiate this authored work trusting in you.

¹ The Cilician Armenian town of Zeitun is modern day Süleymanlı in Turkey.

Preface to These Holy Writings

A perpetually moving inherent force relentlessly elevates the rational intellect of man like an uprising fire, until it reaches the reposeful state of its completion. And the completion of the inner intellect is the truth, as [the completion] of inner operation [is] the good. And by this itself our spirits are enriched in diverse fashion both with the theoretical and the practical. The practical depends on the compliant will, while the theoretic is [associated] with the intellectual process. Also, the theoretical proceeds attaining the truth by moving the compliant [element] toward the good.

Now, the knowledge of the theoretical corresponds to fact—[to the] how and how much or many—some of which transcend the intellect, while others are inferior to logic. And this is defined by us as incomprehensible, comprehensible with ease, and comprehensible with difficulty. And because the incomprehensible is not in this present knowledge, and that which is comprehensible with ease is outside the senses, that which is comprehensible with difficulty can be comprehended in three modes.

First, by defining the simple, by decomposing that which is compound, and by synthesizing the questions that seek truth. Because every question seeks an answer and with itself it has the intention of searching for knowledge. And there are two kinds of questions, as are two kinds of answers, for there are simple and compound questions, and simple and compound answers. And the kind of the question is distinguished in two aspects—logical and demonstrative.

And there is a kind of logic that one asks and another answers.

Likewise is [the case for] those which are demonstrative.

But they [the logical and demonstrative] are [also] different. First,

because the beginning of logic is from another; that is, from the interrogator, as to what or from where he asks.

While the demonstrative has the beginning within himself, as he wills.

Moreover, the conclusion of the demonstrative is the absolute truth. While [the conclusion] of the logical is sometimes true and sometimes false. Because if the answerer knows, [the result] is true; otherwise, it is false.

Furthermore, one of them, that is, either the interrogator or the answerer, confounds that which is logical, while that which is demonstrative no one [can confound], neither the learner nor the mentor.

Fourth addition. That which is demonstrative asks simple things and [provides simple] answers, such as man is a living creature, the living creature exists, [and] then, therefore, the man is a living creature and exists. While that which is logical [seeks an answer for] the compound, which has two opposite terms, for which reason [it] has compound answers.

However, if you answer in simple manner a compound question you will be confounded. When a person asks whether the world is corruptible or incorruptible, this is a compound [question]. If you answer simply that it is incorruptible, you are mistaken, because it becomes corrupt partially. And if [you say that] it is corruptible, again you are mistaken, because heaven and the elements are incorruptible. Therefore [this question] is answered in compound mode—it is incorruptible as to its entirety and is corruptible as to its part.

Again, these [logical and demonstrative] are different otherwise. First, according to the philosopher [Aristotle], four questions can be asked for each object; that is, if [the thing] is, what is it, what kind of thing is it, why is it. Now, [if we ask] only whether the thing is [exists], that is a logical [question]; but if [we also ask about the thing's] what it is and what kind it is, [then] the question is demonstrative.

Second, there are four differences to the sound and [its] comprehension. There is that sound which is one, but its

comprehension is manifold; such as a living creature, or a rational [creature], or the equivocal sounds. And there is that sound which itself is many, as is its comprehension; such as Peter speaks, Paul preaches. And there is that sound which is many but its comprehension is one, such as living, rational, biped man. And there is that sound which is one as is its comprehension, such as man, Peter. Now, two of these—the one that the sound is many and the object is one, and the one that the sound is one and the object is one—are logical questions. And the [other] two—that the sound and the object are many, and that the sound is one and the object is many—are demonstrative questions.

Third, the logical [question] questions the two terms of the contradiction and takes one as an answer. As when a person asks whether Peter sits or not. The answer says one term, yes or no. While the demonstrative [question] questions the one term; that is, the affirmation of what is man, what is heaven.

Fourth, in logic the question is one and the answer is one, as has been demonstrated. In the demonstrative to one question can be numerous answers and to one answer one [question], such as when a person asks what is man? We answer by definition, which is many. And what is the definition that says, a living rational [being]? We say that it is the man.

Then, it is evident that our following questions are more demonstrative, indicating the truth, rather than logical for the sake of refutation.

And all accomplishments need four causes—creative, physical, theoretical, and practical—that is, the creator, the created, the creation, and the cause of it [creation]; such as when a house is constructed, [needed are] the craftsman constructor, the constructed house, the property of the house, [whether it is] circle or square, and the cause of it for the purpose of our habitation.

For the following facts, these ten causative volumes of questions are an objective cause, and the order of their presentation is as follows.

First, refutation of those who are outside us, and the explication

of the arguments of those who attribute necessity and fate, and evil and good to God. And against the Manichaeans, [Saracens²], and Jews.

Second, against Arius, and those who deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and Nestorius, and the Dyophysites.

Third, a brief discourse of the true theology of St. Dionysius.

Fourth, on the hexameron and the creation of the whole world.

Fifth, on the being of man since his creation.

Sixth, on the creatures themselves from the beginning, according to the story of the five books of Moses.

Seventh, Joshua, the Judges, and the Four [books of] Kingdoms briefly.

Eighth, [on] the humanization of the Word of God from the New Testaments.

Ninth, diverse questions on the new church.

Tenth, on transformation and the end of the world. [And on] resurrection and the judgment for reward.

Now, these are the objective reasons of these questions. While the theoretical and practical [reasons] are the same as the explication of the words of adversaries. And the conclusion is the examination of the true acceptance of the confession of our church.

As to the syllogistic reason, it lies in me, weak person Gregory the philologist with the feebleness of his imperfect hand, upon the request of his student Adom of the true faith. And thus, I named the title of my writing according to its subject, The Questions of Gregory the Servant.

And three reasons instigated this for us. First, because of the abovementioned Adom, [and then because] my students asked me many times to explain certain matters [for them], which I could not oppose. Second, fearing that the Theologian [i.e., my person] would be subjected to fines for hiding his talents from the faithful. He who

² Interestingly, in the first partially published copy of the *Book of Questions* in Constantinople in 1720, the words *ayl azgeac'* (այլ սովորաց) were not erased, unlike the publication of 1729 [1730]. Although *ayl azgeac'* literally means “other nations,” it refers primarily to Muslims in Armenian religious literature.

has swallowed riches and hides the Word of God from the hungry, [God] shall cast them out of his belly, [the Scripture (cf. Job 20:25)] says. Third, since my work would have been heard only in the present, I took care to relay [my words] in writing to those to come. I beg, if someone wanders in this [book] reading it, let [him] present [good] wishes for me to God.

Now, the foundation of my work is based on the immovable rock of Christ. And the whole structure I established on four pillars. The first pillar erects the apostolic preaching. The second [erects] the prophetic testimonies. The third [erects] direction to the interpreters. The fourth [erects] the consent of the readers and their love for truth.

And let no one have doubts that I have assembled anything false from the sacred words. And I am saying [this] not driven by the knowledge of wise [men] whose mistakes are numerous. And I myself know what [in my work] is too little and too much, what is disorderly and redundant, as is evident to those who examine it.

However, according to the true teaching, I have tried not to invite the blame of diligent intellectuals over things that are unanimously accepted by us.

Moreover, I beg obligatorily not to misinterpret anything from this [book] by capricious mind, just like those who are accustomed to distorting and misrepresenting the Holy Scriptures, and to preparing their own condemnation. For this reason, it is written that whoever adds something to this [writing] by crooked intention, The Lord shall increase for him all the percussion described in this [book]. Also, if someone subtracts with the same intention, he shall be decreased in the book of life ascribed in this book. Let be amen, let be! But those who have a smart mind and care for ideals, they shall be registered in the book of life with indelible remembrance. Let be amen, let be!

Contents of Volume One of This [Book of] Questions.

First, argument against those who speak of necessity;

Second, against those who acknowledge fortune in ten objections;

Third, against those who say that both evil and good are from God in twelve objections;

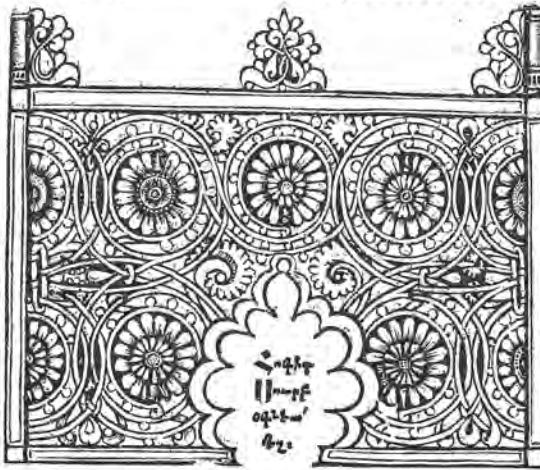
Fourth, against the followers of Mani in ten points;

Fifth, six questions about the good and the evil, and about what do they do; and that evil is not a being, and it does not exist, but [it is] infinite;

Sixth, about knowing God, and about [God's] not being known in the present. Also, about proving the existence of God without the Scriptures.

After these, [exposition of the errors of the Saracens, followed by] objections of the Jews in ten sections and their answers, and about the ten kings on earth.

This much in the first volume is told against external lies and Jews. The contents of other writings are placed before each volume, so that you may find what you seek within their order easily [and] without confusion.



*Պատճենը ուղարկվել է Եւրոպի Պատմագիրք:

የኢትዮጵያውያንድ ማኅድር በፌዴራል የሚከተሉ ነው

(ସମ୍ପର୍କବିଦୀ)



ծողք՝ զամ ինչ մարդկան ՚ի հարկից գոյ և այսինքն
զգործ ։ զդիպուած ։ զմաշ ։ զկեանը ։ և զամ ինչ
(Պատահան) ։ լոքա որք զւախու և զմակատագիր և զհրամանն համ
բաւեն, և էնիչ ասեն ՚ի կամաց մեր գործիւ ։ այլ զամն ՚ի հարկից ասեն,
զի զեղսաքար զիենցաղու վճարեցնեն, լը ասեն ըստ այսմ եղանակի։
լուալին պատճառն ած՝ եղ զօրութիւ իւր յաստեղս և նոքա աղ
դւն ՚ի մեջ, և դարձնանեն զմզ ըստ իւրեանց շարժուեն ՚ի շար
կամ ՚ի քարի, Օ յ հ՛ այլինչ բախան, եթէ ոչ զօրութ աստեղաց:

Sheth's final visit to E

O Holy Spirit, help us!

Chapter One of the Major Contents and Section One of This Volume

Against those who speak of necessity and fortune.

Question: Why do schismatics say that everything human—acts, accident, death, life, and all [other] things—exists by necessity?

Answer: Those who acknowledge fortune, fate, and [divine] command say that we do nothing with our own will; they state that everything is by necessity so that they may spend their life in vice. Therefore, accordingly they say:

The first cause, God, put His power in the stars, and they influence us and according to their movements, they turn us toward evil or good. For fortune is nothing but the power that stars have taken from the first cause and imposed upon us. The sun, for example, which is a remote cause, doesn't burn, but the heat, deriving its warmth from it [the sun], burns by drawing near. This is evident through the mirror, which burns by taking beams of the sun. And thus, our answers to them shall be either affirmation or negation by necessity.

When we say, for example, it is raining or not raining, one of these occurs inevitably. This is the way they apply their lies in the case of [divine] command. What do we have to say in this case?

To begin with, we will argue in general that they sin in four ways:

First, they ignore the difference between the eternal and the variable, which are heavenly and earthly beings.

By necessity exist only things that are always the same, like the immortal angels, the luminous bodies in the sky, the heat of fire. Earthly beings are variable; they exist and do not exist, like the human being, the horse, the tree, and so on. If everything is by necessity, they would not be differentiated as rational or irrational.

Second, also, the nature and skills of [earthly beings] would not

produce any product [on their own], if everything exists by necessity, because different natures and skills function in different ways.

Third, if everything is by necessity, there could not be free acts of will that could equally be done and not be done.

Fourth, nothing could happen by accident, like the misfortune or fortune that happen to some. Now, had everything existed by necessity, none of the abovementioned things could have happened. But since these happen and do exist, it follows that they cannot not exist. And since they cannot not exist, it is impossible for them not to exist. And since it is impossible for them not to exist, they exist and are by necessity.

Therefore, it is evident that those things that are mentioned do exist and are by necessity. In other words, no one can deny works of character, and will, and accidents.

Now, let us go back to each of them, but first, to those who say our words are either realized or not by necessity. They argue thus: According to the philosopher Aristotle, one of two opposites is true by necessity. Such as when we say that tomorrow will be sunny or will not be, or will rain or will not. By necessity, one of these [statements] is true. We answer to this that what you said is false; it pretends to be true, but it is known to those who are wise [that what you say is false].

First, if our words were true by necessity, not only one, but all of what we said should have been true, such as building a city or not, planting a garden or not. Now, if all [of our words] are not true, then the one word also is not true.

Second, if we now say about the stone that it will be wood, it will not be so. Now, if our saying [so] does not change the present, it also cannot change the time to come; neither the close time to come, nor the distant.

Third, if everything we said were true, then our words would not have followed the [existence] of objects, but [the existence of] objects would have followed our words. This evidently is false, because the lasting does not follow the nonlasting, but the contrary [is true], for the trace follows the movements of the feet, and it is not

the feet that follow the traces; and the shadow follows the body, and it is not the body that [follows] the shadow.

Then, therefore, it is obvious that the word cannot verify the object, but the object verifies the word, when it does exist or does not; such as saying that a being by necessity exists when it is, and does not exist, when it is not.

Fourth, if whatever we said was true by necessity, then our thinking would have been unnecessary, for thoughts relate to things that are contingent, and not to things that are necessary, because it [the thought] can be or not be. When we do this, then that will be; and if we do not do this, that will not be.

Then it is evident that whatever we think, we will do the same in the time yet to come, and our word is not by necessity, as was demonstrated.

Concerning the expression of Aristotle that one of the opposites is true, that is, either the affirmation or the negation, we say that yes, by necessity one is true and one is false, but [they are so] diversely, according to the object.

Because regarding the everlasting beings, there are manifestly three times—the past, the present, and the future; one of these is true and the other is false, like the heat of fire and the light of sun [are true]. But that is not so in case of variable things, because in the past or in the present one is manifestly true and the other false, such as when we say that yesterday it rained or it did not; today it is raining, or it is not. But in the future, we do not know whether it will rain. We know that one [of these two] will happen, rain or not, but by necessity manifestly we do not know which one [will happen]. For example, the object in the present, which is a contingent substance, has two powers, just like a dress, which can be torn or cannot be torn, and the water that can be warmed or cannot be. One of these occurs effectively, and it happens. Likewise, that which will happen in the time yet to come has two powers—either to be or not to be; and by coincidence one is before the other and it occurs effectively.

Therefore, our word is not by necessity, but rather by coincidence.

And if someone says that many of our words manifestly happen in the time yet to come, such as when the king says let the city be built and it becomes built, or we say that such-and-such man will die and he dies; we pray and it happens, and other things [happen similarly], whether curses or blessings. Concerning this, we say that all things that exist in the present are known to us in their substance. However, we do not know them in their substance in the time yet to come, but we know them in their cause. And this cause has three modes. Either it is from a necessary cause, since it happens without obstruction, such as that a man is to die. Or it is from an effective cause that can be impeded or prevented, such as that this young man is to live for long, or this young man is to become a musician, if no hindrance occurs. Or it is from its [the thing's] contingent cause, which equally can occur or cannot, such as going for a diversion or not, raining or not. And because we have come to know this, now we answer the arguments that so much as it is from a necessary cause, the word is manifestly true, such as the word of the king, the dying of a man, the rising of the sun, and the coming of spring after winter. And if it is from an effective cause, then it can be prevented, such as a curse, or a blessing, or a prayer, and the longevity of the young man and his becoming a musician. And if it is from a contingent cause, then evidently it equally can be or cannot be, as has been said.

This much on this first [argument].

Section Two of This Volume

Against those who say fortune and fate in ten objections.

And those who attribute fortune and fate to man and say that everything that we have [do] is by necessity, that is, by the power of stars, argue thus first.

Everything that happens has a cause, and every cause exists by necessity before that which is caused. Then, if this necessary cause is not our word, as has been demonstrated, then it is by the power of the stars, influenced by their movement.

Concerning this, we say that everything that happens has a cause, and that the cause is before that which is caused; however, all causes are not necessary. There are contingent causes; then, therefore, the movement of the stars is not a necessary cause.

They also say that all inferior bodies are governed by supernal bodies, which is evident from the four seasons of the year; moreover, birth and growth, and plants and fruits are caused by their rotation. And their rotation is necessary; then, therefore, everything happens by necessity.

Concerning this, we say that although inferior bodies are governed by supernal bodies, human operations are governed by [human] free will, and the free will cannot be inflenced by heavenly bodies.

They also say that human bodies are inferior, and that they are nourished and grown by the movement of stars. Concerning this, we say that the nourishment and growth of bodies are innate and not astral, although they are assisted by them [stars]. And although human bodies are elemental, good and evil act according to the will and not according to reason.

They also say that many humans act because of the temperament of their bodies, which are necessitated by the movement of the stars.

Concerning this, we say that although the temperament of the body is [influenced] by the movement of the stars; many through their free will conquer the ill temperament of the body and do good [acts]. They also say that many things occur regardless of our free will, such as evil sickness, misfortune, death, and so on; then, therefore, they are from fortune and fate by necessity. Concerning this, we say the following.

First, if evil sickness and other [evil or unwanted] things are by necessity, then they should have happened to all [humans] similarly, because necessity brings the same to all. However, if the necessities of one person are different from those of another, then there would not have been evil to all [people]. And now, many have the same death, sickness, and other things; then, therefore, it is not by necessity.

Again, if there is necessity, then there would not have been free will. However, now, since we have will and our deeds are initiated in us and from us, then there is no necessity whose origin is from another.

Again, we have counsel, and we choose the acceptable and reject the unacceptable. And with much contemplation, we embrace the good and avoid evil; and as it has been said, the counsel relates to probability and not to necessity.

Again, if everything is by necessity for man and animal, then nothing should distinguish the rational and the irrational, since the rational [being] is governed by will, and the irrational [being] by the necessity of its nature, as we have said.

Again, if there is necessity [as the cause of all happenings], why do prayers, sacraments, and charity turn away the approaching evil and change it into good? Such as the gifts of Nebuchadnezzar, and the prayers of Hezekiah, who turned away death, and many other [examples]; then, therefore, there is no necessity.

Again, if necessity were the movement of the stars, they themselves would not have been from the necessity of others; but if they themselves are from necessity, then they are not necessity to others, since they themselves are from necessity. Just as when the

sun and the moon stood still with Joshua and the sun turned back with Hezekiah.

Again, he who possesses the tool of a work also possesses the operation, both to make and to sustain. Now, the spirit, the body, and the hand belong to man, so their work also belongs to man, whether evil or good. And as the passions of pain belong to man, because he feels the pain, likewise the passion of pleasure is his, whether evil or good.

Then, therefore, the operation belongs to us and not to necessity.

Again, if it is by necessity, then all principles of virtue are lifted; that is, prudence, courage, modesty, and righteousness, because these are acquired by some and are not by necessity.

Again, if it is by necessity, counsel, threat, and teaching, by which many are advised to [follow] the good and avoid the evil life, would be useless.

Again, if it is by necessity, praise and condemnation would not follow some, because their [deeds] are [committed] voluntarily and not involuntarily. But if [praise and condemnation] follow, then it is not he who committed the beautiful and ugly [deeds], but the cause and necessity that would be praised or condemned; that is, fortune and fate.

Again, if there is necessity, then there are no rights for judgment and examination, nor are there civil laws, nor worthy rewards for good and evil, because the necessity forced [someone] to do this. Honor and punishment would be [applied] to the necessity, and not to man.

Again, if there is necessity, then the stars themselves also are unjust, because they make some good and others evil, some wealthy and others poor, some [enjoying] an easy life and others [suffering] a hard [life], some long-living and others short-lived. They promise good to manifold unworthy [people] and evil to worthy [people]. And this injustice particularly would be raised toward the first cause that empowered the stars to become such unjust distributors.

Again, the adversaries say that the plants, the flowers, and the fruits of the earth have influential power; why would the stars not

have it? Concerning this, we say that although they have power, [they have it] in many different ways, for the plants, which are on earth, heal and cure bodies, while heavenly stars are the creators of light and times, and of the signs of the future, because they prepare humans by being seen everywhere, as the Scripture says: let there be lights for the earth for signs and seasons.

They also say that stars have adverse natures—evil and good, and when they touch each other they become opposites and they produce either evil or good, [either] trouble or peace, [either] destruction or construction, and so on. Concerning this, we say, first, that heavenly bodies are not from the four elements; they are a fifth element or substance, according to Aristotle, and those that are from only simple matter do not become opposites. Second, although they are elemental and with opposite properties, when they happen to each other, they do not always become opposites, except when the will of the provident allows. For example, two enemies under the roof of a king do not dare harm each other unless the king allows it.

They also say that adverse movements possess adverse energies. Behold, planets move in opposite directions; then, therefore, they act in opposite ways. Concerning this, we say, wandering stars [planets] are called wanderers not because of their having opposite movement or being the cause of evil, but because we become wanderers from their movement, since they have common movement and proper movement. The common movement is according to the eighth arch from the east to the west, while the proper [movement] is from the west to the east. And their movement does not cause evil and good for humanity; they are the cause for days and time and seasons, for birth and growth, as well as being signs for the future, as we have said. And the sign is not a cause for someone's being evil or good. For example, many living creatures indicate things to come, but they are not the cause of the being of evil and good.

They also say that if there is no necessity, why then is a city destroyed while others are not, and a boat sinks, and some encounter fights?

Concerning this, we say, by this you testify to us that there is no

necessity, because in the entire city when and where did so many thousand humans, old and young, come to life from the one movement of stars and perish together? Or the multitude of the troops, or those who were in the boat; for they all were born in different times and under different movements of stars; then, therefore, there is no necessity of fortune and fate.

They also say, after the philosopher [Aristotle], that neither God nor nature and crafts ever create useless things; therefore, if the stars do not have influential power, they are created by the Creator in vain.

Concerning this, we say, first, you yourself admitted that there is no necessity, and that God, nature, and crafts, too, influence. Whereby, if [a thing] is the product of crafts or nature, there is no necessity of fortune and fate. Second, we say that the stars are not created in vain, because they regulate the elemental bodies, as we have said; however, human operations are governed by free will, and the free will, which is immaterial, cannot be conquered with the movement of material stars. It is always governed by the will of the providence of the first cause, as St. Gregory of Nyssa says in his book on human nature.

So much on the second [section as] we have placed answers to arguments in ten articles, and [discussed] in twelve articles those that are disagreeable in common.

Section Three of This Volume

Against those who say that good and evil are from God in twelve objections.

And some add more impiety and, as if they were avoiding the left [extreme], swerve to the right [extreme]. They say that the cause of everything, the good and evil of ours, is not us, but the prime cause, God. They distance themselves from the aforementioned fortune and fate of stars, and instead of these, attribute the necessity to the prime cause [God], so that they may not say two origins, as Mani does.

But we, the ranks of the orthodox faith, truth-loving followers, refute this, saying that God is not the cause of evil, but only of good. And this is for many reasons. First, good has being, wherefore it is evident that they [good and evil] are in polarity with each other, for everything that is good is existent, and everything that is existent is good, while evil does not have being.

And now, God is the cause of being, and not nonbeing; then, therefore, evil is not from God. Second, good is habit, while evil is its deficiency, just as darkness [is deficiency or lack] of light.

And now, God is the cause of habit, and not of deficiency. Then, therefore, evil is not from God.

Third, good is true, and true is good, while falsehood is evil and evil is falsehood. Then, therefore, God is the cause of truth and not of falsehood.

Fourth, if evil is from God, and since evil is extrinsic and accidental, then there would be something alien and accidental in God, which is nonsense.

Fifth, good is orderly and evil is disorderly. And now, if evil is from God, there would be disorder in God, which is inappropriate.

Sixth, if evil is from God, it would appear that God is the cause of evil. And now, every cause is superior to that which is caused,

whether evil or good; then it is an absolute heresy to say that evil is from God.

Seventh, if evil is from God, then He loves evil, and if He loves evil, He also loves the wicked who love evil.

Eighth, if evil is from God, He would not have punished Satan who became evil, nor [He would punish] wicked humans; but, behold, He punishes; then evil is not from God.

Ninth, if evil is from God, then He wills evil. Then there would be two wills to God, evil and good, since two works come forth from two wills. But if there are two operations and two wills in God, then He is not a simple one, but is compound, which is nonsense.

Tenth, if evil is from God and He wills evil, then He does not will the good; therefore the good is not from God.

Eleventh, if He does not will the good, then none of the creatures can be good, neither man nor angel, because no one can oppose the will of God.

Twelfth, if evil is from God, He either knows the evil as evil or does not know. If He does not know, He has unknowingness, and if He knows, He makes evil knowingly.

Thirteenth, if evil is from God, does He make it with faculty or without faculty? If [He makes it] without faculty, then He is coerced, and if He makes the evil with faculty, He is incapable of making the good.

Fourteenth, if evil is from God, is He good but makes evil, or is He evil and makes evil? For if He is good but makes evil, then He contradicts Himself; but if He is evil and makes evil, none of the creatures are good.

Fifteenth, if evil is from God, and God is the origin of all things, then also [He is the origin] of evil things, according to them; then Satan is not the author of all evil, as they babble.

Sixteenth, if evil is from God, as good is, and God is the origin of both, it is impossible that opposites together have one origin, since that origin would have not been simple, but of two kinds, and not single, but divided and diverse. Also, it [the origin] would have been opposite to itself and to those that would come forth from it. And if

there are two origins to both [good and evil], thus two origins would appear in God, or two without beginnings, according to Mani.

Seventeenth, if evil and good have one origin, just like the opposite species in the genus, then both the good and evil would have been from the genus of God, which is impossible.

Eighteenth, if evil is from God, this would have happened either by contrast, just like [the coming forth of] white from nonwhite, or by comparison, just like a living creature from a living creature. And now, that which exists by contrast, exists first by power, and then by operation. But there is nothing by power in God, neither good nor evil. And if [there are things in God] by comparison, God is good, and evil cannot be from the good.

Nineteenth, if evil is from God, and evil is either by itself or by accident—it is evil by itself, such as when we call the evil evil, and is evil by accident, such as when we say the man is evil—now, as it has been demonstrated, there is no accident in God. But if evil is from God by itself, then there would not have been good from God, because that which is by itself is necessary, substantial, and immutable.

Twentieth, since God is good by necessity, as He is being by necessity, [and] since the necessary good is always good, and is substantial good and pure good, and since [God] has to be good by necessity, He cannot not be good.

And since He is always good, He cannot not be good. And since He is substantial good, He cannot be accidental evil. And since He is pure and truly good, He cannot mingle with evil.

And now, this much is sufficient, as has been demonstrated, [to assert] that God is not the cause of evil, but of good alone.

But let us examine their arguments and correct their falsehood.

They first argue thus, that if a cause is necessary, then also [necessary] is its operation.

And now, God is the cause of all and He is necessary, then also His operation is necessary. Concerning this, we say that there are two causes—close and distant. And now, the close cause is necessary, as is its operation. But the distant is not necessary, as has been said

before. And now, God is not the close cause of all, but the distant [cause]; therefore He does not operate necessarily. We also say that God is not the cause of creatures by necessity, but by will with which He works, because some happen by necessity and others not by necessity.

Second, they say that before our existence, God in His foreknowledge saw all things as they are—evil as evil, and good as good. Now, it is necessary that all things be in that manner, as God has seen and known, and God's knowledge is genuine. Then, therefore, all things are by necessity in accordance with God's vision. Concerning this, we say that it is to be known that God's vision is different from the vision of a human. Because in God's vision there is no first and last; rather, all are simultaneous and perfect. But in the vision of a human there is first and last, for he sees the past through recollection, and the present through perception, and the time to come through its cause, according to the change of time, as we have said. For example, if numerous people pass on a road, he who stands by sees first one [of them], then the second, and [then] the person who comes after, while if someone is in a high tower, he sees the whole at once. Likewise, God, elevated in the eternal tower, sees all as present.

Now we answer the arguments.

First, although God sees all by prevision, and there is nothing outside God's sight, He sees some to be by necessity, and others to be by contingency.

Again, we say that God sees all before their coming to being, but God's vision is not an imposition upon them to be evil or good. For example, an artisan makes a cart, and someone from afar sees that he labors; and it is not the vision that necessitated the cart's being what it is, but the will of the artisan. Similarly, God's vision does not impose upon us to do good or evil, but [it is] our will [that does].

Third, they say that God's will is not vain, and there is no one against God's will; therefore, He makes all that He wills—some evil and some good.

Concerning this, we first say that there is no one against God's

will, and that He makes as He wills, but He does not will and does not make evil.

Again, we say that God's will is not vain, because He makes all that He wills. And He willed and created us with free will and responsible for our deeds, both evil and good.

Fourth, they say that if evil is not from God, then it seems that someone is the cause of evil and another is the cause of the good, and thus there will be two origins, good and evil, according to Mani. Concerning this, we say:

To begin with, evil is not from God, nor is it from nature, or in nature, or nature [itself]. Concerning the first, we say that evil is not from God, because God is good by nature, and evil cannot come forth from good, as darkness [cannot come forth] from light. Besides, [evil] is not from nature, because the natures of all angels and human beings are good, and have come forth from good, but evil has entered nature through free will. And [evil] also is not in nature, because there is no evil in anyone's nature, but it is accidental and external to nature. Also, it is not nature; that is, it does not have being, neither in part nor in whole. It is the absence of that which is inherent, because good is inherent, and evil is its absence, like darkness is [absence] of light, and sickness [is absence] of health, and death [is absence] of life.

At this time, we will answer the refutation.

Now, although evil is not from God, there are no two gods or two origins because of this, since evil is not being, and is nothing, and God is not the origin of nothing, because God is the origin of beings, and not of nonbeings. And there are not two origins, because the doers of evil have beginning; therefore, there are not two origins.

Fifth, they say that the doers of evil are from God, as [the] will is; therefore, evil is from God, because He created the will.

Concerning this, we say: To begin with, God created the will good, and He placed the good before the will. But he [man] by his free will departed from the good and became the author of evil, because evil is nothing except the departure or lack of good. Then, therefore, although the reason and the will are from God, willing and

choosing evil are not from God, but from the will and the reason. For example, an artisan makes a sword for a good reason, but he who does evil becomes the cause of evil. Likewise, God is the creating cause of will, but the effective cause is our evil will. Again, free will is from God and is made of nothing. Now, free will in itself is not the cause of evil as to its being from God, but [it is the cause of evil] as to [its being] from nothing, and its desire for nothing; that is, evil. Therefore, sin and evil are not from God, but from nothing, which is their [sin's and evil's] origin.

Again, we say that God created the will as well as the angels and humans good, and He wills the good, and imposes the love of good; therefore this is evident since He sowed the good in nature, and established the laws of good, as well as counsel, encouragement, and rewards for the good ones. But He does not will evil, nor impose evil; rather, He torments and punishes those who commit evil acts. Then, therefore, evil is not from God, and He does not will evil to anyone.

Sixth, the adversaries say, if evil is not from God, then God does not recognize evil, as we recognize the like from its like; that is, [we recognize] those that are spiritual through [our] spirit, and those that are physical through [our] body.

Concerning this, we say: To begin with, according to what you have said, you need to become water to know the water, and to become stone to recognize the stone, and other things similarly. And since this is not a necessity, we recognize other things by being the same. Likewise, God, being good, recognizes evil.

We also say that we have two modes of recognizing things; that is, we recognize something by its proper kind and something else through another kind, and likewise we recognize habit by its proper kind and [its] lack by another kind, for it is opposite to habit. Now, by the first we recognize light, and by the second darkness. And by the first we recognize truth, and by the second falsehood. Likewise, by the first we recognize good, and by the second evil. Likewise, God by single intercession knows good in itself by its proper kind, and knows evil by two means; that is, since it [evil] is the opposite

and is the absence of good, as has been said.

Seventh, they say that if evil is not from God, then why does He forgive Satan and evil humans?

Concerning this, we say that evil is not from God, as good is, because good is according to His willing, while evil is by His allowance, and voluntary willing is different than allowing, which is as unwillingness. Again, to allow and to forgive evil is for the sake of good, because God through providence brings forth many good things from evil, such as allowing Satan to tempt the good and increase [their] rewards. He also allows evil humans to either choose the good or repent later, and through diverse [acts of] providence, at His discretion, God forgives the evil, which we shall see later.

Eighth, they say that if God does not will evil, then we can do that which God does not will. Then why does the Gospel say: “Not a single leaf shall fall from a tree, nor a single hair of your head turn white without command”?

Concerning this, we say: To begin with, that we have a free will and are responsible for our deeds—to do or not to do. However, sometimes the origination is from us and its completion is from the providence of God, and sometimes the origination is from God and the completion is by us. And sometimes both are from God; that is, the originations and the completion. And now, that whose origination and completion are from God is a divine operation and a wondrous thing. And that whose origination and completion is from us is reminiscent of those who were the foreknown chosen before the world came to exist, and who have departed this world by their good deeds, which were predestined to them. As to [those deeds] whose beginning is from us and whose completion is from the providence of God, they [occur] when we begin the good [work] and God completes it in good. And if we begin evil [work], He changes it into good by His good providence. We also say that there is no good without God’s will, nor is there evil without His allowing. This is what is meant by saying not a leaf will fall nor a hair of your head perish, because we can do nothing without God’s will, knowledge, or permission.

Ninth, they say, why then does God say: “I make peace and create evil” (Isa 45:7), “I kill and I make alive” (Deut 32:39), and “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart” (Ex 7:3)?

Concerning this, we say that, first, there are two modes to evil; there is the evil of acts, and the evil of punishment. Now, evil acts are not of God, as it has been demonstrated, while evil punishments are of the justice of God who compensates justly. Again, there are four modes of compensations: good for good; evil for evil, which is a just act; good for evil, [which is an act of] God’s unlimited compassion and mercy; but He does not do evil for good, because this is injustice, and if He does, [He does it] because of providence, that good may come forth from evil, even though it seems evil to us, and this also is good, such as sickness, temptation, etc. [Understand] in this fashion the establishing of evil, and the hardening of hearts, and others.

Tenth, they say, why does the Prophet say: “In your book all shall be written” (Ps 139:16)? And [why does] the Gospel say: “The Son of Man goes as it is written of Him” (Mt 14:21)? Then, therefore, according to that book, everyone of necessity is both evil and good.

Concerning this, we say that the book of life has two aspects. One is of justice in present life, which is changeable, from which someone can be erased. The other is the eternal predestination of God, from which no one can be erased. Now, temporal justice is evident; those who through their free will change sometimes into evil and sometimes into good arrive either at salvation or condemnation. But God’s predestination recognizes those who are saved and gives them the way by which the chosen can be saved. And humans by their free will and acts reach that salvation, grace, and glory. This is the book of the chosen, and thus [understand] “His going as it is written of Him.” The choosing, the calling, and the justifying are similar, as the Apostle writes. Likewise, foreknowledge is the recognition of those evil people who, by their free will and acts, made evil despised. Then foolish are those who say that I desire to satisfy my pleasure; for if I am chosen, I will be saved; otherwise, I will be condemned. As the foolish sick person says, I want to eat and drink

as it pleases me, for if I am to be cured, I will be cured, and if I am to die, I will die.

Eleventh, they say, just as in animals the camel is wise and the turtledove is chased, while other animals are stupid and lewd, so also in natural creation of the spirit, one is wise, another is wicked; [one is] lascivious and [another is] chased; [one is] good-natured and [another is] immoral. Then, therefore, both the good and evil are from God.

Concerning this, we say: To begin with, if wit and foolishness and their likes are shaped by the temperament of the body, and by the natural property of the spirit become similar and dissimilar, without operation they are neither evil nor good; [therefore] neither praise nor condemnation could ensue, just as in [the case of] the unnatural conduct of animals.

Again, we say that God makes one person wise and another ignorant so that the latter may learn from the former. Likewise, the immoral and the lascivious may be corrected by good [people]; otherwise, if they do not will [to become moral], they will truly be punished. Again, we say that these are not evil intrinsically, but good, like those who are unknowing of sin and [those who are] angry against evil and those who desire the good, because no one sins by acting in accordance with his nature, says the philosopher. Then all things that are from God are good, and not evil.

Again, we say that these are not the natures of the spirit, but rather diverse qualifications and dissimilarities, like the features of faces. And now, God put these natural qualifications in the parts of the spirit; He also put free will as the master and ruler within the spirit, so that it [the free will] governs and leads the spirit by directing the evil [quality] into good, and by keeping the good [quality] intact and expanding it, for this is the task of the free person. But if he [the free person] does not do this, then he follows evil by his own free will, and not by his nature, which is created good by God. Then, therefore, evil is not from God, but from us, or from the wickedness of the enemy [Satan] who deceives us.

Twelfth, they say that God makes a person poor and another rich,

one lord, another slave, a ruler and a subject; likewise, He makes a person righteous and the other sinful, one evil and the other good, as the Scripture says: “I hated Esau and loved Jacob before they were born” (cf. Mal 1:2–3). Then, therefore, He creates a person evil and another good. Concerning this, we say, to begin with, that poverty and wealth, to rule and to be subject, are from God; however, [God does so] by willing to some, and by forgiving and allowing to others; that is, He makes the good rich and poor through willing, and the evil [rich and poor] through forgiveness and allowing. Likewise, concerning the righteous and the sinful, the evil and the good, some He makes good by willing, and others evil by allowing. Then, therefore, there are no evil [deeds] or sins from God’s will.

Again, we say that God makes rich and poor, lord and subject, and so on; so that they may help each other. And through those in authority He takes care of subjects and obedient people. Similarly, He makes the evil and sinful, so that they might be helped by good people and turn unto the good, while [His] “hating Esau and loving Jacob” (cf. Mal 1:2–3) is like this: He loves the chosen and dishonors the despicable by foreseen knowledge. And as a revelation of this, learn from the [following] example.

As the sun illuminates everything, it is the simple matter that reflects light, while the opaque does not. Likewise, God wills the salvation of all humans; those who by their free will obey God are saved, while those who oppose [God] by their will are not saved. But if the sun gives light indiscriminately, God chooses and redeems those who are worthy rationally and knowingly, like men who choose that which can be chosen, and not that which is worthless. And if the knowledge of man in the present is related to the existence of the object, God knows eternally and before the existence of the object. And if the knowing of man varies with the object, His [God’s knowledge] remains immutable. Likewise, the predestination of God and His forechoice [is immutable], and He does not impose Himself on any person.

And it needs to be known that had God’s predestination imposed itself on the actions of man, [whether] good or evil, there would have

been many absurdities that have been said regarding fortune, and which we place in order here also.

First, the promises of reward to the good, and punishment to the evil, would have been in vain.

Second, the reward of good to the good, and evil to the evil, would have been unjust.

Third, God would have been the cause of our evil.

Fourth, hope and the prayers would have been useless.

Fifth, our free will, which has within itself two sides [good and evil], would have been destroyed.

Sixth, neither the virtuous would have been worthy of praise, nor the evil worthy of condemnation.

Seventh, there would not have been human or divine virtues.

Eighth, the teachings and counsels for morality, by which we avoid evil and affirm good, would have been in vain.

Ninth, hell and heaven, which are places for the evil and the good, would have been redundant.

Tenth, all natural, rational, scriptural, and evangelical laws would have been false, since these, all of them, advise us to avoid evil and to do good, and all other things.

So much against those who say that evil and good are from God.

Section Four of This Volume

Against the Manichaeans in ten points.

We confront the Manichaeans and answer concisely to those who speak of dual beginning—evil and good—as follows:

First, the beginning cannot be dual, for, numerically, two consists of one. Now, the element precedes the composed.

Second, two is compound, one is elemental. All compound things are derived from simple things. Then, therefore, the beginning cannot be dual, since dual is compound. The beginning is one which is simple.

Third, if beginning were dual and adversarial, adversaries would have spoiled each other's creations, and nothing could have been created.

Fourth, again, if beginning were dual and adversarial, adversaries would have contended with each other from the very beginning; therefore, nothing could have been at peace.

Fifth, if beginning were dual and at odds, their derivatives would have been disorderly and at odds; while at present all creation is bound in love and harmony.

Sixth, if there were any disorder among them [the two aspects of the dual beginnings], then nothing would have existed singly in us; everything would be arduous to us and adversarial.

Seventh, again if there were two [principals] at the beginning, this would have been either simultaneously, or by one preceding the other. They could have not been simultaneous, because two adversaries cannot be together. And if one followed the other, obviously the former is the beginning.

Eighth, if there are two [principals] at the beginning, either they dominate each other or they do not dominate. If they do not dominate, neither one is God; and if they dominate, whichever

dominates solely, that is God.

Ninth, if two are at the beginning—evil and good—either they communicate with each other, or [they] do not. If they do not communicate, one of them is the creature; therefore, the beginning is not dual. And if they communicate, there cannot be evil, for evil is the absence of good. Therefore, again, one is the beginning.

Tenth, two beginnings—the sublime good and the ultimate evil—either are self-created or are not. If they are not self-created, they are not the beginning. And if they are self-created, then neither one is evil, since to be self-created is good.

This much on this [subject].

Section Five of This Volume

On good and evil.

First question. How are good and evil adverse [to each other]?

Answer: There are four adversities: relative, as in big and small; defective, as in habit and defect; opposite, as in heat and cold; contradictory, as in affirmation and negation.

Now, good and evil are not polarities such as relations, for relations are simultaneous and composed of each other. Good and evil, however, are not simultaneous; good does not come to exist from evil, and evil does not come to exist from good. They are not like negation and affirmation, which are at odds only verbally, as in true and untrue; but evil and good happen in words and deeds, and not like opposites, as in hot and cold, and white and black, for these are accidental, while good is substance and evil is not substance. They seem like habit and defect; good is habit and evil is its defect, as blindness is defect of the face, and darkness is defect of the light. They also are distinguished as follows: Defect comes from habit, but habit can never come from defect; whereas a person can be changed from good to evil, and from evil to good.

If someone argues that it is because of opposition that things are interchangeable, and not because of habit and defect, we say that good and evil are opposite according to the subject, but taken by themselves they are habit and defect, as we have said.

Second question. What does the good do and what does the evil do?

Answer: The good gives existence and providence, while the evil exterminates and corrupts. Then, therefore, if evil corrupts others wherever it be, it also corrupts itself, for it is evil. Therefore, evil does not exist and cannot be.

If someone says that cold corrupts heat but remains [itself as such], so does evil; we say that cold corrupts heat and itself remains in the subject because it is both substantial and accidental. But evil does not remain [as evil], for it is not a substance; rather, [it is] deficiency.

Third question. How can evil not be? For, behold, it opposes good as in virtue versus wickedness, and it is in the substance as sickness in health, and corruption in a body.

Answer: On this we say:

First, evil is neither a substance, nor in the beings, nor from the beings, nor the origin of beings.

Concerning the first [statement above], we say that evil is not being, because, as it became clear, it corrupts and destroys. Now, while corrupting others, evil corrupts itself, too, and does not remain in the substance. Also, evil is not in the beings, and this we demonstrated through separation. There is that which exists and is good as are all beings, and there are those that do not exist and are good, as unformed matter. And [there are those that] exist but are not good, like evil will. And [there are those] that do not exist and are not good, such as evil outside of substance and outside of good.

Moreover, evil is not from beings, because everything that is being is good and interchangeably also so: “Every good tree bears good fruit” (Mt 7:17), says the Lord. Again, whatever is from beings has a beginning and a cause, while evil does not have beginning and cause, wherefore it is not from beings. Also, it is not the beginning of beings, because good cannot come from evil.

Second, we say that evil is conceived in two modes.

There is evil per se which is simple and totally evil, and it is outside of the good and of the substance. It is nowhere, and never, and was not, and is not, and is not capable of being, which is nothing. This kind of evil is not being, nor is it in beings, and it does not have beginning or cause, nor is it a beginning or a cause for others. This is evil per se.

And there is the evil that is mixed with good and comes to be in

substance like sickness in health, and corruption in the body. For when health diminishes, sickness appears, and when a body diminishes, corruption occurs. And know this: that the more health diminishes, the more sickness increases, and the more the body diminishes, the more corruption grows. But when health totally diminishes, sickness disappears. The same way with corruption: when life totally diminishes, death disappears, for [the capacity of] turning into the opposite is within its essence. And the same way with the good. There is that which is simple and single good as God, for God is unchanging and always good; because He is good by essence and good is God's essence. And there is that which is heterogeneous good, like the good that happens to us, such as habit. Our essence is different from the good in our essence. This good is invariable and inseparable in the angels, but it is variable in us, because our soul is variable—good at times and evil at other times. The difference is that good is a natural habit in us, because we are created in the good, while evil is external and absence of good. Good is one and comes from the one cause, which is God, although it manifests itself in many ways in us. Evil, on the other hand, is numerous and comes from numerous causes.

At this time, let us answer the question that wickedness opposes virtue, and injustice opposes justice, as darkness opposes light; and that light is substantial, while darkness is not; and that air is receptive toward both light and darkness, which means to virtue and to wickedness. Likewise, the soul is substantial and is receptive toward both good and evil; that is, [it is susceptible to] both virtue and wickedness. As light is always light (even when it decreases in the air) for it enlightens again, similarly good is always good (it remains in the essence even when it decreases in the soul) for good is essence, and essence does not perish. But evil disappears the moment it leaves the soul, for evil is not being and does not exist. Then, therefore, clearly good is essence in relation to the subject and essence per se, while evil comes to existence and appears in relation to the subject but becomes extinct and corrupted per se, for it does not have being and does not exist.

Fourth question. Evil does not have being and does not exist. How does it differ from simple nonbeing, which is total nothing?

Answer: Evil, which is in nothing and contradicts good, is equal to the nothing that contradicts existence. However, they differ in the following ways:

First, nonbeing wishes and strives to become being and to exist, whereas evil does not want to become good.

Second, nonbeing communicates with existence and becomes existent, whereas evil does not relate with good and does not become good.

Third, nonbeing by essence is neither good nor evil. Evil is evil by essence even though [essence] is good.

Fourth, when nonbeing becomes existence, it cannot revert to nonbeing, while evil, which appears in being, can revert to nonsubstance and nonexistent.

Fifth, the nothing that is in subjects does not oppose being, although it is opposite to being by essence, while evil, which appears in the subject, opposes and destroys the good, although within itself it does not have being and does not exist.

Fifth question. How could evil be immeasurable and infinite, as well as without beginning or cause?

Answer: We say that substance has beginning and cause, and that nature has measure and limit, while evil is external to substance and nature; therefore, evil is immeasurable and without cause. Again, consider measure and limit [to be] the last borders of substance, while [considering] beginning and cause the first border. Evil, however, is nothing; it does not have beginning and end; therefore, evil is immeasurable and without cause by itself, as we have demonstrated above.

Sixth question. God is infinite and without cause, and evil is without cause by itself. How do they differ?

Answer: We ascribe negations, such as immeasurable and infinite, to God not because of deficiency, but in relation to [God's]

transcendence. Because God's being immeasurable and infinite transcends all others [qualities of the sort]. This is the first difference. Second, because God is without limit but limits us, has no beginning but creates us, and is cause for all [creatures]. Evil is without limit by itself and does not limit others. The same is applicable for evil's being without cause and beginning, as in everything else.

You may find more on the nature of good and evil in Dionysius's four chapters on *Divine Names*, and in his treatise about the attributes of polarities, as well as in David's definitions about the end that "all evil are to be tortured." This much on this [subject].

Chapter Two of the Major Contents and Section Six of This Volume

On knowing God.

First question. To what extent God is known?

Answer: To know Him, God created duplicate paradigms that are perceived either by the intellect or by the senses, like the soul, the mind, and their likes; or the sun, the light, and their likes. And there are five ways to recognize God.

First, through natural examination by which philosophers found [God].

Second, through believing, as we the believers do.

Third, through grace, as happens through prophets' imagination, or by the senses of the body.

Fourth, through special vision for the comprehension of only special worthy people like Moses. Those [four ways are applicable] in this life.

Fifth, in the other life [recognition is accomplished] through a direct vision, according to the Apostle. Those worthy of such a vision are the blessed; they unite with God in inseparable love, as the angels.

Second question. Why may God not reveal His existence to human beings in this life?

Answer: Not as heretics say, because of jealousy, or glory; they are known for their ignorance. Void is this opinion, and it is not worthy of God's pure and simple nature. [God] wants all humans to live; moreover, because of His ultimate goodness He made man in His image and likeness.

Now, according to the orthodox doctors of the church, Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus] posits the following as a first reason—

since everything that is found easily is despised easily; therefore, God wanted that those who see Him unite with Him by inseparable love.

Second reason, for example, it is a futile exercise for someone to incautiously look at the orb of the sun, for he is dazzled by the little [sight] that he has. For this reason, God spared humans, so that we not be burdened with the pain of falling Lucifer, who being unable to stand the great glory was deprived also of the moderate [glory].

Third, because God wanted to reward martyrdom in accordance with works of patience not only by His mercy but also by justice.

Fourth, those of us who are bound by bodies are unable to see incorporeal [God]. For example, it is impossible by proceeding to tread on the shadow; or to see anything without the mediation of the air. The same way, it is impossible for human beings to see God in this life without a paradigm and mediator.

Third question. If someone does not know how to read and does not accept the Scripture's testimony, how can we prove to him that God exists?

Answer: Through existing things, we can prove that God is and exists in three ways—first, by way of hearing; second, by way of thinking; third, by way of seeing.

People either hear from their predecessors that God created the heavens and the earth at the beginning; or they comprehend it by mind through the orderliness of things; or they see by their eyes the heavens and the earth.

The Prophet Isaiah says for the first instance: “Have you not heard, has it not been told you from the beginning that it is I who established the foundations of the earth?” (Isa 40:21). For the second instance Isaiah says: “Have you not understood, or known? (Isa 40:21). And for the third [instance] he says: “Lift up your eyes to the heights and see” (Isa 40:26). Thus, by way of hearing the stories of predecessors, or [realizing] the orderliness of things, or [through] the senses of seeing, we come to be acquainted with this truth from which radiates the faith.

First, through hearing from Him about Him, and from another about Him, and from Him about another, and from another about another. From Him about Him, as “I the Lord God am the first and am hereafter” (Isa 44:6). From another about Him, as “Therefore one must believe that God is” (cf. Heb 11:6). From Him about another: “Beside me there is no God” (Isa 44:6). And from another about another: “Gods made with hands are not gods” (Acts 19:26).

And second, true God is comprehensible from the orderliness of things.

First from cause, then from beginning, then from [the] single.

First, from cause, because everything that is caused needs a cause and [in its turn] causes another cause. Proceeding this way infinitely is not knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary that there be an uncaused cause that is cause for everything, and that cause is God Himself.

Second, from beginning, for nothing by itself can be both a beginning and with beginning. Therefore, there must be a beginning for all created things. If that beginning is without beginning, we have found what we were looking for. But if that thing has a beginning, then there needs to be found its start. Either the latter is infinite, or we have found the unoriginated beginning who is God. [Third] from the single, because all variety is from the single, as the genus is from one individual, the line [is] from a dot, and the many numbers are from the number one. If this single is combined into many, it is no longer single, and if it is not combined, then there are no multiples but singles on their own, and specific things as they are. However, the single becomes combined through multiplication, although it is uncombined within itself. Now, since there are many diversities, also [there are numerous] singles. And because neither this nor that can exist as a single, there should be a single that is single among all singles, and that is God.

These [were] for the second [argument].

[The] third [argument] is related to sensing in heaven and on earth by sight. There are four visible things on earth: first, the firmament of earth and the courses of the water; second, the change of kings, the enrichment of the poor, and the impoverishment of the

rich; third, the impediment of human beings' thoughts and will, since many of our thoughts and wills remain unaccomplished; fourth, the alteration of air and plants.

For the first instance, David says: "Who established the earth on her foundation, so that it shall not be moved forever" (Ps 104:5). Also: "He sends forth His fountains among the valleys: the waters shall run between the mountains" (Ps 104:10). For the second instance, the proverb says: "By me kings reign" (Prov 8:15). And Anna says: "The Lord makes poor and makes rich" (1 Kings/Sam 2:7). For the third instance David says: "The Lord frustrates the counsels of people" (Ps 33:10). Concerning the third [instance,] David says: "He gives snow like wool" (Ps 147:16). Also: "He shall send out His word, and melt them" (Ps 147:18). Also: "He makes grass to grow on the mountains,³ and green herbs for the service of men" (Ps 104:14).

Similarly, four things are visible in heaven. First, grand immensity and the arched firmament of the heaven.

Second, its embellished beauty.

Third, its perpetual movement.

Fourth, the changing nature of the stars, since they become eclipsed sometimes, as happened at the time of crucifixion, and reappear sometimes, as at the time of Joshua and Hezekiah.

Concerning the first [instance,] Isaiah says: "Who set the heavens as a vault?" (Isa 40:22). And for the second instance, [Isaiah] says: "Who has displayed all these things?" (Isa 40:26). For the third [instance,] the Book of Ecclesiastes says: "The wind goes round and round" (Eccl 1:6). And: "The sun rises and goes down, and hurries to the place where it rises" (Eccl 1:5). And for the fourth instance David says: "You did make darkness and it was night" (Ps 104:20).

From these needs to be known that there is a Creator to these.

Accordingly, certain of the physicists has been led to speak about the first beginning: that there is someone who moves heavenly bodies. He is one, and incorporeal, and almighty, and uncreated, for

³ Elsewhere: "He makes grass to grow for the cattle."

Gregory of Tatev

which reason He is without end, and He is the Creator of all creatures, and unto Him is given worship.

Enough about this.

[Chapter Three]⁴

Against the lost nation of Saracens who are the forerunners of the Anti-Christ and are new heathens with the heresy of Arius and Cerinthus.

First, because they deny the Trinity of persons.

Second, they say that good and evil is from God.

Third, they deny the humanization of the Word.

Fourth, they do not confess Christ as God, but only as man and messenger.

Fifth, they do not embrace the entire Holy Scriptures; that is, the Old and New Testaments.

Sixth, they call a man [Muhammad] the messenger.

Seventh, they say that resurrection is physical.

Eighth, they say that angels and spirits are mortal.

Ninth, they dishonor the sign of the cross and the holy images.

Tenth, they do not distinguish the impure animals but eat [everything] indiscreetly.

Eleventh, they drink unlawful wine.

Twelfth, they always wash themselves with water and consider it cleansing.

Thirteenth, the amputation; that is, circumcising.

Fourteenth, they do not have fasts, neither old, nor new [fasts].

Fifteenth, they do not eat animals slaughtered by an Armenian.

Sixteenth, they are impious but they consider themselves to be pious.

And they also have many blasphemies that I do not find worthy

⁴ Our choice to consider the section on Muslims as Chapter Three and preceding the section on Jews is based on the partially produced printed copy of the *Book of Questions* in 1720 in Constantinople. There, we find this chapter listed as “Third: Against Muslims” (Երրորդ՝ Ընդդեմ Ալյազգեաց’).

to mention, except as much as necessary to answer. And although the believer has nothing in common with an unbeliever, neither light with darkness [cf. 2 Cor 6:14–15], as the Apostle says, because if we talk to them by tongue or by mind we sin—let aside if we unite with them or love them—I would like to answer to the fool, according to Solomon, that the ignorant may not err following their damnation.

And thus, we will discuss each [argument] with the help of the Holy Spirit, which empowers the weak.

[A]

[*The first error of the Saracens.*]

They, first, deny the Trinity of persons, like the heretic Sabellius, and say one God. And they first argue as follows. If there is birth in God, then there is also corruption, because the birth of one is the corruption of another, and this is filth in God; therefore, there is no birth in God.

Concerning this, we say that just as a bat cannot look at the light of the sun, likewise human intellect cannot face divine light, which is unapproachable. And we cannot attain it through the natural light of knowledge, but only through the light of faith, guided by the Holy Scriptures. And since they do not have the light of faith, nor have they the Holy Scriptures, therefore all their arguments, which are according to natural knowledge and those things that are known through the senses, are worth nothing in coming to conclusion regarding God. And this one answer is sufficient for all their arguments. But in order not to be perceived as ignorant, we will answer each [argument separately]. Concerning the first [argument], we say that in intelligible birth there is neither corruption nor a change, because there is no matter that may cause corruption to one by the coming into existence of another kind. Again, they say that everything that is born is temporal, because birth is change from nonbeing into being, while God is immutable.

Concerning this, we say that the divine birth is not bound by time, but is eternal, and it is not at all by power, but eternally by operation.

Again, they say that if the Son receives the same nature as the

Father, then there is a diminution [of nature] in the Father, or many gods have come into being.

Concerning this, we say that there is no necessity for diminution in the Father, nor for many gods to come into being. Since He [God] is not physical or material that can be divided or diminished. And since He is indivisible, there are not many gods.

Again, they say that if God beget God, then He either begat Himself or [begat] others. It is impossible for someone to beget himself, and if He begat another God, then there are two gods.

Concerning this, we say that we disagree with both. For if it is said that God begat Himself God, this means that the Father begat Himself Father, wherefore, when we say that God begat God, God is understood here not in absolute [terms], but as the person of the Father who did not beget His own person, but the person of the Son. Also, He did not beget another God, because when we say another God, another here does not indicate the person, but the being.

Again, they say that [if] the Father gives to the Son everything He has, then [He gives] also His person; thus He [Christ] is not a different person.

We say that this is an illusion.⁵ Because when he says that the Father gave everything, what is meant concerns the substance begotten, which is the Son, and does not concern the person of the Father.

Again, they say that in the father, paternity and substance are one; therefore, if he gives the substance, then he also gives the paternity.

We say that paternity and substance are one in the Father, but they are different in the mode of their existence, because substance is communicable, but paternity is not.

Again, they say that when [it is said that] Peter is man, Paul is man, Mark is man, then there are three men, and not one.

We say concerning this that it is not the same. Because when it is said that Peter is man, Paul is man, Mark is man, their one

⁵ The source uses the word ὡμηνοῦπ (partank’), which means charm and which makes no sense here. Therefore, we have chosen to read it as ὡμηνηῦп (patrank’), which is illusion.

humanity is not according to number, but according to species. But when it is said that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God, [these] three are one divinity in relation to number.

Now, through argumentation we will establish that the Trinity refers to persons. First, as follows: because among beings there are those that are born, and those that are unborn. And those that are born are nobler, such as man, than those that are unborn, such as stone. And that which is noble is appropriate to the first origin, wherefore God begat the Son so that He does not seem less than the creatures that are born.

Again, angels and men are noble beings, because they have reason and animation; and those deprived of these are irrational and inanimate, such as stone. And God is a noble being, and has reason and animation, which are His Son and His Spirit.

Again, all rational beings have intelligence by which they comprehend by themselves; also, they have will by which they will themselves. Now, God by comprehending Himself begets the Son and by willing Himself emanates the Spirit. Then, therefore, there are in God three persons.

And I also ask whether God has reason and spirit or not? If He does not, then He is irrational and inanimate, and it is the idols that are called irrational and inanimate gods. But if He has, then Christ is the Word of God, and [God has] also the Holy Spirit, as all the prophets have testified.

But if they say that the Word is created and is born, then we answer that there are four dissents here [according to their teaching]. First, because our words are born of our minds and are not created. Second, because He was irrational until He made the word. Third, because one part of God would be created, and the other part Creator. Fourth, because the Word is from [God's] nature, and if the Word is created, then its nature also is created. Thus, they do not confess God as Creator.

And we will give [both] the oral word and the [word as] written in a book to be examples of the incarnate Word.

As to the testimonies in the Holy Scriptures, Moses says that the

Spirit of God moved over the waters [Gen 1:2]. And Job says that the Spirit of God made it [Job 33:4]. And David says that by the Word of the Lord the heavens were established and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth [Ps 33:6]. And the Psalms say that the Spirit of God filled the universe [Wis 1:7].

And [consider this] as an example for unity and trinity: The mind, intelligence, and will are one in nature, but three in property. Again, the spirit, word, and breath are one [in nature] and three [in property]. Again, man is one by spirit, body, and mind, according to some. Again, one is the sun and its light and its beam; that is, the white light and the yellow [light]. Again, one is the fire and its light and heat. Again, one is the flower and its color and scent. Again, Adam, and Eve, and Seth from them—one begotten and the other not—these three are one in nature.

And we can give many more examples of Trinity as a support to the weak human mind.

But it is Him who is unparalleled and unique, and above all beings. He is like unto Himself only, as the Only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit unto whom be glory from ages to ages, amen.

B

The second error of the Saracens.

Who say that good and evil are from God. About this we have said enough in the first chapter [of the *Book of Questions*].

Some, however, add more impiety, and while avoiding the left, swerve to the right [from one extreme to the other] saying that we are not the cause for all our good and evil, but God is the prime cause.

And thus say the new heathen, who are the Saracens, while avoiding fortune that can be foretold and astral fate; in lieu of these they attribute the prime cause to necessity. And in order not to have two gods, Evil and Good, as Mani does, they say that the cause of both [good and evil] is one and the same [God].

But we, the ranks of the lovers of truth, refute this and say that God is not the cause of evil, but only of the good.

And this [we do] for many reasons.

First, good has being; therefore it is evident that they [good and evil] are in polarity with each other, because everything that is good is, and everything that has being is and is good, while evil does not have being. Now, God is the cause of being, but not nonbeing; therefore, evil is not from God.

Second, if evil is from God, it would be something different from God and accidental, since evil is external and accidental. That is nonsense.

Third, if evil is from God, then He loves evil, and if He loves evil, then He loves the wicked also who loved evil.

Fourth, if evil is from God, then He would not punish Satan who did evil, nor wicked men; but He does punish the evil, [and] therefore [evil] is not from God.

Fifth, if evil is from God, and God is the origin of all things, then also [He is the origin] of evil things; then Satan is not the author of all evil, as they allege.

Sixth, since God by necessity is good, as He is being by necessity, then the good by necessity is always good, and good in substance, and totally good. And since He essentially must be good, He cannot not be good. And since He is always good, He is incapable of not being good. And since He is good in substance, He cannot be evil accidentally. And that which is totally and truly good cannot be mingled with evil.

And now, this is enough, as has been demonstrated, that God is not the cause of evil, but of good only.

But let us see their argument and correct their falsehood. First, they argue in this fashion, that before our existence God in His foreknowledge saw all things as they are—evil as evil, and good as good. Now, it is necessary that all things be in that manner, as God has seen and known. God's knowledge cannot be deceived. Then, therefore, all things are by necessity in accordance with God's knowledge.

Concerning this, we say that it is understood that God's knowledge is different from the knowledge of man. Because God's

knowledge is not [simply] prior, but total, simultaneous, and perfect. But the knowledge of man is [both] prior and final, for he knows the past through recollection, and the present through perception, and the future through its cause, according to the change of time, as we have said. For example, if numerous people pass on a road, he who stands by sees first one [of them], then the other, and [then] the person who comes after, while if someone is in a high tower, he sees the whole at once. Likewise, God, elevated in the eternal tower, sees all as present.

Now we answer the arguments.

First, as to how God knows all by foreknowledge, and there is nothing outside God's knowledge. But He knows some to be by necessity, and others to be by contingency.

Again, we say that God knows all before their existence, but God's knowledge does not impose upon them to be by necessity evil or good. For example, an artisan makes a cart, and someone from afar sees that he labors; and it is not the knowing that necessitated the cart's being what it is, but the will of the artisan. Similarly, our will makes us do good or evil, not the imposition of God's knowledge.

Second, they say, first, that God's will is not vain, and there is no one against God's will; therefore, He makes whatever He wills—some evil and some good.

Concerning this, we say that there is no one against God's will, and that He makes as He wills, but He does not will and does not make evil.

Again, we say that God's will is not vain, because He makes whatever He wills. And He willed and created us with free will and responsible for our deeds, both evil and good.

Third, they say that if evil is not from God, then it seems that someone else is the cause of evil, and thus there will be two origins, good and evil, according to Mani.

Concerning this, we say, first, that evil is not from God, nor is it from nature, or in nature, or nature [itself]. Concerning the first, we say that evil is not from God, because God is good by nature, and

evil cannot come forth from good, as darkness [cannot come forth] from light. Besides, [evil] is not from nature, because the natures of all angels and humans are good, and have come forth from good; but evil has entered nature through free will. And [evil] also is not nature, because there is no evil at all in nature, but it is accidental and external to nature. Also, it is not nature; that is, does not have being, neither in part nor in whole. It is the absence of that which is innate, because good is innate, and evil is its absence, like darkness is [absence] of light, and sickness [is absence] of health, and death [is absence] of life.

Now we will answer the refutation.

Now, although evil is not from God, thus there are no two gods or two origins, because evil is not being, and is nothing, and God is not the origin of nothing, because God is the origin of beings, and not of nonbeings. And there are not two origins, because the doers of evil have beginning; therefore, there are not two origins.

Fourth, they say that the doers of evil are from God, as [the] will is; therefore, evil is from God, because He created the will.

Concerning this, we say, first, God created the will good, and He placed the good before the will. But he [man] by his free will departed from the good and became the author of evil, because evil is nothing except the departure or lack of good. Then, therefore, although the reason and the will are from God, willing and choosing evil are not from God, but from the will and the reason. For example, an artisan makes a sword for a good reason, but he who does evil becomes the cause of evil. Likewise, God is the creating cause of will, but the effective cause is our evil will.

Again, free will is from God and is made of nothing. Now, free will in itself is not the cause of evil as to its being from God, but [it is the cause of evil] as to [its being] from nothing, and its desire for nothing; that is, evil. Therefore, sin and evil are not from God, but from nothing, which is its [evil's] origin.

Again, we say that God created the will as well as the angels and humans good, and He wills the good, and imposes the love of good; therefore, this is evident since He sowed the good in nature, and

established the laws of good, as well as counsel, encouragement, and rewards. But He does not will evil, nor impose evil. However, He torments and punishes those who commit evil acts. Then, therefore, evil is not from God, and He does not will evil at all.

Fifth, they say that if evil is not from God, then why does He forgive evil, whether of Satan or humans?

Concerning this, we say that evil is not from God, as good is; because good is according to His willing, while evil is by allowing it; and allowing is different [than willing], as unwillingness.

Again, to allow and to forgive evil is for the good, because through [God's] providence numerous good [things] are brought forth from evil, such as allowing Satan to tempt the good and increase [their] rewards. He also allows evil humans to either choose the good or repent later, or through diverse [acts of] providence, at His discretion, God forgives the evil, which we shall see later.

Sixth, they say that if God does not will evil, then we can do that which God does not will. Then, why does the Gospel say that not a hair of your head will perish without God's will?

Concerning this, we say, first, that we have a free will and are responsible for our deeds—to do or not to do.

Again, we say that there is no good without God's will, nor is there evil without His permission. He is the one who says not a hair of your head will perish, because we can do nothing without God's will, or knowledge, or permission.

Seventh, they say, why then does God say: "I make peace and create evil" (Isa 45:7)?

Concerning this, we say that there are two evils; there is the evil of acts, and the evil of punishment. Now, evil acts are not of God, as it has been demonstrated, while evil punishments are of the justice of God, who compensates justly.

Eighth, they say, why then does God say: "I kill and I make alive" (Deut 32:39), and "I will harden Pharaoh's heart" (Ex 7:3)?

Concerning this, we say that there are four compensations: good for good; and evil for evil, which is a just act; and good for evil, [which is an act of] God's unlimited mercy and forgiveness; but He

does not do evil for good, because this is injustice, and if He does, [He does it] because of providence, that good may come forth from evil, even though it seems evil to us, and this also is good, such as sickness, temptation, and so on. [Understand] in this fashion the establishing of evil, and the hardening of hearts, and others.

Ninth, they say, why does the Prophet say: “In your book were written all” (Ps 138:16)? And the Gospel says: “The Son of Man goes as it is written of Him” (Mt 14:21)? Then, therefore, according to that book, everyone of necessity is both evil and good.

Concerning this, we say that the book of life has two aspects. One is of justice in present life, which can be changed, from which someone can be erased. The other is eternal, of God’s predestination, from which no one can be erased. Now, temporal justice is evident; those who through their free will change sometimes into evil and sometimes into good, arrive at either salvation or condemnation. But God’s predestination recognizes those who are saved and gives them the way by which the chosen can be saved. And humans by their free will and acts reach that salvation of grace and glory. This is the book of the chosen, and thus [understand] “His going as it is written of Him.”

Likewise, foreknowledge is the recognition of those evil people who, by their free will and acts, made evil despised. Then foolish are those who say that I desire to satisfy my pleasure; for if I am chosen, I will be saved; otherwise, I will be condemned. As the foolish sick person says: “I want to eat and drink as it pleases me, for if I am to be cured, I will be cured, and if I am to die, I will die.”

Tenth, they say, as with animals, the camel is wise and the turtledove is chaste, while other animals are stupid and lewd; likewise, within the natural creation of the spirit, one is wise, another is wicked and lascivious, and [one is] chaste, good-natured, [while the other is] immoral. Then, therefore, both the good and evil are from God.

Concerning this, we say, first, that God makes one person wise and another ignorant so that the latter may learn from the former. Likewise, the immoral and the lascivious may be corrected by good

[people]; otherwise, if they do not will [to become moral], they will truly be punished.

Again, we say that these are not evil intrinsically, but good, like those who are unknowing of sin and [those who are] angry against evil and those who desire the good, because no one sins by acting in accordance with his nature, says the philosopher. Then all things that are from God are good, and not evil.

Again, we say that these are not the natures of the spirit, but rather diverse qualifications and disproportions, like the images of faces. And now, God put these natural qualifications in parts of the spirit; He also put free will as the master and ruler within the spirit, so that it [the free will] governs and leads the spirit by directing the evil into good, and by keeping the good [quality] intact and expanding it, for this is the task of the free person. But if he [the free person] does not do this, then he follows evil by his own free will, and not by his nature, which is created good by God. Then, therefore, evil is not from God, but from us, or from the wickedness of the enemy [Satan] who deceives us.

And if the Saracens say, as God makes a person poor, and another rich, one lord, another slave, a ruler and a subject, likewise He makes one person innocent and the other sinful, one evil and the other good, as the Scripture says: “I have hated Esau and have loved Jacob before they were born” (cf. Mal 1:2–3). Then, therefore, He creates a person evil, and another good.

Concerning this, we say, first, that poverty and wealth, to rule and to be subject, are from God; however, [God does so] by willing to some, and by forgiving and allowing others; that is, He shows favor to the moral rich and poor through willing, and to the evil through forgiveness and allowing. Likewise concerning the just and the sinful, the evil and the good; some He makes good through His favor, and others evil through His allowing. Then, therefore, there is no evil or sin from God’s will.

Again, we say that God makes rich and poor, lord and subject, and others; so that they may help each other, and through those in authority He takes care of subjects and obedient people. Similarly,

He makes the evil and sinful, so that they might be helped by good people and turn unto the good, while [His] hating Esau and loving Jacob is like this: He loves the chosen and dishonors the despicable by foreknowledge. And as a revelation of this, learn from the [following] example. As the sun enlightens everything, it is the simple matter that reflects light, while the opaque does not. Likewise, God wills the salvation of all men; those who by their free will obey God are saved, while those who oppose [God] by their will are not saved. But if the sun gives light indiscriminately, God chooses and redeems those who are worthy rationally and knowingly, like men who choose that which can be chosen, and not that which is a waste. And if the knowledge of man in the present is related to the existence of the object, God knows eternally and before the existence of the object. And if the knowing of man varies with the object, His [God's knowledge] remains immutable. Likewise, the predestination of God and His forechoice [is immutable], and He does not impose Himself on any person.

And it needs to be known that had God's predestination imposed itself on the actions of man, there would have been many absurdities concerning good and evil, which have been said [in the chapter] on fate [of the *Book of Questions*], and which we place in order here also.

First, the promises of reward to the good, and punishment to the evil, would have been in vain.

Second, the reward of good to the good, and evil to the evil, would have been unjust.

Third, God would have been the cause of our evil.

Fourth, hope and the prayer would have been useless.

Fifth, our free will, which has within itself two sides [good and evil], would have been destroyed.

Sixth, neither the virtuous would have been worthy of praise, nor the evil worthy of condemnation.

Seventh, there would not have been human or divine virtues.

Eighth, the teachings and counsels for morality, by which we avoid evil and affirm good, would have been in vain.

Ninth, hell and heaven, which are places for the evil and the good, would have been redundant.

Tenth, for all natural, rational, scriptural, and evangelical laws would have been false, since these, all of them, advise us to avoid evil and to do good, and all similar things.

So much against those, who say that evil and good are from God.

C

The third error of the Saracens.

Who deny the humanization of the Word, and argue thus, first, that God is not a matter, nor is He power in the matter, nor is He mutable. Therefore, if He became man, then He is mutable.

We answer that God the Word became man immutably, because the nature of the Word did not become confused in human [nature], nor [did] humanity [become] transformed in the nature of the Word, for the divine substance is immutable. It [the Word] unites with the body as spirit and becomes man. And it [the Word] does not change by becoming spirit. Because although the incorporeal becomes united, it remains immutable in the body.

Again, they say, if the unbounded Word took body, either a part of the Word became body, or the body [became] limitless with the Word.

We say that the whole and perfect Word became bounded in the body, yet remained limitless. And that the body uniting with the Word remained bounded, because [the Word] became transformed by coming into the body, as a word united to a writing and as human speech [remains] perfect in many ears and yet [both are] wholly limited.

Again, they say that whatever is added to someone after his completion is an accident in him; therefore, the body is an accident of the Word [after incarnation].

Concerning this, we say that God the Word took human nature to be truly man; and becoming man is [related to the] genus of being and not the genus of accident.

Again, they say that God's habitation in a womb is unworthy and nonsense; many who hear this take offense and wander.

We say that it is not unworthy, because the creator lives in his creation, like the constructor in his construction. And behold! God lives in the heavens, and fills all places, and is in the minds of all humans. He also lived in the holy womb [of the Virgin]. And it is not nonsense that the archetype lived in His image, for what He has made by Himself He Himself does not abhor living in it. But if many take offense and wander, that is because of evil and pride that they do not believe in the Holy Scriptures, and are not willing to recognize goodness, and hence there have been many strayings since the creation of the world.

Again, they say that as the good cannot unite with evil, likewise the great power of God cannot unite with the weakness of man.

We say that the weakness of human nature does not make the great power of God lesser, because He united the human nature with His divinity without confusion, and the weak nature became greater by this union, because from his sins he became innocent, immortal, and immaculate, and God. And weakness is not like wickedness, because wickedness is deprived of an end, while weakness is not.

Again, they say that God's mercy is greater than His justice; He ought to have forgiven by mercy, and not to become man and suffer.

We say that it was improper for God's mercy to oppose His justice, but to be together; wherefore He paid the debts according to His mercy and undertook punishments according to His justice.

Again, they say that God could have redeemed man only by willing, or paid his [man's] debts by a different creation.

We say that God could have redeemed [humans] by willing [only], but it was appropriate for God to become man, so that His love be visible to us, and so that He manifests acts of justice. And He did not pay the debt of man by a different creation, because each creation has limited power, while to pay the debt of sins needed unlimited power. Also, [God did so] that we do not become indebted to and servants of a [different] creation, but of God the Savior.

Again, they say that if Christ has already paid the debts

sufficiently, it seems unjust that humans are still being punished; also, there would be no need for prayers for sins, mercy, and so on.

Concerning this, we say that Christ sufficiently paid the debts and lifted sins, but punishments remained, so that we share the sufferings of Christ and partake of His glory [2 Cor 1:7]. Also, if the believers in Christ were without suffering in this life, then the believers in Christ would have been more content with the well-being of their bodies rather than the spirit; in that case, there would not have been reward for faith. And there ought to be good works in the place of sins. It needs to be said that the death of Christ is the reason for universal salvation, as the first sin of man was the universal reason for condemnation. Now, as Adam's death touches everyone [by birth, likewise the death of Christ should touch everyone], so that they may be saved by Him through the font of second birth by their good works.

Again, they say that sin does not become cleansed by sin, but it increases [by sin]; by killing Christ, many have sinned.

We say that the death of Christ was payment for the deadly sins of man, since natural death was because of the original sin. And for imputed sins, which were [committed] voluntarily, He had to die by a violent death. For this reason, Christ died [voluntarily] for the original sin, and violently at the hands of others for sins voluntarily committed. And although some sinned in Christ's death, there was no cause on His part [for their sins], as the Psalm says: "He is my enemy without cause" [cf. Ps 3:7].

Again, they say, sins are erased through repentance, as you say. Then, why was there a need for God to become man? And again, [they say] the act of incarnation was greater than the act of creation; since, as at creation all men were created, similarly at the incarnation all men should have been saved; but this did not happen.

We answer for the first [argument], that repentance and other good deeds cannot erase sins if they [repentance and good deeds] are not based by faith in the suffering of Christ. As to the other [criticism], we say that it is not because of God that all are not saved, but because of themselves. For example, whoever closes his eyes

during daytime remains in darkness. He is the cause [of this darkness], and not the sun. [Similarly], the union of a male and a female does not always result in the birth of a child, and the reason for this is not because of the Creator who said: “Be fruitful and multiply” [Gen 1:22], but from the imperfection of the doer [male] or the bearer [female] of the substance.

Again, they say, if the Word becoming flesh were the reason for the salvation of man, then it [the Word] should have become [flesh] from the beginning of the world, so that the first [generations] would have been saved. Also, they say that the sins of angels and man were of the same genus, that is, pride. And since the angels were not saved, then humans also should not have been saved.

Concerning the first, we say that He [God] left man in natural law for a long time, and [man] fell into despicable sin. He [God] also gave them [humans] written law, so that they would avoid sins, and they were not justified by it [the law]. And then came the law of grace, so that they may recognize that salvation made by Christ. And again, the quality of human life does not attain perfection at once; just as youngsters first learn through lesser studies, similarly it was improper to dictate the greater commandments to man at first, but [to begin with] minor [commandments], so that he learns through the lesser studies and then arrives at the perfect laws. [Concerning the] second, we say that angels were unable to be restored, because choice follows reasoning. And angels comprehend and reason immutably; for this reason, they invariably choose evil or good; wherefore they [in their choices] remained impenitent. And again, angels can learn by intelligence, while man needs to learn through the senses. Again, a part of the angels perished, but the whole remained, while if man had not been saved, all of [humankind] would have perished. In this and in similar ways heathens oppose the Holy Church.

Now, again, we will show that it was appropriate for the Word to become man. And since the humanization of the Word is evident in Holy Scriptures, but they [pagans/Saracens] do not believe, so we must prove this through rational understanding. First, it is natural for man to love God. And it is evident that because he [man] strayed

after many false gods, God became incarnate and appeared, so that we may recognize the one and true God. Again, the first man wanted to become God but was unable prematurely. Therefore, God became man and deified him [man]. Again, Satan committed slander that man is evil and sinful by nature. [Therefore] God became man and showed the innocent and good nature made by the good Creator. Again, He who created by His grace, redeemed by His mercy. Again, as it is proper for God to create, likewise it is appropriate for Him to renew and glorify. He created from nothing and restored from corruption, and will glorify at the end. Again, He, the Creator, gave the sentence and condemned Adam, for which reason He became incarnate and suffered, gave His [new] sentence and redeemed him [man]. Again, His love and most wise knowledge was demonstrated, for if He did not become man, they would have said that He could not, or did not desire, or did not know, and from this [allegation] would be deduced weakness, ignorance, or envy which are extremely inappropriate for God. Again, Satan conquered the body, and God with the same body defeated the conqueror. This is an act of justice. Again, so that He may teach how to defeat evil, particularly through justice, rather than through violence. Again, death became strengthened in human nature, for which reason the immortal God became man and immortalized [man] again. Because of these, and for many more reasons than these, the Word took human nature and appeared as man in this world, and saved us.

The Saracens, however, say, [“]Although we accept this, we find that it is inappropriate to say Father and Son.[”] We say that the Torah of Moses says that all creatures are begotten and made by God. Again, it [the Torah] says concerning man: This is your father who created you and beget you. Again, it says: “My firstborn son is Israel, whom I loved” [Ex 4:22]. And David says: “I have said that you are gods, children of the Most High, all of you” [Ps 82:6].

And if God is called Father of creatures and humans, because they were created by Him, why is it improper for Christ—who was begotten of the Father’s nature before eternity, as David says: Before eternity I have begotten you [cf. Ps 110:3]—to call Him Father? And

concerning the unity of body, what is so strange if we should say that the ray of the sun—which is united with air—is born from the sun, or that words—which are united in writings—are born of the mind? Likewise, [regarding] the Word of the Father, it is united like color with the blood of the Virgin and appears in the flesh. And He, God the Father Himself, testified at the River Jordan concerning the incarnate Word: “This is my beloved Son” [Mt 3:17]. And the Savior Himself said: “I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father” [Jn 16:28]. Now, if you believe in God, how can you deny the Word of God, and not say Father and Son? You hear in agony what God the Father Himself testified and the Son revealed and you do not believe [what] the prophets taught beforehand.

Again, I say briefly. If it agonizes you to hear that Christ is the Son of God, then show us who on earth is the father of Christ? And if you cannot show someone, then believe in God the Father who said: “This is my beloved Son” [Mt 3:17], or believe in Christ who said: “I am the Son of God” [Jn 10:36]. Accordingly, do you believe in the Son of God? Behold the evident testimony of the Holy Scriptures in which is said God and Son of God. Enough concerning this.

D

The fourth error of the Saracens.

Who do not confess Christ as God, but as man and messenger; that is, prophet. Who, having shut their eye of faith before the light of truth, remain in darkness and are eternally deprived of redeemed life; concerning whom Christ the truth testified: “Whoever denies me before men, I will deny him before the Father and the angels” [cf. Mt 10:33]. And John says: “Whoever disobeys the Son, the wrath of God abides on him” [Jn 3:36]. For this reason, believers are saved and unbelievers truly are lost. And both the Old and the New Testaments manifestly show Christ as God, but they [the unbelievers] do not submit to the Holy Scriptures.

And if they say, as our word is not a man [in his totality], likewise the Word of God [is not divine].

We say that our word is imperfect, created and corruptible; therefore, it is not man [in his totality]. While the Word of God is perfect, and is uncreated and incorruptible; therefore, it is God.

Again, we say that if the Word of God is not God, and the Spirit of God is not God, and the Power of God is not God, as you say, then there is no God, because by eliminating the parts the whole is eliminated.

And here is the question. When you say that Christ is light—as you say: “Jesus is light from light”—I ask you now, is that light created or uncreated? If it is uncreated, then it is God and Creator. But if you say created, we say: From whose light [is it]; from the light of angels, or from the luminous bodies, or from the elements? These are not called the light of God. But if you say that it is newly created, we say that in God there is no created object, because He is totally simple and uncreated substance. And now, if you say that the light of God is created, then a part of God is created; moreover, there is an accident within God, which is evidently false.

Then Christ is light from light; as the light of the sun has its substance, likewise the Son has the substance of the Father. And as the light of a lamp does not come after [the lamp], likewise the Son is with the Father from eternity.

Again, that uncreated and creating light dawned in the Virgin Mary, and taking our nature, spirit, body, and mind, united them with His divinity; then, therefore, that which is united with God is God. As a lit candle is light, and as a burning wood is flame, and as a heated iron is fire, likewise the body which is united with God is God. And for example, the spirit of every man is created by God, and the body alone is from their birth-giver, and Mary is called the Mother of God and birth-giver of God, because the incorporeal light of God was born incarnate; then, therefore, Christ is God. And for example, man is one person in his spirit and body, and there is one countenance and one nature in man; likewise the incarnate Word of God is one person, one countenance, and one nature of the

humanized and incarnate God; then, therefore, Christ is God.

Again, every man is born of a father and a mother. Now, Christ was conceived in a virgin womb without seed and was born pure, as you also say that He was born of a virgin; then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say that Eve from Adam and Adam from the earth were born without seed, we say that these too are the acts of God, and not of man. And if you believe in your example, why do you not believe in truth? For as God the Word made Adam man from the earth, likewise the same Word became man from the Virgin; then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say that the prophets worked wonders, as Moses did before Pharaoh, while Elijah and Elishah resurrected the dead, likewise Christ made miracles. We say that the prophets worked by the power of another; that is, God. But Christ [operated] by His own authority, while princes work by the authority of their king. And it is evident that as the prophets worked in the name of God, likewise the Apostles performed all kinds of wonders in the name of Christ, as Paul resurrected the dead, and Peter made the lame walk in the name of Christ. Then, therefore, Christ is God.

Again, to forgive sins befits God alone, as to this you testify. And now, Christ forgave the sins of those who came to Him, and gave us authority to forgive sins in the church; then, therefore, Christ is God.

Again, it befits God alone to know the thoughts of man and to foretell the future. And now, Christ knew the thoughts of men, and what was in them, and said what is yet to come, as you also call Him messenger; that is, prophet, and prophet means seer. And if they say that the prophets too said what is yet to come, we say that it is known to God alone what will happen, or to those whom God reveals, such as the angels and humans. While demons have acute and discerning minds and they can see more swiftly than man and appear to tell the future, and while the skillful [tell the future] by the uses of symbols and movements, and while fortune-tellers [tell the future] presumptuously and hypothetically, truly [the future is told] by God alone, because the past and that which is to come are present in Him.

And if they say that Christ knew just like the prophets, we say that the prophets knew through the revelation of God the Word and the Holy Spirit, and, on occasion, when God desired. Whereas Christ [knew] always and from Himself, because He is the Word of God, and the wisdom and the light [of God]. Then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say, your Gospel says: “A prophet is without honor in his own country” [Mt 13:57].

We say that they call Christ as prophet not to honor Him, but to belittle Him, because when the Word became man, He was called prophet, or apostle, or priest, and so on. And since some perceived Him as a prophet, He [Christ] spoke according to their perception. Therefore, it is obvious when He [Christ] said: “‘Who do people say that I am?’ [And they said,] ‘Some say Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ [And] He said to [the disciples], ‘Who do you say that I am?’ Peter said: ‘You are Christ the Son of the living God’” [cf. Mt 16:13–16]. Then, therefore, Christ is God, and we believe Him to be the Son of God and we are blessed.

Again, to create is the work of God, because an unlimited power is necessary to bring nonbeing into being. Now, you say that Christ in His childhood, during play, took dirt in His hand and created birds, such as a bat and other things. Moreover, [you admit that] He opened the eyes of one blind from birth to make him see. Therefore, if Christ created a bird and gave sight to one born blind, then Christ is God. And if they say that certain witches [also] create the appearances of man or birds, we say that these are illusion and not true. And He who created the appearances can also transform them.

Again, it is given to God to ever remain immortal. Now, you say that Christ was not crucified, nor did He die, but He ascended into heaven and is alive forever. And we say that He was crucified, and buried, and resurrected, and ascended into heaven, and is alive forever. Then, therefore, Christ is God. And if they say that the spirits of all the prophets are in heaven, we say that the spirits of all the prophets are in heaven without their bodies, and that they were raised to heaven after their death. While Christ in [both His] spirit and body,

also by [His] immortal vitality rose to heaven; then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say that Khedr and Elias, who are Enoch and Elijah, ascended to heaven, and so did Christ, we say that they are not in heaven, but in paradise, which is an intermediate state between death and life, and they are alive until the end, when they shall die by the hand of the Anti-Christ, who is the *Mahdi el zaman* [The Messiah of the time]. While Christ ascended to heaven, and not to paradise. And the reason for this is that He did not descend from paradise, but the Word of God and His Spirit descended unto earth and again rose to heaven, to be with God; then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say, Christ will come at the end [of time], He will come and die. We say concerning this that he who will come and die at the end is not Christ, but is the Anti-Christ and the son of Satan. He is whom you call Dajjal [the Anti-Christ who will appear on the Last Day]; for if he was Christ, how would he be able to divert from their faith the Christians who believed in him beforehand. And if they say, why did Elijah and Enoch die and Christ did not? We say that they died, so that they could testify to the truth of Christ. Whereas Christ died to testify for whom? And if they say, you say that Christ died beforehand for the life of the humanity, so that those who believe may be saved. Then, in that case, there is no salvation, since the time of humans has passed and they have arrived unto the judgment. Again, the judge of all is God who created all. And now it is evident from the words of all the prophets that Christ sits as judge. The reason is that, since He took body and suffered, He condemns the unbelievers and saves those who believe in Him. And you also say that on judgment day Jesus will sit as judge; then, therefore, Christ is God.

And if they say to us, you now said that Christ will not come. We say that Christ first came to preach and convert, and then He will come to judge and to save. The first coming was in a humble manner; the second [will be] in the glory of the Father. And He cannot not die because of two reasons. First, because all the dead will rise, why, then, should the living die? Second, for if He dies, at that time who

will pronounce the sentence of judgment, and how could a dead [person] grant eternal life? Then, therefore, Christ is God and the judge of all and [Himself] everlasting life. So much concerning this.

E

The fifth error of the Saracens.

Who do not accept all of the Holy Scriptures; that is, the Old and the New Testaments. And they say that four Scriptures have come from heaven—the Torah, the Zabur [Al-Mazmur/Psalms], the Gospel, and the Qur'an.⁶ The Torah they ascribe to Moses, the Zabur to David, the Gospel they call Injil, and the Qur'an they relate to Muhammad.⁷ They say four, but they do not know three [of them] at all, and they do not believe in them, but only in theirs. And they say that all others are false, and that the Qur'an alone is the only true canon.

Therefore, we ask them, first, thus: If there were four [books] descended from heaven, are they true or false? If you say that yours is true, then the first [three] are also true, because they descended from heaven. And if the first [three] are true, but you do not listen to them, then it is evident that you are outside of the truth and are false.

Again, if in the first [three] truth is not told, this is either because of ignorance, or weakness, or unwillingness, which is obviously false, for God is all wise, omnipotent, and all merciful. Then, therefore, the Old and the New Testaments are true.

Again, if God made His first words false and gave you a new one, then God lies in His words, which is a great blasphemy to speak thus. And if the first were false, then yours is false as well.

Again, if God changed His first words, then [it means that] He regretted and had second thoughts; and repentance follows ignorance, which is an impossible sin [to relate such thing to God].

Again, if He lied in the first words, and then said the truth, then there is mutation in Him, and that which is mutable cannot be God.

⁶ Named Furq'an in Tat'ewac'i's manuscript.

⁷ Tat'ewac'i refers to the Prophet as Mahmêt.

Again, if He lied to the first, then He deceived them and spoke falsely; and he who deceives and lies cannot be God.

Again, if He lied to them and told you the truth, then He hated them and loved you. Then you are now more beloved by God than David, and Moses, and Abraham, and the other patriarchs, which is a total falsehood.

Again, and otherwise, if in their [books] the laws and covenants are false, then yours are false, because you have many things from theirs, such as circumcision, ablution, *zakat*,⁸ and so on; for if the foundation is unstable, so is the structure.

Again, [if] the patriarchs and prophets, all of them, did not have your covenants, then they all lied. And again, all those who did not have your laws perished [according to you]. Then why do you mention their names in your prayers and place David, Moses, Abraham, and others as intercessors?

Again, God appeared to Moses in fire and cloud, and wrote the laws on a tablet; and David is the father of Christ in relation to the body, and Christ is the Word of God and light. If you make false their covenants, then you also make God false who spoke with them and gave them the word of the covenants. And whose mind would consent that the law of God is false?

These and other many similar things are great blasphemies in the words of those who do not accept the Old and the New Testaments.

And if they say, behold, you do not keep the Old Testament, and likewise we do not keep yours [New Testament] or theirs [Old Testament]. We say concerning this that we keep the Old Testaments, as the New [Testament] as spoken by one spirit, and we call these the Breath of God [Bible]. Moreover, we do not put aside the Old Testament as evil and impure. But we need the Old [Testament]. First, because the Old Testament was for the immature and imperfect, while the New [Testament] is perfect and for the mature. Second, the former is as design, and the latter is truth, while the perfect does not depend on and does not exhaust the imperfect; nor the spiritual the

⁸ Obligatory almsgiving.

physical, and nor truth the exemplary type. But we have it hidden and veiled. For example, lead is hidden in a painting and is filled with chemicals, and as the stars are hidden during the daytime, likewise, the natural laws that God gave to Adam, and the oral [laws that He gave] to Noah and Abraham, and the written [laws that He gave] to Moses and other prophets we now have in the Gospels veiled and not manifest, as we have said.

And if they say likewise, our laws are new and yours are old and are changed, we say that all laws have two aspects—that is, the perfect and the imperfect, which is design and truth. And the new is perfect and true, while the old is imperfect and a design. Now, if your law is new, then ours must be old, and then yours is new, for new is said in comparison to the old. But if our law is new, then yours cannot be new, for new cannot be said in comparison to new.

Again, the perfect cannot be imperfect, but it can be beyond perfection, which is not of this world. And now, your law is not beyond perfection, which belongs to the other life, nor is it perfect, which is the new, and not imperfect, which is the old, as we have demonstrated. Therefore, your law is outside of all laws. And that which is outside of the laws is lawlessness, and lawlessness cannot replace the laws, nor can it be a new law.

F

The sixth error of the Saracens.

Who call a certain man [Muhammad] messenger; that is, prophet. And that they are false, is evident from twenty things.⁹ First, from the definition of prophecy. For prophecy is to know the past, to tell the future, and to speak about the present in truth. While Muhammad did not know the past, which is evident from his untrue tale about Abraham and the patriarchs. Further, he did not know what is in the future, nor did he know the present; therefore, he is not a prophet. Second, a prophet does not make another prophet a liar, and it is said

⁹ There must be a confusion here on part of the scribes, for only six items are mentioned in the ensuing section.

that the spirits of prophets pay homage to the prophets. Muhammad, however, declared all prophets who spoke in the past and in modern times liars, and called himself the only true and last prophet; therefore, he is not a prophet. Third, prophets are for others, not for themselves, as is evident from Moses and others, for they prophesied for the sake of others. But whatever Muhammad said, he said for himself, saying: “God created the world for my sake,” and many other arrogant expressions. Fourth, the prophets were revealed through signs and wonders, such as Moses in Egypt. Muhammad, however, appeared by threats and by killing with the sword, and through violence he enforced his laws like all tyrants.

And if they say that Muhammad did not do wonders in this world, but he will do them in that other world which is the life to come, we say that wonders are for faith, and in the other life faith is abrogated, because there is face-to-face vision and not something hoped for. Fifth, every prophet says things that are not said by others, as is evident from the books of the prophets. But Muhammad took some things from Moses, and other things from other books, and wrote them in his name. Circumcision, ablution, obligatory almsgiving, and all other things are from Moses, and are not new commandments. Sixth, no prophet contradicts himself, but he [Muhammad] contradicted himself, for he did not ascribe any sin to man and permitted him to do whatever he is capable of doing. For he says that women are created for fornication, and food [is created] for greed, he says. And it is a great blasphemy to say that God is the cause of evil, and after all these to say that there will be judgment and reward. Now, if man does not sin, what would God reward? And he [Muhammad] said many other things that are not necessary to be mentioned. Therefore, we say that he is not a prophet.

And if they say, why is the name of the prophet not written in your books? We say that our Gospels and the Scriptures were written seven hundred years before [Muhammad]; how could they have written the later [events] in earlier books? And if they say, then, why did not they [the fathers of the church] write [about Muhammad] for such a long time? We say that at the time of the Apostles, schismatics,

false apostles, came forth who distorted the laws and led astray [the faithful] from their faith; for which purpose the Apostles wrote rules and anathemas in the Gospels [advising the faithful] not to listen to others and not to write books after the Gospel and the Apostles. Wherefore we do fear their anathemas and do not dare to write the name and words of another man. And if they say, if he was not a prophet, why did a cloud protect him? We say that there was no cloud over him, but he had over his head a canopy which is called a *sukur* nowadays. And since he was like a thief, he wanted to show himself to be like the prophets, [and] he went around on camelback, so that the word of Isaiah be related to him. And sometimes he dressed in skins in the likeness of Elijah, and he had a canopy as cover, so that he resembled Moses, whom the cloud protected by daytime and gave light at night.

And this is his story, for in the year 97 [648] according to the Armenian Calendar and in the tenth year of the Catholicosate of Ezr, a man named Muhammad, from the nation of Ishmael, son of Abdullah, who was somewhat familiar with the laws of Moses, and was the disciple of an anchorite named Bahira,¹⁰ an Arian heretic, in the desert of Sinai, became a believer in the heresy of Arius. And he declared that the kingdom is material on earth, and that after the resurrection there is food and marriage. And he also taught presets contradicting the Old and New Testaments. And he taught his people many worthless and silly things. They say of him that he became the lawgiver and messenger and commander of the Saracens for twenty years. And after massacring and ruling many, this Muhammad forbade the sword and by his word of counsel subjugated unto himself the greater part of the world. And by unforgettable oath he confirmed a treaty—which is now known as the Great Decree [*Manshour*]—about Armenia, tolerating Christianity, and taxed them [the Armenians] for their faith by collecting from each household four piasters, three measures of barley, one horse-bag, one rope made of hair, and one towel. And he commanded that from priests, nobles,

¹⁰ Tat'ewac'i refers to him as Bxira.

and cavalry taxes were not to be collected. And after the twenty years of Muhammad, Abu-Bakr, Osman, and others ruled thirty-eight years.

After this [Muhammad the Prophet], the other Muhammad [ibn Marwān], with the same name and deeds [as the former], sat as ruler and messenger in his stead. It is told that Catholicos Sahak while going to meet him died on the way and was carried to him in a coffin. And he [Muhammad ibn Marwān] gave to the Armenians the Brief Decree, in the same fashion that the first [Prophrt] Muhammad had written his, exempting from all taxes priests, nobles, and cavalries, to freely and openly exercise their faith. So much on this.

G

The seventh error of the Saracens.

Who say that resurrection is physical, [to include] food and pleasure, forty and seventy wives, as said Arius, Sakarinus, and Cerinthus, whom the Holy Scriptures and the Church of God anathematize.

And here we put, briefly, the precept [of God] that at the resurrection [men] shall not take women, nor [women] shall belong to men; but they shall be like the angels of God, so that they do not perish. And although this is sufficient for the faithful, let us examine the arguments of the pagans.

First, they say that the resurrection is a return to the former life in Eden. And the former life in Eden included marriage, as God said: “Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen 1:22); then, therefore, at the resurrection there will be marriage. Concerning this, we say that there was no marriage during the former life in Eden, nor was there physical attraction, but rather spiritual [attraction] like the angels; so shall it be at the resurrection. And if they say, then what about [the existence of] the male and female [in Eden]? We say that God had the foreknowledge that they would not keep the commandment and would leave Eden; [therefore] He created them male and female, so that they might multiply on earth like animals. This is evident from what He said: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” [Gen 1:22].

He told them to fill the earth, not Eden.

Again, we say that at the resurrection not Eden—which was an intermediary life; that is, between life and death—but the glory will be his [Adam's/man's] with immortal life, which was promised in Eden and which [Adam] could not inherit because of sin.

Again, they say. Isn't it written in your Scriptures the first resurrection and a thousand-year reign with leisure, and a river of oil and honey, and that you will eat and drink in the kingdom, as your Gospel says?

We say: Pay attention to the interpretation and wisdom of Scripture. God's invisible [truth] is to be understood through appearances. When it says first resurrection, [that is because] there are two resurrections, as there are two falls; that is, [one] of the spirit and [one] of the body. Now, the first resurrection is that of the spirit, which is the forgiveness of sins that happened through Christ. And the thousand years indicate a perfect number, so that the saints spiritually rest from their work and reign with Christ until the consummation of the world. And then, at the second resurrection of the body, they take on perfect glory and the crown of eternity. And the river of oil and honey indicates the ever-flowing and abundant mercy and gentleness of God. Likewise, the food and drink indicate the knowledge and wisdom of God, and not material food and drink.

Again, they say, the resurrection of Christ is a cause and paradigm for the resurrection of all humans, as you say. And now, your Christ after His resurrection ate and drank with the disciples, and then, therefore, all humans shall eat. We say that Christ after His resurrection did not eat because of want, but [He ate] so that [people] believe in His resurrection, because many denied His resurrection, as the Jews and you do. And the general resurrection will be evident to all and no one will doubt this. Wherefore, there is no need for food to confirm [this]. It is evident that food has three aspects: First, it [i.e., bread] is cut; second, it is chewed; third, it becomes transformed in the body. Christ exercised the eating and chewing, but He did not exercise transformation in the body, because as He chewed all the elements were dissolved.

Again, they say, the body needs food. Now, if this body be truly resurrected, then food is necessary; otherwise, it is not this body but another that is resurrected. We say that the corruptible body needs food, but not the incorruptible, just as the luminous bodies of heaven do not need food. And now, at the resurrection the bodies of humans will be pure and immortal; therefore they do not need food. And although this body will truly be resurrected from the earth, it will have a different property; for it is corruptible from the corruptible earth now, while then it will be incorruptible from incorruptible elements.

Again, we say, although the body will be the same, its functions will be different. For although there will be feet and hands, He [the resurrected] will not move or function by body; and although it [the body] will have life, it will not have respiration. Likewise, it is a true body, but it will not have eating and growing functions. Therefore, at the resurrection there is no food, nor growth, nor corporeal pleasure. It is completely spiritual, as it is [the case] of angels.

And now that their argument is refuted, we ask them.

First, we ask you whether resurrection is mortal or immortal. For if it is mortal, then how is the mortal resurrected from death? But if it is immortal, then it is obvious that there is no material food, nor pleasure, nor birth, nor aging, nor death, nor corruption; and all that exists in this life, is taken away at the resurrection.

Again, you say, at the time of resurrection, one male will be given forty or seventy *houris* as wives. Now, it is accepted by all that the same number of those who die is the same number of those who are resurrected. And in this life many men die without wives. Now, whence come the forty or seventy women for each man? Then, what they say about *houris* is false.

Again, we ask, is the resurrection subject to change or not? For if it changes, and if there is sensuality and bodily pleasure, as you say, then there is also discharging and impurity, there is also birth and growth, and there is weakness, sickness, and death. Then it is not the resurrection, but this birth-life of ours. And there must be another resurrection and another life to come for that resurrection,

which is totally untrue. But if it is not subject to change, then there is no bodily pleasure and material food, which is transformable.

Again, we ask whether the resurrection is temporal or everlasting. For if it is temporal, then it is this same life and nothing more. But if it is everlasting, then there is no movement of heaven and luminous bodies, which are the source of time, nor is there birth and growth, which follow from time, and no kind of physical pleasure.

Again, food and drink are of earth and from diverse elements. Now, if these elements change by degradation, then nothing can be obtained from them, nor physical food and drink. But if they are degradable, then that is not the resurrection and everlasting life.

Again, do you say that the kingdom is on earth or in heaven? For if it is on earth, it is not the kingdom, but temporal life. If it is in heaven, however, then there is no physical food and drink, for they are all made of the four elements, and heaven is the fifth substance according to Aristotle. And the four elements cannot be elevated above heaven and become elemental food.

Again, our food and enjoyments are from plants and animals, such as bread, meat, and so on. Now, if at the resurrection there are such enjoyments and food, not only humans, but also plants and irrational animals would be resurrected and remain forever.

Again, if material food is there, we would be obliged to work in crafts and with the soil, as we do here. [Then] there would be rich and poor; there would be exploitation, and deprivation, and injustice, and sin. And how would there be just judgment and compensation according to deeds, and what space would be left for holy and righteous works? As this world is a house of sin, and hell is the place for sinners, the kingdom will become a place for sin and injustice, as you so presume.

Again, you say, there, at the resurrection, one male will have forty wives. Now, women are for the bearing of children; but those who are for the vice of pleasure are for fornication and adultery. And you also say that there will be no childbearing, then these numerous women will be for the vice of pleasure and fornication. Then your kingdom is a whorehouse and not a house of sanctity. Then the

Creator becomes the reason for our physical pleasure and vice, since He gave you so much fornication.

Again, you said that the resurrection is a return to the former life in Eden. Now, there was one woman created for the first man; therefore, you also at the resurrection should have one woman to one man, or you will have there as many wives as you have here, and not forty or seventy, for by this you will get pleasure and turn the kingdom into a house of ill repute and a whorehouse. O you foolish and blind [people], for if here you are modest in your mosques,¹¹ both men and women, in your marriages and your relationships with each other, how do you proclaim [that there is] marriage and voluptuousness in the kingdom of heaven. [Perhaps] so that you will have such marriage and such houses of voluptuousness and places of filthiness in this life and in the other, while we will have the holy kingdom that God prepared for His beloved, the prophets, apostles, martyrs, ascetics, and other holy people. So much on this.

H

The eighth error of the Saracens.

Who say that the angels and the spirit of man are mortal. This is eviler than all other false teachings and is against divine Scriptures. This eliminates faith in the resurrection and in compensation for deeds. And this suggests that there is no immaterial substance. Furthermore, it demonstrates the weakness of God's will, as we will see in the following.

But for what reason do they base their words on such things? [They say] God alone is immortal, because He is uncreated and without beginning, and that which is beginningless is without end. All created things, however, have a beginning, and that which has a beginning, of necessity has an end. Then, since angels and human spirits are created, therefore they have a beginning and an end.

We say that God alone is uncreated and immortal, while angels

¹¹ Tat'ewac'i's manuscript renders *mosque* as մաճիյ (mačit' [majit]) instead of *masjid*.

and spirits are created and immortal, and all others are created and mortal.

Again, we say that God alone is immortal by nature, while angels and spirits are immortal by the will of God, for He willed and created them immortal; and nothing is impossible for the will of God.

And if we ask them when do they die and why do they say to us that at the last point in time, at the consummation of the world, at the blinking of an eye all spirits and angels will die and will be brought to life again? And if we ask the reason why they die, they say nothing except that God alone is immortal, for He is uncreated and without beginning, and that which is without beginning is without end. But all creatures have a beginning, and that which has a beginning, of necessity has an end.

We say, first, that it is necessary for everything without beginning not to have an end. But it is not necessary for everything without end to be without beginning, like the everlasting, because it [the everlasting] has a beginning, but it is without end. Then, therefore, it is possible that angels and spirits be with beginning and without end.

Again, we say, God is immortal by nature, and He created the angels and the spirits according to His image immortal by nature, so that as they have free will and are immaterial, likewise they will have immortal nature. Otherwise, either deny you the form of the image, or the immortality of the archetype, which is absolutely evil.

Again, God created the angels immortal and as His everlasting lauders, as is evident from their definition—immortal being, incorporeal, servant of God. Now, if angels are mortal, then their laudation of God is not everlasting.

Again, we say that the spirit is self-moving, the self-mover is perpetually in motion, and that which is perpetually in motion is immortal; then, therefore, the spirit is immortal.

Again, I ask, do you conceive the spirit to be material or immaterial? For if it is material, then it is mortal; but if immaterial, then it is immortal, for an incorporeal being does not perish.

Again, death is caused by the mingling of opposite elements;

while the spirit is a single and simple being; then, therefore, it is immortal.

Again, angels and devils are from one genus and species. Now, as devils are immortal and are tormented forever, likewise the angels are immortal and are glorified forever.

Again, death is separation of the spirit from the body, and resurrection is reunion of the spirit [with the body]. Then if an angel is mortal, it needs to have a spirit, so that it dies by separation [of the spirit] and is revived by reunification.

Again, heaven is the fifth incorrupt substance, and the angels are from heaven and in heaven; then, therefore, they are immortal and incorrupt.

Again, if spirits are mortal on earth and angels in heaven, then nowhere is there a place for immortality.

Again, you say that at the end of time all spirits and angels will perish. Now, the end of time is restoration and life for all. Now, if the spirit, which is alive, dies, how can the dead body revive? And when all elements are restored, why would the angels be corrupt?

Again, resurrection of the body happens because of the immortality of the spirit. Now, if the spirit is mortal, then there is no resurrection to the body. And if [there is] no resurrection, also [there is] no judgment and compensation for deeds. Indeed, then, you commit all sins indiscreetly, for you say that the spirit is mortal, while the body is decomposed to earth and there is neither compensation nor judgment.

And if they say, [if] the angels and the spirits are immutable and immortal like God, then there is no difference between them and God. We say that the bodies have two changes—at the beginning and at the end—while the incorporeal things have [the change on] one side; that is, [change] at the beginning, not at the end. But God is totally immutable, for He has neither beginning nor an end, as we have said previously.

Likewise, death also is two [kinds]—natural for senses, and moral for intelligences. Now, natural death is separation from life, while moral [death] is separation from grace, which is sin. Now, the

man has two deaths, natural and moral, in relation to the body and the spirit, while the angel [has] moral [death], for it is a spirit only. But God is totally immortal.

Man also has two resurrections—forgiveness for sins and immortality for life. But the angel does not have forgiveness for sins, as devils do not have. While God is totally outside such separations, for He does not sin, nor does He need forgiveness; in the contrary, He is the giver of life and forgiveness for sins.

So much on this.

I

The ninth error of the Saracens.

Who dishonor the sign of the cross and holy icons. They slander us with such foolish opinions that we worship things made by hand and idols, and that [we worship] the sun facing east.

We say that they speak nonsense and their minds contemplate vanity. We do not worship creatures, nor idols; for the idols of pagans are demons. We worship God and are Christians.

Now, you only see the material substance of the cross and you do not comprehend its hidden mystery, like a man who is illiterate and who only sees the form of writing but does not comprehend the word hidden within. The cross is the sign of Christ and of our salvation, and it is a weapon against enemies that you do not know. But I will tell you the evident. The cross has material substance and form, and [has] the power of God united with it. This material substance is stone, or wood, or iron, or other things. And the form is four-sided in the likeness of the crucified Christ. And the power of Christ is nailed to it and is forever undetachable. For wherever the cross is, there also is the crucified and the crucifixion.

But we do not worship simply the material substance or the form alone. You know that among the living and the dead there are numerous figures and four-sided forms that we do not worship. But we worship the power of God, which is united with the cross; that is Christ, who is nailed to the material substance through the medium

of the form. And the material substance in its four-sided form, with its inseparable form and material substance, is called the cross. Wherefore with the crucified we also worship and honor the cross.

And the sign of the cross is not an innovation of later times but has existed from the time of the fathers. The staff in the hand of Moses, whereby he did signs, was a symbol of the cross, and he divided the sea in the form of a cross saying *aia, shraia, andonia*; [that is,] God be before us, as well as to our right and left.

Again, the four-sided tablet engraved by God, as well as the staff of Aaron, which blossomed and which the Israelites honored and took everywhere with them, and by which the River Jordan was turned back and the walls of Jericho were destroyed. These and many others [such as these] were paradigms of the cross. Now, since Moses, Joshua, David, and other prophets reverence such paradigms, why should we not worship what is true? And if you honor the horseshoe [i.e., crescent],¹² which is a sign of Melchisedec's nail, why should we not reverence the cross, which is the sign of Christ?

And if the Saracens say to us, your cross is on the back of a donkey. We say, your horseshoe [or crescent] is under its feet. And if they say, we draw your cross on a web. We say we put your horseshoe [or crescent] under slippers. And if one of them dishonors a woman with evil intention [saying] that she has the form of the cross, we say that a woman is crosslike in her upper half, but she is *mrhep*¹³ in her lower half, which you dishonor. So much concerning the cross.

And if the Saracens tell us that our icons are idols, we say that we picture the image of God, and not idols, and we are worshippers of God, and not [worshippers] of idols. For the archetype of the images that we erect is different from the archetypes of those who erect idols, because our archetype is God, and their archetype is a demon. Then our worship is different than theirs.

¹² The text uses the word *horseshoe* (խալ [hal]), which has the shape of a crescent.

¹³ Referenced here is the *mihrab*, the place of worship in a mosque, which is constructed in the shape of a semicircular niche, pointing in the direction that Muslims face to pray.

And if they say that the material substance of this or that icon is gold and stone or something else, and that they have the same form as male, or something else, we say that from one material substance many things can be made; for example, from the same wood we can make a chair and a wheel, and from the same stone is built a temple of God and a temple of idols. Behold, one material substance and many different products. Therefore, no wonder that one material substance can be both icon of the sacred and image of the profane.

And if they talk nonsense that we seek spirit from the icon-maker, we say that God says the following: “The Spirit shall go forth from me, and I have created all breath” [Isa 57:16]. And if He is the Creator of spirits, why would He expect this of man? And [we add] God asks what is possible of a man, and not the impossible.

And if parents give to their children only the material substance of the body, and not the spirit, how can they ask for spirit from the icon-maker?

And if you depict other breathing animals, can you give breath to them?

And if they argue that the Prophet says: “To whom have you compared the Lord?” [Isa 40:18]. We say that you do not accept the Holy Scriptures; why do you utilize them as evidence? This very same prophet says: “The Most High does not dwell in a temple made by human hands” [cf. Isa 66:1–2; Acts 7:48]. Therefore, do not erect a temple for God, since useless were the sanctuary of Moses and the temple of Solomon.

And since He does not have a corporeal mouth, why do you kill animals for God? And [since] He does not have a corporeal nose and ears, why do you burn incense, and why do you pray to God?

But come, since you bring testimonies from the Holy Scriptures, we will answer you according to the Scriptures. Moses says: “God created man in His own image” (Gen 1:27).

Now, since God created His own image, in the same way [it is possible for us] to make the image of God.

Again, God appeared to the prophets in human form—to Abraham and Daniel, an old and aged [person], and to Isaiah, seated

on a high throne, and to Ezekiel, on a four-sided throne. For this reason, we depict visible images.

Again, God the Word took human form from the Holy Virgin Mary, and He reproduced His image on a linen cloth and sent it to King Abgar, who was cured by it. For this reason, we depict the image received by Him.

Again, the Mother of the Lord, on the day of her assumption, gave by her own hands her portrait as a sign for healing, and it remains to this day. Given this example, in numerous places the images of saints are depicted. So that through our physical eyes and intelligent mind we perceive the archetype. The iconography of saints is for this reason.

Now we will answer the statement that says: “To whom have you compared the Lord?” (Isa 40:18).

It needs to be known that in the old covenant, [God] prohibited images, saying: “You shall not make for yourself likeness whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath” (cf. Ex 20:4). First, because divine substance is dissimilar to that which is created. Second, so that they be not misled into idol worship, since they were immature [in faith], as He hid the bones of Moses, so that they not be worshipped. Third, because there was not yet the incarnate Word of God. But when He [God the Word] appeared as man, He allowed us, the mature [in faith] to depict images, as we have said.

And concerning their libel that we worship the sun facing east, we say that we do not worship the sun, but the Creator of the sun. Whereas it is evident that he who worships the sun, worships it facing east in the morning and facing west in the evening. But we, Christians, worship always facing east. And the reason for this is that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven from the east, and promised to return at His second coming from the east. For this reason, awaiting the coming of the Savior, we worship facing east.

And why do you worship facing south? Abandoning the worship of God, you worship facing the house of Ishmael. Therefore, you are worshippers of man and not of God.

And if they say that the Israelites worshipped facing south, we say then, you are Jews and the curse of all nations.

Again, we say that they did not worship only facing south, but from all directions they worshipped the Christ by facing Jerusalem, where He is to appear in the body and where He will judge at the last judgment. But you do not do so; you worship a dead body and a [human] grave.

So much concerning this.

J

The tenth error of the Saracens.

Who do not distinguish unclean animals, but eat all indiscreetly except the pig.

And it is to be known that God distinguished between clean and unclean animals in the natural law and in the books of Moses.

In the natural [law] He made four distinctions among animals: First, carnivorous, such as beasts. Second, enormously huge, such as camels and elephants. Third, tiny and abominable, such as reptiles. Fourth, dangerous, such as serpents and lizards and their like. Naturally these were considered unclean after Adam.

And God by the word of His mouth told Noah to take into the ark seven pairs of clean [animals] and two pairs of the unclean. And when he exited from the ark, he [Noah] offered a sacrifice of the seven that were clean to God, and none from the unclean.

And in the written word He conveyed to Moses and manifestly made distinction. Besides the natural distinctions were appended these [distinctions] among four-legged [creatures]. First, the ruminant; second, the hoofed; third, those that urinate from the belly; fourth, the horned; fifth, those that have their teeth within their inner jaw. These five are signs of the clean, but if one of these [qualities] is missing [in an animal], it is unclean, such as the camel. It is a ruminant but lacks all other [qualities]: the pig is hoofed and urinates from the belly, but lacks the rest; and the rabbit is a ruminant, but lacks the rest.

And with birds: those that have a straight beak, have ankle bones, fly in groups, have membrane in their crop, and keep their claws straight after being slaughtered. These five are signs of the clean.

Likewise, the fish that has gills and scales is edible. Now, God chose these through Moses and established laws, and we retain the same [laws] in the present time.

Now, it is obvious that you do not have the laws, neither the natural nor the oral, nor the written, nor in the new [Qur'an], since you eat all animals indiscreetly.

And if they say, why do you sift the horsehair and use the skin?

We say, and you clean the sieve of the olive grinder with pig hair and consume the oil, and use the skin of the ass. And the otter, fox, and wolf are unclean, and their meat is filthy, yet you wear their skin. The reason is that whatever an artisan makes is clean and useful. Likewise, whatever is from a horse and horsehair becomes clean through handicraft.

And if they say, why do you eat the pig? We say, for two reasons. First, because it is ancient tradition and people are accustomed to eating it and have not abandoned the eating of the pork. Second, as the Romans and the Franks eat rabbit and coney, likewise the Armenians eat pig. But it is not a must to eat it. In fact, it is better not to eat meat and drink wine. [It is better to] be abstinent and moderate, for this is good and acceptable to God, and not what they eat and drink.

But why do you eat the horse that does not have the sign of cleanliness? Therefore, it is unclean.

And if they say, our prophet permitted us to eat [the horse]. We say, nowhere in your Scripture [Qur'an] appears such a statement. It was told once, only during winter and extreme famine, to eat [the horse] and live, but not to eat it always.

Again, if the Prophet Moses said that the horse, camel, and rabbit are unclean, and your Muhammad said that they are clean, then he has contradicted Moses and he is not a prophet. Then how do you accept the Holy Scriptures as having come down from heaven, when you contradict the old laws of Moses?

Again, we say, as there is no difference between the sheep and goat which is edible for us, likewise there is no difference between the horse, mule, and ass; why do you not eat them [the mule and ass as well]?

Again, as the ass and the mule are unlawful being like the horse, so the horse is unlawful. And if the horse is lawful, why do you not offer and sacrifice the horse as [you do with] the sheep or ox?

Again, you say that wine is impure and unlawful, for it is the cause of evil; likewise, the horse is impure and the cause of many evil things, for wars and killing and plunder and destruction are caused by it; therefore, it ought not to be eaten.

So much concerning this.

K

The eleventh error of the Saracens.

Who drink the unlawful wine. Now, first we say this: All the prophets and Gospels consider wine lawful and clean, while your Muhammad [considered it] unlawful; then, therefore, he contradicts the prophets and he is not a prophet.

Again, Moses says that everything made by God is good [cf. Gen 1:31], for God is good and does not make evil. Now, if wine is evil, then it is made by evil, and not by God; then there will be two gods, one the creator of good, and the other creator of evil.

Again, if the producer of something is clean, then the product also is clean, as a sheep is to lamb. Now, the producer of wine is the grape, which is clean and edible; then the wine that is the product is clean and drinkable.

Again, both must and wine are from grapes; if must is clean, so is wine.

And if they argue that not everything that comes forth from one [source] is clean, such as the milk and urine from a mother, [in which case] one is clean and the other is unclean, likewise from grapes, [in which case] the must is clean but wine is unlawful, we say that your example is not analogous for both. First, in a mother there are both

clean and unclean things, while in this case the same must turns into wine. Second, in the first instance milk is always clean, and urine is always unclean, while in this case, [according to you,] it is not always [clean], but sometimes. [As you say,] once it was all must and clean, and at the present the same has become wine and unclean, and then it shall become vinegar and clean; then, therefore, if both the must and the vinegar are clean, then likewise the wine is clean now.

And if they say, there are some things that are clean in the past and in the future, but are unclean at the present, such as the meat of sheep in your periods of abstinence.

We say that it is so; however, we do not say that the meat is unclean, [we say that eating] it is unclean for us at the moment. Likewise, you should not say that wine is simply unclean, but say that you consider it unclean for the moment. Then, therefore, wine is unclean for you but is clean for us [at a given moment].

And if they say, there are many clean things that become unclean if their quality changes, such as the rotten meat changes its quality; likewise, the must changes its quality and becomes unclean. We say, in this case admit that the quality is unclean, but not the wine, for the wine is substance, while quality is accidental.

Again, we say that the natural change of qualities does not corrupt the object, but further cleanses it, as the blood of an animal, which is unclean, changes into white milk and becomes clean. And water inside a plant changes the quality of its fruit and makes it clean. Similarly, must is transformed by its natural quality into wine, and then into vinegar, and is not made unclean by this transformation. Therefore, it is evident that wine is clean [both] in its quality and in its substance.

And if an ignorant person or a tyrant from the Saracen asks us whether wine is lawful or unlawful, what do we answer? Tell him simply that it is lawful for us and unlawful for you.

Again, tell him that a little and moderate [portion of] wine is lawful, but its excess is unlawful; it is drunkenness. For many evil things come forth from it; that is, from wine and drunkenness, in our spirit and body, because it destroys reason and aggravates emotions

and moves that which is excitable, wherefore adulteries, killings, and many crimes happen. Because of this it [wine] is unlawful as to the deed, and that evil deed is the result of drunkenness. Wherefore drunkenness is forbidden, for those who become drunkards do not inherit the kingdom of God, as our Scripture says.

Again, say that the nature of wine is lawful, but its effect is unlawful, like a sword; for the material [of a sword] is iron and is good, while the effect is evil and despicable, because it is murder. Likewise, the effect of wine is evil and bad, for it weakens the body, twists the tongue and the eyes and the ears, deviates the feet and the hands while they are used, and wine brings about many other harmful things.

And this also is to be known that a little wine, if drunk moderately, is beneficial and useful. First, it lifts sadness and cures sickness and increases strength. Because of this, wine is appropriate to three kinds of people—the depressed, the aged, and the sick. As Solomon says: “Give wine to those who grieve, and to the old and to the sick” (cf. Prov 31:6). Wine is appropriate for these.

And if someone says, if the excess of wine is unclean, then a little wine is also unclean, because they are uniformly wine; like a small piece or a pound of corrupt meat as food will contaminate a man alike.

We say that these are corruption in two [different] ways. There is corruption in relation to the substance, and there is corruption in relation to the effect. That which is corrupt according to its substance uniformly corrupts man, as one egg and ten eggs uniformly contaminate our abstinence. But that which is corrupt according to its effect, a small [portion] does not corrupt [immensely], but excess does, such as the thorn; when it causes a small wound it does not kill, while the arrow, which makes a large wound, kills. Similarly, a little wine does not harm, but an excess causes immense harm.

Moreover, the Prophet Moses, whose Scripture you accept and call it Torah, by God’s command roasted two lambs in the temple every day and [had] a fourth [part] of a vessel of wine, pure wine with unleavened bread. Likewise, later, Solomon, who built the

temple, did the same. And if wine was unlawful, why did they take it to the temple and the priests drink it?

So much concerning this.

L

The twelfth error of the Saracens.

For they always wash themselves with water and consider it a cleansing from sins. Concerning this, we say that water cleans filth of the body, but not filth of the spirit, which is sin; because that which is material cannot clean the immaterial.

And if they say, as the body contaminates the immaterial spirit with sin, likewise the body is [cleansed] by good deeds, then, therefore, water can clean the sins of the spirit; we say that our bodies are united with the immaterial spirit; for this reason, whatever the body does good or evil, both touch [i.e., affect] the spirit. Though water washes the exterior of the body, it does not touch the spirit, which is immaterial, wherefore it cannot clean the sins of the spirit.

And if they say, do you not baptize? We say that our baptism is not merely ablution of the body with water; it is empowered with the Holy Spirit, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, [who said,] “You shall be baptized by the Holy Spirit and with water” (cf. Acts 1:5). Now, water washes filth of the body, and the Holy Spirit cleanses the sins of the spirit in a hidden fashion; therefore, our baptism is unlike your ablution.

Again, Christ was baptized in the River Jordan and He empowered the water, opened the heavens, [and] God the Father witnessed to Christ: “This is my beloved Son” (Mt 3:17), and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descended upon Him; wherein we, the faithful, are baptized in that water in the Holy Trinity and in the one Godhead, and become cleansed from sin. But your ablution is not like this.

Again, from the side of Christ water and blood came forth for the salvation of the faithful. And we believe in the cross of Christ, His burial and resurrection, and are baptized in the water from the

side of Christ into the mystery of His burial and resurrection. But your ablution is not like this.

And if they say, yours is simple water like ours and nothing else. We say, our baptism is unlike your ablution. Although water is the same, what is accomplished is different. For example, the same woman is a lawful spouse for a person who is married with blessing, but is adulterous for others; thus, the same woman and the same deed, but different accomplishments. Likewise, although water is the same, in baptism blessing has been united, while in ablution it is not.

And as sweat is from the body and urine is from the body, while one is healthful the other is not; likewise, one can be sweet water, while the other bitter. Thus, our baptism and your ablution in the same water are different. First, our baptism is a mystery, for when we recall the Holy Trinity, the Word touches simple water and the mystery occurs, while yours is not [a mystery]. Second, our baptism is a spiritual birth in the Holy Spirit. But you are not born spiritually, because you do not believe in the Holy Spirit. Third, there is only one birth of the spirit, as with the body, but your [ablutions] are numerous. Fourth, we are baptized by others, but you wash yourselves. Fifth, our baptism is in the water from the side of Christ and in the water of the Jordan. And this is demonstrated by the cross, which is placed in the font, and by the Holy Chrism, which is mixed with the water, while yours is not like this.

And if they say, Moses and other prophets did not wash themselves in this fashion with water. We say that Moses made the law of the sanctity of water as a model of baptism like a pattern. You do not keep [the law] of Moses, and you do not have the new baptism; then your ablution is nothing.

Wherefore I ask, does your ablution cleanse from sin or not? For if it cleanses from all sins, why do you do other good works, such as pilgrimage, tithe, and fasting, and bowing, and so on. [It is not necessary to] do any other good [works], since the water cleanses you. And if the good works cleanse from sin, then the ablution by water is useless and redundant.

And if they should say, you too do good works after baptism. We

say that baptism cleanses us from all sins, original and those of commission, major and minor, once and not twice, because the spiritual birth is once, as is the corporeal [birth], and [because] Christ was baptized once, and was crucified once. And the many sins we commit after baptism are cleansed not through baptism, but rather through repentance, confession, penance, and benevolence, and our sins are expiated and our unlawful works are wiped out by fasting, almsgiving, and prayers. And if they should say, minor sins are cleansed by ablution, and major sins by benevolence. We say, if water cleanses minor sins, why do you wash your bodies that have committed adultery and fornication, which is a major sin? The same way concerning the hand that has committed theft and killing; then it is evident that your ablution is useless.

Again, if good works can clean major sins, they are capable also of cleaning minor sins, [just] as when an ax cuts the roots of a tree its branches become dried; therefore, your ablution is useless as such.

And if they should say, then, ablution is good for nothing. We say, not at all, neither in ancient times, nor at present, as we have demonstrated. The cleaning of [the] body is different, like someone washing away the filth of his body in a bath. And we wash our hands and faces every day, yet the spirit is not cleansed, as in the case of your ablution. Otherwise, consider frogs in water that bathe every day, yet it has no value.

Again, we say that your ablution is not a cleansing from sins. It is obvious that when you go to your legal spouse, you wash yourselves afterward, just as if [you went] to an unlawful woman. Now, if water cleanses [from sin], either you do not have a legal spouse, all are fornicators, and because of that you wash yourselves, or you have a woman legally and you wash yourselves because water is the cleaning of [the] body as if in a bath, and not the cleansing of [the] spirit, as we have said.

So much concerning this.

M

The thirteenth error of the Saracens.

Cutting off [the foreskin], which is circumcision, [is the thirteenth error], and they disparage us that we are not circumcised.

First, they say that Abraham's covenant was circumcision, and that we are his children through circumcision.

We answer, first, that we have the faith of Abraham, and are his children through faith, which is better than circumcision; for Abraham believed in God and was justified [for believing], the Scripture says, but not for being circumcised.

Again, God made the law of circumcision as a covenant with Abraham for the imperfect. The same God changed it and gave us the sanctity of baptism as law for us, His perfect [people].

Again, He [God] gave to Abraham physical circumcision, while to us [He gave] the spiritual. You cut the excess skin, which is useless without faith and good works. But we cut excess sins by faith and good works. Then, therefore, what we have is a spiritual circumcision which you do not have.

Again, we say that circumcision does not denote uprightness. It is a proprietary sign, so that the children of Abraham may be distinguished from others, like someone who brands his sheep, so that it may be distinguished from others.

An evident proof is that when they were in the desert for forty years, they were not being circumcised, but when they entered the promised land, they were circumcised, so that they may be distinguished from others.

Again, circumcision was a sign that Christ would be born from that [specific] nation and portion. Wherefore Abraham made them swear under their loins in secret signifying Christ. Now, we do not give birth to Christ physically, but spiritually; therefore, we are not circumcised physically, but spiritually.

Again, circumcision was a sign of the Jewish nation, since they were destined to depart from the covenant and laws of God, to be cut off from all the members of Christ, to be considered vile among all

nations, as they are now, for they departed from the grace of God and became subject to the hatred of all people.

Again, we are not circumcised so that we may be differentiated from Jews and [we are not] baptized so we may be differentiated from heathens. But since you are circumcised and not baptized, it is evident that you are equal to the Jews who are cursed by all nations. And you do not have new laws, because you do not baptize; [therefore,] you are equal to worshippers of idols.

And if they say, Christ was circumcised; why do not you, Christians, become circumcised? We first say that Christ by circumcision completed the old covenant and established for us a new law—baptism, saying: “Go baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19).

Again, Christ was circumcised so that He may not appear as contrary to the old covenant, but as one who obeys and fulfills it, such as his going to the temple on the fortieth day to fulfill the law.

Again, [Christ was circumcised] so that the humanization of the Word may not appear as a vision, as it appeared to Abraham; rather, He accepted circumcision, so that He may truly be man.

Again, Christ did not hand on to us those things He did until the upper room and the cross, but it was after the supper that He initiated the new law and handed it on to us, saying: “Do this in remembrance of me” (Lk 22:19).

Again, Christ was circumcised in His body, so that He may justify and accomplish the covenant made for Him. He commanded us, however, spiritual circumcision; that is, the cutting off of sins from the spirit and the body.

And if they say, behold, those belonging to the southern nation of Abyssinia are circumcised according to the law, yet they are Christians, therefore you ought to do the same. We say that they are not circumcised according to the law, but because their country is unhealthy, and that smelly member causes harm and man dies [because of it].

And if they say, as baptism cleanses original sin, likewise circumcision. We first say that circumcision in the old law was

against original sin as a paradigm and imitation, while in the New Testament baptism is against original sin as reality and truth.

Again, as the lamp lights at night but becomes obscure at the sunrise, likewise circumcision was effective in the past, but after the grace of baptism dawned, the law of circumcision faded.

Again, baptism was useless in the past, because Christ was not yet baptized. And circumcision in our times is useless, because it was removed by Christ. And each is effective in its own time. Wherefore it is evident that, although they baptized in ancient times, such as [the baptism] of Moses and John, the mystery of baptism did not take place. Likewise, if someone is circumcised nowadays, he will not receive the mystery of circumcision and will not be cleansed of the original sin.

Again, circumcision cleanses only from original sin, as some say. But baptism cleanses from original and actual sins, as it is evident from new converts who are baptized and cleansed from all sins. Then, therefore, baptism and circumcision are not equal.

Again, circumcision does not cleanse original [sin], as is evident from the prophets. Although they were circumcised, they descended into hell because of original sin. But baptism cleanses. As is evident; those who were baptized did not enter hell.

Again, baptism opens the door of heaven, which circumcision cannot do. Wherefore those who were not born by water and Spirit did not enter the kingdom, although they were circumcised.

Again, baptism makes [us] children of God through grace and sharers of Christ's inheritance, unlike the circumcised.

Again, baptism saves us from eternal punishment, which circumcision cannot do.

Again, by baptism both male and female are cleansed, while by circumcision the male alone [would be presumed cleansed], and not the female.

Again, circumcision was corporeal, temporary, and temporal seal; it is evident that this has changed. Baptism, however, [is] a spiritual and everlasting seal, for the seal of baptism is immutable in the spirit.

These comparisons were according to the old circumcision. Your

cutting off [the foreskin], however, is not the circumcision that God gave to Abraham. And this is evident from two [things]. First, because [according to] Abraham's covenant [men] were circumcised at their eighth day, while yours is different; you circumcise both aged and young [men]. Second, Abraham promised to circumcise male children, while your Muhammad [promised to circumcise] male and female, which is contrary to the laws of God. Whereby we demonstrate that you, Saracens, do not have circumcision. If you circumcise male and female, this is against Abraham's covenant and in violation of God's laws. But if [you circumcise] only the male, then your women are not circumcised. And by communicating with them, you [males] too become uncircumcised, because whoever unites with a prostitute is one body with her and a fornicator with her. And from this it is obvious that your circumcision is in no way like that of the Jews, nor does it have resemblance to the new baptism as the Christians. Therefore, you appear in the ranks of idol-worshippers and heathens who have neither circumcision nor baptism, as you also do not have.

So much concerning this.

N

The fourteenth error of the Saracens.

Who do not have the old fasts of the Jews, nor the new [fasts of the] Christians.

We shall see, first, the differences between foods: Which are for fasting, and which are for feasting? We say that all [edible] objects are divided into two kinds: those with breath and those without breath. That is, the living and the lifeless. Now, those that breathe, such as sheep, or those that come forth from that which breathes, such as milk and eggs, are edible and are food for feasting. And those that are without breath, such as plants and fruits, are food for fasting. But you do not have this differentiation; then, therefore, you do not have fasting.

First, Moses fasted for forty days and forty nights without eating

anything. Similarly, Christ fasted without food for forty days and forty nights. And in our times Christians keep a fast for fifty days and are content with food [permissible] for abstinence. But your fasting is not similar, since it is for thirty days, less than the old and new fasts. Also, the food [consumed] is provision both for feasting and joyous occasions. Then, therefore, it is apparent that you do not have fasting.

And if they say, we do not eat until evening, we say that there are two options for fasting: One concerns time, [and] the other concerns food. When we, Christian people, remain hungry until evening and at evening we are satisfied with Lenten food, you [remain hungry] as far as time goes, but you overlook the food [you eat]; then, therefore, you do not have fasting.

Again, during the whole year you eat during the day, and not at night. But during the month of Ramadan, you eat at night, and not during the day. Evidently, as you do not keep [fasting] in other months, likewise that month [Ramadan] is not a time for fasting.

Again, your fasting is not thirty days, but one day, because though you fast during the day, you break it in the evening and feast, and again on the following day you fast.

Again, daytime and night make one [twenty-four-hour] day, as Moses says: “And there was evening and there was morning, one day” (Gen 1:5). Now, you fast during daytime and break [the fast] at night; obviously, your fasting is half a day, and not a whole [day].

Again, for God there is no daytime or night in the heavens, but always daytime. But for us the movement of the sun from one point to another marks a day. And so long as the sun has not completed its cycle, it makes no difference whether the breaking [of the fast] occurs during the daytime or at night.

Again, you fast during daytime and break [the fast] at night, as if God sees during daytime and does not at night; otherwise, why do you not fast at night?

So much concerning this.

O

The fifteenth error of the Saracens.

Who do not eat an [animal] that is slaughtered by an Armenian.

Before all, it is evident that three things cannot be corrupt: first, the tongue, even when it speaks to unbelievers; second, the hand, even though it catches unclean animals; third, the sword, which severs diverse objects, cannot be corrupt.

Now, I ask you, the hand is clean, and the knife is clean; what is it that corrupts the animal?

They say, are we referring to God when we say, “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit” or someone else. They say, if you are referring to God, then you have said there are three [gods]. We say, then why do you say *ba nami Khuda*,¹⁴ *bsmila* [i.e., *bismillah*],¹⁵ *rahman u rahim*?¹⁶ Thereby you mention the name of Trinity. And even though in your language you say, “in the name of Khuda,” while we in our [language] say, “In the name of God,” neither different language is defiled. Now, I question whether in your language when you say “In the name of Allah” over an unclean animal, such as a bear or a wolf, and you slaughter it, is it cleansed or not? If it is cleansed, then why do you not slaughter other animals in this fashion and eat them? And if they should say, it is not cleansed, we then say, as [the phrase] “In the name of Allah” does not cleanse the unclean animal, in the same way [the phrase] “[In the name of] the Father, the Son, and the Spirit” does not defile a clean animal. Then, therefore, that which is slaughtered by a Christian is not to be disdained.

And if they say, [it is to be disdained] because you are uncircumcised. We say that if the slaughter by an uncircumcised [person] contaminates, the patriarch Abraham, while being uncircumcised, was commanded by God to sacrifice a three-year-old

¹⁴ “In the name of Khuda” [or Khoda]. God’s invocation in Persian.

¹⁵ “In the name of Allah.” God’s invocation in Arabic.

¹⁶ “Beneficent and merciful” in Arabic.

sheep, an ox, a goat, a turtledove, and a pigeon, and to see God at evening; could it be that his [offering] was unacceptable?

And before him, Noah, upon his exit from the ark, sacrificed clean animals, which God accepted. Likewise, God accepted Abel's offering with fire. Now, what do you say; was their offering unclean, because they were uncircumcised?

And if they say, at that time the covenant of circumcision did not exist. We say that at that time there was no covenant for circumcision, and now that covenant is replaced, and a greater covenant is given to us by Christ. And as the offering of those who were uncircumcised was sacred, likewise ours will be sacred.

And in your great city Damascus are not the Saracens more Sunni [orthodox] than you? There the slaughter is done by Christians and no Saracen tries to slaughter animals; is it possible to deny this? Then it is evident that your fanaticism and rejection toward animals slaughtered by Armenians is a new invention.

And again, if you discriminate against that which is slaughtered by a Christian, why do you eat wheat, since Christians harvest it and cut it, as well as grapes and all fruits? For they are life that is planted and rooted in the earth, and their cutting is their slaughter. As land animals are rooted in air, and fish in water, likewise plants and shrubs are [rooted] in the earth. And as the separation of air [breath] from animals and water from fish means their slaughter, likewise to separate plants from their root means their slaughter.

And if they say, why, then, do you not eat [animals] slaughtered by Saracens? We say that there are three choices concerning slaughtered animals; that is, that which is slaughtered, he who slaughters, [and] the way it is slaughtered. That which is slaughtered should be a clean animal, such as [a] sheep [or] dove. The act of slaughtering should be done in the name of God, and not offered in the name of idols. And he who slaughters needs to meet two conditions: first, to be a perfect male, and neither female nor genderless or immature youth, because they lack seminal strength; second, to be faithful, because the unbeliever is mortally destroyed by sin in his soul, and that which is slaughtered by him is like that

which is torn apart by a beast and is nonedible for that reason. Now, the Saracen slaughters in the name of God; it is good, so long as the animal is clean. But because he is an unbeliever and his soul is mortally destroyed by sin, that which is mortally destroyed [by him] cannot bleed.

And again, the Saracen is infected with Sodomite corruption [homosexuality], and is classed as a woman and genderless. Therefore, that which is slaughtered by him is inedible and corrupt. Now, because of this we do not eat that which is slaughtered by a Saracen.

So much concerning this.

P

The sixteenth error of the Saracens.

Who consider themselves to be law-abiding.

For this reason, we shall demonstrate their falsehood by natural examination. First, as follows. In the Platonic civil laws, the whores and the adulterers were commanded to sit in the streets and in public areas, so that others could keep away from them and avoid their evil. But Muhammad established a “laudable” law—if someone goes ten or more times down that road, he should be honored. And the Saracens praise Muhammad that in one night he went unto many women.

Second, the philosopher [Aristotle] says that the hope of man should be in that which is superior to himself. Because of this, poor people hope in the kings. But the Saracens hope in Muhammad in such way as if he is the gate of the kingdom. And this is evident in that they do not kiss the ground when they often mention God, but they fall on their faces whenever they mention Muhammad.

[Third], they proclaim that the new law was written by Muhammad, whereby they thus lie terribly, because their circumcision, ablutions, and praying is according to the laws of Moses. For the Israelites prayed always facing Jerusalem, and they [pray] facing the [place of] pilgrimage. As well as [the law of] dowry

and saying that God has one countenance, and so on, [have their antecedents in Jewish traditions]. But their only difference is that they call Muhammad a prophet, while the Jews do not.

Fourth, they preach that in the kingdom of God there is food and drink, and they say that [there] each person will take forty or seventy women, which is an obvious falsehood, [as we have] demonstrated before. Because they confess this to all nations [saying] that those who die will be resurrected.

Now, in this world, there are many who die without a wife; where would it be augmented from for them? And they also confess that human nature does not generate there. Then, therefore, their laws are false, [and] the taking of women there [in the hereafter] is false, because women are for childbearing.

Again, they say that they worship God, but they deny the Word of God. They confess the resurrection, but they do not give a place to the Spirit. They say that there is restitution for acts, but they commit all kinds of sin. Moreover, they say that wine is unlawful, but they all drink it. And they turn to us and libel us by saying that our priests at the hour of death pray and take the person to church so that he renounces his faith; it seems that they have heard of the act of renunciation on behalf of the dead.¹⁷

Also, they say Jesus will come on the day of resurrection and will have a wedding feast. It seems that they have heard about the spiritual bride and groom of the Gospel, but in ignorance they take this [wedding] as physical.

And if someone asks, what is written on the door of paradise, they speculate Muhammad's name. Because those who say that the kingdom is physical, likewise think that the door and the writing is physical, not knowing that the kingdom is seeing God, and that the door is Christ, as He decreed.

Ask them, how did the patriarchs Abraham, Moses, and David enter into the kingdom, since they were unaware of Muhammad's name?

¹⁷ The Messiah of the time.

Gregory of Tatev

And [tell them] that Christ decreed: “Where I am, there shall also my servants be in the heavens” (cf. Jn 12:26).

Behold, Christians also enter the kingdom, yet they do not know the name of Muhammad.

So much on this.

Chapter Three of the Major Contents and Section Seven of This Volume

Against Jews.

Blinded Jews argue against us that the Messiah has not come yet.

First, [they argue,] Isaiah speaks of the coming of the Messiah in saying: “In the last days the mountain of the Lord shall be conspicuous” (Isa 2:2). Now, numerous days have passed from the coming of your Messiah; that is, more than one thousand four hundred years. Therefore, he was not the Messiah.

To which the Doctors of the Church answer, and taking their words, I say that [the expression] *last days* does not refer to the consummation of the world; it means the diminution of laws and His justice, for their law was diminished at the time of the coming of Christ. And since they did not acknowledge Christ, the Sun of Justice, they fell from light into darkness.

Second, [they argue that] the same Isaiah says: “All nations shall come to it” (Isa 2:2).

We did not see this happening [they argue].

For this, we say that we should not treat this word of the Scripture, *all*, in a narrow meaning, as we treat philosophers’ [words]. As the second book of Samuel says: “Abessalom went in to his father’s concubine in the sight of all Israel” (2 Kings/Sam 16:22), and in the same place it says: “All the men of Israel said, ‘The council of Chusi is good’” (2 Kings/Sam 17:14). Did all of Israel say this? No. Then, therefore, *all* means many. Likewise, not all nations but many people from all nations came to Christ.

Third, they also argue that Isaiah says: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares . . . and nation shall not take up sword against nation” (Isa 2:4), and this has not come to pass.

We say that the Prophet speaks here about peace, which prevailed

shortly before the coming of the Christ, and during all the time of the Christ, and forty years after Him until the Jews rebelled against the Roman domination. Now, when Christ was born, there was much peace as if one man ruled the whole world. No wonder in such a peaceful [condition] swords were beaten into plowshares. And when he says: “Neither shall they learn to war any more” (Isa 2:4), know that there was not. As is written in the first book of Samuel: “The Philistines did not any more come into the border of Israel” (1 Kings/Sam 7:13); meaning, during Samuel’s life. After his death [people] entered Israel. Likewise, at the time of the preaching of Christ and the Apostles there was peace. But some say that the words said before do not refer to the first coming of the Christ but to the second.

Fourth, they argue that concerning the time of the coming of the Messiah, Isaiah says: “The wolf shall feed with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid” (Isa 11:6). We did not see any of this. We say that the Holy Scriptures often speak with allegory, as in the book of Judges it is said: “The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them” (Judg 9:8). Likewise, Jacob, while blessing Judah, likened him to a lion. Here, likewise, he likened the defilers to wild beasts. At the time of the Christ, Jews were not harassed by anybody; and at the coming of the Christ many bestial defilers came to the obedience of Christ.

Fifth, [they argue that] the book of Deuteronomy says: “The Lord God may show you mercy” (cf. Deut 13:17), and again “He shall gather you out from all the nations” (Deut 30:3). The same says Ezekiel in [verse] 39 (Ezek 39:27).

We say that God’s promise was delivered during the time of Zerubbabel and Ezra, as Nehemiah says in his prayer: “Remember, Lord, the word wherewith you did charge your servant Moses, saying . . . If you should be scattered under the utmost bound of heaven, thence will I gather them, and I will bring them into the place which I have chosen” (Neh 1:8–9). This happened exactly.

And if the Jews say that not all the Jews were assembled as promised, Ezra proves them to be liars and disgrace, as he says in

his first [second book of] Ezra: “The priests, the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinim [temple servants] dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities” (cf. Ezr 2:70).

Sixth, they argue that Jeremiah says: “In his days Judah shall be saved” (Jer 23:6), while by the coming of your Messiah they scattered more and destroyed.

We say that the Talmud answers to this, for it says that *Jew* means *confessor*, for those who confess to Messiah will be saved.

Seventh, [Jews argue that] Ezekiel says: “The Messiah battles against Gog and Magog” (cf. Ezek 38:2), which your Messiah did not do.

We say that Gog and Magog spiritually mean all persecutors of the church. Our Lord Jesus will destroy them all, as says the Psalm: “You shall dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel” (Ps 2:9).

Again, the book of Hetrin relays that Elijah and his disciples said: “The world altogether has six thousand years, out of which two thousand [years] will be *tohu*"; that is, voidness. “And two thousand for the laws, and two thousand for the Messiah.” Therefore, it is obvious that the Messiah has come.

Again, concerning the Psalm that says: “Awake, my glory” (Ps 57:8), the interpretation and the Hebrew traditions say that [David here] speaks of the four kings who persecuted Israel.

For the first is written: “Awake, my glory,” in Babylon giving us Mishael, Ananias, and Azariah. Arise from mourning, giving to us Mordechai and Esther. Arise among the Greeks, giving us the Maccabees. Arise within Rome, giving us the Messiah.

And in the book of Iama is written: “Messiah will not come until the evil king of Rome has ruled over the entire world for nine months.”

As in the commentary on Genesis 1, Perez says that “Ten kings will rule from the beginning to the consummation of the world.”

First, God; second, Nebroth [Nimrod]; third, Joseph; fourth, Solomon; fifth, Nebuchadnezzar; sixth, Darius; seventh, Cyrus; eighth, Alexander; ninth, Augustus Caesar, who will break all into pieces like iron; tenth, the Messiah, who is the first and last.

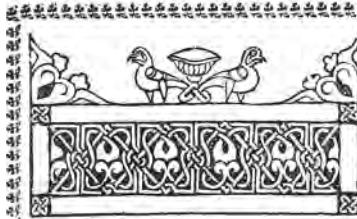
Now, because the evil king was ruling since nine months before [the Messiah's birth], Christ was born during the reign of Augustus Caesar, which the holy New Testament testifies.

Again, it is to be known that there are four types of birth: first, neither from a father, nor from a mother, like Adam; second, from a father, but not from a mother, like Eve; third, from a father and a mother, like all people; fourth, from a mother only without a father, which is Christ's birth. It was for this that God said to Abraham that in the fourth generation all his sons will be liberated [Gen 15:16].

Also, the years of Christ's birth, and concerning [the prophecy of] the seventy weeks of Daniel, you will find [it written] at the end of the fourth kingdom in number thirty. There you will find the word against the Jews.

[This is] the end of my first volume with God's help.





Գալուխ է՝ ի մեծ ցանկէն։
Եւ ուշի Պրու Խըմբեր Հայոցին։
Ա ս ինքուն հերթունծողաց։

Թ Ա Բ Ո Ւ Ս
իմաստից յիմանալի ճառ
ուղայթիցն խուսափեն
ցին թիւր կամօք, և խո
տոր մոգք + զանուղայս խորհե
լով, և զանպատշաճն բարբառե
լով։ յարձակին անկապ լեզւան
և անդուռն շրթամբը բացեալ
յերկնու և ցող բերանով ՚ի բար
ձունս բարբանջելով + և յածեալ
ընդ երկրան լեզնագագրելով.
որոց դասուստնն ՚ի էնէ ոչ դա
տարկանայ + և կրուսան ոչ նիր
Տեսցէ։ Ուզ հերձեալ ըստ ին
քեանց սարտուցան ՚ի կենաց +
և զհերձուած կորսաւն ուսու
ցին բազմաց։ Ո որոց պատճառ
մոլորուն ըն են ասացեալ հետե
չողը ուղափառութե։

Լ ուժին է անգիւսանալ զոկարու
թիւն և զինքրկուն մարդկայինն
մոտաց + կարծեն թէ՝ ամի պարու
նակօդէ, և ոչ ունի սահման։
Ա ս այնորիկ ոչ երեսի ճշմարիտ
նց, զոր ոչ ըմբռնէ միտք + և ոչ
այլ իրկը հաւասան, բայց միայն
զայն զոր իմանան ՝ ըդ՝ զըօրին
նակ զգալի աչք մեր ոչ կարէ ըմ
բռունել զբանակութիւ արդի կանն
և այլ լուսաւորացն այլ մտաց

լա

(Հ-ՊՐԵ ՂԵՒՄՐԵ)

իմանաւիք զմեծու ի նց : Եղյնպ
զիմանալի խորհուրդն և զգասու
թիւն զոր տկարանայ միոք, կարո
զանայ հաւատքն տեսանել։ այլ
նա ոչունի հաւատ քան զուսու
թիւն մոյան։

Ե Ր Կ Ի Ր Ո Ր Դ՝ է դարձնացանել զի
մացումն ՚ի հաւատալեացն, և
յայնցանէ որ ածեն զմարդն առ
հաւատան այնպիսին խաբենէ։
զի բնութբէ մարդոյ ու տեսա
նել զետայս իւր և և ոչ առանց
աչաց հայելոյ ։ Եղյնպ ոչ կարէ
իմանալ յորժամ ՚ի պէ գրոց և
՚ի սրանցնեաց և ՚ի բանից որ
վարդապետաց դարձուցանն ըզ
միոքն + որպ ասէ առակն՝ պակա
սամնան ոչ ընդունի զբան իստ
հետութեց։ բայց միայն զայն
որ շրմնն ՚ի միտս նր։

Ե Ր Ր Ո Ր Դ՝ է նրբութիւն իմանալեցն
և բթուութիւն իմացմանն, ոոպ բժուու
աչքն ոչ աեսանէ զման ՚ի հե
ռաստանէ։ իւր զոր ինչ տեսանէ
աչք արծընն ոչ կարէ տեսա
նել աչք մարդոյ ։ այնպէս բթա
միոք ոչ իմանայ, զոր իմանայ նըլո
բահանացն և ուսեալ յայ։
զոր եդ ած ուսուցիչ այլոց ոոպ
մարդարէնն, և առաքեալքն,
և վարդապետք։

Ո Ր Ր Ո Ր Դ՝ է հեռաւորութիւն հա
ւատալեացն + զի որք ոչ կըթին
՚ի գործ իմացման, բայց մի պէ ՚ի
զգայնեց՝ չեռիքն ՚ի հաւատա
լեան որպէս երկիր յերկնէ։
Ա ս այն ոչ կարծն իմանալ զի
ասէ տըն, (կոյր կուրի առաջ
նորդէ, երկոքին ՚ի իսորխորաս ան
կանին +) այսպէս որ առանէ ըզ
գայլարան առաջնորդ իմացման
անկանի ՚ի մոլորութիւն։



Contents of My Second Volume and the Schism of Arians in Twenty Sections

First, those who say was [Christ] born with will, or without will? and answers [to this question], and also questions by the orthodox to them.

Second, was [Christ] born from being, or from nonbeing?

Third, was [Christ] born and ceased [from being born], or not?

Fourth, is the Father unbegotten, or not?

Fifth, is it possible to state that the Father was begotten, coming to being of the same nature [as the Son]?

Sixth, is the attribute Father for [His] creation, or for [His] nature?

Seventh, [on] “my Father is greater than me,” and answer to this [statement] in seven sections.

Eighth, [on] “God possessed me,” and our answers in four sections.

Ninth, [on] the first of creation, and our answers in five sections.

Tenth, [on] reigning until the end of time, [as] they say, and on obedience.

Eleventh, [on] “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” and answers to them in seven sections.

Twelfth, [on] “my God and your God.”

Thirteenth, [on] “I can do nothing on my own,” and answers to them in ten sections.

Fourteenth, [on] “Whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.”

Fifteenth, [on] giving life, judgment, and so on, to the Son.

Sixteenth, [on] “Not my will, but [the will of] Him who sent me.”

Seventeenth, [on] “They shall recognize you as the only true God.”

Eighteenth, [on] “No one is good, but God alone.”

Nineteenth, [on] the mediation of the Son and the Spirit.

Twentieth, [on] the Son's being unaware of the last day; also [on] the Son's being called the Word in ten sections. [Also] on [being named] Shepherd in ten sections, Melchisedec in ten sections, and the Blowing in ten sections.

The arguments of those who deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit in nine sections

First, [on] those who rank the Trinity, and say that the Spirit is extrinsic, like accident.

Second, [on] those who say that [the Spirit] is alien by nature and that it is created.

Third, is the Spirit begotten or unbegotten?

Fourth, [on] nothing prevents the Spirit being the Son, if the Spirit is [made] of the same nature.

Fifth, [on] paradigm of birth and emanation and on how the earth was shaped in six modes.

Sixth, they say [if] everything happened by the Son, what about the Spirit?

Seventh, [they say] you call the Spirit God without the Scripture.

Eighth, [on] what polytheists say.

Ninth, [on] how do you say one and three [regarding the Holy Trinity], and answers to all these.

Here you will find those that are not and are said [to be]; are and are said are not; are not and are said are not; are and are said [are]; and the cause for the occultness of the Spirit.

Also against those who say that the Word of God is created, as well as the Spirit.

Tenth, [on] evidences for the cosubstantiality of the Trinity in ten sections.

Eleventh, [on] that the Holy Spirit is God in nine sections.

Twelfth, [on] arguments of Macedonius in five sections.

Thirteenth, [on] those who say that the Spirit is from the Father and the Son in eight sections.

Fourteenth, [on] the Spirit emanates from the Father only in ten questions, in six examples, and in eight evidences.

This [much] on those who deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

Regarding the Chalcedonians

First section against Nestorius in nine points.

Second, against the Dyophysites in fourteen sections.

Third, on Christ being truly God in twenty sections.

Fourth, on that our Lord [Christ] and God are one in substance in twenty sections.

Fifth, [on that] the Father and the Spirit are not incarnated, although Trinity is one in nature.

Sixth, [on whether Christ] is God by human nature, or is human by divine nature.

Seventh, why Chalcedonians deny the unity by nature?

Ninth, [on] God and man.¹⁸

Tenth, [on] God become man.

Eleventh, on how the Theologian speaks of two natures.

Twelfth, against having the same Trinity.

Thirteenth, [on] avoiding Eutyches and Nestorius.

Fourteenth, what one nature is, what two natures are, and how two [natures] become one nature?

Fifteenth, on the ten questions of Dyophysites to us; and there [also] on one will, one action, and passion.

Sixteenth, the ten questions of the orthodox to them [Dyophysites].

Seventeenth, what does it mean to say wholly God and man?

Eighteenth, on that the [body] members of Christ—feet, arms, and head—are divine.

Nineteenth, what is [the interpretation of being] equal to God, exulted, and given a name.¹⁹

¹⁸ Note that the original manuscript does not contain a title for the eighth chapter.

¹⁹ See Phil 2:5 and 2:9.

Gregory of Tatev

Twentieth, the questions of Dyophysites with regard to the Word's incarnation.

This much about the Dyophysites and the second volume of my book.

Chapter Four of the Major Contents and Section One of My Second Volume

On the digression of schismatics.

Whose eyes avoided the cognizable beams of knowledge by erroneous will and by strayed mind, thinking incorrectly, saying the inappropriate with a loose tongue and doorless lips opened to the heavens, with intemperate mouth driveling against the heights, babbling on the earth, and whose judgment by nature does not remain idle, and whose destruction does not slumber. Those who were schismatics per se, life abandoned them, and they taught the damaging schism to many. And there are eight reasons for their deviation, according to the orthodox.

First [reason] is ignoring the weakness and the smallness of the human mind, thinking that it contains everything and is limitless. Therefore, it seems untrue to them what the mind cannot comprehend. They, also, do not believe in things unless they understand them. Now, for example, our sensible eyes cannot comprehend the measures of the sun and other luminous bodies, but we can understand their greatness with our minds. Likewise, belief can recognize mysteries and knowledge that the mind falls short in comprehending, while he [a schismatic] does not believe except in what his mind comprehends.

Second [reason] is diverting cognition from beliefs, and from things that turn a human being into a believer. Such a person is deceived. It is natural for a human not to see his own back without looking in a mirror. Likewise, a human cannot understand when his mind is diverted from the Scripture, and the miracles, and the teachings of the holy fathers. As the proverb says: “The fool does not accept words of prudence, save what wanders in his mind” (cf. Prov 18:2).

Third [reason] is the fineness of a cognizable thing, and the dullness of cognition; as the teary eye cannot see a hair from a distance. Things that an eagle's eye can see are not visible to humans. Likewise, a dumb person does not recognize what can be recognized by an intellectually keen person, or one taught by God, whom God made teacher to others—prophets, apostles, and fathers of the church.

Fourth [reason] is the distance of the objects of faith. Those who are not experienced in the ways of cognition and are only dependent on the sense experience are as far from faith as the earth is from heaven. Therefore, they are unable to comprehend. For the Lord says: “[When] the blind lead the blind, both fall into the abyss” (Mt 15:14). Thus, whoever bases cognition on sense experience falls into error.

These are not capable of reasoning the spiritual, like a person blind from birth relative to colors. For the fathers of the church say that God is light for the mind not for the body; if someone is unable to see it, he is blind.

Fifth [reason] is not seeking the assistance of God to believe, for faith is not innate; otherwise, it would have been the same for all. Rather, [faith] is the gift of the goodness of God free of charge. Therefore, it needs to be sought often. Hence: “I do believe, help me in my disbelief” (cf. Mk 9:24). Because as the sun is not visible except by its light, likewise the cognizable God cannot be comprehended except by the light of the gift of his faith. For this reason, whoever is slow to seek this gift is unable to believe.

Sixth [reason] is the pretense of sins. Some, by evil deeds, separate themselves from the light of the sun of righteousness. For such [people] Job says: “By day they shut themselves up and they knew not the light” (Job 24:16).

Seventh [reason] is pride, which is the bloating with arrogance of intellectuals and which separates them from God. Because “God opposes the proud, gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5). Through David, God said: “I have not eaten bread with those that are proud in look and insatiable in heart” (cf. Ps 101:5). For as Satan was deprived of the light because of his arrogance, so also the proud was deprived of grace according to Jeremiah: “Your insolence and the

arrogance of your heart deceived you” (cf. Jer 48:29).

Eighth [reason] is disorderly appetite, which drives the mind contrary to faith. In other words, the fear, attachment, and hatred. For as tearfulness prevents clear vision, so does fear keep many from believing in Christ, as John states: “Thus spoke the parents of the man born blind, because they were afraid of the Jews in acknowledging the Christ” (cf. Jn 9:22). Also, attachment to the world and glory is an obstacle to faith; hence: “You receive glory from each other but do not seek the glory of the one; therefore, you cannot believe” (Jn 5:44). For eyes of the greedy are the love of possessions, and the eyes of the voluptuary are the love of lust. Hatred also turns the minds of many from faith, just as the hatred and envy of the Pharisees did not allow them to believe in Christ, although they saw the miracles He performed. As the Psalm says: “Them that hated me needlessly” (Ps 35:19).

Ninth,²⁰ because their logic is erroneous, not their anger or passion, upon whom reason imposes itself through the conscience, and puts them aright. But the driver himself, the erroneous logic, is not set right. As the eye cannot see its own defect, likewise the logic does not see its own error. Because of this the schismatics do not turn [to true faith], because they cannot recognize their own falsehood.

Tenth, because they are crooked in their evil path, it is difficult to cure them. As the proverb says: “Whose ways are crooked and self-willed their paths” (Prov 2:15). Because the way of a scrupulous transgressor is not crooked; rather, he is swerved from the straight path. But he who is wicked in his will is on the crooked path; his error grows with his progression. For that reason, the schismatic cannot be corrected.

Eleventh, because tradition is paternal, and custom is of a possessive nature; therefore, desire and tradition when truly intermingled result in self-satisfaction and a divisive spirit. Equipped with these, [schismatics] harden against correction, thinking that they

²⁰ It needs to be noted that while Tat’ewac’i had indicated above his intent to touch upon eight reasons, the paragraphs numbered nine through twelve need to be conceived simply as explanations integral to the eight reasons.

have more authenticity than others. Therefore, they do not accept the guidance of the doctors of the church.

Twelfth, they rejoice in their wicked deviation, as the proverb [Prov 2:14] states. And this is an incurable pain. Because with remorse, sin is a sickness and a stumbling. The sick hastens to health, and the stumbled to recover the right path; while to rejoice in wickedness is death and insensibility, and a contest against healing, as the heathens were with their idols, and the Jews in their laws, and the phalanxes of the heretics in their sects. As the doctors of the church say, the most serious sin is the worship of idols for two reasons. First, because every sin is a violation of God's commandments, while to worship idols is to sin against the essence and glories of God. Second, every sin has a rein—the fear of God, by which it is repented. But to worship idols is not to have the fear of God; therefore, the immensity of this sin is obvious, for from ancient times, whenever one committed major or minor sins, he was forgiven by sacrifice of birds and animals. The power of paganism remained until the Only Begotten Son was sacrificed bodily, after which sins of paganism were lifted from people.

Now, the heathen and the schismatic are equally ungodly, for like a dog he [the heathen or the schismatic] returns to his vomit—that is, he did not have that [heathenism], and he denied this [orthodox faith] and turned from there. Moreover, [the schismatic's case] is even worse for six reasons:

First, heathens worshipped idols out of ignorance, while schismatics are sacrilegious knowingly; therefore, their punishment is heavier.

Second, because they [the heathens] repented, as is evident from their conversion into believers, while these [the schismatics] do not repent like Satan, considering themselves correct.

Third, because they [the heathens] glorified God, although they were unaware of the truth, while the schismatics diminish the glory of true God.

Fourth, because they wasted only themselves in their own time, while these [the schismatics] waste themselves and many [others];

that is, the flock of Christ. “Seizing from the flock and appropriating unto themselves,” as St. Cyril says. Besides, through writings they passed on their evil heresy to others as an evil memento to their own destruction.

Fifth, since Satan is manifested through their error as its source, while these [the schismatics] erred in the humanization of the Word.

Sixth, because the heathens were only in error, while these [the schismatics] associate the angels with us, humans, as is evident from the commentaries of Cyril.

Similarly, the worship of the schismatics and the Jews are alike.

First, [it was said on Jews]: “Those who fell from the grace of God and dishonored His Son” (1 Thess 2:15). And these [schismatics], by denying the one Lord by their anti-Christ language, destroy themselves.

Second, they [the Jews] argued with Christ that “You are a man, but consider yourself God” (Jn 10:33). And these acknowledge only man [in Christ], and call Him God only in name and in His soul.

Third, Jews do not acknowledge three persons and one nature. And these deny the three persons in one nature.

Fourth, the Jews acknowledge Moses and reject Christ, His cross, and His teachings. And these believe in Christ as man only, [and] deny the cross and the new teaching.

Fifth, Jews plotted against the Lord and murdered God. And these “crucified the Son of God and continue to dishonor” (Heb 6:6), according to the Apostle.

Sixth, they crucified in ignorance: “for had they known, they would not have put the Lord of glory on the cross” (1 Cor 2:8). And these dishonored themselves knowingly: “for it would have been better for them to never have known the way of justice, rather than knowing and withdrawing from the holy sacrifice” (2 Pet 2:21). And many more similar things.

Likewise are the new schismatics, Chalcedonians, the forerunners of Anti-Christ, the followers of Nestorius the damned, and Leo the sacrilegious.

They preach love, but they plot machinations with Cain’s

craftiness. They speak with their lips, but they deceive with their tongues. They revere Peter, but they trample upon his confession. They deny faith and pride themselves with knowledge. They are lazy in praying and greedy in salutations. They sin with hope and perish without hope. They take pleasure in impure excitations and elevate him who has fallen into the same. Although their clergymen commit adultery with women, they proclaim them saints. They do not distinguish the ways of suffocation [of animals], and they excessively indulge in filthy food. Breaking the fast by eating the flesh of fish, they also eat boneless meat on the eves of festivals. Those separated from the faith divide Christ and invite the schismatic to other churches.

As false witnesses they blaspheme the Lord, and they cause confusion in a congregation. And whatever I omit here modestly in relation to the Anti-Christ, is exposed in the General Epistle of John: “Now there are many Anti-Christians . . . Whoever denies that Jesus is not the Christ, he himself is the Anti-Christ” (1 Jn 2:18–22). And they [the schismatics] are called anti-Christ because of their many resemblances [with the Anti-Christ]. First, the function of the Anti-Christ is to deny God, as is indicated by his name. Likewise, the schismatic denies the divinity of the Son, or the Holy Spirit. It [the Gospel] says: “He who denies the Son, also denies the Father” (1 Jn 2:23).

Second, the Anti-Christ blasphemes the Christ when he calls upon Him. Likewise, some schismatics blaspheme the humanization of Christ.

Some by saying only man divide the divinity into two natures, two wills, divided work, and so on.

Third, he [the Anti-Christ] is called deceiver. And schismatics misdirect Christians from their true faith and good works. They teach them erroneous faith and evil works.

Fourth, he [the Anti-Christ] is called a false Christ and a false prophet. And these [the schismatics] are called false priests, false doctors, and false apostles.

Fifth, he [the Anti-Christ] is called profaner of the temple.

Likewise, the schismatics profane the temple of God, and the holy faith by which Christ lives in us, and we live in Him.

Sixth, [the Anti-Christ] is against Christ and Christians. And these [the schismatics] are against the holy church and the orthodox faith. Regarding the fact that the Word of God took human nature and united it with His divinity, they [the schismatics] contradict Him by separating the word from the body. According to them, God did not become man, and the body did not become God. And thus, they create the occasion to deceive people.

Seventh, he [the Anti-Christ] is called by Daniel small horn, goring like a ram and talking grandiosely. And these [the schismatics] gore the church, and they open their blasphemous mouths against the heavens, and spread contradictory words on earth.

Eighth, he [the Anti-Christ] is referred to as treacherous serpent on the way [cf. Gen 49:17]. And these [the schismatics,] like the first serpent, induce many, and exile them from the paradise of the church. And by having the poison of vipers within their lips, and by having a sting for those whom they approach, they kill the soul either at the onset of their words or at their end, by using an ambiguous, cunning language, both evil and good, veiled and obvious.

Ninth, he [the Anti-Christ] sits in the temple and teaches. And these [the schismatics teach] inside the church. By having the appearance of pious people, they are wolves covered with the skins of lambs.

Tenth, the Anti-Christ deceives by preaching, and by fanciful miracles, and so on. And these [the schismatics] deceive the minds of the innocent by flattering discourse and benediction, and they pretend to be an angel of light like their father Satan, and [they do] all these fancifully only, not truthfully. Their whole intention is to deceive people and divert them from faith, and to fill their bellies, and to attract women burdened with sins.

And [there are] many other comparisons between the disputers and the Anti-Christ, and these, by denying all that the Lord redeemed, bring speedy destruction upon themselves. And since Satan influences the Anti-Christ, as stated by the Apostle, they [the

schismatics] are also influenced by Satan as they think and speak many heresies according to the evil counsels of Satan. Particularly since—as was spoken from the beginning concerning the Anti-Christ to the faithful, to caution them; in the same fashion the schismatics were spoken about by the Apostles and the doctors, so that people be not misled by them unknowingly.

Therefore, in agreement with the orthodox holy fathers, we placed [here] some of their arguments along with our answers.

Chapter Five of the Major Contents

Objections of the followers of Eunomius and Arius
Refutations and remonstrances of Gregory the Theologian
[Nazianzus] from four writings.

Section and Question One

Did the Father beget the Son voluntarily or involuntarily?

They say that this is questionable. If voluntarily—say the unorthodox—then [Christ] is the son of will, and the grandson of God. Also [Christ] is created according to others. “God created as He wished” (cf. Ps 135:6). Also, they contrive the will in lieu of the mother.

We respond that every consent, which is will, follows thought and wisdom. And Christ is the wisdom of God, according to the Apostle [Paul (1 Cor 1:24)]. Therefore, the son is before the will.

And they say, if that is so, then the Son is [begotten] involuntarily. This surmounts to doubts: Was there someone greater than the Father who compelled the Father? And what kind of pregnancy is necessary for birth? And is [Christ] opposed to the Father? And how can that which is compelled be God? For this it is to be said that [Christ] was [begotten] neither involuntarily nor without involuntariness, because the Son is the image and representation of the substance of the Father, according to the Apostle [Paul (cf. 2 Cor 4:4)]. Within the one and same substance there cannot exist will and nonwill. But [it can exist] external to [the same substance], it is said. And if they say so in ignorance, they divide the image and therefore they remove the substance of the Father. Then, therefore, the Son is [son] with nature and substance, not voluntarily or involuntarily.

Ask them if you, having come forth from your father, were born voluntarily or involuntarily? Because if [you were born] voluntarily,

then you are the son of will, not the son of your father. If that is so, you remove your father as cause, and you are removed from humankind as species. And if [you were born] involuntarily, who compelled him? Because nature is chaste, as is evident from the fact that many live in virginity.

Also, did God the Father make the whole creation voluntarily or involuntarily? If involuntarily, He was compelled by someone else mightier, and He was deprived of divinity. Because the compelled cannot be God. And if voluntarily, creation was due to will, not to God. And by accepting the will as means, you are separated from the mercy of God toward His creatures, because you attributed the willing and the will to different entities. For us, both the movers and movement are one, as one is the saying and the word, for “All that He willed, He did” according to the Prophet (cf. Ps 135:6).

Also, is God the Father [God] voluntarily or involuntarily? If [He is so] voluntarily, then the will was before the substance, which is impossible in beings. Again, you are dividing the substance, as if half of it existed and the other half was desired into existence. And if [He is so] involuntarily, then He was drawn to divinity by force. Thus, you eliminate God’s eternal existence. And since He was compelled by force, He is not God.

Section and Question Two

The second question of the unorthodox is whether [Christ] was born from being or nonbeing.

In this question, which is a lie in two aspects, the substance of the Father is removed, and the Son is turned into a creation. For if they say [Christ] was son before His birth, and since the substance of the Father is fatherhood, and if [God the Father] was not father to the Son, then [God the Father] is removed from His substance. And if [Christ] did not exist and was born later, then whose father was [God], since there was no son?

This is our answer.

We say that the Son is the begotten of the Father from the

beginning. Because this is the solution to this ambiguous question, and the assertion of the substance of the Father.

By saying *begotten from the Father*, [the assertion] demonstrates that He [the Son] is not before the Father.

And by saying *from the beginning*, [the Son] cannot be after the Father. As much as the Father is father, the Son with Him is son. But not after, as is the opinion of Arius. But this question could be asked of us, because we are referred to as having come to exist from being and from nonbeing. From the being, as you were inside your father potentially, and then you were born by a new act. And from the nonbeing, because in the minuscule sperm there was no flesh, bone, nerve, or skin.

Again, from the being, because we are from the elements; and from the nonbeing, because these elements came to existence from the nonbeing.

You ask them whether the Father is from someone, or not from someone. If He is from someone, then you have removed the eternal existence and unbegottenness of the Father. And if He is not from someone, then He is counted among those who exist from nonbeing.

Again, [consider the] time. Did He exist in time, and is He now in time or in non-time? Because if He is in time, who did contain time? And if in non-time, then what was time itself that was formed in the beginning of creation?

Again, when you came into being, were you close to yourself, and are you now close to yourself, or no?

Solution. When you become sick, you are close to your sickness, and when you are a child, you are close to your childhood; and when [you are] gray-haired, you are close to old age. But this is not enough, because you should not say that something is close to itself, which is impossible. These are accidents to yourself. Otherwise, if you were close to yourself as one to one, you [could be] divided into two, and how could you be one? And if you were not close at that time, and are not close to yourself now, you are not and do not exist.

Section and Question Three

The third question of the adversaries is whether the Son was born of the Father and ceased [from being born], or is still being born? If He ceased, then He is by necessity and has a beginning. And if He is still being born, then the birth is incomplete.

It is necessary to avoid these two sides. Because if we answer that it is not a necessity for everything that has a beginning to end, such as the angels and human souls that have a beginning but do not end, although this is an answer, it is insufficient. Because John of Damascus also says that everything with a beginning should have an end. However, that the angels and souls do not end, this is maintained by God's will, and not by their nature, because those who came into existence from nonbeing can be changed into nonbeing.

And our answer for this is the following. The Son is always begotten of the Father by His own nature. He is perfect by Himself, as light is always begotten from fire and is not incomplete, similar to the Son. And it always emits warmth, similar to the unending emanation of the soul. That very fire is a paradigm of the Father, because it is impossible [for the fire] to be without light and warmth, which are the substance of the fire.

Section and Objection Four

They also object that if the Father is God, and is not begotten by nature, and the Son is begotten, then the Son is not God, because begottenness and unbegottenness are opposites to each other, like black to white, and light to darkness. This objection manifestly denies the divinity of the Son or the Father. The cunning does not say that God does not come [to exist] from the Father but from unbegottenness.

We answer that begottenness and unbegottenness are not related singularly to divinity, because divinity is equal to trinity. These [begottenness and unbegottenness] are the singularities of the Father and the Son, and begottenness and unbegottenness are not separate

natures, but are [components of] the one and same nature. Otherwise, you ought to say that there are numerous natures for the numerous names of God.

And since unbegottenness is not a nature of God, how can it be said that [unbegottenness is] God. First, because if unbegottenness were God, He should have had a creation out of unbegottenness. But He does not have one, and none of the heathens says anything like that. On the contrary, they all acknowledge that God is God, not that unbegottenness is God. Second, because if, as you say, unbegottenness and begottenness were natures, then you would have placed a contrariety within the divinity. Third, because you would have placed habit and deficiency in divinity. Fourth, because you have placed the deficiency first, and then the habit, which is contrary to that which has been said [about divinity]. Fifth, because if you put the deficiency first, you eliminate the substance of the Father and the Son. Sixth, because it surmounts to deficiency growing stronger and defeating the habit. Therefore, begottenness and unbegottenness are not separate natures but [components of] the one and same nature of God.

Again, insanity and sanity are in the one and same nature of man and are not said to be contrary to each other. Rather, the insane in a like manner has the nature and the limit of the sane. Likewise, unbegottenness and begottenness are not natures contrary to each other but are in the one and same nature.

Again, because the unborn Adam is not the only humankind, but also those who are born from him are called human, likewise not only the Father is God, but also the one who is born from Him is God.

Section and Objection Five

Fifth, they object that if the Father and the Son have one and the same nature, and if the Son is begotten from the same nature, then it is possible to say that the Father is begotten from the Son of the same nature, since the nature is one.

We respond that this questioning is extremely foolish. Since the Father is the parent of the Son, according to your statement, then it is not possible to give birth without being. Also, The Son cannot give birth to the Father, although He is of the same nature of His Father. Just as you are born from your father, but you cannot give birth to your father and be the father of your father, although you have the full nature of your father.

Section and Objection Six

Sixth, they object whether the name Father whereby we call God is related to His own nature or to creation. If [it is related] to the nature, then the Son, they say, does not have the same nature, since God has one nature. If it is related to the father, it is only fatherhood and it is His nature thereby. But if [the name Father is related] to creation, then the Son is a creation.

We respond that the name Father refers neither to the nature [of God] nor to [His] creation. It refers to a singularity, whereby [the Father] is distinguished from the Son and the Spirit.

You ask them!

You, followers of Arius, since you call us children of [God] by grace, and creatures, because we are children by grace, we do have a connection between ourselves and the Father, with the Holy Spirit acting like a link. But since you deny the equality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, and say that [the Spirit] is less than the Father and the Son, who is that who unites the Son and the Father, that calls Him [the Son] to adoption by the Father? And since [there is] no one, then, therefore, confess you the Son begotten from the nature of God eternally.

Section and Question Seven

The seventh argument of the adversaries. Why does Christ say: “I was sent by the Father” (Mt 28:18). And: “My Father is greater than me” (Jn 14:28).

We respond: Do not rend the Scripture. Find the explication to your statement in: “The Father who sent me is with me” (cf. Jn 8:29).

And with regard to the other statement: “The Father is greater than me,” understand the [word] *than* as a measure, that He is as great as I am. As the Son says: “I and my Father are one. Who sees me, sees my Father. As the Father knows me, I know the Father. Whatever is mine, is from the Father; and whatever is the Father’s, is mine” (cf. Jn 10).

These and other similar [texts] demonstrate equality with the Father.

Again, He [Christ] says: “I am in the Father, and the Father is in me” (Jn 10:38). And if the Father is greater than the Son, how can the lesser contain the greater?

Also, how can the lesser strive to become the greater, to fill the Father?

And since it is not possible, as I mentioned, then the Father is not greater than the Son, because they contain each other, and they fill each other. Also, according to you, it should have been stated: “I am in a portion of the Father,²¹ and a portion of the Father [is] in me.”

Also, [the Father] is said to be great relative to cause, and equal relative to nature.

Also, it is not said the uncaused cause is greater than the caused, because the Son of the same cause shares the glory and greatness of the Father.

Also, it is said that God the Word is greater than human nature. He is our Father relative to creation and the other world. And oneness needs not be understood as greater; rather, it is equal, as the taker and the taken are both God and man.

Paul too balances [this]: “Who was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Phil 2:6). The interpretation of this is that God’s equal did not regard His taking the form of servant as being robbed or deprived, since He did not have any doubt that

²¹ There is, as we believe, a typographical error in the printed text, where ի միասին [*miasin*, “together”] should be corrected as ի մասին [*i masin*, “in a portion”].

He usurps the glory, because it is His own. Although some others comment that [God] did not regard equalizing human nature with His glory, and sharing it with divinity a deprivation, for their nature is one.

Again, we interpret [the same] as follows. The word of the Apostle and the Gospel are not contradictory [in stating] that the Father is greater than the Son, because they both are conceived to be the same divinity. Since [God] united our humble and weak natures with His divinity, and the invisible appeared and moved around in the form of a servant for the purpose of dispensation, it was said that [the Son] was lesser in this unity than the Father. But since [Christ] is without cause and is begotten from the Father before eternity, He is equal to the Father and not lesser.

And again, the Apostle witnesses that “when [God] made the promise to Abraham after offering his son Isaac, He swore by Himself” (cf. Heb 6:13–14), whatever He promised him. Because the Father was not greater than that by whom He swore, for those who swear, swear by someone greater than themselves. Then, therefore, the Son is equal to the Father, and not lesser, as the Apostle says.

And we certainly know that this is the Son, because He is called angel in the Scripture. And since the Father was never called angel, but the Son was according to the Prophet Isaiah, who called the Son, who became a servant of the great mystery “the angel [messenger] of great counsel” (Isa 9:6). That is [the mystery of] our salvation through His humanization.

And when He [Christ] says: “I am sent” (Lk 1:19), He does not mean from one place to another, as we, the gathered in one place, do, since we are dispatched from one place to another by motion. But He [Christ] has penetrated all beings by might and by substance, and there is no space void of Him. Hence: “I fill heaven and earth” (Jer 23:24). But because He humbled Himself from the height of glory, and united Himself with our humble nature, it is this that is referred to as *sent*. And since this dispatch was by the will of the Father, it is related to the Father.

Section and Question Eight

[This is] the eighth argument of the Arians. Why did Solomon say: “The Lord accepted me from the beginning of His paths and all His works” (Prov 8:22)? And since [Solomon] was ages before the corporeal birth of the Christ, then among all creatures [Solomon] was the first creation, they say.

To this we reply that in many ways we can offer explication to this argument. First, we say that this king was a voracious, drunken, and lustful man. What can we say about his word? We cannot say much. Second, it is not because of his later idolatry that we dispute his wisdom and do not accept it, although it is possible to argue that his abundant wisdom failed to keep him in God’s favor. While Anthony, who was illiterate and not as wise, remained in favor before God. [Therefore,] how can we believe in and accept that wisdom?

Third, because it is possible to interpret the corporeal wisdom, and the creations of the skillful, and the natural influence over the nature of an object by placing the substance first, we say as it is written, this wisdom was created before “all His works.”

As we allegorically say: “The sea saw and fled. What is the sea to you, [and what are] the mountains and the hills, the rams and the sheep?” (cf. Ps 114:3–6). And that “the heavens tell the glory of God” (Ps 18:2), although they do not have senses. But we will not answer this. We will talk about the fourth theory concerning the humanization [of Christ], for He who said, “He created,” [also] said: “Before all hills, He begot me” (Prov 8:25). Now since God is God without cause—otherwise, who is that which caused Him to be God?—and if there was [someone] greater, then the cause would have been greater than God, but the creation is evident by its cause; that is, for the salvation of humankind, then, therefore, [Christ’s] birth before the hills was from the beginning of the nature of the Father, while His [Christ’s] creation refers to incarnation, since the body is His.

Look at the deeds for which He was consecrated; that is, humanity was joined to the divinity, because it is written: “The deeds

of His hands are justice and righteousness” (cf. Ps 111:7), meaning that He judged truly and justly, and rightfully He freed the enslaved nature of humanity. Now, wisdom is called created relative to its humble birth, and [is called] begotten relative to the antecedence of the inconceivable.

While other doctors say that with such words is demonstrated the way of divine birth, because the begotten takes by birth the nature of that which gives birth; that is perfection. In the case of births that happen among us, that which gives birth is altered, while in creation the contrary happens, since creation is altered, not the creator. Now it is said that the Son was begotten and created, because in His creation is conceived the immutability of the Father, and in His birth [is understood] the unity of the nature of the Father and the Son.

This is the commentary of the second council.

Section and Question Nine

The ninth question of the adversaries [relates to] Sirach’s statement: “I came out of the mouth of the Most High as the firstborn of all creatures” (Sir 24:5), and Paul’s statement to the Colossians that the Son was “the firstborn of all creatures” (Col 1:15).

For these we say that the Son is not called the firstborn as being considered a creature, because none of the creatures took God’s nature as the Son did. But He is called the firstborn, because He took from the Father that by which all were created. Because “all things were made by Him” (Jn 1:3). Therefore, the Son is called not only the firstborn but also the only begotten.

He is also called firstborn relative to the corporeal birth. Because He was the firstborn without sperm from the Virgin and the Holy Spirit, and thus we are born after Him by the Holy Spirit from the virgin font.

He is firstborn also relative to the graces of the Spirit, which He received not because of want—since He had them in abundance—but since He is our head, He received that He may spread them to the members of His body.

He is firstborn also by resurrection, since “he was the firstborn from the dead, and was fruit of those who sleep” (Col 1:18; 1 Cor 15:20).

Section and Objection Ten

[As] a tenth argument, the Arians say that He [Christ] has to reign until the end of the time, according to the Apostle. We answer, O you daring expositor, after the end of time, what end is there to His kingdom? Who will depose [Him] and for what reasons? Had you not heard from the Angel: “There shall be no end to His kingdom” (Lk 1:33)? Because of your ignorance you do not comprehend that your [word] *until* in any case does not contradict the end, because although it signifies a duration, it does not reject what is beyond duration. As in “I am with you to the end of time” (cf. Mt 28:20), where it is obvious that He [Christ] does not go away at the end. Also: “I am, I am, even unto your old age I am” (Isa 46:4). With this it is obvious that after humanity’s old age God Himself remains. And you shall understand other [similar instances] likewise.

Here is how we interpret this.

Because we heard about two kingdoms from Scripture, first, relative to creation; second, relative to divine economy, now, [Christ] rules over all willing and unwilling [creatures], since He is God. But by divine economy He does not [rule over all]; rather [He rules] only over the obedient. When all tongues shall confess Jesus Christ as Lord, then He definitely will rule with the Father by divine economy too.

Concerning the obedience of the Son to the Father, [it is not that He] is disobedient now because of a discord; that befits thieves. It is not possible to say that the one and same substance within itself could be both submissive and rebellious. It is the Word itself that is divinity pure and simple. But [we should understand it this way:] that a new Adam has replaced the old Adam, and the one who never sinned was called a curse and sin for me [i.e., for humans], thus destroying the curses and lifting the sins.

Similar is our disobedience. Some by denial, and others by vice, attribute to the head rebellion of their members. When all members submit to Christ, the head, knowingly and through transformation, then He [Christ] consummates the submission and offers the obedient [members] to the Father.

Also, we could say that the Son somehow is obedient to the Father by deeds, in completion of [the Father's] will. And the Father [is submissive] to the Son by consent to [His] deeds. And this [is so] for the unity of the nature and the will of the Father and the Son.

Section and Explication Eleven

[The exclamation] “God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46) [means] not that He [Christ] was abandoned by Himself or by the Father, as if He were afraid of suffering, because He came voluntarily, not by force.

Rather, [it means] that since we were forsaken and ignored by God for our sins, He [Christ] took upon Himself our appearance, sharing the same nature with us, and becoming head of our members. Interpret in the same way His outcry and tears, His fear, sorrow, praying, and all such things on our behalf. Becoming our head and our tongue, He showed to the Father the weakness of the nature of our members.

For Christ's submission to the sufferings, Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus] brings up many reasons here.

First reason, because to whatever object He approached by suffering, He redeemed my sufferings. That is, by fearing, my fear; by hunger, the hunger; by laboring, the toil; in the same way understand others. Because suffering is understood as evil compensation for the evil that had already been committed.

Second, so that through this act He may perfect His submission to the temptation of sufferings. Thus His perfect love toward us is demonstrated by act and truth. For this it was written: “No one has perfect love, like me as I have laid down myself” (cf. Jn 3:16).

Third, to instruct us; since as He gave freedom by suffering to

our human nature, likewise every person will be freed through His own suffering from the punishment of self-initiated sins.

Fourth, so that by His suffering He may test our obedience; that is our sorrow and the weight of our suffering, as if to comprehend through His [suffering] our [pain] and forgives us.

Fifth, because by His suffering He put a boundary to the suffering of His followers; that is, “to be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil 2:8).

Sixth, because He demands that those who love Him think constantly about it [love], since as He gave His self for us out of love, so we in His stead out of love for Him give ourselves for Him.

Seventh, because by His suffering He gave us hope so that we may not remain in martyrdom caused by our weakness and suffering before the tempter; rather, we follow His example in our suffering and remain patient, as He counseled.

“For if the light was harassed by the darkness because of its garb, how great is the darkness?” (cf. Mt 6:23), for His persecution is greater than our demise through suffering.

Whereas in some places the body is called garb for two reasons. First, since, as the body is covered with a garb, likewise the Lord confined His divinity in the body to be untouchable by the tempter. For this [it was written]: “The darkness comprehended Him not” (Jn 1:5). Second, as everyone is recognized by his garb, likewise Jesus revealed Himself to the world by appearing in a body.

Eighth, since He [Jesus] experienced suffering, He helps those who are in suffering. We discussed this in detail in our fourth chapter [of the *Book of Questions*]. But there is also a different viewpoint, which is deep and beautiful. That is, He [Jesus] suffered for our sanctification. And whoever suffers for the sake of sanctification—sharing the same intention [as Jesus]—He [Jesus] helps Him. That is, He [who suffers] unites with Him [Jesus] in holiness and becomes God fully. Otherwise stated, He [Jesus] turns Him [the one who suffers] into God, and all shall become God. And He [Jesus] remains God over all through the unity of the head with its members.

These reasons demonstrated the suffering of Jesus herein.

Section and Explication Twelve

Concerning His [Christ's] words: “My father and your father, my God and your God” (cf. Jn 20:17), this separation in names, which are joined together, leads the schismatics to error. The one who is God, is [God] for us truly, and for Him [Jesus] according to [the human] body. And the other who is Father, is [Father] for Him truly, and for us nominally. For He is Father to Him [Jesus] by nature, and to us by grace. A Creator of us truly, but for Him [Jesus], through appearance, not the Word. As the Apostle says: “God of our Lord Jesus Christ and Father of Glory” (Eph 1:17). That is, God for humans, and Father for Glory, which is God the Word begotten from the nature of God without body, that united later with a body.

Section and Explication Thirteen

What is [the meaning of]: “I can of my own self do nothing” (Jn 5:30)? The inability has many meanings. First, inability because of weakness in time and endurance.

As an infant cannot fight, a lion’s cub cannot see, a weak person cannot compete with a strong person, but only with his homogenous counterpart, such as Joab fought against Absolom and not David.

Second, by way of frequency. It is said: “A city set on a hill cannot be hid” (Mt. 5:14). First, because the commuting is much; second, because the place has an elevated location.

Third, by way of inappropriateness. The wedding guests cannot fast until the groom, who is Christ, joins them. Because, if you physically see [Him], His coming is time for celebration, and not for mourning, which is fast and penance. And if you understand the Word, then fasting is inappropriate for those who are cleansed by the Word, for which it was said: “You are clean because of the Word that I spoke to you” (Jn 15:3). For fasting purifies the unclean; but since they [the Apostles] were clean, then fasting was not suitable for them; therefore, they could not [fast].

Fourth, because of unwillingness, as He [Jesus] could not do

miracles because of their lack of faith, for these two things are necessary—faith to the patient, and strength to the healer. One is incapable without the other, since they are joined together. It seems that it was said it was not suitable, because it was not suitable to do miracles for those who were defective in their faith. Then, regarding the unwilling, worldly people cannot hate the worldly. It is said: “You, who are evil, cannot speak good” (cf. Mt 12:34), because had they willed, it would have been possible.

Fifth, [inability refers to] what is naturally impossible, as for someone who is born to be born again, and for a camel to pass through a needle. These are impossible for us, but not for God, for whom they are feasible and possible. But the inability of God is the following—to become evil, and to become nonbeing. This is not because of His lack of ability, but because of His excessive capability. Since God always is, He cannot be nonbeing. He is always good and He is light; [therefore] He cannot be evil and dark. This nonbeing and evilness can appear among us, because we have a partial but not perfect ability. For example, a potter can make a pot, but not the heavens. And [is able] sometimes [to be] good, and sometimes to be evil and corrupt. But God cannot be like this. God and our inability cannot exist together, as forty [cannot exist] in four.

Thus comprehend the inability of the Son to do anything of Himself that is something alien to the Father. Had He [the Son] been able, He would have been alien by nature; consequently, He would not have been the Son of the Father, because He would be of different nature. And there would not have been the Father, because the Father by the Son is Father.

In the same fashion, had there not been the Father, or the Son, since the Son is son to the Father, accordingly there would have not existed divinity, which is impossible, as we said. Therefore, the Son cannot do by Himself, because it is impossible for divinity to be removed. This is [the interpretation of] the inability of the Son.

Again, [concerning] “I can of my own self do nothing” (Jn 5:30).

First meaning, He said: “The Father works and I work” (cf. Jn 5:17). For this the Jews took offense, as if the most humble spoke in

order to calm their aggravation. But these words should be understood as a likeness to a former thing by those who have a mind and are not retarded. Second, I can do nothing means [I cannot do] anything useless. Third, I can do nothing; that is, sin and evil. And [these] are nothing, because they are the absence of good. “Without Him was not anything made that was made” (Jn 1:3).

Fourth, thus He [Jesus] demonstrates strongly the unity of will, because one is His will with the Father. For that reason, He can do nothing without the Father, since the Son does not have a different will in order to do whatever He wishes without the Father. Fifth, since might; ability, from which follows divinity; lordship; power; and similar things are not peculiar unto separate persons, but are common [to the persons of the Trinity]. And neither of them [Father and Son] is greater than the other. Therefore, the Son can do nothing by Himself without the Father, as we said.

Look! Since it is said that there is no alienation in one nature, therefore God’s will and operation are one, because [the Father and the Son] have one nature.

What is questionable about this is the following. If it is necessary for those who have one nature to have one will and operation, then why is human nature one and the same like the nature of the father and the son, but their will and acts are not one and the same? The divinity should not be viewed in that fashion, and the reason is the following. Although those who give birth and those who are born have one nature, they do not have the same will, because the son is separated and divided from the Father. While God the Word is begotten of the Father but is not separated, as the word is not separated from the mind, although it enters numerous ears, and appears bodily on parchments. And as light cannot be separated from fire, likewise the Word cannot be separated from the Father. Therefore, this indivisibility makes the will one.

Section and Question Fourteen

And what does it mean: “Whatever the Father does, these also does

the Son likewise” (Jn 5:19)? This is not like [the interpretation of] the heretics when they say that the skillful painter draws a picture and then the illiterate copies it. They [the heretics] were saying that the Father acted and then the Son acted in the same fashion. And if that is so, then He [Jesus] was following the Father to create a different world and hereafter, and wander on earth, heal the unhealthy, raise the dead, and walk on water. [The heretics say] as we have asserted, “eternity was created by the Word of God” (Heb 11:3) and that “by the Word of the Lord were the heavens established” (Ps 33:6) and that “All things were made by Him” (Jn 1:3) and that “God established the foundations of the earth by wisdom” (Prov 3:19). And [since] it is said that Christ is God’s wisdom, [then when it is said that] God established the foundations of the earth by wisdom, and this same God the Word was incarnate and wandered on earth, then there should have been four worlds, since the Son also acted in the same fashion. And if the Father acted without the Son, He acted without wisdom, since the Son is the Wisdom of the Father according to the Apostle. Or [He acted] by a different wisdom which is totally false. The acts of the Father and the following of the same by the Son means that the Father wills and the Son accomplishes the same will, for the will of the Father and the Son is one. And for this He [the Christ] said: “My father works hitherto and I work” (Jn 5:17). It is not [related to] something new or a new world, but [to the] providence of all creation. And within this identity the Father wills and the Son accomplishes, not as a servant or by ignorance, but as a master and by knowledge.

Section and Question Fifteen

What does it mean that [the Father] has given the Son life, judgment, or authority over all gentiles and all peoples? It appears that Christ is less than the Father, because He [Christ] did not possess it and [God] gave it [to Him]. We say this was relative to His humanity, since He did not have our nature. But when He united with the Word, [He] became the Creator and received the ruler and lord of all. This

is not out of place even if you understand it as relating to divinity, because as He [Christ] has essence from the being of the Father, likewise He has authority from the power of the Father. And similarly understand [Christ's] receiving other things.

Also, He says the Father gave me, so that it not be thought that the Son opposed the Father, as the Jews thought when He broke the Sabbaths. And if you understand it according to [His] humanity, do not think that it is about giving bounty and grace. That is the [thought] of Nestorius. And as it is particular, natural, and not acquired to the Word, so understand relating to the body, because of the ineffable unity of the Word, for the body is of the Word. Therefore, whatever is said of the Word is attributed also to the body. Concerning this, St. Cyril says: “After the ineffable unity, cursed shall be whoever separates the humanity and the divinity [of Christ].”

Section and Explication Sixteen

“I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me” (Jn 6:38). This does not demonstrate two wills opposing each other, because it is said about the creator and not creatures; that is, about the Word and not humanity. If it were about humanity, what can be said?

This indicates the transcendent oneness of the will of the Father and the Son. Because He says: It is not my will, but another’s will that I do, and I do that will because it is [held in] common. Because this *not* is eliminative as in *God gives the Spirit to the Son without measure*, which means that what [God] does not give does not measure either. And it is in the same fashion that the Prophet says about Christ: “Neither [is it] my iniquity, nor my sin” (Ps 59:3). The negation of these [iniquity and sin] does not indicate their existence but their total absence. Likewise, now he says: “I do not do my own will” (cf. Jn 6:38), meaning that the will that I do is not different; my will is the same will as the Father’s will.

Similarly, that [expression] “Not my will, but yours be done” (Lk 22:42). Here this does not indicate a peculiar will that is separate

from that of the Father, but rather the transcendent unity of the will of the Father [with Christ's].

Section and Question Seventeen

What does it mean: “They know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn 17:3)? Therefore, the heretics say that only the Father is true God and neither the Son, nor the Spirit.

We answer. First, when He [the Christ] said that the Father only is true God, He also spoke the same truth about Himself. “Him has God the Father sealed” (Jn 6:27). The Apostle says about the Son: “Who only has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light” (1 Tim 6:16), and so on. And if you relate [the expression] “only true” to the Father only, then you will lose the Son through falsehood, death, darkness, and other means. And since He is the Son, then He is a true God, and king of kings, and other things according to the Apostle [Paul].

Also, Baruch says: “This is God, no other is to be compared to Him . . . Since then He has appeared on earth and moved among men” (Bar 3:36, 38).

This is evident that it was the Son who was clothed with a body on earth.

According to your word here, you give divinity to the Father and take it away from the Son. And according to [the words] of the Prophet, you relate divinity to the Son and take it away from the Father. Then you should be an atheist, because you relate one superior over the other.

The answer, however, is the following. Whenever you hear that God is one, you should immediately understand Trinity, for divinity is not solitary but communal. And when it is said one and true, it is to distinguish [divinity] from the numerous and false gods of the heathens who are gods in name only. Also, now that He calls the Father truly God “and He who sent” (Jn 17:3), here *and* is a conjunction that indicates by this connecting word His divinity with the Father. Also, the Trinity becomes evident in this case: the Father,

when He [Christ] says, “true God” (Jn 17:3); the Spirit, when He says, “whom you have sent” (Jn 17:3); and He reveals Himself by name when He says, “Jesus Christ” (Jn 17:3).

Section and Question Eighteen

What did He [Christ] mean when He said to the tempter keeping the law: “No one is good but one, God” (Mk 10:18)?

We say that the man keeping the law thought Christ is good as a human, not as sublime [being], for humans also are called good, as is said: “The Lord does good to them that are good” (Ps 125:4), and that “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good” (Lk 6:45). But this is a secondary flow of the first good, which is God. For this reason, the Lord subdued the man keeping the law [by saying] that God only is the supreme good, and no human has that quality. How can you relate to me the secondary goodness of humans, when I am the supreme good with my Father in my divinity?

Again, the same tempter went before Christ with arrogance to make it obvious, through his words, that he is the keeper of all the commandments, but the Lord reproached him for his deficiency. He came to Jesus saying: “Good teacher” (Mt 19:16), so that he may be heard as a good student. For this, the humblest of all despised the arrogant thoughts [of the tempter] with his humble answers, and [thus] also exposed his pretentious hidden words.

Section and Explication Nineteen

And what about the intercession of the Spirit and the Son that we hear? [It does not mean that] they are less than the Father, or intercede in the fashion of a servant falling on their knees. Rather, the intercession of the Spirit is this: when we are praying [and] we do not know how to ask for the suitable, but the Spirit silently gives us wisdom to pray suitably. As the Apostle says: “The Spirit helps our infirmities” (Rom 8:26). And Christ says: “Do not worry about

what you shall say [. . .] for the Spirit of your Father will give you [what you shall say] at that time” (cf. Mt 10:19–20). Therefore, the prayers that we do inspired by the Holy Spirit are called the intercession of the Holy Spirit.

Understand the intercession of the Son also in this fashion: Since He is our head and we are members [of His body], when He finds us in sin, He cares and suffers for us. And through preachers, that is through angels, doctors, or through the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, He hastens to give us life. Hence: “He wants everyone to live, and to come to the knowledge of truth” (1 Tim 2:4). And when we turn from our sins, He counsels us with His hidden wisdom to be patient during temptations, and endure the suffering that He Himself experienced. This is the intercession of the Son, says Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus]. Because we, who are tormented and tempted, pray patiently, and our prayers relate to Him [the Son], for it is He who counsels [us], as we said regarding the Spirit.

Section and Explication Twenty

With regard to the argument of our adversaries that the Son was ignorant of the [last] hour and day, and, therefore, their assertion that the Son is less [than the Father], [we say]:

God forbid! Not that [the Son] was ignorant, for He said everything that would happen at His death; then how could He be ignorant of the hour? This is like the parable when a person before knowing what is the fortification of a city, says that he does not know what the fortification is.

And like the person who does not know the end of the day, and says that he does not know the beginning of night. But it is this. He knows as God, but does not know as human, for the name of Son is absolute; that is, indefinite, and therefore it is possible to say it is given to both the Word and the body.

Again, if this is not enough, we say that as He [Christ] relayed supremacy to the Father as in “My Father is greater than me” (Jn 14:28), and as in “Not my will, but the will of Him who sent me”

(cf. Jn 6:38), similarly He relayed to the cause, [for example] the Father, the greatest knowledge, so as to honor Him who begot Him.

Also, as Athanasius says: “The Son as a different being does not know the hour and day as the Father does; that is, [the Son] knows as God, not as an angel or man, for His knowledge is one with His Father.” Which shows that that hour is totally comprehensible by none of creation, but only by the prime uncreated nature of God.

On God’s Name.

God is called by no name, because a name is a [limited] term, and a [limited] term indicates nature. But it seems that [the words] *Is* [being] and *God* are closer to the divine nature than [any] other [words]. And of these *Is* is more transcendent. Since God brought us here, we call Him either Creator, or Judge. These are relative but not peculiar to [His] nature. [The name] *Is* indicates [God’s] eternal being. Hence: “I am the Alpha and Omega” (Rev 1:10); that is, the beginning and end. All other names indicate the act of creating us, and providence. But all names are divided into two [kinds]: [indicating His] authority, as in Lord of Sabaoth, Almighty King; and [indicating His] economy, as in God Savior, or [God] of justice, or of peace, or of Abraham, or of Isaac, and so on. And this is common to the Trinity.

[Christ] Denominated Son in Four Articles.

Why do we say Son?

First, because He is of the Father’s nature.

Second, because He is [begotten] from Him without mother.

Third, because He is the only begotten, for no one else is begotten [from the Father].

Fourth, because He cannot be separated from the Father, as word [cannot be separated] from mind.

[Christ] Denominated Word in Ten Articles.

Why is it called Word?

First, because the Word is born of mind.

Second, because it is born pure.

Third, because it is united with mind.

Fourth, because it communicates mind.

Fifth, because Word defines; and as definition indicates that which is defined, similarly the Son defines the Father's being. As: "He who has seen me, has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9).

Sixth, because it defines the magnitude of the Father. "I am in my Father, and the Father is in me" (Jn 14:20 and 10:38). And according to the Apostle: "According to the designation [to be] the Son of God" (cf. Rom 1:4).

Seventh, because although this Word is silent and not pronounced, it is rational word.

Eighth, it is called Word for it established everything. As: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established" (Ps 32:6).

Ninth, because by His advent He lifted our irrationality and ignorance, and brought us to the true knowledge of His divinity.

Tenth, as the word explains and relates the thoughts, so the Son [communicates and expresses the thoughts] of the Father. There are many more thoughts about the Word, but we have written only a few [here].

[Christ] Denominated Shepherd in Ten Articles.

And why is He [Christ] called Shepherd?

First, because the shepherd makes [the sheep] lie down in green pastures; that is, [He makes] the savage [lie down] in the knowledge of Holy Scriptures.

Second, because He leads them besides still waters; that is, the font of baptism by the Holy Spirit.

Third, because He leads the sheep.

Fourth, because He wars with the beasts.

Fifth, because He brings back the wanderer.
Sixth, He finds the lost.
Seventh, He fences the disheartened.
Eighth, He protects the strong.
Ninth, at the end of the day [He] leads them to the fold.
Tenth, [He] comforts them with [His] pastoral word.

*[Christ] Denominated Priest with the Same Order as Melchisedec
in Ten Articles.*

How is Christ a priest with the same order as Melchisedec in ten ways?

First, because *Melchi* means “king,” and Christ is eternal king.

Second, *Zedech* means “justice”; Christ did justice to our nature, which was enslaved by Satan.

Third, he [Melchisedec] was king of Salem, which is peace. Christ made peace in heaven and on earth, and gave us His peace.

Fourth, he [Melchisedec] was without father; so was Christ on earth.

Fifth, he [Melchisedec] was without mother; so was Christ from the Father [only].

Sixth, his [Melchisedec’s] generations were not counted; and in [Christ’s case,] “Who can tell His progeny” (Isa 53:8)?

Seventh, he [Melchisedec] was the patriarch of the tithe payers;²² so is Christ [patriarch] of the faithful.

Eighth, he [Melchisedec] offered bread and cup; so did Christ.

Ninth, his [Melchisedec’s] priesthood was without substitute; in the same fashion, only our high priest entered behind the curtain.

Tenth, he [Melchisedec] was called by God to priesthood; similarly, Christ had authority from the Father.

²² Cf. Gen: 14:18–20.

[Christ] Denominated Son of Man and Man.

And He [Christ] is called Son of Man, because He was from the blood of the body of Adam as His progenitor, and from the Virgin as His mother.

And [He] is [called] man, since to purify us by Himself, He became all things for the sake of all; that is, spirit, mind, and body, as death was common to these, that there be life. What can I say, for Adam obeyed by spirit, consented by mind, and by body completed the act. Man sins with all these things. The Savior took all, except sin, that He may save all. Sin is extrinsic, and not from the nature [of man], for nature was created pure by God.

About the Ways by Which the Blowing Is Defined.

First, [God] breathed the breath of life into Adam and he existed.

Second, in the plants.

Third, in sensate beings [the animals].

Fourth, in rational beings [humans].

Fifth, in prophets.

Sixth, through descending in the Jordan, where Christ received it as our head and gave it to His members.

Seventh, before the cross, to give power to the Apostles.

Eighth, by entering through closed doors.

Ninth, in the upper room.

Tenth, relative to us, the descent of the Spirit upon us.

Also, [in] those who through asceticism become witnesses, like Paul, Anthony, and others. [And in] those who were illiterate, but came to know God through their asceticism. This is according to the Prophet: “I opened my mouth and drew breath” (Ps 119:131), for the greatest witnessing is the opening of one’s mouth.

Chapter Six of the Major Contents

On the Holy Spirit.

Now, the divinity of the three persons is perfect and is one Godhead—light, and light, and light; and one light. Like one God, according to the Prophet: “In your light we shall see the light” (Ps 35:10). But those who eliminate the divinity of one [of the three persons], eliminate also the divinity of the [other] two [persons], since, according to the Apostle, the Son is the power and wisdom of the Father,²³ and [also] the Word, according to the Gospel of John. If the Father was at any time without the Word and wisdom, how would He have thought of begetting the Son? And if God was at any time without power, how would He have found power to beget the Son? And if He was at any time without the Spirit, then He was without breath and unholy; how would He have been giver of life and sanctifier?

Behold, if the Father is irrational and weak without the Son, then He could not have been God, nor, therefore, Spirit. Likewise, without Spirit, the dead and unholy is not God, nor, therefore, Son. Behold, two, and even three are eliminated by one.

Again, those who do not acknowledge the Spirit as God, [commit] the first heresy, because they eliminate the Father.

Second, [heretics are those] who say that the Spirit is created like us.

Third, if [the Spirit] was created, how would He cause us to become God through adoption by the Father in the font?

Fourth, how would [the Spirit] be part of the Trinity? Does it not say: “Baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19)? Therefore, the Spirit is perfect God.

²³ Cf. 1 Cor 1:24.

But there are many opinions about the Spirit.

Some, like the Saducees, think [the Spirit] does not exist. Also, [they deny] resurrection and the angels.

The theologians of the pagans say that like the minds of all of us, there is an external mind filling in the cavities of the heavens. And that mind external to all of us grants us knowledge and ability in every profession. This resembles us and is appropriate to us.

Others [consider the Spirit] creation, because the Spirit is not revealed as God in the Scripture.

Others say [the Spirit] is God's power, while others neither worship nor dishonor [the Spirit], because they do not accept the order of eternity, as we remarked.

Others acknowledge [the Spirit] as God, like we do, together with the Father and the Son.

And others put stages in the Trinity and name [the persons of the Trinity] Creator, associate, and servant. And they appropriate graces [to the persons of the Trinity] according to the names. They say that the Creator is unbounded in power and nature. The other, the associate, is unbounded in power, because He [the Creator] made Him His associate; while by nature He [the associate] is bounded, because He is created. And the other [the servant they consider] bounded both in power and nature, because He is created and a servant and a subject, they say.

Our argument, however, is not about all the others [aforementioned], but about those who say that the Spirit is a servant and creation. For us the Spirit is a being in itself and is visible in another [person of the Trinity]; that is, as perfect personification of the Father's essence.

I

When they hear this *in another*, they attack us, saying that if He is in another, then He is as an accident in the Father, as energy [is accident] in us; but if He is energized and ceases totally from being energized, then He is [simply] motion and not the mover.

We answer that He is not being energized, but He is the one who gives energy and who chooses, according to the Apostle: “He has chosen before the foundation of the world” (cf. Eph 1:4). And [He is] the one that sets apart: “Set apart Paul and Barnabas” (Acts 13:2). And He can be angry and troubled, for it is written: “Grieve not the Holy Spirit” (Eph 4:30).

All these are [appropriate] to a mover, and not to motion; therefore, the Spirit is not energy.

Then they say, if [the Spirit] is a being and not *in another*, that is in the Father, then He is alien to the nature [of the Father], and is a creation and not God.

For this it is to be said that there is no other being between the created and the creator; it [a being] must be either God or creation. And this cannot be divided into two [beings], that is, to be both from God and the creation and yet have one being. As a chimera, which is created from a stag and a goat, is not a being; then, therefore, there cannot be a being from both the creator and the creature.

And how do we verify that a being must be either a creator or a creature?

Let us first examine whether the Spirit is creation as you think He is. If He is created, how can we believe and be fulfilled; that is, we receive when we seek, because the created cannot give us what we seek from them, like the nominal gods of the heathens. If that is so, then, therefore, the Spirit is not created. And since He is not created, He is nothing else but God, as we have remarked. And since He is God, it cannot be said that He is created, or a creature, or a servant, or a subject.

II

Again, they ask whether the Spirit is begotten or unbegotten. They say, if He is not unbegotten, then the two [the Father and the Spirit] are without beginning and are contrary to each other. But if He is begotten, then He should be either from the Father or from the Son. If He is from the Father, then there are two Sons—brothers. And if

He is from the Son, then we have seen a grandson as God. And if He is from both [the Father and the Son], then the Father cannot give birth and needs the assistance of His son; therefore, the Son is imperfect. And that which is begotten from the imperfect will be imperfect Himself. And thus they think that they have encircled us from all sides.

We say to those who are fond of sensual pleasures: If you think that the birth [of the Spirit] is physical, like our birth, then you are ridiculous. If you think that the birth is after human fashion, then the Father will need to have two testicles, there will be manhood and femalehood in God, and there would be two sons, one elder and one younger. And the birth will make no sense to you, as in the case of the eight gods and eight eternities of Marcion. We rather say neither begotten nor unbegotten, but emanated from the Father, as Christ Himself testifies: “The Spirit which proceeds from the Father” (cf. Jn 15:26). I think He is a truer theologian than you.

III

Again, they question: If the Spirit is equal to the Son, what prevents Him from becoming the Son? Otherwise, He is lesser than the Son.

We answer that the Spirit is not lesser, because divinity is not imperfect. It is not the state of being lesser that prevents the Spirit from becoming the Son, but the countenance and the singularities. Otherwise, the Son is totally needless; why does not He become the Father? Or more so, since the Father is all-perfect, why does not He become the Son, since He is from the same nature?

IV

They also say: Give us an example that there can be one begotten and another unbegotten from the same nature. Then we will believe that the Spirit is God. We answer: show us a similar God [with] three persons with one nature, and I will show one as being begotten and the other as being unbegotten.

Otherwise, why do you not distinguish the corporeal from the incorporeal, and search for the living among the dead according to Isaiah? Then we will give the fire as an example, for it has the flame as birth, and the heat as emanation. Then [there is] Adam, for he has Seth as [his] begotten, and Eve as [his] unbegotten, but as separation from the same nature. Within the same one category there was a birth-giver, a separation, and that which was begotten.

Also, the births on earth are distinguished in six ways.

First, as same from the same, like a horse from a horse, and an ox from an ox.

Second, as unlike from unlike, like the mule, and like the frogs and mice from the sun and earth.

Third, as same from unlike, as the hen hatches the egg of a partridge or a goose, and the same partridge or goose comes out of the egg.

Fourth, as unlike from same, as bees from cattle-bees, although they originate from flowers now.

Fifth, as the date-bird whom others call phoenix that is found in Arabia and that consumes itself with fire and again comes to life.

Sixth, as those who change [their nature influenced] by others' nature due to the abundance of [that] nature, as the silkworm gives birth to its like by regeneration, and has silk as its production. Comprehend similarly others, for they give birth to their likes, but produce things that are different than their births, such as the horsemoney²⁴ from the horse, the bees from the cattle, and worms from others. Many other examples were mentioned in the previous three sections relative to the Trinity.

V

They also say that the Gospel of John states: “All things were made by the Son” (cf. Jn 1:3). Therefore, the Spirit was made by the Son; how can [the Spirit] be equal to the Son, or the Father?

²⁴ An imaginary creature.

We answer that he [John] did not simply say “all things”; rather, he established along: “any thing that was made” (Jn 1:3). If you prove to me that the Spirit was made, I will believe that it was made by the Son. Otherwise, your words are but a lie, for the Spirit is uncreated.

Otherwise, as you phrase it, the Father, too, would have been made by the Son.

VII²⁵

They also say: How can you formulate to us without Scripture that the Spirit is God? Because when you say God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, you are polytheists like the heathens.

We answer first to the Macedonians, who confess the Son as God, [by asking:] tell us the reason for your having two gods. If you come up with a reason, then we will answer you. While to Arius, who acknowledges the Father only as God, we say that we do not have three gods, but one God and three persons, and that two of them emanate from one and the same essence. One in will, and one in power. As when we look at the orb of the sun and we say that the sun is one, but when we look at the light and the heat we comprehend three, likewise we visualize one Godhead and three persons.

VIII

They also say that the heathens also recognize one God in all the idols, although they are numerous. As it is said, humankind is one in nature, although humans are many, then you are polytheists.

We answer that the gods of the heathens are not one; rather, they are numerous and opposite to each other by the demands of their worship and sacrifices.

Also, humans [are numerous], because not only are they brought to life by numerous humans, but also they differ from each other in time, and are divided in will, and opposite to each other. While God

²⁵ There is no Article VI.

is not like that. God is one in will, and one in power, as He is one in nature.

And the unity [of divinity] is so that as much nature, power, and will God has within Himself, so much He has with the two, whether you comprehend [God] the Father, or [God] the Son, or the Spirit. This is the word about unity.

IX

Again, they ask: How can you say three [persons] and one nature? For three cannot correspond to one nature. Because one corresponds to one nature, and two to two natures, and three to three natures, since there are as many natures as corresponding to the number. A name cannot correspond to the nature of a different name. As one cannot correspond to two, nor two to three. Then therefore, since you say three, Father, Son, and Spirit, then they correspond to three natures according to their number, and not one.

We answer that every number is indicative of not the nature but the quantity of what the number includes. Also, according to Solomon, three are those who walk majestically: the lion, the he-goat, and the rooster [cf. Prov 30:29–31]. Behold how he categorizes them under one number, although they have different natures. While [God speaking to] Moses referred to the Cherubs, who partook one nature and one name, as being one on the right side and one on the left [cf. Ex 25:18–19]. Christ in the Gospel refers to God and mammon with the same number [Mt 6:24]. And the Apostle names the spirit, water, and blood as three witnesses to Christ. And the philosophers aggregated equivocals, which were not of the same sort or nature; such as the crab [as] a breathing and sensate animal, and the stars and the dog [as] aquatic, terrestrial, and heavenly.

Also, through natural examination. When you say that one and one is equal to two, now [two] has the nature of both. And yet when you divide it, it turns into one and one. According to you, its prior nature is now dissolved and yet it still has the same number. The same thing has become both nature and non-nature, which is

impossible. Then, therefore, although the Father, the Son, and the Spirit be three in number, they are not three in nature.

We find about the Spirit in the Holy Scriptures, that although there are things that do not exist, they are said to be, such as the chimera, the vampire, and the mermaid. In the same way in God [are said to be] anger, sleep, awakening, moving, and so on.

There are things that exist but are not said to be: Those are untrodden mountains and the depths of the seas that humans have not seen. Whereas God who is without beginning and without birth, immortal and immaculate, is not described in the Holy Scriptures as such literally but is demonstrated in a different way; that is, when [God] says: “I am Alpha and Omega” (Rev 1:8), by this we comprehend Him as without beginning and immortal.

Likewise, although the Spirit was not manifestly called God [in the Scriptures], it was revealed as such with another word, which shows [the Spirit] as truly perfect God, as in “Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Truth, Good Spirit, Holy Spirit.”

These, and others similar, manifestly show the Spirit as God.

Third, there are those that do not exist and are said not to be: Those that do not exist cannot be named, nor can a circle be squared, or a man [can be considered] simple. While with respect to God, He is not called [by these names], since He is neither evil, nor ignorant, nor incapable.

There are those that exist and are named, such as God, Creator, merciful, and compassionate.

There are those that exist and are named in beings: man, angel, heaven, earth. And are named also those that exist in them.

These are those things that do not exist but are named, do exist but are not named, do not exist and are not named, and do exist and are named, as we have demonstrated.

While the reason for the veiling of the Spirit is that as the patriarchs knew the Father but their knowledge of the Son was obscured and was revealed upon His humanization, likewise the divinity of the Spirit was revealed in His time, after the crucifixion of Christ and His ascension to the Father, and [then] when the Spirit

descended and its divinity was revealed.

Again, against those who call the Word and the Spirit of God created, like Arius, and Macedonius, and the Jews, and so on.

Moses says: “Spirit of God” (Gen 1:2). David [says]: “Word of the Lord” (Ps 105:19). And Job [says]: “Divine Spirit” (Job 33:4).

Now, first, Word of God and Spirit of God are not appropriate to a creature; [they are suitable] only to God. As the spirit of man and the word of man [belong] only to a man, and the spirit of angel and the word of angel [belong] only to an angel.

Second, the Word is wisdom, and the Spirit is life. And if they are created, how did [God] create them irrational and lifeless?

Third, with wisdom [God] made the Spirit and the Word, and not without wisdom. Now, that wisdom, which made the Word and the Spirit, is the Word of God and the Spirit of God, and not the creation [of God].

Fourth, with might [God] made the Word and the Spirit, and not out of weakness. Now, might itself is the Word and the Spirit of God, which were not made by Him.

Fifth, if the Word and the Spirit of God are creations external to Him [God], then it is impossible for creatures to be the Word and the Spirit of the Creator.

Sixth, if the Word and the Spirit of God are creations, then they are different from God’s essence, and are extrinsic from and redundant to Him.

Seventh, if the Word and the Spirit of God are creations, and are from His essence, then the one to whom belong the Word and the Spirit is Himself a creation.

Eighth, if the Word and the Spirit of God are creations, then they are two, not one, like the created Word and the Word of the Creator, and the created Spirit and the Spirit of the Creator. [They are] created and uncreated, and so on.

Ninth, if God is Creator, and His Word and Spirit are creations, then He is not simple and one, but is compound and made of many.

Tenth, if the Word and the Spirit of God are creations and have different nature, then there is not one God; there are many and different gods, for plurality is the plurality of God, as if three natures are three gods, and two natures are two gods. Enough about this.

X

*Evidence about the consubstantial and equally honorable Trinity,
and cooperative creation, for:*

The Father is Creator, and the Son is Creator, and the Holy Spirit is Creator. As it was written: “By the mercy of the Lord the earth was filled, and by the Word of the Lord the heavens were established, and by the Spirit [breath] of His mouth [were made] all the host of them” (Ps 33:5–6).

The Father filled the whole world, but not without the Son. As it was written: “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” says the almighty Lord (Jer 23:24).

The Son also filled [the whole world]. Because “all things were made by Him” (Jn 1:3). And for the Spirit it is said: “The Spirit of the Lord fills the universe” (Wis 1:7).

Paul says: “He who acted this in us is God, who has also anointed and sealed us” (cf. 2 Cor 1:21–22).

The Holy Spirit also seals: “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by which you are sealed unto the day of your salvation” (Eph 4:30).

The Father is great, the Son also is great, and the Holy Spirit, too, is infinite. According to the song inspired by the Holy Spirit: “Our Lord is great, and great is His power” (Ps 147:5); that is, Christ the power of God. “His wisdom is infinite” (Ps 147:5); that is, the Holy Spirit.

The Father is peace, of whom it is said: “My peace is like a river” (Isa 66:12). The Son also is peace, according to Paul: “He is our peace who has made the two one, and made peace by the blood of His cross” (Eph 2:14; Col 1:20). The Holy Spirit also is peace: “This is the fruit of the Spirit,” he says; “love, joy, and peace” (Gal 5:22).

The Father is a spring, for the spring of life is from Him. The Son also is a spring, since it was said: “They have forsaken me the fountain of living water” (Jer 2:13).

The Holy Spirit also is a spring, because we have all drunk of the same spirit.

The Father is light, for He is called God of light. The Son also is light. He said: “I am the light of the world” (Jn 8:12).

The Holy Spirit also is light. Paul said: “Quench not the Spirit” (1 Thess 5:19).

The Father is life. Accordingly: “I kill and I give life” (Deut 32:39).

The Son also is life who said: “I am the resurrection and the life” (Jn 11:25).

The Holy Spirit also is life. Accordingly: “The Spirit gives life” (Jn 6:64).

The Father is Lord, according to Isaiah: “Lord our Father” (Isa 33:22). The Son also is Lord, according to Paul: “We have one Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 8:6).

The Holy Spirit also is Lord: “For Lord is the Spirit” (2 Cor 8:17), says Paul.

The Father is good: “For there is none good but the one God” (Mk 10:18). The Son also is good. It is said: “You are only benevolent, O my God Jesus.” And the Holy Spirit also is good. Accordingly: “Your good spirit shall guide me” (Ps 143:10).

XI

Evidence that the Holy Spirit is God, and is not a servant, nor is created.

First, as follows. No one consecrates a temple but God. As the Psalm says: “The Lord is in His holy temple” (Ps 10:5). And Paul says in his First Corinthians: “Do you not know that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit?” (1 Cor 6:19). Then, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.

Second, a worship related to God is suitable to God only. Accordingly: “You shall worship your Lord God, and Him only shall you serve” (Mt 4:10). And in the Philippians Paul says: “The circumcision are we who worship the Spirit of God” (cf. Phil 3:3).

Third, it is only given to God to consecrate humans. As it is said in Leviticus: “I am the Lord who makes you holy” (Lev 22:32). And in First Corinthians is said: “You are sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 6:11).

Fourth, from God is spiritual life. Accordingly: “The Father lives . . . and I live by the Father; and He who eats me, even He shall live by me” (Jn 6:58). And similar life is in the Spirit. Accordingly: “The Spirit is the one who gives life” (cf. Jn 6:63; Rom 8:11).

Fifth, to resurrect is suitable to God only. Accordingly: “As the Father raises up the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whomever He wills” (Jn 5:21).

And this power is related to the Holy Spirit also. As Paul says in Romans: “The Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead . . . shall also give life to your mortal bodies” (Rom 8:11).

Sixth, only God can create. Sirach says about God that “He created Wisdom through the Holy Spirit” (Sir 1:9).

Seventh, to examine the hearts is given to God, not to any creature. Accordingly: “No one knows the Son but the Father who is God; and no one knows the Father but the Son” (cf. Lk 10:22). And in First Corinthians Paul says: “It is the Spirit which searches everything, even the depths of God” (1 Cor 2:10).

Eighth, as the spirit of man is from the essence of man, likewise the Spirit of God is from the essence of God. This is shown in First Corinthians where it is said: “No one knows man if not the spirit which is in him. Likewise, no one knows other things if not the Spirit of God” (cf. 1 Cor 2:11).

Ninth, Isaiah says: “I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send” (Isa 6:8). And afterward he says: “Go and tell this people, listen carefully but you shall not understand” (Isa 6:9). While Paul relates this to the Holy Spirit, saying in his Acts: “Well did the Holy Spirit speak through Isaiah to our fathers, saying hear but not

understand” (cf. Acts 28:25–26). Then, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.

Tenth, it is evident from the Holy Scriptures that it was God who spoke through the prophets, for it is said in [the book of] Numbers: “I, the Lord, will speak with prophets through vision and dreams” (cf. Num 12:6).

It was the Holy Spirit who spoke with the prophets. As Peter says in the Catholic epistle: “No prophecy has come through the will of men, but men spoke to God moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:21).

Eleventh, revealing mysteries is given to God only. As Daniel says: “God from heaven . . . Himself reveals things that are deep and hidden” (cf. Dan 2:22). And in First Corinthians it is said: “It is the Spirit who speaks mysteries” (1 Cor 4:5).

Twelfth, it is given to God alone to enlighten the mind of man from within according to the Psalm: “He that teaches [man] knowledge” (Ps 94:10). And this is particular to the Holy Spirit, as John says: “The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you everything” (Jn 14:26).

Thirteenth, it is given to God alone to dwell in the hearts of the saints. As it is said in First Corinthians: “Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you” (1 Cor 3:16).

Fourteenth, it is given to God alone to be everywhere. As Jeremiah says: “I fill the heavens and the earth” (Jer 23:24). And this is appropriate to the Holy Spirit; for Sirach says: “the Spirit of the Lord fills the universe” (Wis 1:7).²⁶

Fifteenth, in First Corinthians it is said on behalf of God: “By strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people” (1 Cor 14:21). It was the Holy Spirit who spoke in tongues. As the Savior says: “It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaks through you” (Mt 10:20).

Sixteenth, it is given to God alone to know the secrets of the hearts. As Jeremiah says: “I, the Lord, search the hearts and try the

²⁶ We found the verse attributed to Sirach in the book of Wistom.

reins” (Jer 17:10). And this relates to the Holy Spirit, for in First Corinthians it is said: “If everyone prophesies, and an unbeliever or an unlearned person should come in, he will be convinced by everyone; and the secrets of his heart will be revealed; and falling on his face he will worship God, and will confess that indeed God is in your midst” (1 Cor 14:24–25).

Seventeenth, it is given to God alone to affiliate children with God. As it is said in Galatians: “God sent His Son . . . that we might receive adoption” (Gal 4:4–5). And in Romans it is said: “You received a Spirit of adoption” (Rom 8:15).

Eighteenth, none of those created as intelligent and communicative is able to be shared with the many. But the Holy Spirit, remaining one and the same, is shared with all the faithful, as is said in Acts: “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4).

Nineteenth, Peter says in Acts: “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit” (Acts 5:3)? And afterward he says: “You did not lie to man, but to God” (Acts 5:4). Then, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.

Twentieth, the Gospel says: “God is Spirit” (Jn 4:24). Again, in Genesis it is said: “The Spirit of God moved over the water” (Gen 1:2). Again, in Job: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty teaches me” (Job 33:4).²⁷

And if the adversary says that the acts mentioned above are related to the Holy Spirit not as God but as servant, his lie is evident, for in First Corinthians it is said: “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; and although there are varieties of things accomplished, it is the same God who accomplishes all in all” (1 Cor 12:4–6). And afterward it is said: “But the one and same Spirit accomplishes all these, distributing to each as He wills” (1 Cor 12:11).

And now we will discuss the attestations of Macedonius from the Holy Scriptures and we will give appropriate answers.

²⁷ In other biblical versions, the verse goes: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life.”

XII

Arguments of Macedonius

First, says Macedonius, to pray and to intercede are not appropriate to God. For if it is by Christ, it concerns humanity. Whe Paul in Romans says: “The Holy Spirit intercedes with inexpressible groanings” (Rom 8:26).

We first answer, as Chrysostom says, that those who were born newly of the font, according to need were made worthy of the grace of wisdom, translation, and so on. Similarly, one would receive grace for liturgical prayer, which others might learn from him how to pray. An example of this for us now is the deacon who was called spirit because of his spiritual (i.e., ecclesiastical) language. While others refer as spirit to the spirit of the angels, which is given as our guardian; for [the spirit] guides us to the good and offers our prayers to God.

For which it is said in Tobit: “While you and your daughter Sara prayed, I presented your prayers before the Holy” (Tob 12:12). This was said directly about the same Comforter Spirit. It is customary in the Holy Scriptures to refer to God what is done by humans. As was said to Abraham: “Now I know that you fear God” (Gen 22:12); that is, now I manifested to humans your fear. Similar is the intercession of the Spirit, for [the Spirit] rises in our hearts to intercede during our prayers; that is, to ask that which is for the glory of God.

Second, they say that it is a given that the greater sends the lesser. And the Son says: “When comes the Comforter Holy Spirit which the Father will send in my name” (Jn 14:26).

We answer that as it is said that the Son is sent by the Father and the Spirit, accordingly: “The Lord, the Lord and His Spirit have sent me” (Isa 48:16). And this is not [said] because one is lesser, but because of the unity of wills. Likewise, sending forth the Spirit does not denote diminution, but the concordance of the Father with the Son.

Third, they say that movement is indicative of creature. And in

Genesis it is said: “The Spirit of God moved upon the waters” (Gen 1:2). And Joel says: “I will pour my spirit upon all flesh” (Joel 2:28). We answer that some say that the Spirit of God is wind whose natural place is over the water. Also, movement does not refer only to the Holy Spirit, but also to the Father and the Son. Accordingly: “They heard the sound of the going of the Lord God in that garden” (Gen 3:8). And also: “I will go down and see whether they were compensated according to their cry” (Gen 18:21). And these movements do not indicate God as created. Then, therefore, neither also do they [indicate] the Holy Spirit.

And when Joel says: “I will pour my spirit,” that pouring is nothing else but the emission. And it indicates the increasing of the graces of the one Spirit unto many.

Fourth, they say that grief is an emotion, and that does not happen in God. But in Ephesians it is said: “Grieve not the Holy Spirit” (Eph 4:30).

We answer that if the Prophet says: “The Lord was very angry with the people” (Ps 106:40), this does not mean that God has emotions, but that He punishes those who work inequity.

Similarly, when it is said that the Spirit was grieved, [that means that] as the aggrieved departs from the one who caused the grief, likewise the Holy Spirit departs from the sinner.

Fifth, they say that if the Holy Spirit derives His nature from the Father, then He becomes His son, for the one who has the very same nature of the father is called son. And if He does not have the nature of God the Father, then He is not God.

We answer that the Spirit has the nature of the Father, but not begotten as the Son; rather, by emanation, like breath and word, having the essence of the spirit in different ways, and as Adam brought forth from himself Seth and Eve, one being begotten, and the other unbegotten; and all three have the one and same human nature.

Thus, the Holy Spirit received eternally the essence of the Father through emanation, while the Son [received the essence] by begetting. Then, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God equal with the

Father and the Son, co-Creator, and coeternal, and equal in glory.
And this much for the Macedonians.

XIII

Against those who say that the Spirit emanates from [both] the Father and the Son.

Come now and see the perversity of those who say that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father and the Son. And first let us analyze their attestations, and then synthesize the truth.

First, they argue that [the Holy Spirit] is called the Spirit of Christ. Second, that He [Christ] breathed on the Apostles and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit” (Jn 20:22). Third: [Christ said,] “I will depart and send Him [the Holy Spirit]” (cf. Jn 16:7). Fourth, that “He shall be taken of mine” (Jn 16:14). Fifth, that “He shall glorify me” (Jn 16:14). Sixth: “The Spirit gives life” (Jn 6:64). Seventh, if God’s finger is called Holy Spirit, while the Son is His [the Father’s] right hand and arm, then He [the Holy Spirit] is from Him [the Son]. Eighth, as the speech is from the mind and reason, likewise the Spirit is from the Father and the Son. And other similar [arguments].

We answer that when it is said Spirit of Christ, and that He breathed, and that He sent, these are said because of the increase of the Holy Spirit among humankind occasioned by the coming of Christ. Accordingly: “The Spirit was not, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (Jn 7:39).

And again, the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son, and through the hand of the Son is distributed as the Father’s gift to all who exist in the heavens and on earth, before the incarnation and humanization, for this very reason He is called the Spirit of Christ.

And again, since everything that is of the Father, is also of the Son, as the Lord says, then the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son because of their one essence.

Because the Father gave to the Son substance, and not relation.

For the second [argument] we say that [the expression] “Breathed on the Apostles” (Jn 20:22) demonstrates emanation; then, therefore, the Son is begotten by the Spirit according to the angel: “That, which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 9:20).

These reveal that they [the Father and the Holy Spirit] cooperate.

For the third [argument] we say that “the Spirit is sent through the Son” (cf. Jn 16:17 and Jn 14:26), [which] means that He begins in Him. Then the Son was sent by the Father and the Spirit; that He emanated from them. Accordingly: “the Lord, the Lord sent me, and His Spirit” (Isa 48:16). And these demonstrate agreement of wills.

For the fourth [argument] that “It shall be taken of mine” (Jn 16:14), [this] means that he will take of mine from the beginning and relate it to you. But if this “mine” means the emanation of the Son, then in other places [in the Scripture] you would think to yourself that the Father was incarnated. For this the Son said: “Everything that is yours, is mine” (cf. Jn 16:15), and reciprocally: “What is mine, is yours.”

And these demonstrate unity to us.

For the fifth [argument] we answer that when the Spirit glorifies the Son, you say that He [the Son] originated from Him [the Spirit]. Behold, the Father glorifies the Son whose origin is in Him. Accordingly: “I glorified and I will again glorify” (Jn 12:28). And these reveal equal honor.

For the sixth [argument] we answer that when you say that the Son is without life from whom the Spirit does not emanate, then according to you the Spirit is irrational because it does not beget the Word. To presume or say that [there are] such things in one existence is considerable folly.

For the seventh [argument] we say that God’s finger sometimes indicates the Trinity of persons. Accordingly: “Who weighed the heaviness of the earth with three fingers” (Isa 40:12)? Sometimes [it means] the difference of graces, as it is said in the Song of Songs: “My hands poured the myrrh, and my perfumed fingers over the handles of the lock” (Song 5:5). Sometimes [it indicates] one person alone; accordingly: “By the finger of God I cast out demons” (Lk

11:20). Sometimes [it indicates] mighty strength, for which the wise men of Egypt said: “This is the finger of God” (Ex 8:19). But why is the finger of God called the Holy Spirit? First, as the finger is of the same essence as the body, likewise the Holy Spirit is of the essence of God. Second, as we write and do all works by fingers, likewise the Holy Spirit wrote through the prophets; accordingly: “Among whom and in which time the Spirit of Christ influenced them” (1 Pet 1:11).

And the Son worked all the wonderful deeds through the Spirit.

For the eighth [argument] we will tell you that to comprehend the Holy Spirit by analogy of speech is somewhat correct and somewhat incorrect.

It is correct, because as the speech is the interpreter of mind and reason, similarly the Holy Spirit [is the interpreter] of the Father and the Son. Accordingly: “He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear” (Jn 16:13).

And it is incorrect as follows. First, for speech that is expressed reason is the same inner reason. Then, therefore, this example removes the person from the spirit.

Second, because the speech is formed by reason alone, and not by minds, then, therefore, to think in this fashion [means] to relate the Spirit only to the Son, and not the Father, which is an impossible separation.

And that the Holy Spirit emanates only from the Father, we find this first from questions, second from examples, and third from testimonies.

First, through the questions.

First, in the following manner. If you say that the Spirit is from the Father and the Son, to which do you relate the emanation: to the person, or to the nature? If to the nature, then you have divided nature into origin and the originated, like a birth-giver and the begotten, which is [what] Arius and Macedonius [do].

And if you mean that [the Spirit] emanates from the person, then you say that the Spirit is two persons: one emanating from the Father,

and the other from the Son. In this manner the Trinity becomes a quaternity.

Second, I ask if the Trinity has one origin or two. If it has one origin, then their saying that the Spirit emanates from the Father and the Son is false. But if there are two origins, then there are obviously two operations. In this manner the Manichaeans acknowledge two gods, one Creator of the good, the other [Creator] of evil, which is denial of the [one] God.

Third, again, I ask whether the Father is capable of emanating the Spirit, or not. For if He is capable, then the Son is not a participant. And if He is incapable, then that which comes forth from Him is incapable; therefore, none of them is God.

Fourth, again, I ask whether the Holy Spirit emanates partly from the Father, and partly from the Son, or wholly from the Father and wholly from the Son.

For if [the Spirit emanates] partly, then the emanation of the Spirit is incomplete. And if wholly, then there would be either two Spirits, as we mentioned earlier, or the emanation from the Son would be superfluous, which is blasphemy.

Fifth, again, I ask whether the Father and the Son emanate the Spirit evenly or unevenly. For if even and equal, then there is no perfect originator of the emanation among them, because they both [the Father and the Son] are in place as originator of the emanation. But if unevenly, the one who emanates perfectly is the originator of the emanation, and not the [one who emanates] imperfectly.

Sixth, again, I ask whether the Father and the Son emanate the Spirit in an orderly or disorderly fashion. If orderly, on occasion one of them, and then the other, the first originator of the emanation is the [true] originator of the emanation, and not the last. But if they emanate in a disorderly fashion, then the one who emanates from them is disorderly; therefore, none of them is God.

Seventh, again, I ask whether the Spirit emanates from that which has no beginning, or from that which has beginning. For if [the Spirit] emanate from that which has no beginning, then [the Spirit] is uncreated and immortal, as the Son and the Spirit from the Father

without beginning. But if [the Spirit] comes forth from that which has beginning, then [the Spirit] is made and created, like all creatures who are made by the Son and the Spirit. And if the Spirit emanates both from that which has no beginning and from that which has beginning, then [the Spirit] becomes both uncreated and created, which is a Macedonian [belief] and is a weighty blasphemy. Then, therefore, from only the Father who has no beginning does the uncreated and unending Holy Spirit emanate.

Eighth, again, I ask whether the Son emanates that which has been emanated from the Father, or that which has not been emanated. If the Son emanates that which has been emanated, then the emanation of the Son is unnecessary, for the Spirit emanates from the Father. But if the Son emanates that which has not been emanated, then you will say that the emanation is not from the Father, but only from the Son, which is false.

Ninth, again, I ask whether the emanation of the Spirit is one totality and not partial; for if that one [totality] emanates from the Father, then it cannot emanate from the Son. But if that one [totality] emanates from the Son, the Spirit that emanates becomes the grandson of the Father and does not emanate from Him.

Tenth, again, I ask whether the same Spirit emanates from the Father and the Son, or different [spirits]. If the same [Spirit] emanates from them, then the emanation of one of them is unnecessary, as has been demonstrated. But if different [Spirits] emanate from the Father and the Son, then the Spirit is twofold and not one.

So much concerning the questions.

Second, through examples.

First, since the Spirit's emanation is a procession, and the procession is a movement from one to another. Now, if the Spirit proceeds from the Son, it is necessary that [the Spirit] proceeds from the Son to the Father, or to another person. Now, [the Spirit] does not proceed to the Father, because the Father does not have anything from the Son. And [the Spirit does not flow] to another person, because there is no other person. Therefore, [the Spirit] does not proceed from the Son.

Second, the Holy Spirit proceeds as breath and emanation. Now, as the breath does not proceed from the Word, likewise the Spirit does not proceed from the Son.

Third, again, the Holy Spirit is from the Father like a will from reason, and the Son [is from the Father] as intelligence. Now, the will is not from intelligence [understanding], nor is the Spirit from the Son.

Fourth, again, the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father as heat [proceeds] from fire. Now, we see that heat proceeds not from light, but from fire alone. Likewise, the Holy Spirit does not emanate from the Son, but only from the Father.

Fifth, again, the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father like a scent of a flower or an apple. Now, the scent is not from color, but from the body alone. Likewise, the Spirit is not from the Son, but from the Father alone.

Sixth, again, the Spirit proceeds as a relationship and a unifier. The one [relationship] as mediating which relates the two extremities, and the other [unifier] as a third [party] and an extremity. Now, if [the Spirit] proceeds from both the Father and the Son, then [the Spirit] is an extremity and third [party], and is not a relationship. Therefore, [the Spirit] does not proceed from both the Father and the Son, but [proceeds] from the Father to the Son.

Third, it is evident from testimonies that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father alone.

First, as the Savior says in the Gospel of John about the Spirit: “The Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father . . . shall teach you all things” (Jn 15:26; 14:26). And again: “The Spirit of your Father will speak in you” (Mt 10:20).

Second, Paul in Romans says: “The Spirit of Him who raised Jesus” (Rom 8:11).

Third, the prophets testify. As David says about the Spirit: “With you, Lord, is the fountain of life,” (Ps 36:9) and [states] not *from yourselves*. And Isaiah says on behalf of the Father: “My spirit shall go forth from me” (Isa 44:3).

Fourth, witness is the great Dionysius who says in the *Divine Names*: “From the immaterial and indivisible Good arose two shinings.” Now, the two lights proceed from one [origin], and not one from the other. Again, he says: “The Father is originating Godhead, while the Son and the Spirit are divinely begotten. If need be, say divinely planted blossoms, or like flowers or sublime lights.” And again, he says: “Those which are begotten of the Supreme are not antithetical to each other, for the Father is the only ultimate origin of divinity.”

Fifth, in the Canons of the Ecumenical Councils that occurred in their [the Macedonians’] time, the confession of faith is presented sufficiently. There, in the Creeds, it is said that the Holy Spirit is from the Father, and the Son is not mentioned. Also, in the Canons of the three Holy Councils there are eight statements that forbid those who preach or teach differently than they [the three Councils] teach.

Sixth testimony, in the Council of Chalcedon, which they accept but we do not, it is written, whoever says that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son shall be anathematized. Then, therefore, they are anathematized by their own Canons.

Seventh, witness is the Damascene [John of Damascus] who, himself being a Chalcedonian, says: “We do manifestly say that the Holy Spirit is of the Father, and we call Him the Spirit of the Father. Now, we do not say that the Holy Spirit is from the Son, but we call Him the Spirit of the Son.”²⁸

Again, when it is said that you shall hear “from the Father,” and or “shall receive [of mine],” do not understand from this that the procession of the Holy Spirit was as yet future, for it was eternal. But it was said in that fashion to demonstrate that divinity is so eternal that it contains within itself all times; accordingly, divine processions happen in future times, yet somehow exist presently. And as we can for the present truly say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, we can for the future say that the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son; and since [it] will not proceed [from the son],

²⁸ St. John of Damascus, *Writings* (Washington, DC, CUA Press, 1970), 188.

nor did it receive its existence and truth in a way that it will never receive again [anything from the Father].

Eighth, St. Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus] says: “The Son and the Holy Spirit are like two rays that deliver their light to us.” Then, therefore, the Son and the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father like two rays, and based on this, one does not proceed from the other.

Again, he [Nazianzus] says in the treatise on the Son: “For this, coming into our world, we accept within us the unbegotten, as well as the begotten, which was sent forth from the Father.”

Again, he says: “The one moving in the two until three came. And this is for us the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We call the one begetter and sender immaculate and eternal.” Again, in the treatise on faith he [Nazianzus] says: “I maintain my word that there is one God the Father, one origin concerning the Son and the Spirit.” Again, he says: “If you hear [about] birth, do not examine how. If you hear that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father, do not question how, for to examine is presumption, to believe is piety, and to recognize is eternal life.”

And we, in agreement with the holy and orthodox teachings, thus do believe and confess that God the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father. Accordingly: “The Spirit which proceeds from the Father” (Jn 15:26) and is received by God the Son. Accordingly: “It shall be taken of mine” (Jn 16:14). For procession is one thing, and reception is another. Thus, the Spirit proceeds from the Father, as the Son is begotten of the Father. And all that the Father has is His Son’s, and Christ is God’s strength and wisdom [1 Cor 1:10–25].

While the Spirit takes from the strength and wisdom of the Son and distributes [the received] to creatures. For example, the Holy Spirit is a fountain flowing within us. Now, the fountain first moves from the sea, arrives at the source, and from the source flows to us.

Now, the beginning of the procession of the Spirit is the Father, as it is said in the hymn: “That which flows from the fountain is moved by the Father.” And [the Spirit] arrives at the Son as the source, and is poured upon us through the Son.

Thus we explain [the expression] the Spirit of the Son.

Again, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and is sent through the Son, and [the Spirit] through His autonomous will breathes His grace to whomever He wants and in whatever measure.

For the first Proverbs says: “The Lord gives wisdom” (Prov 2:6).

For the second: “Knowledge comes out of His mouth” (Prov 2:6).

For the third: “Wisdom will come to you” (Prov 2:10).

And it is to be known that as the Son of God is called the Word, likewise the Holy Spirit is called speech. Accordingly: “He shall speak whatsoever He hears, and shall tell you the things to come” (Jn 16:13).

First, for speech proceeds from the intellect, like the birth of the inner word. And the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father like the Word is begotten [from the Father].

Second, the speech has the meaning of reason and intellect. And the Holy Spirit [has] the wisdom of the Father and the Son.

Third, the speech tells the knowledge of reason and intellect. Similarly, the Holy Spirit tells and teaches knowledge of the Father and the Son.

Fourth, the speech has the same nature as reason and intellect. And the Holy Spirit has the same nature of the Father and the Son.

Fifth, as the person is different, so also different is the word, and different is the intellect. Similarly, different are the person of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And this much about the Holy Spirit.

Chapter Seven of the Major Contents

Against the Nestorians who only acknowledge the humanity of Christ—those who say that the Word dwelt in the body as if in a temple.

Section One *Refutation from the studies of the Scriptures.*

Those who deny the unification by nature of the God become man, and who [believe that] by indwelling alone and through the grace of adoption [Christ] was elevated to the glory of divinity, as the Nestorians say. This is their first mistake.

[They argue,] as the Apostle says: “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who dwells in our hearts” (Eph 3:12–17).

And also [he] says: “You are the temple of God” (1 Cor 3:16). Then, therefore, we are the temple of God. And since He [Christ] also is a habitation, then He has nothing more than us.

Second, since He [Christ] is Son through grace and not by essence, then, therefore, He is divine partially and successively only, not completely, for grace is a special gift. Then, how can John say: “Of His fullness we have all received grace” (Jn 1:16)?

Third, as the Apostles and the Holy Fathers say, they do not acknowledge as a unity the Son and the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead, by necessity they acknowledge two [persons], one by nature, and the other by grace. Therefore, one is the giver, and the other is the recipient according to them; that is, the Word and man.

Fourth, since every object that is received from another becomes [something] to be disposed of, and although He [Christ] outwardly possesses the sonhood and other [attributes], sometimes there is question whether He could dispose of that which He has received.

Fifth, in the Gospel of John it is said: “He gave them power to become sons of God” (Jn 1:12). Since He [Christ] is Son by grace, how can He give to others that which He has just abounded with?

Sixth, since we appear as if we were adopted by grace unto the true and by nature Son, and [since] He [Christ] is adopted by grace according to us, it is necessary for Him [to have the existence of] a bodily Son with superior nature to whom this [Christ] resembles as a Son by grace.

Seventh, as we are under the yoke of servitude, so is He [Christ]. How [is it], then, in the parables that are in the Gospel, [that] the Son was sent after the servants, [and having seen Him,] the partakers in the vineyard said: “This is the heir . . . and they slew Him” (Mt 21:38–39). How does He Himself say: “The true Son will make you free” (cf. Jn 8:32)? And unto Peter He says: “The children are free” (Mt 17:25).

Eighth, the Son Himself said: “I am the truth” (Jn 14:6). Since everything He possesses is extrinsic and outwardly, how, then, does He say that He is true? Then he [Peter] lied to them when he said [of Christ]: “He committed no sin, and no guile was found in His mouth” (1 Pet 2:22).

Ninth, “Every knee should bow to Him,” says the Apostle (Phil 2:10). Now, if [Christ] is to be worshipped as God because of God’s dwelling [in Him], then He becomes by nature both God and something else at the same time. [Then] not only the earthly, but also the heavenly [creatures] are at fault for worshipping man.

Tenth, if He [Christ] is to be worshipped as God because of the dwelling [of God in Him], then not only does He become God, but also all earthly and heavenly creatures in whom God dwells can be called by the name God.

Eleventh, if He [Christ] is a habitation and a temple, and He forms us as His habitation and temple, then He is not God in His temple, but as a temple in a temple.

Twelfth, if because of His [God’s] dwelling His [Christ’s] body is edible, as He said: “My flesh is true food” (Jn 6:55), then those who eat become beastly cannibals, and not [eaters] of the flesh and

blood of the Son of God.

Thirteenth, if His [Christ's] flesh gives life because of His being a habitation, then all habitations will have lifegiving flesh, which is impossible to think of.

Fourteenth, if we were all saved by His suffering and death, then it was by mere man only. Then, [our salvation] happened not by God, but by man, which makes the prophet false concerning salvation by man. Thus He [Christ] becomes a savior who is saved and a life-giver who Himself receives life.

Fifteenth, He ascended and is seated down at the right hand of the Father. Now, if He is another Son and becomes one who shares the throne with the Father, then He displaced the Word who was seated at the right hand of the Father and who is the Father's own and proper to share the throne with Him.

Sixteenth, especially it is extremely inappropriate to seat the servant with the master, and the creature with the creator, since by nature he [the servant] is different.

Seventeenth, if the born is by the body human alone, then his birth-giver is not the *theotokos* [birth-giver of God], but the *anthropokos* [birth-giver of man].

Eighteenth, then the Father lies when He states: “This is my beloved Son” (Mt 3:17).

[Lie as well] the disciples like Peter who confessed Christ as the Son of God.

Nineteenth, if He is human alone, then, consequently, there is a separated nature, two wills, and a double operation. Thus, the Word would not have become man, but man through [God's] dwelling would have been elevated to the glory of the Word.

Twentieth, thus trinity would become a quaternity, and there would be an increase in number in the nature and persons [of Trinity], if He [Christ] is different as man alone and as God alone.

Also, many other blasphemies follow from the opinions of Nestorius, which are anathematized by the Holy Church.

Section Two

Questions of the Dyophysites who deny that the one Christ was God become man, and through separation say [Christ was] perfect god and perfect man.

First question. Do you relate perfection to the person, or to nature? If you relate it to nature, then you attribute two perfections to the Trinity, for Trinity has one perfect nature and one human nature. And if [you relate perfection] to the person, then you make Trinity quaternity, as it has been said.

Second question. Did the Virgin Mary give birth to the Only Begotten Son as to her nature, or to the firstborn solely, or to both? If to both, then you would say that she is mother of two sons. If to the firstborn solely, then you, like Nestorius, do not acknowledge the son given birth by the Virgin as God. And if merely to the Word, then you conclude that the beginning of existence comes from the mother, and not from God the Father.

Third question. O you Dyophysites! Do you acknowledge Christ as God become man, or man become God? If God become man, then how do you deny and divide into two natures God and man? And if man become God, then the Apostle lies [when he states] that from integrity to vanity [cf. Phil 2:7–8], since [your claim of] rising from humility to sublimity contradicts this. And if you say neither this, nor that, behold [you have come up with] a new heterodox heresy and the abolition of the great mystery of dispensation.

Fourth, “Every knee should bow to Him,” says the Apostle (Phil 2:10). Now, you, dividers, which nature in Christ is to be prostrated before? If the divine nature, then you worship in the Hebraic fashion. Then, therefore, the Apostle lies, since he says [prostrate before] “Jesus Christ.” And if the human nature alone, then you sin with blasphemous worship of man, and despite the divine commandments you have prostrated before that which is created instead of the Creator.

Fifth, “There is no God but one . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ,”

says [the Apostle] (1 Cor 8:4–6). O you Dyophysites! For which nature in Christ do you say one Lord, the divine or the human? If the divine alone, then you are related to Arius, for he calls the Word alone Christ; that is, anointed and sanctified by the Father, from which is understood that He [Christ] is less than the Father. And if you mean the human alone, then you have deprived the Word of divinity and have stated that everything happens by the human alone, which is extreme evil. And if you relate two natures to the Lord, then you contradict the Apostle who said that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, as there is one Father.

Sixth, “You are Christ the Son of God” (Mk 14:61). I ask you, O divider! In Christ which [person] do you consider Son of God by nature? If you say that He is divine by nature, then you will say that He is human by grace. And if you say that the Son is human by nature, then thus you would take away the Word from sonhood. And if [you admit] two natures, then you have said that the Father has two natures.

Seventh, the Holy Spirit descended on Christ and alighted on Him [Mt 3:16].

O you divider! Whose son do you say was sanctified by the Holy Spirit? If you say that He [Christ] received the Word from God the Father, then you classify Him with those creatures who need sanctification and sonhood by grace. And if you say from the son of David alone, then how could He—who is sanctified by grace—sanctify with authority the faithful? Or, when He was granting His goodness to His followers, [how could He] physically breathe on them, saying: “Receive you the Holy Spirit” (Jn 20:22)?

Do we say now the Spirit of Christ by grace and not by nature?

Eighth question. “Baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). Now, as we believers are baptized in the Father and the Holy Spirit, likewise in the incarnate Son, the one Lord and one Christ.

And I ask you, dividers of Christ, in which nature are you baptized, the divine or the human? If the divine alone, then you reduce the immortal nature unto death, for the Apostle says: “As we

were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death; we are buried with Him” (Rom 6:3). But if in the human nature alone, then you are still incomplete, for you were baptized in the death of a mere human. And again [you are incomplete], because you remove the Word from the order of the Trinity, switching it with the human. Therefore, we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Ninth, “As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me” (Jn 6:57). I ask you, who divide [Christ] into two, from which nature do you receive nourishment by which you will live? If the divine in itself, behold, the nature of the Word is inedible. And if the human alone, how could the human body give life, or, how was He sent from the Father and how can He live because of the Father?

Tenth, “Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed” (Jn 17:5). Tell me, O divider! Which nature says this in Christ? If you say the divine, then you will show that the Word lacks glory, and you shall follow Arius. And if the human in itself, how could He have glory before the world existed, for He came into being in time? Then the Father lied when He called His Son that who was from the son of David.

These questions are in opposition to the Dyophysites who deny the unity of Christ’s natures.

Again, eleventh, the Apostle says: “[God] gave Him the name (that is, God) that is above every name” (Phil 2:9). And this, O you divider, to which person do you relate? If [you relate it] to the Word, you think the unthinkable, for He has it [the name of God] by nature. Precisely have you become a follower of Arius. And if [you relate it] to the human alone, then you will have instantly introduced a new God to be worshipped by angels and human beings. Because He has the name *God* outwardly and extrinsically, and not in essence.

Twelfth, “He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3). Likewise, say the following! Did the Son by nature sit at the right hand of the Majesty, or the Son by grace, according to you? If you say the [Son] by nature, then both the Apostle and the Gospel

have lied, since they said that Christ resurrected, ascended, and sat at the right hand of the Father. But if you say that the human is seated, then you have deprived the Word from sharing the throne of the Father, O you who love solitude! And if you will say two natures, then you declare that there are two who share the throne with the Father, one divine, and the other human.

Thirteenth, “I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me” (Jn 6:38). Tell me, O divider! To which person is this related? If [it is related] to the human alone, how did He come down from the heavens? For His body was born of the Virgin. And if [it is related] to the Word alone who came down from the heavens, then you have confessed two wills contrary to each other—the will of the begetter and of the Word. To this will follow double work, and particularly [double] natures. Hence, a discord within the Trinity.

Fourteenth, “I have power to lay it down, and [I have power to] take it again” (Jn 10:18). Tell me, O Dyophysite! Whom do you think this refers to? If the Word in itself, then you have reduced the immortal to the level of mortality. And if the human alone, how can a mere human die on his own and resurrect by his own power?

And these are the fourteen questions against the Dyophysite heretics who divide two natures in one Christ.

Section Three

Testimonies from the Holy Scriptures that Christ is true God.

First, as follows. God’s work is to create. Hence: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1). And the Apostle says concerning Christ: “one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things” (1 Cor 8:6). And He [Christ] gave sight to the person blind by birth. Then, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ is God.

Second, God is the giver of life. Hence: “I kill and I make alive” (Deut 32:39). And John’s Gospel says: “[The dead] will hear the voice of the Son of God . . . and will come out” (Jn 5:25, 29). And

He [Christ] called Lazarus out of his grave and gave him life by the Word.

Third, “God is righteous judge” says the Psalm (cf. Ps 96:10). And John’s Gospel says about Christ: “The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to His Son” (Jn 5:22).

Fourth, God knows the hidden [things]. As David says: “who fashioned their hearts alone; who understands all their works” (Ps 33:15). And the Lord [Christ] knowing their thoughts said: “Why reason you these things in your hearts?” (Mk 2:8).

Fifth, God is incomprehensible. Hence: “No one knows the Father except the Son” (cf. Lk 10:22), and for Himself He [Christ] said: “As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father” (Jn 10:15).

Sixth, “You shall worship the Lord your God,” says the commandment (Mt 4:10). And the Apostle says: “[At the name of Jesus] every knee should bow, of things in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:10–11).

Seventh, divine glory is proper to God alone, as He [God] said to Isaiah: “My glory I will not give to another” (Isa 42:8). And Matthew [said]: “The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father” (Mt 16:27).

Eighth, James says: “There is one lawgiver and judge” (Jas 4:12). And Christ Himself, establishing laws, said that the people of old said this, but I say thus and thus.

Ninth, it is given to God alone to do miracles. Hence: “You are the God that does wonders” (Ps 77:14). And our Lord Christ worked miracles. Hence: “My Father works hitherto, and I work” (Jn 5:17). And that “whatever the Father does, these also does the Son likewise” (Jn 5:19).

Tenth, it is given to God alone to forgive sins. Hence: “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk 2:7). And the Son of Man had authority to forgive sins. As He said: “Your sins are forgiven” (Mt 9:2). Then, therefore, Christ is God.

Eleventh, it is given to God to renew. As David says: “You shall

send forth your spirit . . . and you shall renew the face of the earth” (Ps 104:30). And the Apostle says about Christ: “We shall be transformed into the same change when He changes our vile body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (cf. Phil 3:21).

Twelfth, it is given to God to be eternal and immutable according to the Prophet. “I the God [am the same] and do not change” (cf. Mal 3:6). And the Lord [Christ] says: “Touch me and see; it is I myself” (cf. Lk 24:39).

Thirteenth, God alone is almighty, according to the Prophet: “Almighty great name Lord” (Jer 32:19). And Paul says about the Son: “He upholds all things by the word of His power” (Heb 1:3).

Fourteenth, it is given to God alone to be omnipresent. Hence: “Our God [who is] in the heavens and on earth” (Ps 113:3).²⁹ Likewise, the Only Begotten Son was in the Father’s bosom and in the Virgin’s womb. [He was] dishonored on the cross, and seated on the throne of glory. As He [Christ] said: “The Son of Man that is in heaven” (Jn 3:13). Therefore, He [Christ] is with the faithful unto the end of the world.

Fifteenth, a temple is sanctified by God alone. Hence: “The Lord in His holy temple” (Ps 11:4). Which the Apostle explains as: “You are the temple of living God” (1 Cor 3:16). And He [Christ] Himself said to those who kept the commandments: “We [I and my Father] will come to Him and make our abode with Him” (Jn 14:23).

Sixteenth, it is given to God alone to accomplish as He wills. Hence: “All that the Lord willed, He did” (Ps 135:6). And the Lord Himself said: “I am willing. Be clean” (Mt 8:3).

Seventeenth, it is given to God alone to be just with complete holiness. Hence: “There is none as holy as the Lord, and there is none as righteous as our God” (1 Sa 2:2). And the Prophet says for the Son: “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth” (Isa 53:9). As He [Christ] says: “The prince of this world shall not find me among his followers” (cf. Jn 14:30).

Eighteenth, God alone is true, and He [Christ] testified to

²⁹ Absent in the Septuagint.

Himself: “I am the truth” (Jn 14:6). Then, therefore, Christ is God.

Nineteenth, God alone is the Lord of glory. Hence: “The Lord of hosts Himself is the King of glory” (Ps 24:10). And the Apostle calls Christ the Lord of glory in First Corinthians: “Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor 2:8).

Twentieth, to call to mission is given to God alone. According to Isaiah: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us to this people” (Isa 6:8)? And the Lord Himself said: “As my Father has sent me, so I send you” (Mt 28:18). Then, therefore, Christ is God equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit.

However, one might say that the aforementioned operations are proper to Christ in the nature of the Word, and not in the body. For this I am compelled to demonstrate in the following twenty chapters [of the *Book of Questions*] that Christ is God in His body united to the incarnate and humanized God.

Section Four

How is our Lord Jesus Christ and God one with the body born of the Virgin?

First, “The Word became flesh,” says John (Jn 1:14). And this *became* means the unification of the Word and body. But if someone says that *became* indicates change, as in the staff of Moses became a serpent, we say that when the Prophet indicates that the Lord became a refuge [cf. Isa 25:4], it does not mean that He [God] changed from authority into refuge, but that the Lord came, remained Lord, and became refuge. Likewise, God the Word came, remained Word, and became body.

And since the Word became body by unification, then it is evident that the body of the Word became Word by the same unification. Then, therefore, the same body of Christ is God.

Second, in First Corinthians it is said: “One Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things” (1 Cor 8:6). Now, since *all things* is proper to the Word—accordingly: “[All] things were made by the

Word” (cf. Jn 1:3)—and [since] the man is called Jesus, then, therefore, one is the Lord, and one is Christ the Word become man.

Third, in the Philippians it is said: “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who . . . being in the form of God” (Phil 2:5–6). Now, the Word without body is not Christ; then, therefore, it is evident that by the united body our Lord Jesus Christ is equal [to God] and is in the form of God.

Fourth, in Galatians it is said: “God sent His Son made of a woman” (Gal 4:4). Then, therefore, that which became man from a woman is the Son of God.

Fifth, God promised to Abraham: “All the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring” (cf. Acts 3:25). And Paul in Romans says that that offspring is Christ: “From the fathers, according to the flesh, comes Christ, God blessed forever” (cf. Rom 9:5). Then, therefore, the Son of the Virgin is God.

Sixth, God the Word is immaterial and from the beginning. Hence: “In the beginning was the Word” (Jn 1:1). And John says in the Catholic [epistle]: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life” (1 Jn 1:1). Then, therefore, the Word of life is a tangible body and God.

Seventh, to descend from heaven is proper to the Word, for it became united to that body as it descended. And concerning the body, John says: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven” (Jn 6:51). Then, therefore, the body is God and is descended from heaven.

Eighth, to ascend into heaven is proper to the body of Christ, as it ascended before the eyes of the Apostles. Also, the descent of the Word [is proper to Christ] as has been said. And in Ephesians the Apostle says: “He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens” (Eph 4:10). Then, therefore, the Son of Man who is God is in heaven.

Ninth, that which *is* is called God. Accordingly, it was said to Moses: “I am who I am” (Ex 3:14). While John’s Gospel says: “No one has ascended up to heaven but He who came down from heaven,

the Son of Man who is in heaven” (Jn 3:13). Then, therefore, the Son of Man, who is God, is also in heaven.

Tenth, pronouns such as *I*, *you*, *he* indicate one particular person. And Christ the man said: “Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn 8:58). And Peter says in [his] confession: “You are Christ, the Son of [the living] God” (Mt 16:16). Then, therefore, Christ is God and the incarnate Son of God.

Eleventh, John’s Gospel says: “I and my Father are one . . . Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn 10:30, 14:9). As He [Christ] said to the blind man: “He whom you have seen and who speaks with you is the Son of God” (cf. Jn 9:37). Then, therefore, He who was seen in the body and who has spoken is the Son of God and one with the Father.

Twelfth, that which is at the beginning of the world, and before whom the world did not exist, cannot be said to have come into the world. And yet the body and spirit of Christ were at the beginning of the world. Concerning this unified body, God the Word says: “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world” (Jn 16:28).

Thirteenth, Paul in Hebrews says: “When [I] came into the world . . . a body you have prepared for me” (Heb 10:5). Then, therefore, that body is uniquely the body of the Word of God, and this could not be, if it [the Word] was not unified with it [the body].

Fourteenth, Paul says in Philippians: “Who, though He was in the form of God . . . took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in human likeness, [etc.]” (Phil 2:6–7). Then, therefore, the Son of God, the incarnate Son, and the God become man are one.

Fifteenth, it is said in Colossians: “By Him all things in heaven and on earth were created” (Col 1:16). And following this he says: “He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead” (Col 1:18). Then, therefore, one is God and the Son who is the Creator of all, and the firstborn from the dead.

Sixteenth, [Christ] says: “I will raise Him up at the last day . . . I will give them eternal life” (Jn 6:40, 10:28). Then, therefore, there was no one who raised up, and no one who gave life, if there was no one united with eternal life.

Seventeenth, John's Gospel says: "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son," that is unto death (Jn 3:16). Then, therefore, the man who suffered and perished is the Son of God.

Eighteenth, all emotions of the body are related to the person to whom the body belongs. As when Peter's body is wounded and tortured, we say that Peter is wounded, and Peter is tortured. Then, therefore, the body of Christ is God. For this the Theologian [Nazianzus] says: "Crucified God, suffering God."

Nineteenth, although some people are called lord for having a certain authority, it is God alone who is Lord. Hence: "The Lord of hosts, He is the king of glory" (Ps 24:10). And Paul in First Corinthians calls the crucified Christ Lord of glory: "Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor 2:8).

Twentieth, it can be said that the major goals of the unity of the body as God are resurrection and eternal life. Likewise, the minor goals of the unity of the Word of God are to be born as man of the Virgin in time, to be crucified, and to perish. As the Apostle says: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8). Then, therefore, Christ is true God united with the body indivisibly forever.

Section Five

On the unification of Christ.

Question: If the common nature of the Trinity is one and undivided, how can we understand that the Word alone was incarnate, and not the Father, nor the Spirit?

Answer: This question is a vulgar, isolated expression of those who are ignorant. Now, [this is] to refute your thoughts, so you understand how in one common nature the Word [is] begotten and the Spirit emanated, while the Father is neither begotten, nor emanated, nor [is] interchangeable. For example, an individual person has a common nature totally within himself. Therefore, it is evident by definition that each living mortal rational person has a

mind and sense. And you, Peter, a living mortal rational man, you have mind and sense. Now you, as an individual, have your common nature. You were born of a mother in time, or you died in the world, [but] not the common humanity [you share]. Likewise understand that God the Word having the same nature [of the Trinity] within His individuality, He alone was united with the body, and not the Father, nor the Spirit, according to the Apostle: “In Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily; [that is, in essence]” (Col 2:9). And [understand] that the one has nothing less than the two, nor the two have anything more than the one, except their identity. So much for the common nature.

And concerning the indivisible essence, understand it too by examples. The apple has one substance, but three accidental properties—taste, fragrance, and color [associated] with the shape. Now, we sense differently through different senses, and not one [sense] by all [senses], nor all [senses] by one [sense]. For the eye senses color with shape, but not taste, nor fragrance. And the nose [senses] fragrance, but not the others. And the mouth [senses] only taste, without fragrance and color.

And as fire has in its substance light and heat, the hand senses heat, and the eye only light in the one substance. Likewise, [there is one substance] in the humanization of the Word, remaining indivisible with the Father and the Spirit. Hence: “I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (Jn 14:10), and “by the Spirit of God I cast out demons” (Mt 12:28). But [it is] the Word that became flesh, and not the Father, nor the Spirit.

Section Six

Question: Is Christ in His human nature God, or in His divine nature man?

Answer: This is a question for the Dyophysites and resembles the [question] whether man in the nature of spirit is body, or in the nature of His body is spirit. Now, since they think that God is greater than the two parts, either by necessity they fall in Nestorius’s [concept of]

the two natures, or they confuse the natures as Eutyches does.

We avoid the two extremes, and following the correct median path, we say that Christ is man in His divine nature without a confused unity, and is God in His human nature. For the name Christ itself teaches you becoming man by divinity, and God by humanity. Therefore, the human alone or simply God is not pronounced Christ, but, as we have demonstrated, the unity of the two.

In this fashion [we lay argument] against Nestorius. But against Eutyches, [it needs] to be said clearly that [Christ] maintains the properties of [each] nature in the unified natures. Accordingly, Christ is human with divine nature, and God with human nature. Not by transformation, but by way of restitution; that is, while uniting [with humanity] He came remaining what He already was, and became that which He was not. For He is both God within His nature and similarly human according to His unified nature. Whereby, as His humanity was God according to His unified nature, the same was man according to His property. Likewise, the Word is immortal in its nature, and the same becomes mortal by unification; as also humanity becomes immortal by unification, and is mortal in its property. Likewise, [Christ is both] unbounded and bound; immaterial and incarnate; uncreated and created; impassible and passible.

In this fashion the unification of the Word and the unconfused union should be understood. For this is the correct confession of the unity of Christ, and so have we learned from our holy mentor.

But [to relate] divinity to God alone, and humanity to man only; immortality to God and mortality to man; passibility to man and impassibility to God; therefore, only that born of the mother is human and not divine nature; to say these and other similar [things] unbinds and denies the unity of the Word. And whoever denies the unity denies the being of Christ; then, therefore, the Christian faith. Then he remains faithful who cannot deny his person [Christ].

And you receive this and let it remain with you, and remain united in all aspects and feelings always oriented toward Christ, the head of all.

Section Seven

Question: Why do Chalcedonians and Nestorians deny the unity of nature, and say [unity was] only in person and property?

Answer: For three reasons they deny the unity of the Word in humanization.

First, not to confuse the natures in unity, as Eutyches said.

Second, so that the divine nature not suffer with human [nature].

Third, so that the Trinity does not appear to be incarnate. Since nature [of the Trinity] is common [to all persons of the Trinity], His [the Word's/Christ's] mother becomes the mother of the Trinity.

This [is what] they [say]. And we briefly answer.

As to the first we say, although God the Word by nature becomes united with humanity, it does not bear any confusion or mingling. For it [the Word] is incorporeal and becomes united with the body, like the spirit and body, which become unified by nature and are distinct.

As for the second we say that it is not the divided nature that receives the impassibility of the Word, but the uncreated nature. Since it [the Word] is uncreated, it does not undergo any evolving or change of emotion. In fact, there are unified things among the created, such as fire and iron, body and spirit, which suffer without pain.

As for the third we say that it is total nonsense and error even to listen to it [this argument]. For had we said that the impersonal nature was united with that which was common, they would have had something to say about it. But because we say that the hypostatic nature and the incarnate individual [were united], for the beginning of the unity is in nature, and the perfection [of the unity] is completed in the person, then their argument is [that of] stupid and stunned people. Because, according to that [what they say], they have to deny the individual nature of His [Christ's] humanity, in order to avoid His unity with all humanity. It follows that, according to them, the whole of humankind suffered and died with Christ. Such evil positions are banished by the Orthodox Church. We confess that God

the Word was incarnated and became human in His fullness, and not partially, as Paul says: “In Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9). Not by change and confusion, but by an unconfused unity the Word became flesh and perfectly united our nature with His divinity. And by appearing in the body, we saw one nature and one person, one Lord, one Son, according to the orthodox teaching of the holy fathers.

And we say one is our Lord Jesus Christ, and one is His nature, because one is the nature of the incarnate Word.

Section Eight

Question: What is the ultimate unity of the incarnate Word?

Answer: It is understood in four ways. First, it is miraculous the bounds of which are incomprehensible, and are beyond nature.

Second, it is the uniting of uncreated with created.

Third, the uniting is immutable.

Fourth, it is indivisible.

Section Nine

Question: How do we say [the Word/Christ is] God and human?

Answer: Saying that Christ is God and human is comprehended in two ways. Some, by dividing the whole, say God and human, like the Nestorians.

And others, like the Chalcedonians, say partially divided.

While we say wholly indivisible God and human; that is, human in His humanity and God in His divinity.

From this follows three different ways of uniting.

First, the selfsame God the Word God and human; that is, human in humanity and God in divinity. And this, not partially or by division, but wholly and in unity. These observe the unity of human with divine.

Second, saying that the selfsame God is man, and the same human is God; not by transformation, but by way of restitution.

These observe the unity of substance.

Third, it is said for humanity itself, human as divine and God as divine; and for God the Word Himself, God as divine and God as human, for it is indivisible; and although He [God the Word] was God before the incarnation, after this ineffable uniting He is God in the body. These observe the unity of nature.

And how can we say this?

As we call the Virgin birth-giver of God both mother and virgin, not [having] two natures or two persons that are partial and divisible, but as one and the same [person], who has both properties; likewise, we can say the one and the same virgin in her virginity and mother in her maternity; and also say mother virgin and virgin mother. And again, say virgin in her virginity and mother in her virginity, as well as virgin in her maternity and mother in her maternity. In this fashion, He who is born of her is truly God and man.

Again, as it is said exclusively for God the Father, without beginning and without end, having these two [properties] in His single unity. He is not two persons, nor does He have two natures. Likewise, the begotten Son is united in His body, and is called God and man in this compound unity, and is not perceived as two persons or two natures.

Again, in the same fashion, God the Word is begotten of the Father before eternity, and is born of a mother in this later time. He is not perceived as twice begotten, but always as the only begotten. Likewise, the same Word has divine nature from the Father, and human nature from the mother, and it is not perceived as two natures, but one nature because of the uniting.

Again, as He [Christ] was the Son of the Father with His proper nature, He became son of the Virgin with her proper [nature]. And He is not, and is not perceived to be two sons or two countenances, and so on; but one son and one individual with His proper nature, and one countenance, one person, one form, and so on. Thus, He was from the Father by nature, and He became from the mother by nature, and it is not perceived to be of dual or two natures, but a single and one nature. One Son and one nature—one species, God become man.

And by extending this we will demonstrate that:

a) [Christ] became human as the Creator of creatures, and is not perceived as creature, nor as Creator and creature. But wholly uncreated and Creator in His body.

b) And He is not perceived to be imperfect and lesser as to growth in size. But totally perfect and always great in His body. Hence: “Great and perfect tent not made with hands; not of this creation” (cf. Heb 9:11).

c) And He is not perceived to be temporal in the body, but eternal and forever in body. Hence: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:8). Understand other [verses] similarly.

d) He is not perceived to be terrestrial or earthly because of the earthly body, but always heavenly in His body, and Creator of the terrestrial and earthly beings. Hence: “The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second is the Lord of heaven” (1 Cor 15:47).

e) And He is not perceived to be carnal as to His fleshly body, but totally spiritual. Hence: “The first man was a living soul, the second lifegiving spirit” (1 Cor 15:45).

f) And He is not perceived to be servant as to the servile body, but always as Lord and free. Hence: “The children are free” (Mt 17:25).

g) And He is not perceived cursed as to the cursed body, but wholly blessed in the body. Hence: “All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in Him” (Gen 26:4).

h) And He is not perceived sinful for having taken on a sinful body, but always innocent in His body. Hence: “He committed no sin, and no guile was found in His mouth” (1 Pet 2:22).

i) And He is not perceived as ignorant and weak concerning the body, but omniscient and omnipotent in the body. Hence: “Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:24).

j) And He is not perceived as corrupt in His taking on a corrupt body, but always pure in His body. As “His flesh did not see corruption” (Acts 2:31). And because He made us pure by the second birth.

k) And He is not perceived as mortal concerning the body, but

always immortal and giver of life in the body. Hence: “Whoever eats my flesh will live forever” (cf. Jn 6:55).

I) And He is not perceived as bounded by the body, but unbound in the body. Hence: “Offerings are offered everywhere” (cf. Mal 1:13). Similarly understand all other [verses].

And for this it is not perceived, nor can it be said through separation: Christ uncreated and created;

Or eternal and temporal;
Or perfect and imperfect;
Ignorant and omniscient;
Mighty and weak;
Spiritual and living soul;
Innocent and sinful, and all others.

And as you have learned the abovementioned by orthodox confession, keep in mind what we say.

He is not perceived as simply and solely human because of His human form.

And He is not perceived as God and human by separation, but God become human and incarnate. For if by separation you say God and human, then you will say concerning the Virgin who gave birth, *theotokos* and *anthropokos*. Otherwise, you will simply confess her to be *theotokos* as do we, and then you will confess Him who is born of her the incarnate and God become human.

Again, know rightly that as He is perceived to be incarnate and God become human, it is because of unity. And He is not perceived as human become God and incorporeal, because this means transformation.

Also, He is perceived as God clothed in corporeality, but He is not perceived as God in human form, or as human clothed with divinity, for this means separation.

Again, He is perceived as God who became body, became human, and took body, but it is not said that [God] took man.

Also, He is perceived as born in the body and appearing in the body, and walking in the body, and so on. And He is not perceived as born in man and appearing in man, or walking in man, and so on.

Likewise, He is perceived to have suffered in the body, and to have died in the body, and resurrected and ascended [in the body]. But He is not perceived to have suffered in man and died in man, or resurrected, or ascended [in man].

Section Ten

Question: Why does the Theologian [Nazianzus] say: “The one deified, and the other was divinized”? And [why does] Cyril say: “Not human become God, but God become human”?

Answer: Different teachings are against different heresies, and are not against each other. For the great Theologian [Nazianzus] opposed Arius, who said that the Word was created and then deified. Wherefore, he [Nazianzus] said that on the one hand, the Word was God by nature, God the Creator and author; while on the other hand [the divinized] was human by nature, created and brought into being from nature, and being mingled with the Word, the recipient became, like the giver, even with and equal to God. Hence: “God made Him both Lord and Anointed [i.e., Christ]” (Acts 2:36).

While St. Cyril provided weapons [for defense] against Nestorius, who said that the Word was in the body as habitation, and that the human was first born of the Virgin and walked on earth, and then, after His baptism, God the Word dwelt [in Him], and after resurrection [the Word] glorified Him and empowered [Christ] with Himself through coherence.

Wherefore, St. Cyril says that it is not the human who became God, but God the Word descended into the womb of the Virgin, taking body and spirit from her, only thus God became human. Hence: “The Word became flesh” (Jn 1:14).

From these two theologians we understand that God the Word became incarnate and became human, and that humanity became divine through mingling and uniting with the Word.

Section Eleven

Question: Why does the Theologian [Nazianzus] say “two natures,” while St. Cyril and Athanasius say: “The nature of the incarnate Word of God is one”?

Answer: We say that this also is against the two [aforementioned] heresies. St. Cyril against Nestorius, who claimed that Christ has two separate natures, said [that Christ has] one united nature—God incarnate and become human.

While the Theologian [Nazianzus] against Apollinaris, who claimed [that Christ took human] body without [human] spirit, said that a body without spirit is an incomplete human. He [Christ] received both body and spirit, which is the perfect nature of human. As he says, two natures, meaning complete. Contrary to what Apollinaris thought, perfect God and perfect human, both in spirit and body. Wherefore, he places the body and the spirit next to each other, meaning that a human cannot exist without spirit. Thus, confirming that the spirit and the body are united with God the Word, he puts it in order also, but he adds that there are not two sons, nor [two] gods.

He says this concerning the unity of countenances. Then he raises the doctrine of the unity of natures, among which he mentions the Savior. Otherwise, [he says] the visible and the invisible are the same, as well as the eternal and the temporal.

He stated that the Word is invisible and eternal, and that the body is visible and temporal. And referring to those who separate by dividing, he says that the two are one by taking the divine become human, and the human become God. Thus he indicated the unity of natures.

Section Twelve

Question: What does the Theologian [Nazianzus] mean [by saying] that the Trinity within itself has diversity, for there are diverse persons so that we do not confuse them?

Answer: These words mean that the unity of the Word contradicts the unity of the Trinity, because there [in the latter] there is one nature and three persons, while here [in the former] there are two natures and one person, the heterodox comment. Such opinions are false, because this [Nazianzus] says *against*, referring to that one nature that is in the Trinity and in the economy of the Word, while these [the heterodox] understand *against* as referring to division.

We, the followers of orthodox [faith], understand these words in two ways. First, as follows. He [Nazianzus] says that it is not possible to avoid the division within the Trinity, for one [person] is different from the other in order that we not confuse them, the persons. While he refutes divisions within the Savior as the opposite of this, for He [the Savior] is united by nature and it is not possible to confuse [His divinity and humanity]. Again, as he [Nazianzus] says, this unity within Christ is different from [the unity] within the Trinity, for there is unity but a separation of persons; while here [in Christ], although there is unity, there is no separation of persons; rather, according to the unity of nature there is one person.

Section Thirteen

Question: How do we avoid the dividing of Nestorius and the confusing of Eutyches?

Answer: In the context of worship, the Holy Scriptures teach us moderation. As Solomon said: “Keep straight the path of your feet . . . Do not swerve to the right or to the left” (cf. Prov 4:26–27). Now, it is the schismatics who swerve right or left. Like Sabellius who, swerving to the right, summed up the Trinity in one nature and one person; and contrary to him, swerving to the left, Arius separated three persons and three natures. While the Holy Church confesses one nature, as opposed to Arius, and three persons, as opposed to Sabellius.

Likewise, in the economy of Christ, Nestorius falsely divides the persons and natures, the wills and operations. And contrary to him, Eutyches altogether confuses and mingles the person and nature, as

well the wills and passions. While the orthodox followers strive against both right and left.

As opposed to Nestorius, they confess [the Trinity] indivisible, and as opposed to Eutyches [they confess the person and nature] unconfused unity.

Thus avoiding false extremes and maintaining moderation in the course of piety, we confess Christ God become human as one without confusion or separation, one person, one nature, one will, and one operation, according to the orthodox concept.

Section Fourteen

Question: What do we understand by one nature as to the Word and the body, or two natures, or the two [Word and body] become one nature?

Answer: Theological comprehension is veiled and incomprehensible for the unsophisticated intellect, and is hardly understood by educated minds or by the delicate inquiries of the saints. But what do we understand by saying one nature, or two [natures], or two in one nature?

Now, to say simply one nature of the Word and the body is a complete profanity. For the body is from the Virgin, and the Virgin [is] from Adam's generation, and Adam [is] created from earth. Now, to relate one nature to that which is created from earth and to God the Creator is a profane opinion.

While those who say that Christ has two natures after the uniting, and who, although declaring the person one, divide the will, operations, and passions, do not confess God become human; but either say that divine nature dwelt in a preexistent person, or consider [Christ] adopted by grace, as does Nestorius.

And those who claim that the two became one nature, as if there was one nature to both man and God which was neither divine, nor human, they declare the economy holy in a mulish [fashion], or by fantasy and vanity, as it seems to the Manichaeans and to Eutyches.

Question: I have become confused. Explain your words.

Answer: We say that when we relate one nature to the Word and the body, this would be either like Arius, who says that the Word is created and the body is created, and thus relates one nature to the created and [declares that] the Word in the body is subject to pain and death; [or like] Apollinaris, who denied the spirit and mind, and stated that [the Word] received only corporeal form and dwelt there in the place of the spirit.

Eutyches also claimed one nature by confusing and mingling the properties of different natures.

Again, the other Eutyches [Eutychius] claimed one nature [by saying that] the body received nothing from the Virgin, but as if through a tube, like a mold, [the Word] passed and received only its form shaped in her form.

Again, one nature is claimed by those who declare the true humanization to be in appearance and likeness.

Also, one nature is claimed by those who declare that the body [of the Word] was brought from heaven. Or [declare] the Word materialized in the form of a body according to its nature, like water becoming ice.

Again, one nature is declared by Marcellus and Photinus who say that the beginning of the Word was taken from the Virgin, and that it was not begotten of the Father before eternity. And there are those who say that without person and without being was the incarnate Word, as is our reason [human logos].

Also, one nature is claimed by those who confess Christ solely human, and not as God become human. These are the perverted sectarians who declare one nature to the Word and the body. And the Holy Church anathematizes those who think in this [aforsaid] fashion.

And those who confess two natures after the uniting, they are of two classes. Some, such as Nestorius, Paul of Samosata, and Theodoros, who say Christ is divided into two persons, two natures, two wills, and two operations. They manifestly say two Sons and two Christs; one Lord, the other servant; one Son of God by nature, the other [Son of God] by grace, and so on.

And others—such as the Chalcedonians, the cursed Leo, Flavianus, and their associates—declared one person, but two natures, two wills, and two operations in Christ. These do not confess unity in substance or nature, but in person only. But person without nature is merely a simple noun, like *Son*, or *Christ*, or *Jesus*. Now, these say that the noun is one, but they gather in this one noun two substances; that is, God and human. And they say one person, one Son, one Christ, and so on. As if the Word and the human are divided by substance and nature but are one by sonhood. For the Word is called Son, as the human is called Son. And the Word is called Christ, and Jesus, and Lord, and God. Likewise, the human is called Christ, and Jesus, and Lord, and God. Thus, they unify in name and sound, but divide and separate in reality and nature. Then, therefore, by confessing the sonhood and the noun to be united, they mislead the simpleminded [people]. And they deny and avoid the true unity. And these are those anathematized by the Holy Spirit at the Council of Ephesus and in other places, and are anathematized by the Holy Church.

And the third group who say that the two have become one nature, neither divine, nor human, these either confess confused like Eutyches and others, denying the one nature, or are [misled] by appearance. The Holy Church of God anathematizes them.

While we, the followers of orthodox faith, know the nature of the Word. Before humanization [the Word and the human] were apart from each other, as much as God and creatures, uncreated and created, temporal and eternal. And when the Creator willed to become human, God the Word in His perfect person and nature, not partially, but totally ineffably united with the body. Not taking a part of a human, but gathering the total nature in all its parts of an individual human—that is, our rational spirit, mind, and body—united with His divinity in an unconfused and inseparable union.

It [the Word] never had division either in word, or in comprehension, or in fact, [or] in its countenance, or nature, or will, or operations. For the united does not divide, because unity has eliminated duality.

And this unity we confess in one person, one countenance, one image, one nature, one will, and one operation. And although others have said one person, as we do, [they did so] out of confusion. We are not deceived [by them], nor do we agree with them. And although some may say like us one nature, but are confused, we do not err from their equivocal utterance.

But we follow the Holy Fathers who without doubt and vacillation maintain intact the unity of Christ. Like St. Athanasius who writes against Arius as follows:

“We confess God the Son begotten of the Father before eternity, and then born of a mother in time. The same being God and Son of God according to the Spirit, and Son of Man according to the body. We do not say two natures in the Son, one to be worshipped, and the other not to be worshipped, but one is the nature of the incarnate Word of God.”

The same writes St. Cyril in his letter to Succensus: “We say one is Christ God become man, and one is His nature. And as the Holy Fathers said, one is the nature of the incarnate Word of God.”

And the great Dionysius in many places confesses as united and one the nature of the incarnate Word of God. He, first, says in the third chapter of *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*: “By His all-perfect and distinct humanization, philanthropically He received shape in our nature, and among us, the divisibles, immutably came forth according to one nature.”

Again, he says in the same [book]: “Because the *one* and *simple* of Jesus, the most supremely divine Word, becoming human like us, compound and visible, unified our lowliness with His utmost divinity.”

Again, St. Hierotheus in the second chapter of the *Divine Names* says: “For the Super-God through love toward man came to nature, truly became substantial, and became man.”

And again [St. Hierotheus] says: “The divinity of Jesus, the cause and completing of all, is neither part nor whole, [while being at the same time] both whole and part, as embracing in Itself everything both part and whole.”

Again, St. Dionysius says in his fourth epistle: “Jesus, who is the first born among all, is connected to all men by substance, as the same entirely became truly man.”

And again, he [Dionysius] says: “We do not distinguish Jesus as human.”

And again, he says: “The sublime by substance, as was until this time by property, came also into being truly.”

And again, he says: “That which transcends being became being, and that which transcends man acts on man.”

And again, he says: “Christ was neither man, nor like no man, but [He was] like from man, and above men, and supreme man—that which truly became man.”

And again, he says: “And He did not act the divine as God, nor the human as man; but through God becoming man He conjointly as divine and human acted in a new way living among us.”

Again, St. Hierotheus says: “Wherefore, for the sake of humanity He came as to His nature, and was shaped as truly man.”

And again: “Since the unification was by divinity, [those united] are above divisions and the unified is no lesser [than divinity].”

Now, we have no right to add or subtract with any pretentious words. But we must confirm the holy confession of those who have taught us the mystery of piety, as it was shown.

Section Fifteen

The question of the Dyophysites to us—those who say that [Christ is] one person and divide Christ into two natures.

Question: Why don’t you say two natures to Christ?

The orthodox answer: To avoid appropriating two natures to Christ; for if we separate two natures [in Him], then, necessarily, we have to separate two persons [in Him].

The adversary says: Why does man have two natures, and one person?

The orthodox says: Man does not have two natures and one

person, but one nature and one person.

The adversary says: Which of the two do you deny and say one nature?

The orthodox says: Neither by denial, nor by obliteration, but by unification [man is] one nature.

The adversary says: Do you say unified by nature or by person?

The orthodox says: By nature unified and one complete person.

The adversary says: How do you say [that]?

The orthodox says: The unification of Christ has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The beginning is two natures. The middle is the unification in one nature. And the end and completion is one person.

The adversary says: Then why don't you say one person and two natures?

The orthodox says: Because the unified cannot be divided, and to say or understand two natures is to divide and sever Christ.

The adversary says: Did the person of the Word receive a human person or his nature?

The orthodox says: God the Word in His perfection received human nature; [human] spirit, body, and mind; and by unifying it [human nature] with His divinity became one perfect person and one countenance.

The adversary says: Then why don't you say unified in person?

The orthodox says: Because the person without nature is the designation only, and not the being.

And again, the unification of person implies division, while nature is united indivisibly. Third, for if the Word became unified in person only, and not in nature, then Christ would have been Son of God in person and by designation only, and not in substance. And fourth, for everything is unified in its substance, and not external to its substance, as fire unites with iron, and spirit with body.

The adversary says: If they are unified in substance, then no differences in substance are left.

The orthodox says: Although they are unified in substance, their differences are not removed, for the existence of differences does not hinder unification, such as [unification] of spirit and body, and gold

and fire. And know that the differences are of two [kinds]: consolidative and dividing. Species come into existence by consolidative differences, such as the rational and mortal, [which] complete the human nature. While dividing [differences] such as the rational and irrational distinguish a human and a horse. Now, when you say two natures in Christ, you speak of dividing differences, while we confess one [nature] through consolidative differences.

The adversary says: How do you relate one will and one operation to God and a human?

The orthodox says: As we say the nature of a human is unified with the nature of God, likewise the Word become man is unified and is one will. And the operation follows will. Then, therefore, one is the executed operation that comes forth from the one will of Christ.

As St. Dionysius says: “He did not act the divine as God, nor the human as human; but through God becoming man He conjointly as divine and human acted in a new way living among us.” Likewise, addressed the Theologian [Nazianzus] says in his Second Discourse to Claudianus: “Where are those apostates who manifestly divide Christ into two wills and two operations? They relate [Christ’s] hunger and thirst to [the nature of] man, and credit the supreme [operations] to divinity, etc.”

And again, do not ask about the how of His [Christ’s] operation. We do not say one operation, as if there is no most sublime and most humble. But we say one operation, for it is acted in unity, such as one hand cutting, sewing, writing, and erasing.

Know also this. We say one nature of Christ concerning not the origin, but the completion. And we say one operation concerning the origin, and not the completion of the act. And understand the will as [being] one concerning the willing and the unifying which is origin and completion. And likewise, we say one nature, one will, and one operation in the incarnate Word.

And if someone should argue that, as the heated sword cuts and burns, likewise there are two operations in Christ, we say that both cutting and burning are of the same heated substance. Similarly, both the most sublime and the most humble are of the one and same

unification; that is, the Word become man. Similarly, we say that accidents and energies are indivisible in Christ; such as becoming hungry is an accident, and feeding the thousands is an operation. Accident [is] thirst, and operation [is] drinking. As He [Christ] said: “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink” (Jn 7:37). Accident [is] the laboring on the way, and operation [is] the reposing of the laborer. Accident [is] the nailing on the cross, and operation [is] His eclipsing of the sun.

Accident [is] the release of the soul, and operation [is] the earthquake.

Accident [is] to be buried, and operation [is] the destruction of the hells.

And one are operation and accident, like the harp and the harper who do one operation, and not two [operations]; and like the pen and the writer who do one operation, and not two; and like the sound and the word who do one operation, and not two; and like the spirit and the body who do one operation, and not two; like one is a human in spirit and in body, and one is a human’s operation. Likewise, God the Word did one operation by His body, for the unification of the natures was without change and division.

So much on this.

Section Sixteen

The questions of the Orthodox to the Dyophysites.

I ask you, ranks of the Dyophysites who unify [Christ] in person and divide into two natures. Is Christ one or two?

The adversary says: He is one according to person, and two according to nature.

The orthodox says: Is that person, whom you call one, a thing or nothing? If He is a thing, then it must be said that Christ is one thing and two, or He is partly one thing and partly two things, or totally one and totally two. And if He is nothing, then He is one in name only, and not in reality, like equivocal sounds that are communicated

by name, but are different by nature. Give an answer!

The question of the orthodox: Is that person substance and existent or not?

The answer of the adversary: He is substance and existent; and why not?

The orthodox: If He is substance and existent, how then is He defined as “the person [who] is indivisible being of rational nature”? Now, if the person is essence, and it is said that human nature is one according to person, then He is also one according to essence. And if He is one according to essence, as a true unity, then also say one in nature, because essence and nature are one.

The question of the orthodox: Is that person divisible or indivisible? If you say that He is indivisible, then you have made the person nature, because nature is the unifier according to Porphyry—through the relationship of species, many human beings are one. And by nature the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one. Then the Trinity is united according to you. Then, how can you differentiate the Trinity if not by persons? But if the person is divisible, as is known by its definition, He is a noncommunicable being. Then He is divisible according to human nature, and is not united with other different nature. Then you have become Nestorian relating two persons and two separate natures to Christ.

The orthodox: The person is individual and proper as Peter. And it is said [to be] individual, because it is indivisible and inseparable as the whole [is indivisible and inseparable] in its parts. For if you divide Him as into spirit and body, or feet and hands and head, the whole does not remain.

Similarly, Christ is one person and one individual, for if you divide Him into God and human, the whole will not remain in Him, but become different parts and different persons.

The orthodox: As Porphyry says, a person has seven inseparable properties: “The individual consists of properties whose collection is not to be found in someone else”; and these are: matter; form which is shape; country [residence]; relations [through blood or marriage]; time; place; and proper name. And if one of these is found

in someone else, [it] separates [both] from each other. Now, we will show how the Dyophysites divide six of these [attributes when discussing Christ].

First, [they divide] the matter as one [being] material nature, such as a human, and [the other being] immaterial nature, such as God.

The form [they divide] as one different in quantity and quality, such as a human; and the other beyond form and shape, as God. Likewise, [they divide] the residence—one in heaven, and the other on earth.

And [they divide] the relation—[appropriating] to one the Father and the Spirit, and to the other Joseph and Mary. And [they divide] the time—[considering] one eternal, and the other temporal. Likewise, [they divide] the place that contains the body—one bounded, and the other unbound.

This [aforementioned is said] for the six [attributes]. They also divide sometimes the proper name; that is, God and human. That is, [they call] the human nature man, and the divine nature God, as it seemed to Nestorius. And sometimes they unify the name by saying: one Christ, one Lord, one Son, and one man, as was said by the Dyophysite Council of Chalcedon.

Now, they confess the unity by proper name, but not by real nature. This is what they mean by saying: one person and two natures.

The orthodox: There are eight modes of division according to the Philosopher [Porphyry]; that is: genus into species; species into individuals; the whole into parts in two fashions—into similar parts, and into nonsimilar parts; equivocal sounds into indications of different things; the substance into accident; the accident into substance; the accident into accident; the one into one.

Now, let us examine the fashion in which you divide the one person into two natures.

It is necessary to know that genus cannot be divided into species. First, because among the species of genus that are divided into opposites, there is no first and last, such as animals being divided into rational and irrational, and it cannot be said that the rational is

before the irrational. They [both] are even and complete. But divine nature is before human [nature] as [the natures of] creator and created. Second, because in the species that are divided into opposites, one does not need the other in order to be formed. But the humanity of Christ cannot come into being without divine substance. Third, because the species that are divided into opposites [are] nowhere to be seen in each other, nor the irrational in the rational. While now the human nature is seen in divinity, and the divine nature [is seen] in human [nature], both in the unity of nature, and the unity of person, because Christ is neither merely human nor simply God, but God become man.

And also, not [divided] as species into individuals. First, because individuals are infinite and unlimited, while here there are two natures, or three according to some.

Second, because individuals are separated by number, while here two natures are in one person as is proclaimed by some. Third, because separated individuals have the same nature of species, while the unity of two natures is denied by the Dyophysites. Then, therefore, Christ cannot be divided as species [is divided] into individuals.

And also, not like the [division of the] whole into parts. Neither into similar parts, for the whole and the parts are considered equivocally, such as wood into many [pieces of] wood, while divinity and humanity are not similar to each other and are not applicable to the whole according to some; nor into nonsimilar parts, such as Peter being divided into feet, hands, and head, for they are not related equivocally either to the whole or to the parts. While here [the parts], similar to each other and to the whole, are called Christ, wherefore it is said that Christ descended from heaven—that is, the Word; and Christ was placed in the grave—that is, only the body with divinity; and Christ descended to hell—that is, only the spirit with divinity. Second, for it is not by a part, like some, such as Apollinaris and others, say, but by two complete natures is the unity of the Savior. Then, therefore, it cannot be divided as the whole [is divided] into parts.

And also, not like [division of] equivocal sound. First, because the equivocal sound communicates only the name, and not to the thing in itself. While our Lord is God both by name and by nature, as we, ranks of the orthodox, confess. Second, there is no first and last in an equivocal, while here there is, as it has been shown.

And also, not like [the division of] substance into accident, for the humanity of Christ is from the category of substance, and not the category of accident.

And also, not like [the division of] accident into substance, for God the Word is not without person and not simply a perception such as our words, as some like Marcellus and Photinus allege. But He is a personified being, caused to be subject within His humanity.

And also, not like [the division of] accident into accident, and this is evident from what you have said.

But His [Christ's division] is like from one into one; that is, from the one Word into the one humanity, or divinity [of Christ], whichever they like [to choose or admit]. Now, it is the same whether they divide [Christ] from nature into nature, or from person into person, as Nestorius does, or divide from person into nature, as happened in Chalcedon.

Regardless of how [the division] is realized, a number is derived from the [division of] the one [Word] into one [humanity or divinity], while the person with divisible number is the same [according to them].

Behold, it is obvious that those who divide one Christ into two natures do not maintain the indivisible unity. Rather, by the division of nature, also the persons in Christ become divided, although they proclaim the person one. For they say that it is the uncreated that is one in Christ, and not the created; that is, the person that is not created is one, while in the created they separate the nature and divide it into two. This is [what they mean by] their statement: one person and two natures.

His [Porphyry's take] again on the same [subject].

And as the philosopher says, from among those you have mentioned, there are essentially three modes of division: genus to species, the whole to parts, [and] equivocal sounds.

Let us now relate these three modes to the unification of the Savior in direct perception that is not pleasant to others. First, as genus is visible in species completely and not partially—that is, because the substance that is the genus is complete in [both] material and immaterial [things], and the living thing is complete [both] in rational and irrational [beings]—similarly, as God the Word is complete in His divinity, likewise [He] is complete in His unified humanity. Or, as [God the Word] is complete in the spirit, likewise [He] is complete in the unified body and complete in each part of that body. Second, as genus remains indivisible in the species, likewise God the Word is not divisible in His unified humanity.

This much [for] the [division of] genus into species.

And regarding [division of the] whole into parts, as with the diminution of one part the whole becomes imperfect, likewise [in] God the Word, spirit, and body totally united are Christ, and by the diminution of one [of them] Christ does not remain.

And as with an equivocal sound that equally communicates to whatever is named [by it], such as the heavenly, earthly, and aquatic ram, for they are called [ram] neither more, nor less, but equally, likewise the names Christ, and Lord, and God, and so on are parallel and equal in His [the Word's] humanity and divinity and are neither more nor less; neither weaker nor greater; neither ignorant, nor omniscient, and whatever is similar to these things. But the unification of the Savior is all-paralleled and all-equal.

The Question of the Orthodox

Which one of these three do you say is the one Christ: [the human, or] the divine person in Himself, or the divine nature?

For if you say that Christ is human, then you have particularly

separated Him as Nestorius does, and you have said that Christ is solely human. But if [you say Christ is] divine nature, then you have said that the Trinity is incarnated, since nature is common to the three persons. And if you say that the divine person is Christ that is the anointed, then you have leveled Him with the anointed [persons], and you have simply related the person to the one who died on the cross, as you sing in your Trisagion—Christ who was crucified, have mercy on us!

While in your litanies it is said: Christ, the vessel of divinity, have mercy!

Hence a new teaching and a third testament. And if you avoid these by apparent separation or for some other reason, then you cover with lamb's skin the wolf that you are. If you say that the divine person and His nature is one Christ, then you still have the aforementioned doubts, because you say that the divine person and nature suffered and died, since Christ was crucified and died, according to Scriptures. But if you say that the divine person and human nature are one Christ, then it is apparent that you have separated Christ from the divine nature, because you say that the divine person and the human nature are one Christ, and you separate the divine nature.

And if you relate divine nature and human [nature] to Christ without [relating divinity and humanity to the] person, then you have confused the two natures without their uniting in the person, as Eutyches does. And you are drowned in your own words in the same way you have libeled others.

And if you say that the divine person and the divine and human natures are one Christ, then this can be either by unification or by division. For if [this occurred] by unification, then confusion has occurred, because you have said that the person and the nature are one. And if [this occurred] by division, there will be two Christs, and [even] three according to the division of person and nature, or there will be one Christ in name, and three in substance. In this fashion Nestorius related oneness to Christ not according to the unity of substance, but by the consonance of the name, similar to an equivocal

sound that has one spelling but diverse natures within one name.

The Question of the Orthodox

Again, a question to you who confess two natures in Christ. Are the two natures to be worshipped, or one? If two, then you have to say: Glory to the Father, to the two natures of the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Or: We baptize in the name of the Father, the two natures of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and things similar to these. But if one, then I ask you: Which do you honor and which do you dishonor? For if you honor the divine nature, then you have to dishonor the human [nature] and commit the error of discriminating Jews who were saying: “You are a man, but you make yourself God” [Jn 10:33]. And [you have to] deny the whole mystery of the economy and distance [yourself] from His [Christ’s] salvation.

But if you worship the human nature, then you have become idolaters and have entered a new and created God in the order of the Trinity. And you have stripped glory from the Word and given it to man, and you have become worshippers of a man, cannibals, and [people] baptized in man. While the Prophet confirmed that the salvation by man is untrue. This [is presented] as a brief exposition of the concealed impiety of those who relate two natures to the one Christ. Although they declare the person one—as we do—they dispute us and the Churches of God by dividing the natures [of Christ].

Section Seventeen

Question: What does St. Cyril mean by saying everywhere: “Universally God and man”?

Answer: Universally means wholly, or parallel and equal, or altogether.

The [word] *wholly* is contrary to the Dyophysites who say that Christ is partly God and partly human; that is, God and human assembled of divinity and humanity. These [Dyophysites] divide the

parts and assemble the whole.

St. Cyril says against them: *Universally*; that is, wholly God and wholly man. And *parallel* and *equal* are [also] contrary to them.

Again, as they say God and human unequal; that is, powerful and weak, uncreated and created, by nature and by grace. While here [in the orthodox teaching] God and man [in Christ] are equal and parallel as is said by Gregory the Theologian: “Parallel God: as the giver is God, so is the recipient.”

And *altogether* also is contrary to them [Dyophysites] who separate God and man from each other, both by nature and by person. While this [St. Cyril] says *universally*; that is, [God and man] altogether interchange with each other and accompany each other. Similar to saying that God is man, and man is God. This is the meaning of God and man universally; that is, wholly, equally, and indivisibly God and man.

Likewise, saying one and the same God and man. *One* is opposite to *two* and *many*, and *same* is contrary to *different*. Likewise, this also is contrary to those who say that the person is one, yet they separate two natures. While St. Cyril says *one* concerning the person, and *same* concerning the nature. This is the meaning of one is God and man, and not two; and God and man are same and not different.

Section Eighteen

Question: How do we answer the Dyophysites who question us that if the [body] parts of Christ—that is, His feet, and hands, and head—are God, then you are polytheists.

Answer: It follows that they clearly deny this and say that the hands of Christ are not God, and the head of Christ is not God, and so on, in order not to be [considered] polytheists.

To the questioner: They [Dyophysites] say that they, meaning the hands and feet of Christ, are neither human nor God. For example, the hand and the foot of a human are not human, but [merely] the hand of a human and the foot of a human. The same [is applicable] to Christ, they say.

Answer: Now their error has become evident. When the hand of Christ is not God, then the whole body is not God, because the whole is composed of the parts. And if the body of Christ is not God, and the spirit of Christ is not God, as they allege, then Christ in His entirety is not God, because Christ is entirely one Christ by the unity of divinity and humanity; divided He is not Christ.

Again, as the hand and the foot of a human is not a human, likewise the hand of Christ is not Christ, and the foot and other [body] parts are not Christ, then the whole body is not Christ, and the spirit is not Christ. And if these are not Christ, then the Word itself is not Christ. Thus, it becomes evident that they deny the being of Christ, and they deny God with such an argument.

To the questioner: They say that the hand belongs to a human, and the foot belongs to a human, and the other parts belong to a human, since it cannot be said that they are the parts of God.

Answer: Thus, it appears that, since the parts—meaning the hands and feet—are not the parts of God, then, according to them, the body is not the body of God, and the blood is not the blood of God, and the spirit is not the Spirit of God, but all these belong to a human.

To the questioner: They say also that the body belongs to Christ, and so the blood and the spirit [belong to Christ], but they do not say all of these belong to God.

Answer: Thus, it becomes evident that since they say that the parts belong to Christ, but not to God, they clearly do not confess Christ as God. Then it follows that Mary is the mother of Christ, but not of God; then [for them] it is more appropriate to say [for Mary] birth-giver of Christ [*christotokos*], and not birth-giver of God [*theotokos*].

To the questioner: You have gone beyond your limit and are talking of complicated matters. And whatever I have asked of you has remained unanswered.

Answer: You asked that if the parts of Christ are God, then you are polytheists, because numerous are the parts [of Christ]. And I tell you that if the parts of Christ are Christ, then you are *polychrists*.

To the questioner: I have nothing to say about this, but I seek a correct answer.

Answer: This is the correct [answer] briefly.

As we say the body of Christ is God and is also divine because of the unification with God, similarly, [His] blood is God and is divine blood, and other [parts] likewise. For if we say that it is not God, then being separated from divinity, there will be no divine hand, nor divine body or blood, because the part which is separated from the whole is not a part of the whole and cannot be called a part of the whole. Like a hand which is severed from [the body] members cannot be called part of the whole. And if you say that the body singularly is God, and the blood [singularly] is God, then that would be a demonstration of many gods. And the part would receive the name of the whole. And to say [Christ] is God and divine body, spirit, and so on, is correct.

To the questioner: Then, therefore, two opposites will altogether exist together; that is, nominative and declinable, because to say *God* is nominative, and [to say] *God's* is the genitive declination.

Answer: Don't we already say that Christ is God and God's Son, for God is nominative and God's Son [is] declination?

In this way we can say that the body of Christ is both God and God's body and blood; and all others [likewise].

To the questioner: But by saying this you relate the name of the whole to the partial.

Answer: First, we say that this is not an exception, because in other areas also one thing can be both the whole and the part. Like when we say that the hand is the whole and a part, because it is a part of the whole body, yet it is whole as to the fingers of the hand. Similarly, the body of Christ is God as to the parts of the body, and is the divine body as to the whole Christ. Second, we say that all parts have the same substance of the whole, and that which has the same substance, bears the same designation [as the whole]. As the hand has the substance of the whole body, and the body, in its wholeness, is called Christ. Similarly, the body and the spirit are of the substance of Christ, and as Christ is God and is called [God],

likewise the body of Christ is God and is called God and divine body.

Third, the whole and the partial in us and in Him [Christ] are not the same, because although the parts of a human do not bear the name of the whole, the body parts of Christ are named after the whole and have the substance of the whole, as is seen in the relics of the body. In the entirety is the whole Christ, and in each individual part is the whole Christ. Thus, we can say that the body of Christ is God and is divine body, and likewise for others [the parts]. In this fashion it is said altogether God and divine body. And if you say specifically by orthodox thinking, and not in unorthodoxy, then you will say divine body and divine blood, because that which is from God is God, and not different than God.

Similarly, to say that body, blood, and bone, and others [parts] are divine is to indicate God. And if you say individually that God is body and God is spirit, you will not become thereby a polytheist, because divinity is one united in these by essence and substance.

And again, when we say the body, the blood, the spirit, and the word Christ, [we] do not [mean] numerous Christs. Similarly, by calling these [parts] God, we do not mean numerous gods. Again, to say God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit does not mean many gods, but one God; likewise, to say that the body of Christ is God, the blood of Christ is God, and the spirit of Christ is God does not mean many gods, but one God.

So much on this.

Section Nineteen

Questions of Gēorg.

What is “to be equal with God” (Phil 2:6); and what is “[God] highly exalted Him” (Phil 2:9); and what is “granted Him the name” (Phil 2:9); and what is “above every name” (Phil 2:9)? I beg you to be benevolent to those who doubt.

Same Gregory's answer:

Blessed Paul says that the mystery of godliness is evident and

great [1 Tim 3:16], whereby the Word was manifest in the flesh. Therefore, to separate [the Word] from the body is a total impiety in both thought and expression. And how can the completion of a life giving well come to pass with a cup? And [let alone separation through] deformed fingers, scribbles, [and] that which is necessary for opponents.

First, what is “to be equal with God” (Phil 2:6); and what is “[God] highly exalted Him”; and what is “granted Him the name”; and what is “above every name” (Phil 2:9)?

Now, the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures by the one and same procession becomes multiplied in the many, similar to the one and same pure water [becoming multiplied] in the nature of plants. It is [the duty] of the orthodox students, however, not to speak on their own, but to follow the ancient saints and be guided by them. He [Paul] said that it did not seem to the Word, who was in the form of God—that is, coexistent with the Father—that to be our equal was a deprivation beneath His glory. And again, He [Christ] put on [body] and became equal to the being of God in the same body without rapture, not to be considered the image of the Father by incorporeality alone.

As it is said, the idea is the image of mind, and that the concrete word that is brought forth is the image of the same [mind] and equal to the mind. He who humbled Himself [embracing] human vanity took upon Himself the form of a servant in human acts, emotions, and likeness, although He was above all humankind and human form.

And not only this. The same image of the Father humbled Himself unto death, which is the ultimate end, and [even] unto death on the cross, which is curse. And He [Christ] was counted with criminals, which was the utmost insult. These are the humiliations. And [Paul thereafter] brings up the sublime elements.

On this he [Paul] says in contrast to the aforementioned humiliations that God exalted Him above all. God the Father, who sent Him and humbled Him, also exalted Him: “I glorified you,” He [God] said (Jn 12:28). Again, “with the glory that I had with you before the world existed” (Jn 17:5). And His saying *Him* [Christ]

relates either to unity, or, according to others, to division. For if [it relates to] division, it concerns either the Word, or the body, since one is favored by Arius, and the other by Nestorius. To these we contend as follows.

Why is the image of the Father and equality to God related to the Word alone? And if it is related to the human, how did the one who was born in these days of the Virgin have eternal glory?

Concerning the exaltation above all, as the humiliation of God through humanization and suffering is incomparable, likewise it is an unparalleled exaltation for human nature to be seated on the right hand of God and to be His equal. But according to the [teaching of] unity, this [humiliation and exaltation] is extremely appropriate. Because the same Word that humbled itself in body exalted bodily. And He who descended upon this lower earth is the same who rose up above all heavens. And He who became emptiness filled everything. For we do not say the body was incarnate, but [we say] the Word became incarnate.

And “granted Him the name” (Phil 2:9), which is Jesus Christ. If this happened by separation, then the Word alone is not Christ, because there is no one greater [than Him] to anoint Him, and who was saved without body. Also, the body is not perceived to be anointed by another anointer. And how can a body from Adam’s nature be Creator of all beings from nothing? Hence, it was said: “To us . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him” (1 Cor 8:6). Again, you might contradict His grace. And this as to unity.

The *granting* alternatively is giving: “All that the Father gives me,” He [Christ] says (Jn 6:37). Because the Father sent the Word. Indeed, therefore, it is said of Him that He granted and gave both the name and the object. For as He [Christ] humbled Himself and became man, likewise He was given grace from God and men.

And now let us refute you with your words. As you say, He [God] by grace gave that man the name of consecration, sonhood, lordship, and authority. And you say that for the humiliating suffering God exalted Him above all.

Oh fool one! For if these are rewards for martyrdom, where is the grace then? And if [God gave these] by grace, then how do you say that they occurred in His operations? And again, if He is Son by grace and anointing, then He is not above us, because we too are not servants, but children: “He who sealed us and anointed in the same is God, who gave us His Spirit for adoption” (cf. 2 Cor 1:21–22) says the Apostle. Why then is He alone worshipped from among the heavenly and earthly? Why then do we eat His body, and we baptize in Him, and are resurrected with Him, and so on?

And concerning His name being above all names, although many in the Old and the New [Testaments] were named Jessy and were anointed, He [Christ] was united in nature and substance, while the former [were united] in grace and time. He was anointed God, while the former [were anointed] prophets and other [things]. And if it is said somewhere that He was anointed by the Spirit and by the Father, those are said concerning the economy of the mystery. It is for this that He is above all, for He is coexistent with the Spirit within Him and with the Father by nature. While the former [were anointed] in divine and merciful love. And see in the equivocals such as the living human and the dead. Don’t we say that the human name of a living man is above a dead man? Behold, accept the modest gift of my brief presentation in your heart’s vast treasury, my eldest brother George. Correct that which is lacking, and weigh that which is added. I beg you humbly from your greatness. Stay alive!

Section Twenty

The Dyophysites divide the humanity of the word.

Question: Does the humanity of Christ comprehend His divinity or not?

Answer: It appears that you separate the humanity and differentiate the human and God.

Question: Yes, I separate [Christ] in nature, but unite [Him] in person.

Answer: Is that person a substance or only a name? For if He is substance and is united with the substance of the Word, how does He not comprehend His divinity? But if He is a name only without substance, then you have confessed Christ as God in name only, and not in substance. And you have made Him equal to Moses who was called God in name, but not in substance.

And again, the name Christ signifies unity of two natures, whereby divinity anointed humanity, as both the Theologian and St. Cyril have stated.

Now, if you divided Christ, then you have departed from your faith and you are Christian no more. And thus, there are many [arguments] in this our *Book of Questions* about the unity of the Word with the body against Nestorius and the Dyophysites that sufficiently explain our subject.

But now, you question if Christ the man comprehends God or not, agreeing with the Jews who said: “You are man but you make yourself God” (Jn 10:33). For this the Jews stumbled and the pagans became foolish, and the Apostle said: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning” (1 Cor 1:19). And He the Truth said: “I thank you, Father . . . because you have hidden these things from the sages and the learned and have revealed them to the childlike” (Mt 11:25) and the innocent. Because the sages resist faith, and by intellectual examination cannot attain [knowledge], and are deprived of their salvation. While the faithful are saved, and the adversaries are lost.

And the basis of our faith is established by Christ from the Father, and the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, the writings of the fathers, and the canons of [church] laws [are] the confirmation, which I would like to briefly affirm through testimonies.

First, the Apostle Paul, the chosen vessel, writes to the faithful: “Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:24). Now, Christ, who being anointed by divinity, and being the wisdom of God, would not comprehend God? By ignorance He would have made lost Him who has wisdom!

Second, the beloved disciple John testifies: “No one has ever seen

God. It is the Only Begotten Son . . . who has declared Him to us” (Jn 1:18). And we acknowledge the Only Begotten Son as the Word born to the Father and become son of the Virgin. Now, among humankind no one has ever seen God, and the son of the Virgin has not seen [God], as you say; then the story that was taught to us is untrue, since He relates that which He has not seen. This is the abyss of blasphemy for which I remain silent for the time being.

Third, the Apostle writes: “God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways; that is, by the prophets and the angels, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son” (cf. Heb 1:1–2). Now, if the Son of God the Father is ignorant, and [the Father] has spoken to us through an ignorant Son, then the new law would be more ignorant than the old [law].

Fourth, the same Apostle says: “We have Christ in our minds and we are stewards of the mysteries of God” (cf. 1 Cor 4:1). Now, if Christ is ignorant and they had an ignorant mind, how could have they been stewards of God’s mysteries? Or are the stewards above the mysteries of God?

Fifth, in the Gospel of Matthew He [Christ] confessed: “All things have been handed over to me by my Father” (Mt 11:27). What was given, if not perfect knowledge? And if you say that He [God] gave [knowledge] to the Word, and not to the body, then the humanity of [Christ] has made a false confession, “All things have been handed over to me,” because He [God] did not give Him knowledge. Or perhaps the Word deprived His humanity of [this] knowledge and did not hand it over to Him.

Sixth, in the same [Gospel] He says: “No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son” (Mt 11:27). Now, if the Father does not recognize anyone among strangers, then, according to you, He does not recognize the Son, and thus the Son becomes alien to the Father. And again, as you think, the Son of Man Himself would not know Him [the Father]. And the Jews did not acknowledge the Son, saying: “Who is this Son of Man?” (Jn 12:34). Then the Son of Man would be from the same class as the Jews and nothing more.

Seventh, because He says in the abovementioned [Gospel of Matthew]: “and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal” (Mt 11:27). But the Son Himself chose and revealed Himself [as the Son] and the Father through the miracles of His disciples, like a tree is recognized by its fruit. Now, if He revealed Himself [in His divinity] to His disciples but did not reveal [this] to His humanity, then He is more ignorant than His disciples; or He did not reveal something of which He was unknowing.

Eighth, in John He [Christ] says: “As the Father knows me and I know the Father” (Jn 10:15). Manifestly He shows Himself equal in knowledge to the Father. Now, if the Father knows more than the Son, then this would mean that either the Father knows less as the Son, or the Son is a liar.

Ninth, in John He [Christ] says: “The Father loves the Son and shows Him all” (Jn 5:20). Now, if showing all is a sign of the love of the Father, then [showing] nothing indicates that He hates the Son.

Tenth, in Matthew He [Christ] says: “Why do you reason in your hearts” (Mt 9:4), while in John it is said: “He Himself knew what was in everyone” (Jn 2:25). And to know the hidden things of the heart is given to God only; hence: “who tries the hearts and reins” (Ps 7:10). And He who knows the hearts of others, more so knows His own. Now, either the Gospel lied, or your words were lies as [are the words of] your father Satan.

Eleventh, in John He [Christ] says: “I am the way and the truth” (Jn 14:6); meaning, I take you to the Father and show you the truth. Now, if He does not know the truth, how would He show us? And if He is lost, how would He take us to the Father?

Twelfth, Luke says: “The child grew and became strong, filled with grace and wisdom” (Lk 2:40). For by the fullness of His grace we were justified, and by His wisdom we knew God, as John says: “The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Christ” (Jn 1:17). Behold, the Gospel says filled with wisdom, while you say lacking [wisdom]. Now, if He lacks grace and wisdom, how did we receive those in fullness?

Thirteenth, Isaiah says about Christ: “The spirit of Wisdom and

understanding, knowledge and counsel shall fill Him [etc.]” (Isa 11:2). These comprise all kinds of knowledge—wisdom includes knowing all divine things; understanding includes knowing all immaterial things; knowledge includes knowing all conclusions; and counsel includes knowing all things created. Then, therefore, the spirit of Christ has complete knowledge filled by the Holy Spirit.

Fourteenth, Paul says in Ephesians that the Father set Christ in the heavenly places far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this world but also in the world that is to come (Eph 1:20–21). Now, from among the glories of heaven the greatest is Him who sees God perfectly. Then, therefore, the spirit of Christ knows God most perfectly.

Fifteenth, while [Christ] was ascending to heaven the heavenly hosts asked in wonder: “Who is this that comes from earth with a beautiful garment and with mighty strength?” (Isa 61:1). He says: “I speak of righteousness and saving judgment” (Isa 63:1). Again, they say: “Why are your garments red?” (Isa 63:2). He answers: “I have trodden the winepress alone” (Isa 63:3).

The winepress signifies the cross, which was dyed with blood. Now, the angels instruct all humankind, prophets, and saints, and they are instructed by Christ. Then how can He be deficient in knowledge who instructs the angels?

Sixteenth, in the Gospel of John He [Christ] says: “I know Him and I keep His word; if I would say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you” (Jn 8:55). Now, if He knows the Father, then He knows Himself. And if He does not know Himself, how would He know the Father? And if He does not know the Father, how does He keep His Word in Himself?

Seventeenth, Peter says while asking Him [Christ]: “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you” (Jn 21:17). How does He know everything, if He does not know Himself, as you say? But if He knows everything, including Peter’s love, then His knowledge is not deficient.

Eighteenth, the Apostle in Colossians says: “In Him the whole

fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9); that is, by essence. Now, if the whole divinity bodily is in Christ in essence, and it veils knowledge of Him, then either He is not the incarnate and humanized God, or has [the divine] essence but is deprived of knowledge, which is falsehood.

Nineteenth, in Matthew He [Christ] says: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Mt 24:35). Now, if the word of Christ is the word of a human and ignorant, then it is perishable; but if it is the Word of God and eternal, then He is not ignorant or deficient in knowledge.

Twentieth, in Colossians the Apostle says: “In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). Now, the ignorant does not have all wisdom and knowledge stored within him. And how can the store and source of the wisdom of heaven and earth be lacking in knowledge or receive it from another?

The Dyophysite might say that all these are relative to the person of Christ, but not His humanity.

For this we say that until now you were dividing the nature, and now you divide also the person. Now, if you confess that Christ has one person, and that the human nature is united with the person of the Word, then whatever is the nature of the Word will entirely become the nature of the body by its unity. But if the [natures of the] Word and the body are different, then you have separated humanity from the person, and you have said two persons and two natures, as your mentor Nestorius and Paul of Samosata, and you were a covert Nestorian who has now revealed Himself.

And now we will speak to you according to the testimonies in our turn, O you Nestorian Dyophysite who, while affirming only Christ’s humanity, divide Christ and are separated from His grace. You say that Christ was mere human, ignorant and weak, having a corruptible body, and fallen with human needs.

Twenty-first, now if Christ had an ignorant mind, and a weak spirit, and a corruptible body, and He [Christ] came to lift our weaknesses, and enlighten us who were seated in the darkness, and He was the lamb of God who takes away the sins and corruption of

the world; now the ignorant cannot take away ignorance, nor the sinner our sins, nor the corruptible corruption, nor could a mere human save a human, for false is the salvation of humankind. Then He who took away ignorance was not ignorant, and who lifted sins and corruption did not have sin and corruption. And the Prophet [Apostle] testifies: “He did not sin” (1 Pet 2:22), and “was justified in spirit” (1 Tim 3:16), “and His body did not see corruption” (Acts 2:31).

Twenty-second, Paul the Apostle and John the evangelist testify of the other world that: “We shall see Him as He is” (1 Jn 3:2), and “Shall know Him even as also I am known” (1 Cor 13:12).

Now, if at the time of general resurrection the just shall see God face to face as He is, but Christ cannot see, then He is less in knowledge than a human, which is falsehood.

Twenty-third, the Lord said concerning the Holy Spirit: “The world cannot . . . see Him, nor know Him. But you know Him, because He abides with you” (Jn 14:17). Now, if the Apostles, who are the habitations of the Spirit, know the Spirit of God, but the humanity of Christ does not know [the Spirit], then Christ becomes less than the habitations.

Twenty-fourth, the doctors [of the church] say concerning the angels that they have the knowledge of morning and evening. Morning, so that they see God the Word and receive knowledge from Him; and evening, so that they see the creatures. Now, if the angels see God the Word and receive knowledge from Him, but Christ the man cannot see—as you, Nestorius, say—then Christ is less knowledgeable than the angels. Then how can He be above all Principalities and Dominions and a teacher? And how can the heavenly and earthly and those beneath the earth worship Him, and all tongues confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father?

Twenty-fifth, in John’s Gospel He [Christ] says: “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn 17:3). Now, if to know God the Father and Jesus Christ is eternal life, but Christ the human, as you

say, cannot know the truth, then He is deprived of eternal life. Then, how does He say: “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life” (Jn 6:54). When He does not have eternal life, how can He give it to others? Then, how does He say: “I am the way, and the truth, and life” (Jn 14:6)? And in John it is said: “The everlasting life appeared in body” [cf. Jn 1:14].

Twenty-sixth, the Revelation says: “Worthy is the lamb to receive divinity and understanding” (cf. Rev 5:12), which is the knowledge of all. Now, the Lamb of God is the Son of Man. He is the one who through the unification with the Word received divinity and omniscience.

Twenty-seventh, in John He [Christ] says: “The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to His Son” (Jn 5:22). Now, the Son judges not only according to His divinity, but also according to His humanity. Hence, “When the Son of Man comes in God’s glory . . . He will sit on the throne of glory” (Mt. 25:31). The judge should possess an unlimited knowledge, so that He might examine all natures of the angels and humans, and all the deeds that have been done and will be done, and the counsels and words of all, of the first, of the middle, and of the last. Then, therefore, the spirit of Christ has unlimited knowledge, in order to understand the infinite things that are to be known.

Twenty-eighth, your doctor Albert says: “Christ was altogether a traveler and a discoverer of His destination.” Now, He was a traveler according to the economy of the body in order to enter glory by death and resurrection. And [He was a] discoverer, for by the rational understanding of His mind He was fascinated by the unity with divine glory. And Christ, through His glory, comprehended everything limited by operation, and knew everything unlimited by a superior knowledge.

Twenty-ninth, their doctor Isidorus says: “The Trinity by itself only is known and is received by men.” While John of Damascus in his chapter concerning the Dyophysites says: “The whole divinity is united with the human nature in Christ, and is visible in the spirit of Christ.”

And their doctor Augustine in his *Book of Trinity* says: “To comprehend the divine substance is proper to the Son of God by nature, and to the Son of Man through unity with grace.”

And their doctor Thomas says: “The spirit of Christ knows all unlimited things.” [He states] thus, because the spirit of Christ knows His whole potential and everything He can do. And now, He [Christ] can clean immense sins, as John says in his epistles: “He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn 2:2).

Then, therefore, the spirit of Christ knows the unlimited.

Thirtieth, the holy doctors [of the church] resemble the humanization of Christ to the unity of light with air, and fire with iron. Now, as the air full of light does not have any particle of darkness, likewise the spirit of Christ united with God the Word does not have any particle of ignorance. And as the fire while united with iron eliminates from it coldness and blackness, leaving its weight only, likewise the body of Christ united with God the Word possesses the ability and divinity of the Word. As Gregory the Theologian says: “I dare to say equal God both to the recipient and the giver, because the incorporeal became incarnate, the Word became material, and God became man with one person, and united nature. One Lord, one Christ, one Son of God and Son of the Virgin. Confessed by the heavenly and earthly, and testified by the Holy Scriptures,” as was shown.

Now, to examine by mind is presumptuous, and to believe is life, because salvation is in faith. And again, that which is incomprehensible cannot be comprehended through mind’s examination, but is known through faith, comprehended through hope, and embraced through love. This is how [a person] should believe by heart and confess by mouth. For “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will acknowledge him before God and the holy angels. And whoever denies me, I will deny him before the angels” (Mt 10:32), says the Truth. Because all the orthodox confessed Christ as God, and were martyred in Him, and to Christ the Truth were elevated from earth to the heavens.

And we accepted the same confession with firm faith in life, in death, and beyond death; and we shall be worthy of His promised good in Jesus Christ, in our Lord.

By which and wherefore glory, honor, and dignity to the Father and the Holy Spirit over all infinite creatures forever, amen.

So much about the economy of the Word. And end to the second part of our *Book of Questions*.





Տառապ Լուսաբ:

Պալում ը ՚ի մեծ ցանկէն :

ԵՐՏԱ, ԳԻՒՏԱՀԱ
զի ներըց բանին զգա-
լուսոց անուուի, լու մերձ
բանին իմանալեացն քըն-
նուի. լու ՚ի մերոյ քանին ածա-
բանութիւն հանզի ներըցն մա-
սանեց. ՚ի ձեռն զայրէուց ճանա-
կ զերևանիս + ո՞յ քայրու ՚ի կար-
ենուու տապաւորի զնմանուիս և
իբրայեաց, ո՞յ սպիտակի ՚ի սկ տրա-
մանուրութիւն քննէ զիմանալու +
ո՞յ հրեշտակի. ՚ու ՚լ մերին մա-
սանեց ծայրին իմացութիւն ձկուի
յածայրին հանատոյն լուսով
վկայուիք ո՞յ դրոց հաստատու-
թիւն առաջանաւութիւն ծանօթա-
հանակ որ արտապց քան զնո՞յ
՚ու ՚նուչեմանթիւ որ իներգու ՚ի
մոզ ՚ու մերին խոկմամբ. որ ՚ի
մը ՚ու քան զմեղ ըստ կարողութ-
ուուսաւորին հառու զնմանաւեն:

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ (ՊՐԵՄԻ ՀԱՅ)

¶ ፩ ፭፻፲፻ ዘመን መጠበቃዎች በዚያ የሚያ
ዘመኑ ስት እና ተግባር ገዢነት መጠበቃዎች በ
፩ ፭፻፲፻ ዘመን መጠበቃዎች በዚያ የሚያ
ዘመኑ ስት እና ተግባር ገዢነት መጠበቃዎች በ

269

($\bigcup_{k=1}^{\infty} \{x_k = y_k\}$)

“ Ա է՞ր է բնութիւն այ
անդիտելի :

ա կրկնին պատճեալի ։
ա խի և հետական ա ամ շաբառան
եալ գոյացան ։ եթէ կ մանակը ք
եթէ գոյացան ։ և կ բնութին այ
անեղէ և և զի անեղէ ։ անցափէ ։
և կ շաբառառութին պանցափէ

Թիրն ոչ կարէ չափել։
Երկրութիւն զի տեսութիւն մտաց
Հասարակի ընդ գոյսուն էուն.
ու որ եզերի բնութիւն անգ. և
համար որութիւն, Այսու ու քիմ է,
ին որ իվեր է քան զեւսի, իվերէ
քան զիմսութիւն, Աղապար որոյ
ան անուն է ած : զի անունն
բնութիւն յայտնէ : ուն մարդ :
և կ բնութիւն այ ան յայտ է և
անգիսենլի :

— 1 —

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[Contents of] Third Volume of Our Questions: The Theology of St. Dionysius

- I. Effable and ineffable. And God's nature [being] uncognizable. And that God is cognizable through ignorance. And that ignorance is the darkness of minds.
- II. What is the repose of minds?
- III. Unity and separation.
- IV. Comparison between the divinity and the humanity of the Word.
- V. Why do we call *Trinity*, and *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit*.
- VI. One, singular, and many.
- VII. Origin and cause.
- VIII. On being, and nonbeing, and prebeing, and was, and is, and shall be.
- IX. On paradigm; it is one and many.
- X. On being uncreated and created.
- XI. God is timeless, and everlasting, and Ancient of days.
- XII. On eternities.
- XIII. On life, and the differences between God, the angels, humankind, and animals.
- XIV. On the vision of God, and the angels, and humankind. And God is omniscient.
- XV. What is different and similar in the vision of God, and the angels, and humankind.
- XVI. Differences between recognizing by mind, and by senses, and the beginning and completion of reason.
- XVII. On whether God possesses word. And on truth, and faith. And the differences between the rational³⁰ examination and faith.

³⁰ *Natural* (p̄naułquū [bnakan]) in the printed text. This change is justified based on the discussion of rational examination later in Section Seventeen (p. 260).

- XVIII. How many modes of theology are there?
 - XIX. Those which negate and those which deny are different from each other.
 - XX. God is called sun by twenty properties.
 - XXI. On the astonishment and jealousy of God.
 - XXII. God is love, beloved, and good.
 - XXIII. God is said to be broad, tall, deep, and high.
 - XXIV. Alpha and O[mega].
 - XXV. The foot is body.
- So much on theology.

On Angels.

- I. Intelligent and intelligible.
- II. Grace is unequal concerning the resonance of its sound, and our word is united with sound.
- III. The impressive vision of beasts.
- IV. On four-faced living creatures.
- V. How do incorporeal things appear; in body, in fantasy, or in reality?
- VI. The angels have nine classes and are divided into three triads, while others say [that there are] seven [classes].
- VII. The order of classes.
- VIII. The names of the angels. And they are commonly called angels and powers.
- IX. What is common and proper about them?
- X. The hierarchy of theirs [angels] and humans.
- XI. What is grace, and what is the grace of priesthood?
- XII. The angel, the spirit of man, and the intellection of angels are different things.
- XIII. The numbers of angels.
- XIV. Their movement.
- XV. The senses of humans.
- XVI. Love and compassion.
- XVII. The proper names of angels.
- XVIII. Prasies of angels.

XIX. On the conversation of angels.
So much on angels.

On Devils.

- I. On the fall of devils, and their adversity, and their appearing as light.
 - II. The reason for their destruction.
 - III. Which order they fell from? And they are called the princes of the air.
 - IV. Nymphs.
 - V. Their sin is unforgivable.
 - VI. The fiery dragon and its tail.
 - VII. What is the extent of Satan's fall?
- So much on the third volume of this book.

Volume Three
On the Theology of Saint Dionysius.

Chapter Eight from the Major List

It is necessary to know that the knowledge through sensory faculties is beneath reason; and the examination of intelligibles is next to reason; but theology is above reason. Because [one] recognizes visible things, such as stone, through the lower part, the senses. And through suppositions [one] figures similarities and differences, such as white. While through logic [one] examines conceivable things, such as angels. And through the extreme edge of comprehension [one] tends to that which is divine by the light of faith and the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

Again, through senses we recognize that which is external to us. And through sagacity [we learn] that which is intrinsic. And through higher meditation [we understand that] which is above us, [and] according to our abilities we become enlightened to speak about the ineffable.

Section One

Question: What is ineffable [in] theology, and what is effable?

Answer: Ineffable is the Word of God's nature and essence, and effable are the names.

Again, ineffable is the incommunicable and sublime distinction of the uncreated, and effable is the proceeded communication with all beings.

Question: Why is the nature of God incognizable?

Answer: For two reasons. First, because the whole creation came into existence limited, both in intelligibility and in sensibility. While the nature of God is uncreated, and since it is uncreated, it is

unlimited. And that which is limited cannot measure that which is unlimited.

Second, because the knowledge of mind equals to the existence of essence, and where nature ends, there also ends the mental capacity. Therefore, it is evident that that which is above essence is above knowledge. Wherefore, God is nameless, because a name indicates nature, such as man. While the nature of God is unknown and incognizable.

Question: How is God cognizable through ignorance?

Answer: Ignorance is two [kinds]. One is from lack of enthusiasm in learning, and this kind of ignorance is darkness of the mind and blindness. Also, there is an ignorance when we extend our mind over all created things and we do not find Him [God]; [then] we concentrate on that one who is outside these [created things], and thus God is conceived through ignorance.

Question: How is ignorance darkness of the mind?

Answer: For example, sensible darkness is [the darkness] of the eyes of the body. Likewise, ignorance is the darkness and erring of the mind, and is a bond, and weight, and divider, and unsightliness. Because the mind becomes darkened, the intelligence confused, the broad vision limited, the lightness weighty, and it [mind] becomes incoherent, and the image becomes unsightly. While the holy knowledge enlightens and guides the mind against these; it broadens the vision, lightens [the thoughts] directed to the supernal, and concentrates on one, and perfects the image.

Section Two

Question: What is the repose of minds?

Answer: It is to be known that lie, suspicion, and that which is dissimilar are torturous for the mind. Then, therefore, truth, discovery, and similarity are repose. This we will demonstrate through the example of knowledge by sensory faculties.

First, as the sight of the eyes reposes in the body, likewise the knowledge of the mind [reposes] in the immaterial, which is similar

[to the immaterial mind].

Second, as the eyes delight in looking up, since light travels up, so do the minds delight in thinking about supernal things.

Third, as the eyes delight by sensible light being analogous, so do the minds [delight] by the intelligible, which is analogous to it.

Fourth, [as] the eyes delight in [corporeal] beauty, so do the minds from the beauty of reason.

Fifth, the eyes [delight] from various visions, and the minds [delight] in diverse judgments.

Sixth, the more the eyes see, the more they delight. And the more the minds understand, the more [they delight].

Seventh, the eyes delight when they concentrate on one thing, and the minds [delight] when they establish the truth through numerous examples.

Eighth, the eyes delight when [their sight] becomes broader, and the minds [delight when they are] unbound from suppositions.

Ninth, the eyes delight by limited things and become powerless [before] unlimited things, such as the sun. And the minds [delight] by moderate theology.

Tenth, the eyes delight when they always see; and the minds, likewise, [delight] when they always understand.

Section Three *On unity and separation.*

Question: What is unity, and [what is] separation; that is, [what is] commonly and properly divine?

Answer: First, it is to be known that unity in substance brings forth sameness; and unity in quality brings forth similarity; and unity in quantity brings forth commonality; and unity in relation brings forth property.

Again, common is that which is one in three [the Trinity], and is not more in two, nor is less in one. While proper is that which is different in three [the Trinity], and is more in two, and [is] less in one.

Now, unity in the Trinity is evident abundantly, particularly since everything is common [in it]—nature, will, kingdom, and so on.

While property and separation of countenances are less [evident]. Thereby, they are perceived numerically.

First, we say Father and Son and Spirit, because the Father is not the Son, nor is He the Spirit. Likewise conceive [the same distinctions] for the Son and the Spirit.

Second, we say begetter and emanator Father, begotten and received Son, emanation and receiving Spirit. Behold! For the Spirit is the procession of the Father Himself, and is received by the Son through wisdom, as it was shown in the thirteenth point of section six.

Likewise, He who breathes, He who has been breathed, breathing, and other explanations befit here.

Third, the Father is without cause and is a cause. The Son is from Him who is without cause, and [Himself] is a cause. The Spirit is from Him who is without cause, but [Himself] is not a cause. Because the Father does not have a father but has a Son and a Spirit. The Son does not have a son but has a Father and a Spirit, for we say the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit does not have a Son or a Spirit but has a cause-Father. And again, He who sends but is not sent [i.e., the Father], He who was sent and who sends [i.e., the Son], and He who is sent but does not send [i.e., the Spirit]. And other such things are appropriate here.

Fourth, might [is attributed] to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and benevolence to the Spirit. First, so that the Father may not be conceived as being weak for His old age, and the Son [may not be conceived] as ignorant for His young age, and the Spirit [may not be conceived] as wrathful for His rumbling. And again, [this is so] because might is before wisdom, and wisdom is before benevolence. Likewise, to create, and to separate, and to adorn. Also, to give, and to grant, and to grace. Other such things are appropriate here.

Fifth, the Father is singular, for He is the origin of all numbers. And the Son is binary, and the Spirit is ternary according to the Theologian [Nazianzus]: “Upon moving, the singular stood in the

binary and ternary.” I do not say numbers, but rather one Father, one Son, one Spirit.

Sixth, the Father is eternal, for He is beginningless and endless; and the Son is everlasting, having been originated from the Father and being endless; [and] the time-Spirit has been originated from the Father and ended in the Son. I do not perceive [the Father as] time, for He is Creator of time and eternities; nor [do I perceive the Son] as He who has been originated in time, nor [do I conceive the Spirit] as ending in time. So much concerning the separation of properties.

Likewise, although commonalties are many, they are mentioned in twelve points. First, nature, which is the same as substance. Then benevolence, will, immortality, wisdom, enlightenment, beauty, immutability, delight, glory, authority, and creation. These are the twelve [commonalties], yet there are unlimited [properties] in line with these.

By this reasoning the degrees of faith are twelve. Divine virtues also have the same number; that is, faith, hope, and love. Likewise, the titles of the three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Likewise, the perception of the Trinity can be explained in this number.

So much is hallowed concerning unity and separation by the universal doctors [of the church].

Again, divine commonalty and property are perceived in different modes [as] is said by St. Dionysius.

First, solitary and common are the superlatives, such as sublime God and Lord of Lords; the negatives, such as uncreated, immortal; the causatives, such as good, wise, and so on. And proper is the Father’s being and being unbegotten; the Son and Word; the Spirit and emanation. For divine properties are common except [those properties that are pertinent] to individual countenances.

Second, common is the being in each other of the persons, like the Son [being] in the Father, the Father in the Son, the Spirit in the Father and the Son, and vice versa. And proper is the unconfused separation from each other. For example, the lights of three lamps are united yet separately proper.

Third, common is in the Trinity the holy unity, for one is the Father, one is the Son, and one is the Spirit. And proper is [in the Trinity the fact that] one is giver of birth and emanation, and one is begotten but not emanated, and the other is emanated but not begotten. As St. Dionysius says in the second chapter of the *Divine Names*: “The Father is the only source of sublime divinity, and they are not interchangeable with each other.” And again, he says: “Because the Father is the source of divinity, while the Son and the Spirit are from the God-begetter Father, like sprouts planted by God, and like flowers and sublime lights.”

Fourth, it is common for those who came forth from the benevolent will of one to communicate incommunicably according to the proportion. To some only existence, to others life, and reason, and knowledge, like an impression sealed in wax. And it is proper, for it is separated and divided from beings, and is not one of them, is not a part of the creatures, nor the whole. In this way it is separated and divided in unity, and is united in diversity. Like the seal of a ring in many waxes.

And as the figure A is divided in many syllables yet it remains one, likewise the essence of God is multiplied in the beings, and the name God [has turned into] many gods, yet it remains the same one God according to Paul: “For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things” (1 Cor 8:6). Hence, diverse creatures communicate to one, to one origin, to one God, and to one caretaker.

Fifth, unity and property are according to different modes, wherefore, one [only] from the Holy Trinity, God the Word, communicated with our nature in inseparable unity, and the perfect God became perfect man.

And here are seen two properties and two commonalties. First, for one [only] from the Holy Trinity became human. Second, for [the Word became human] only in humankind. While commonality is that God the Word totally by His perfection took total and perfect human nature, and the perfect God became perfect human.

Thus are the unities and divisions that are proper and common in the Holy Trinity.

Section Four

Question: How comparable is God the Word who took human nature [to regular human nature]?

Answer: Many things [can be said in this regard].

First, God the Word took human nature and united it with His divinity. He did not take a part, nor [did He unite] with a part, but [united divine] totality with [human] totality. Hence: “In Him dwells all the fullness of deity bodily” (Col 2:9).

Second, God the Word is prime and the origin of creatures, for by Him were made all things. And man is last and ulterior of all creatures.

Now the prime took the last and made Him first.

Third, the Word is the image of the Father, and man is the image of the Word. The image took the image, or the archetype took the image.

Fourth, the Word is sublime in comprehensible things, and man is sublime in perceptible things, for which reason He [the Word] became man.

Fifth, two essences came forth from the Word; that is, intelligible and sensible, for if it was taken only from the angels, the sensible [aspect] would have been absent, and if only from animals, the intelligible [aspect] would have been absent. Therefore, He [the Word] became man, so that He unites in Him all that came forth from Him.

Sixth, the Son of God became Son of Man, that He makes us children of God. And since the Son of God became Son of Man in nature, do not doubt that you will become son of God by grace.

Seventh, God became man and descended unto earth, so that you may become God and ascend unto heaven. Hence: “I said that you are Gods” (Jn 10:34), because His [the Word’s/Christ’s] coming was not in vain and He accomplished great works.

Eighth, He [the Word] was born according to body so that you become born according to spirit. And [the Word was born] from the Virgin so that you become born from the virgin font. And since He

was begotten spiritually, He was born according to body, while since you are born physically, you will be born again spiritually.

Section Five

Question: Why do we say Trinity?

Answer: First, because the number three is perfect, for it has beginning, middle, and end. Likewise, the Trinity is perfect—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Second, one is the origin, and two is from one. Likewise, the Father is the origin, and the Son and the Spirit are from the one origin.

Third, for there are three ones [in three]; that is, one, one, and one. Likewise, one Father, one Son, and one Spirit.

Fourth, three has the same nature of [its] three [ones]. Likewise, the Holy Trinity is the same in nature.

And we call Trinity by separating it from the number three.

First, for the number three is three and not one. While the Trinity, which is the unity of three, is one Trinity; that is, one three and three ones. Because it is not three persons and one nature as in the case of Peter, Paul, and John, but it is one in person and has three properties of countenances. As one is the sun, but white and yellow is its light, so is one the fire and its light and heat. And as one is the spirit and its reason and vitality, which [are] the speech and breath, so is one the mind and its intellection and will. Therefore, it is evident why we say Trinity God, uncreated Trinity, and we do not say three gods, or three uncreated [countenances]. But [we say] one God and one uncreated.

Second, the Trinity shows the consubstantiality of the three, for there is no first and last in them, but equal and simultaneous. And the number three is one after one.

Third, the Trinity shows the one common nature of the three, as we say man and humanity, horse and horsesness. Refuting Arius, who says that the number three has three natures, we say that the three persons have one nature.

And it [Trinity] is differentiated [from the number three] as follows:

First, the number is an accidental quantity and perceivable by us. While in the Trinity there is no quantity and measure, no accident, nor is it perceivable by created minds.

Second, in the number three one is less than two, and two is more than one. While in the Holy Trinity one is not less than two, nor is two more than one, for the Father has the whole fullness of the Son and the Spirit. Similarly, the Son and the Spirit [have the whole fullness of the other two persons].

Third, for the number one is less perfect than two, and two is less perfect than three. While in the Holy Trinity the Father is perfect, the Son is perfect, the Spirit is perfect, and that which is perfect can be neither more nor less.

Fourth, the number three is [derived] by change. When we say one and two and three, it [the number] changes from one to two, and from two to three. While the Holy Trinity is immutable, for the Father begat the Son and emanated the Spirit, and was not changed by becoming Father. Similarly, the Son and the Spirit [remained immutable].

Fifth, for [the components] of the number three are separated from each other, because when you divide the number one, two is not in one. While in the Holy Trinity the Father is inseparable from the Son and the Spirit; the Son [is inseparable] from the Father and the Spirit; the Spirit [is inseparable] from the Father and the Son. And this can be comprehended directly both correlatively and consubstantially. Hence: “My Father is in me and I am in my Father” (Jn 10:38). And: “I work these works through the Holy Spirit.”³¹

Question: The Trinity is common, and divinity is common. Now, we say God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit. Then can we say Trinity the Father, Trinity the Son, and [Trinity] the Holy Spirit?

Answer: We say no, because divinity is common to their nature, while the Trinity is common to their persons. And because they are

³¹ No such verse in the Bible.

proper in person and one in nature, therefore the Trinity cannot be perceived as one person, but as God or divinity according to the unity of nature.

Question: Why is He called Father?

Answer: Because He is the source and the origin from which all emanate.

Question: Why is He called Son?

Answer: Because as the ray is from the sun, likewise the Son is begotten of the Father.

Question: Why [is] the Spirit [called so]?

Answer: Because it emanates forever from the Father to the Son, and through Him [the Son] comes to us, like heat [reaches us] through a sunbeam.

Again, He who created all things is called Father, and He who encompasses all so that they may not be dispersed [is called] Son, and He who gives life by breathing and adorns all is called Holy Spirit.

Question: Why is He [the Father] not called mother from the genitive sex?

Answer: Because birth originally comes forth from the Father.

Question: Why is He [the Son] not called daughter?

Answer: Because the Son is more similar to the Father than a daughter.

Question: Why is the Holy Spirit not called Son?

Answer: Because it is not birth, but emanation, like breath and life in our souls.

Question: When we glorify, why do we [glorify] first the Father, then the Son, and last the Spirit?

Answer: In coexistent and united Holy Trinity there is no first and last, big and small, elder and younger. But five modes [of classification] are said to be to things that precede: time, nature, hand [perhaps rank], honor, and cause. From these mentioned, nothing is appropriate to God, except the cause.

Now, since the Father is the cause of the Son's birth, and of the Spirit's emanation, He is placed first and then the Son [is placed].

Not as some think, that the Son is the cause for the emanation of the Spirit; the right knowledge is threefold. First, because the Father is the cause for the emanation of the Spirit and the receiving of the Son, for the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father and receives from the Son. Second, for the Son is related to the Father and is even [to Him] by nature. Third, the Son reflects birth in essence, and the Spirit [reflects] life, and the existence of a thing precedes its becoming alive.

Section Six

Question: How is God one; hence: “Your Lord God is one Lord” (cf. Mk 12:29), and “There is one God the Father . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 8:6)?

Answer: It is to be known that one is different from the only one [singular], for one is common, while the only one is proper and unique. Because all the only ones are one, but all the ones are not only ones; such as when we say one flock, one pile, one liter, these are ones, but are not only ones. While God is called one.

First, because He is not many, but one.

Second, for He is simple, and not compound.

Third, He is one, meaning whole, and not part and incomplete.

Fourth, He is one and only one, for He is indivisible and inseparable.

Fifth, He is called one, like the singular which is the origin of numbers, but not a number. And God is the origin of all creatures, but not a creature.

Sixth, the singular becomes many by multiplication, and God is the one who continues the multitude of beings.

Seventh, the singular is the fulfillment of all numbers, and God is the fulfillment of all beings.

Eighth, one makes ten, hundred, thousand, ten thousand, and infinite by multiplication. And from one God came to existence the ten classes of angels with humans, and the hundred legions according to the parable of the sheep, and the thousand species of animals that

are on earth, and the ten thousand lifeless plants, and the countless beings.

Ninth, one evidently exists in ten, hundred, thousand, and ten thousand in a veiled and hidden way. And God is evident in rational [beings] through comprehension and appearance, while in animals, plants, and [other] beings through insignificant resemblance.

Tenth, as the singular is inferior to ten, hundred, thousand, and ten thousand, likewise it is superior to them. Similarly, God the Creator is that which is beneath and the basis of all whom He carries with the power of His Word, and also is above and superior to all creatures.

Eleventh, as one expands when [it] becomes many, and narrows when [it] heads toward one, likewise our knowledge becomes expanded when descended from the one God to the creatures and narrows again when [ascended] from these [creatures] to Him.

Twelfth, for He multiplies with many, yet in His oneness is and remains according to the example of one.

However, [the only one] is also different from the number [one].

First, for the number is accident, which does not exist in God.

Second, the number is quantity, while God is immeasurable.

Third, the number is within our knowledge, while God is limitless to our knowledge, as we have said; then, therefore, the only one is superior to one.

Again, it is to be known that one can be perceived in two ways. There is one that is the origin of numbers, and such a one cannot be related to God, because it is a quantity, and accident does not exist in God. And there is one that is reciprocal to Being, and thus it is said one God, as if He is, for it does not indicate accident. And this is the definition of one: One is indivisible in itself and is separate from others. And the essence of God is indivisible in itself and separate from creatures.

Question: How does God grow and become multiplied?

Answer: First, since the one person of the Father grew in the person of the Son and becomes multiplied in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Second, [God] grows in the proto-idea, and becomes multiplied during the creation of beings.

Third, [God] grows in the essence of beings, and becomes multiplied in life, in grace, and in other gifts.

Fourth, [God] grows in genera and species, and becomes multiplied again in species and the individuals [of species].

Fifth, [God] grows in the formers and in those who were originated, and becomes multiplied in those that are derived or come forth from them.

Section Seven

Question: What is it that they say for God that He is the origin and cause?

Answer: As to cause, both origin and cause are the same. But as to those that are caused [beings], they are different.

First, among those that are consubstantial, the Father is the origin of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the cause of all other creatures.

Second, the origin is [related] to the archetype, and the cause [is related] to the beings, as to images and resemblance of the archetype.

Third, origin is [related] to the intelligibles, and the cause [is related] to the sensible things, which are [respectively] eternal and temporal.

Fourth, origin is [related] to those that precede, and the cause [is related] to those that follow and that exist through mediation, such as from elements and parents.

Fifth, origin is [related] to the essence, and the cause [is related] to life and grace and to other things.

Sixth, origin is [related] to energy, and the cause [is related] to completion, because being originated from Him we come to completion in Him.

Section Eight

On being and nonbeing.

It is to be known that nonbeing is perceived in many modes. First, the simple nonbeing, which is nowhere, and in no time, and which was not, is not, and will not be, such as nothing.

Second, nonbeing is perceived to be the supreme being and existent, such as that which is not and does not exist among beings, but is supreme being and supreme nonbeing.

Third, nonbeing is perceived to be the matter without quality, which does not have form, genus, and quality.

Fourth, nonbeing is perceived to be the incompatible forms, such as incorporeal, lifeless, and breathless. Some classify these with matter, although not rightly, because the matter [they refer to] is absolutely formless.

Fifth, nonbeing is perceived to be those material things that are in [the process of] existence and corruption, for they were once nonbeing, and will not be latter.

Sixth, nonbeing is perceived to be also those absolute things that are in the life to come, for they have not been yet, but will be forever.

Seventh, nonbeing is perceived to be evil, for it is the absence of good and is external to nature. And it is to be known that in as many ways as we perceive the nonbeing, in so many ways also [is perceived] the being, because they oppose each other.

And the being is first divided into three [categories]: into the being of beings, which is the preexisting cause of all. And into the original being, which is the paradigm and proto-idea. And into the essence of beings, which is the image and likeness of the paradigm.

Again, created essence is divided into two [categories]: substance and accident. And substance, again, [is divided] into two: first and second, which is individual, species, and genus; while accident is quantity, quality, and so on.

Question: Why is it said that the preexistent is the first cause?

Answer: For three [reasons]. First, for it is before all beings in both origin and essence. Second, for it is and is God, and then is

good, wise, and so on. Because the name *Is* is primary over all [other names such as] *good, kind*, and so on. Wherefore, He said to Moses: “I AM that I AM” (Ex 3:14).

Third, for first He put the beings into communication with existence and substance, and then with life, wisdom, and so on, because our being precedes the being of good.

Question: Why do we call Him *was*, and *is*, and *will be*? Hence: “I AM that I AM” (Ex 3:14), and “In the beginning was the Word” (Jn 1:1), and “God will be all in all” [1 Cor 15:28].

Answer: For three [reasons]. First, for He is forever, and He is not sometimes *Is* and sometimes non-*Is* [i.e., nonexistent].

Second, for He is the beginning, the middle, and the end.

Third, for in Him is the past, the present, and the hereafter.

Section Nine *On the Paradigm.*

Question: What is the paradigm?

Answer: Some said [it is] the most primordial elements from which all material beings were made. But this is not correct. First, for the paradigm is simple, and worshippable, and pure, and immutable; while elements are not simple, and not worshippable, and not pure, and not immutable.

Again, the paradigm does not materialize like elements, nor is it formed as matter and genus. And it is not the paradigm that created us, but the paradigm is in God, and in His vision, and in His goodwill.

Now, there is no personified essence in God as [there is in] ternary persons, nor is it separated from Him as [it is separated in] the classes of angels, nor is it solely an idea in the vision of God. Because there is no merely extrinsic vision in God, but He sees the paradigm within Himself, and sees us in our paradigms, as our being first in God, and then in our essence, and not as a change from the goodwill.

As our origin was prior to our being, it remains the same origin now, and later, at the end, it will remain unchanged, turning into the

origin. Therefore, it [the paradigm] is sometimes called origin and we [are perceived to be] originated from it.

Sometimes [it is called] paradigm as always in the vision of God.

Sometimes [it is called] proto-idea, like an archetype, and we [are perceived to be] the image and likeness of it.

Sometimes [it is called] predetermination according to Paul: “declared [to be] Son of God” (Rom 1:4), and that God predestines us according to His will as to an immutable determination. The same is the book of life as to an indelible return to predetermination.

And it is to be known that God is the creative cause of the paradigm and predetermination, while the material cause is that matter that is predetermined, and the theoretical cause is the order, so that grace may be given here [in this life], and glory in the life to come. And [there is] the fulfilling cause so that we may become cleansed and pure.

Question: Is this paradigm one or many?

Answer: The paradigm is one and simple if we consider that one is the substance of God, and one [is His] vision, and one [is His] truth.

But it is many and diverse according to the image and likeness of those who were modeled and who are numerous. Because God sees many through one paradigm, as He sees the corporeal in His incorporeality, and the temporal through His eternity. Thus, from the one and same origin, which is the paradigm, many were originated according to the paradigm. Thus, there is one paradigm in the one God, and it is many according to many images.

For example, the number one multiplies in many numbers, but it is one in itself. And again, all the lines in a circle unite with each other in the middle point, and are separated from each other departing from the middle point. And for example, a genus is one, but it multiplies in many species. And one is the power of the soul, but it becomes proper in each of the parts [of the whole]. And one is the sun, but it multiplies in its energy. And one is a sound, but it multiplies in many ears. And one is the seal of a ring, but it is many in sealed wax. Likewise, one is the paradigm in itself, but [it]

multiplies according to those that are multiplied from it. So much on this. And the rest we will show later.

Section Ten

Question: How is God uncreated, since we call uncreated those that do not exist?

Answer: It is to be known that the uncreated is perceived in four modes.

First, that which has not been yet is perceived to be uncreated, like that which exists in the hereafter, and which needs an origin.

Second, that which lacks completion is perceived to be uncreated, because it has an origin but needs completion.

Third, those that are from someone and are not in someone are perceived to be uncreated, like the angels that are made in eternity and are uncreated in time. These lack and do not lack two things; that is, origin and completion.

Fourth, uncreated is perceived to be that which is nowhere, and that which is never; that is, the nothing. This absolutely lacks origin and completion. While God is uncreated absolutely and transcendently, for He is uncreated, and always existent, and self-perfect. Since He is uncreated by existing, He is differentiated from the uncreated nothing. And [as] forever existent [He is differentiated from] the angels. And [as] self-perfect [He is differentiated from] those that lack origin and completion. And [that God is uncreated] absolutely and transcendently is evident from the Trinity.

Again, God is perceived to be uncreated as the cause for those that are uncreated, and as before all uncreated things, and as completion and totality of all uncreated things.

Question: God has uncreated nature, while creatures have created nature. Since the uncreated brought forth the creatures, how is the created regulated by the created, and the uncreated by the uncreated?

Answer: First, that God is uncreated, wherefore the creatures were without origin and uncreated according to the nonexistent, is regulated and very much [so] as you have said, because God the

uncreated being brought forth the uncreated into existence.

Again, since God is uncreated in nature, He is unlimited in power, because the power of created nature is limited. And now, according to [His] uncreated essence, He brought forth the uncreated essence of the Son and the Spirit, and according to [His] unlimited power He brought forth the created essence, because unlimited power is capable of [bringing forth] all opposites, wherefore He is omnipotent. Likewise, the everlasting [brought forth] that which is temporal, and the immaterial [brought forth] that which is material, and the immutable that which is variable, and the beginningless those that have beginning, and others similarly.

Again, God is uncreated in nature, and uncreated in knowledge. And since He is uncreated in knowledge, He is immutable. And now, He who is uncreated in knowledge and immutable knows those that are made and those that are variable. And this is the proto-idea of God, according to the Apostle: “Chosen before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4).

Now, we, creatures that came into existence later, were uncreated in the uncreated vision of God. Now, it is regular that the uncreated God according to His uncreated vision brings into existence [creatures] according to their substance.

Again, the uncreated and beginningless God the Father before eternities begat and emanated from Himself the co-uncreated Son and the Holy Spirit. Now, the Son and the Spirit are equal to the Father as being co-uncreated.

But since they are from a cause, they are appropriated from the Father, for the Father is without cause and without beginning.

And now, the Son and the Spirit have the Father as their origin, according to their cause; and they are without beginning with the Father, according to their existence before eternities. And because we have realized this, we answer and say that it is regular and very much so.

Because the beginningless Father beginning by Himself with the Son and the Spirit made the origin of those that are originated, as the Gospel says: “All things were made by Him” (Jn 1:3), and the

Apostle [says]: “from whom, by whom, and in whom” (cf. Rom 11:36). Then, therefore, it is evident how the created were made from the uncreated, and the originated from Him who has no beginning.

So much on this.

Section Eleven

How is God timeless and everlasting?

Question: How is God timeless and the soul timeless?

Answer: God is timeless, first, because He is the Creator of times. Second, because He is before times. Third, because He is superior to times and not inferior to them.

But the spirit is not the Creator of times, nor is it before times, for it is in time. However, it is timeless, because it is not with time, but with eternity, and time is contained in eternity.

Question: How is God everlasting and the soul everlasting?

Answer: Likewise is this. Because God is the Creator of eternity, and is before eternity, and is above eternity, for God contains eternity, as eternity [contains] time. And He is called everlasting God, for He does not have end. Likewise, [God is perceived to be] everlasting, because He does not have beginning and end.

While our soul and the angels are perceived to be forever, because they are not with time but with eternity. They are also called everlasting, because they have beginning but not end.

Question: Why is [God] called the Ancient of days according to Daniel?

Answer: The Ancient of days, which is the old [aged], has four properties.

First, that which exists long since.

Second, that which is old.

Third, that whose days are diminished.

Fourth, that which is variable.

Now, three [of these] are not appropriate to God, because He does not become old, nor does He become aged, nor do His years diminish according to the Prophet: “You are the same, and your years do not

fail” (Heb 1:12). And He does not vary or alter. Hence: “There is no variation or shadow of turning” (Js 1:17). But He is long since and forever.

Again, the Ancient of days, hexameron Creator. It is to be known that saying *ancient* means eternal, and [saying] *day* [means] time. This is what is called eternal, time, and day. Hence: “You are forever and ever, and your years shall not end” (cf. Ps 102:27). And “The day of the Lord will come, and the day of vengeance of our God” (2 Pet 3:10; Isa 61:2). And “Jesus Christ . . . yesterday and today [that is, time] the same and forever” (Heb 13:8).

And this for three reasons.

First, for God is and exists in all eternities, and every time, and every day.

Second, for He is before all eternities, and before time, and before all days.

Third, for He is the cause of eternities, and times, and days, as He is called light, wisdom, and life, because He is the cause of these.

Again, it is to be known that Daniel saw Him ancient and aged: “The hair of His head like white snow”³² (Dan 7:9). While Abraham saw [Him] young. Hence: “The three men were three youngsters,” says Philo [the Jew]. Which means the aged of the Ancient of days and the young one who does not age.

They interpret this as follows.

First, it means the aged is the beginning of everything, while the young means He is immutable and without alteration.

Second, *the aged* means [God’s] being without beginning, and *the young* means [God’s] being without end; the same by one another, and not different from each other. Because that which is beginningless is without end, and the same endless is beginningless. Although we see the beginningless at the first end and the endless at the last end, in Him there is no first and last, because He is simple and singular.

Third, they interpret that *the Ancient of days* means former times,

³² The original verse says: “his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool.”

and *the young* [means] the former numbers, because the only one is the origin of all numbers, and that which is close to the only one is the most primordial [compared to] the farthest [number]. And since time is combined with number, *the aged* means former in time, and *the young* [means] former according to number.

Then it is evident that *the Ancient of days* means before time and eternity, and superior to and Creator of time and eternity, and encompasser of eternity, as eternity [encompasses] time. Wherefore: “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom” (Ps 145:13); that is, enclosure of all eternities.

Section Twelve *On eternities.*

Question: How many eternities are there?

Answer: Four.

First, that which does not have a beginning and an end.

Second, that which does not have a beginning, but has an end.

Third, that which has a beginning, but does not have an end.

Fourth, that which has both a beginning and an end.

And although these are commonly called eternities, they have their proper names.

The first is called perpetual eternity.

The second [is called] original eternity.

The third [is called] everlasting eternity.

The fourth is called temporal eternity.

Also called eternity are the homonyms of these, such as the individual centuries.

And regarding to the laws of Moses, the law says: “shall be forever” (Ex 29:28), which means for a long time. And truly these are our sayings:

Thus also we give glory to the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and always, which is the temporal and the forever. Forever and ever, which is primordial and perpetual, for it contains three eternities that have neither a beginning, nor an end.

And it is to be known that God is called forever beginningless and endless, and [He] is the cause for those who contain the eternity that has neither a beginning nor an end. Also, God is called eternity and forever, and time, because He is the cause for these, as has been said. But the angels, the souls, and the world are called eternal, because they are in communication with the eternal, to that [eternal] that has a beginning but no end. And if someone says, since God is eternal, beginningless and endless, similarly the perpetual [is forever beginningless and endless]; then there would be two [beings] without beginning and without end.

We say that there is one eternity beginningless and endless, which is God Himself, wholly altogether and perfect, and before the eternities and Creator of all eternities. Hence: “through whom He also created the eternities”³³ (Heb 1:2). And He begot the Word before eternities. And this created eternity we perceive as not having a beginning and an end, because it contains other eternities that have either a beginning or an end; but [that eternity] itself is contained by the uncreated eternal that is God.

Again, it is to be known that eternity, perpetuity, and time are differentiated in six modes.

First, the eternal does not have a beginning and an end. The perpetual has a beginning and does not have an end. And time has a beginning and an end.

Second, the eternal contains the perpetual, and the perpetual [contains] time; and time is contained by both [eternal and perpetual].

Third, the eternal does not have a part; it is wholly altogether and perfect. Likewise is the perpetual. But time has three parts; that is, past, present, and future.

Fourth, God is eternal; angels are everlasting; humans are temporal.

Fifth, time is for things that are sensible; the perpetual for things that are intelligible; and the eternal for things that are inconceivable.

Sixth, time is beneath the heavens; the perpetual is above the

³³ *Eternities* is rendered as *worlds* in other translations of the Bible.

heavens; and the eternal is above all heavens.

So much on this.

Section Thirteen *On life.*

Question: How many lives are there?

Answer: First, three.

That which is eternal; that which is perpetual; and that which is temporal.

Eternal is that which does not have a beginning, and does not have an end, like God. And perpetual is that which has a beginning, but does not have an end, like the angels and the soul of man. And temporal is that which has a beginning and an end, like animals and plants.

Question: How are the lives of God and the angels differentiated?

Answer: In three ways. First, in God it [life] is self-existent, because He has it by Himself. While the angels have it [life] from another [being]; that is, from God. Second, God is life giving life, while the angels do not give life to others; they are simply alive. Third, God is life without beginning and without end, while the angels are initiated, but have no end, as we have said. And this is the same according to the first thoughts.

Question: What are the differences and similarities of the lives of angels and souls?

Answer: They are similar by immortality, because they both are originated but have no end. And they are different by one [thing]; that is, by change, because the angel is the same and immutable being, while the soul changes. The latter is first alive by body, [and] then it is incorporeal, and then [it] is eternal by unification. Other properties of the soul and the angels we will show later in four modes.

This [what we said] is proper to the lives only.

Question: What are the differences and similarities of the intelligible life and the sensible life?

Answer: They are similar in that they are originated from one vital cause.

But they are different, first, because the intelligible [life] is immortal life, while the sensible [life] is mortal. Second, the intelligible is directly from the cause, while the sensible is through the mediation of the elements.

Question: What are the differences and similarities of the lives of the animals and the plants?

Answer: They are similar, first, because they are elemental. Second, because they are corruptible.

And they are different, first, because plant life is from only the heat of fire, while animal life is from heat and breath of air.

Second, plant life has eating, growing, and birth-giving [functions]. While animal life in addition to these has [the functions of] sensing and moving. And their other differences we will completely learn later.

Section Fourteen *On the vision of God.*

Question: How does God see the past and the future altogether presently, while we do not?

Answer: Our mind has two defects; that is, forgetting and ignorance. Because it forgets the past and does not know the future.

But these defects do not exist in God.

Again, our mind presently is within time, while the two parts of time are not; that is, the past is lost, and the future is not existent. Therefore, with the loss of these parts, the knowledge of our mind is lost too. While the mind of God is above time, therefore He sees presently the past and the hereafter.

Question: How come God sees those that are not made and those that are not existent, while we [see only] those that are created and made?

Answer: The wisdom of God is uncreated; therefore, He can measure the uncreated that are not existent. While ours is created,

therefore it [our wisdom] measures those that exist. Because where nature cannot reach, there our mind also cannot reach.

And the uncreated is differentiated in two modes. Like the uncreated being, God; and the uncreated [thing] which has not yet been created or brought to existence. Therefore, both uncreated things are known only by God. Because only He knows Himself, and He alone knows those that are not existent. While we do not know these two [uncreated things].

Question: How does God see the beings, since He does not have sensation, while we recognize the the intelligibles through inner sensation and the visible things through external sensation?

Answer: When we say that God is without mind and without senses, [we say it] not because of their lack [in Him], but because of His transcendency. Like when we say irrational and foolishness [thinking of God, it means that] He has more reason and wisdom than we do. And when we say to become vain [thinking of God], that means [God has] more power, and [when we speak about Christ's] weakness on the cross, [we speak about] His excessive power, and all such things.

Again, to say [that God is] irrational and without senses denotes the transcendent [nature of God]. And since He has reason and understanding, Solomon says: “God by wisdom founded the earth, and by His understanding” (Prov 3:19). And David speaks of superior senses: “He that created the eye, shall He not see; and shall He not hear?” (cf. Ps 94:9), [and] “The ends of the earth are in His hands” (Ps 95:4).

Now, the divine mind sees in four properties as follows: altogether, presently, perfect[ly], and immutabl[y]. Altogether, that is, He sees the past and the hereafter as present; and presently, for He sees everything, and He Himself is present. Perfect[ly], for [He sees] without excess or lack; and immutabl[y], for the vision of God is the same. And all these are opposite to our vision, because we see partially, and one after another, and by more or less knowledge, and variably according to the object.

Again, it is property [in the vision of God] that God's vision

comes first, and then the existence of all things follows His vision. While our vision follows existence, because first comes the object into being, and then we see it. Because God sees before He operates and before He wills, and before He brings into existence. Hence: “Your eyes saw my unwrought substance” (Ps 139:16). While we [see] after His operation, and willing, and bringing into existence, as we have said.

Again, God sees according to the cause, for He is the cause of all. And [He sees] according to capacity, for He contains all in Himself. And [He sees] according to fulfillment, for He is the end and fulfillment of all.

Again, He sees the material things immaterially, and the compound things as simple, and the temporal things eternally, and the many and divided things as one and undivided. While we see all these in an adverse way, and this is the reason. Because God does not have the vision outside of Himself, but only inside of Himself, for He sees Himself in Himself and others in Himself. And then [He sees] the created in the paradigm, which is the vision of God, as we have said.

Question: What is it [indicative of] when God is called all-seeing?

Answer: All-seeing indicates the total vision, which is contrary to our partial vision in four modes.

First, for in God all things are seen, heard, and so on. While in us particular things [are seen and heard].

Second, for God sees all; that is, the righteous and the sinners. While we [see] only one [of them].

Third, for He sees all deeds inside and outside, of minds, words, and so on. While we [see] one [of these].

Fourth, for He sees the past, the present, and the hereafter. While we [see] only the present.

Question: How do we see God: through intellect or through sensation?

Answer: Since divine essence is nature, its identity and quality are incomprehensible to us in this world and in the hereafter.

But since the being is God, He is seen in two modes: that is, thorough knowledge and ignorance, by assertion and negation, as follows.

First, by looking to the images and resemblances that are the orderliness of creatures. And by attaining through them [creatures] their paradigm, and from the same again attaining the archetype paradigm, and thus seeing that God is the cause of all.

Again, God is also seen as follows. When the mind of all beings is separated [from each other], [it] also [is separated] from Himself [the being] since He is created, [and] abandoning Him unites with the divine beam, which is impenetrable light and wisdom. The first [kind of] vision is given to the common [beings]. But the second [is given] to the perfect [beings] like prophets and apostles. The first vision is natural, while the second is of bright faith and luminous vision.

Question: How do the angels have vision?

Answer: Their vision is God-like; that is, simple, single, and sublime. Simple and single, because they perceive the material and divided beings as solitary and simple. And sublime, because they perceive the upper side, and not the lower side; and they ascend. That is, in God the Word they see God in Himself, and the creatures in Him.

Therefore, they perceive single and simple, like the rising of the light that illuminates without traveling, and [they] always ascend by vision. And this is their knowledge of the morning and of the evening, for when they see God, their knowledge is always renewed; that is, [the knowledge] of the morning. And when they see the creation in God, their knowledge of the creation is renewed; that is, [the knowledge] of the evening.

Section Fifteen

Question: How are the knowledge of God and the angels different and similar?

Answer: They are similar as follows. They are single and simple,

and sublime knowledge, as we have said. Because they [angels] perceive God in the one and same God the Word, and they perceive the beings in their paradigms.

But they are different as follows. God has the knowledge self-wisely; that is, He by Himself is without beginning and without end. While the angels [do not have it] from themselves, but it is originated from God and is endless, because they have [knowledge] without forgetfulness. Again, the angels always increase their knowledge.

On human knowledge.

Question: What is [the nature of] human knowledge?

Answer: Human knowledge is two [kinds].

First, natural.

Second, donative.

Now, the natural has three properties. First, that perception lowers itself to the perceived present before it.

Second, that which is mingled with these [perception and that which is perceived].

Third, [that which] is divided and different in many, and finds truth through wandering. And such is the natural examination of philosophers.

And the donative is opposite to these, for by simple and single perception it is elevated to divine knowledge. And thus one becomes astonished by the perception of Him. And thus is the perception of prophets, apostles, and faith.

Section Sixteen

Question: How are angelic and human perception different and similar?

Answer: They are similar by donative perception, but are different by the natural [perception].

First, the perception of angels is intellectual and all at once, while human [perception] is rational and through putting particles together.

Second, angels ascend when they perceive God, and humans lower themselves and divert from that which is conceived.

Third, their [angels'] perception is simple, while ours is compound and material.

Fourth, their [angels'] perception is singular and is from one, while ours is many and from many, because by different senses we perceive different objects.

Fifth, their perception is unforgettable, while ours is with forgetfulness, as much as the mind perceives by senses.

And this is because of three reasons.

First, because our mind slips and forgets the thing, since the membrane and the brain of the head are cool and moist.

Second, because [our mind] forgets the thing because of being tortured by the diseases of the body.

Third, because of the deceit of the enemy [our mind] forgets the good things.

And since after death and resurrection there are no such reasons, the perception remains unforgettable.

Question: How different are the perception of mind and the perception of senses?

Answer: First, mind perceives the immaterial, and senses [perceive] material things.

Second, mind perceives the substance of an object that is in [the object], while senses [perceive] the accidents that happen to [the object], like quality, quantity, and so on.

Third, senses perceive that which is particular, like a specific person who is an individual, while mind perceives the common that is nature, like humanity.

Fourth, senses perceive that which is close, like here and now, while mind [perceives] that which is far, and past, and hereafter.

Fifth, mind perceives as operating cause and as maker, while senses [perceive] as instrumental cause and as mediator.

Question: What is the origin and completion of reason?

Answer: As the practical, which is moral, is originated from the good of God and is completed in the good, likewise the theoretical,

which is rational, is originated from the truth, which is the Word of God, and is completed in the same truth.

Again, the origin of the practical is the will, and [the origin of] the theoretical is the cognitive power of mind.

Section Seventeen

Question: Why do we say that God has word; accordingly: “By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established” (Ps 33:6)?

Answer: For many reasons.

First, because [God] is the distributor of all words and wisdoms.

Second, because He has gathered together all the beings in His proto-idea word. Hence: “He sustains all things by the power of His word” (Heb 1:3).

Third, because our [spoken] word reaches all ears by sound and goes to all places by paper [written word]; and the Word of God is sharp and cutting, and it penetrates all beings.

Fourth, because our word is purified by the regulating [function] of the larynx, and it is said: “The words of the Lord are words that are purified seven times, like silver [refined] from earth” (cf. Ps 12:6).

Fifth, because our words extend more than anything else, and the Word of God is expanded in everything by substance and creation.

On truth and faith.

Question: What is truth?

Answer: Truth is the same simple and divine Word that does not have anything false and opposite in it. And the true and truth are differentiated from each other thus, as partially and wholly, like man and humanity.

Again, man’s word is true; divine Word is truth.

Again, the true sometimes changes into false, like the words of philosophers, while truth does not change, like the light of faith. Because the light of faith rising in the mind of the faithful from this

truth, with an immutable solidity, confirms the faithful in truth and the truth in them.

As knowledge unites him who knows with that which is known, likewise faith unites the truth with the faithful.

Question: What are the similarities and differences of rational examination and perception by faith?

Answer: They are similar by both having truth as their objective. But they are [also] different.

First, because the rational is completed with the earthly things and with many truths, while faith [is completed] with one and divine truth.

Second, because the rational sometimes deviates from the truth and doubts, while faith is infallible and doubtless in truth.

Third, rational examination leads to heresy, and faith [leads] to orthodoxy.

Fourth, rational examination pulls truth after the mind, while in case of [perception by] faith, mind follows the truth.

Fifth, rational examination is without rewards, while that [examination] of faith receives rewards and glory.

So much on this.

Section Eighteen *On theological modes.*

Question: How many modes of theology are there?

Answer: Four. That is:

First, typological;

Second, causative;

Third, symbolic;

Fourth, mystical theology.

The first, which is the typological theology, relates to the Holy Trinity and one divinity—how is it one, and how [is it] three, [that is] begetter and begotten and emanation; and [it relates to] the humanization of Christ. And this is primary, because it theologizes and examines that which is before eternity and time.

The second is causative [theology], whereby through things that are caused, that is, by comprehending the beautiful in creatures, we invoke the Creator and designate Him as good, beautiful, light, life, wisdom, and so on. And this is second, because this [type of] theology comes forth from the cause of the creation of us beings.

The third is symbolic theology, whereby through sensible images we transcend into intelligible knowledge—what does it mean to appear as man, or lion, lamb, fire, light, and so on; and why do we say that God sleeps, wakes, becomes enraged or grieved. And this is third in its turn, because this theology comes forth from visible and material things.

And the fourth is mystical theology, when by leaving all sensible and intelligible beings outside, we go deep by mindfulness and enter the cloud and the fog, like Moses, and then we see Him [God] different than all beings. Because He is neither body nor spirit; neither mind nor anything else that we know or comprehend. Then we say [God is] inconceivable, impenetrable, ineffable, not only to us, but to all created intellectual faculties [God] is incomprehensible and unknown. As the Prophet says: “He made darkness His secret place” (Ps 17:12). And the Apostle says: “who dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Tim 6:16). Because as darkness is unknown, similarly the abundance of light causes invisibility; and the substance and nature of divinity is invisible to angels, and unknown to human minds.

This is the ultimate peak of theology. This is the felicity of intellectual faculties. And this is what all the chosen beings desire—to inconceivably conceive the inconceivable, and to incomprehensibly comprehend the incomprehensible.

This is called mystical theology.

First, because it is comprehended through mystery and faith, and not by mental examination.

Second, because it is mysterious and hidden, and is not [relayed or attained] through parables and symbols as in different [types of] theology, as has been mentioned.

Third, because it can be veiled as mysterious and hidden from

the schismatics and heathens and the untrained minds of stupid people. “Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine” (Mt 7:6).

Know also this by smart mind, that all kinds of theology are divided into two groups to begin with; that is, by thesis [affirmation] and by antithesis [negation].

And each of this is divided into two becoming four, according to Gregory the Theologian as follows: is and is said; is not but is said [to be]; is but cannot be said; is not and is not said [to be].

First, by affirmation, [which is] that which is and is said [to be in God]—such as Father, Son, Spirit, light, life, and so on—is those things that exist in God, and we invoke Him by placing [them] in Him.

And such are the typological and causative [theologies].

The second [is] that which is not but is said [to be in God], such as body and hand and foot, or to sleep and to wake up, which do not exist in God but are related to Him parabolically. And this is symbolic theology.

And the negatives are of the mystical theology. First, that which is and cannot be said [to be in God], such as without beginning and without end, not Word and not mind and not existent, and so on. And these are [negatives] according not to their deficiency but their transcendence.

The second [is] that which is not and cannot be said [to be in God], such as mutation, corruption, evil. They are not and cannot be said [to be in God]. This is theology by thesis and antithesis; that is, by affirmation and negation, and effable and ineffable.

It is to be known that the first [kind of] theology, which is the typological, is the most limited and brief.

And the second, which is the causative, is greater than the first, because it is related to the examination of divine names.

And the third, which is the symbolic, is even greater, and more extended, and more diverse, because it engages the senses, which are many and divided. Because the more it comes from up to down, it divides into many and multiplies as in individuals and species from

the genus. Or like the one trunk of a tree that has many branches and leaves. Likewise is the [symbolic] theology.

And from down to up, from plurality to the one heads the mystical theology, isolated from the plurality of beings and directed toward the one, which is absolute ignorance and incomprehensibility, ineffable, inconceivable, and honored in silence by all creatures.

Section Nineteen

Question: What makes the negations and denials different and equal, for they look one and the same? As when we say negatively not existent, not word, not mind, not sonhood, not fatherhood, and so on, likewise those who deny say Christ is not God, is not Father, is not Son. Then, therefore, they are one and the same for two reasons: First, that same negating particle—that is, the *not*—effects both the denial and the negation. Second, because the opposite of negation is affirmation, and the opposite of denial is confession. Now, affirmation and confession are one and the same; therefore negation and denial are one and the same.

Answer: Negations and denials are not one [and the same].

First, because denial is in relation to deficiency; when someone says that Christ is not God, it means that He is less and is not God, nor is He Father, nor is He Son. But the negation is in relation to transcendence, for it is sublime word and supreme mind, and it is ultimate and more Father and Son, and not of our level, as our words and minds are.

Second, denial is against the essence and glory of God, for it makes [someone] deny the essence and glory of God, while negation does not remove the essence and glory of God; rather, [it removes] that which is consequential to the essence of God and is created by Him, and [also] removes [its] humility.

I answer the first: although the one and same negating particle, which is the *not*, operates both denial and negation, denial and negation are not [one and] the same, for often it happens that the tool is the same as the hand is, but the operation is not the same, as in

cutting and sewing. Similarly is the *not*, as in there, where Aristotle says, “not man,” which is an indefinite designation, and “does not sit,” which is negation; different is the indefinite noun, and different is the negation of confirmation.

Concerning the second, we answer that affirmation and confession are not the same. Like when we affirmatively say that it is evil, it is dark, it is sin, behold, this is denial and deficiency. But when we say it is not evil, it is not dark, it is not sin, behold, this is confession and not affirmation. Then, therefore, different are the negation and the denial. This much on this.

Section Twenty

[On] How is God called the sun?

The property of the sun is described later in the twenty-first point of chapter twelve, section twenty [of the *Book of Questions*]. See and compare with God if you need to. But here, regardless, the sun is compared with the Holy Trinity according to the following example. The one sun is origin to the two lights—the yellow and the white. And the entire sun is the image of the Father, while the image of the Son is the yellow light, and the image of the Spirit is the white light. And the property of the sun is obvious, since it is the origin of the two lights. Likewise, the Father is the origin of the Son’s birth and the Spirit’s emanation.

And [we say this concerning] the commonality of the two lights.

First, they are from one origin, and the Son and the Spirit are from the Father.

Second, again, the two lights are diffused and dispersed, for immaterial are the origin and the emanation.

Third, for they are the same in nature.

Fourth, for they are everywhere.

Fifth, for they exist simultaneously.

Sixth, for they are illuminators.

Seventh, for they chase away darkness.

Eighth, for they complete the day.

Ninth, for they veil the stars.

Tenth, for they give joy.

Similarly, there are numerous other equalities.

And now, since they are common in essence but proper in peculiarities, the properties of the two lights are different.

First, the yellow light is formed while traveling or entering in the eyes, whereas the white is not [formed similarly]. Likewise, the Word became incarnate, but the Spirit did not.

Second, according to the space it penetrates, it becomes big or small. And according to the space of recipients Christ becomes born in our hearts.

Third, the yellow light has a shade; the white does not. Since [Christ] entered [in this world] in time and completed the shade of the laws.

Fourth, the minuscule dust appears in the ray, and the Word revealed particular mysteries.

Fifth, the light shows the sun, and the Son reveals the Father.

Sixth, the yellow [indicates] the virtue of the body, and the white [indicates] the innocence of the spirit.

Seventh, heat is with the yellow light, and the love of God was inflamed by the Word. Hence: “I came to bring fire to the earth” (Lk 12:49).

Eighth, the white light is more transparent as in clouds and likewise in other substances. And the grace of the Spirit descends into the sinful and enlightens them.

Ninth, in the yellow light we see the white light. Likewise, the Prophet says: “In your light shall we see light” (Ps 35:10). This is so because the Holy Spirit is granted to all creatures in the heavens and on earth through the Son.

Tenth, the white light precedes and succeeds, as it is seen in the morning and in the evening. And first came the Spirit everywhere, as in the prophets and the Holy Virgin, and then the Word became incarnate, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and remained in the church. This much on the three persons.

And the sun compares only to the incarnate Word according to

Malachi: “To you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise” (Mal 4:2). And this, because of many properties.

First, as the sun has everlasting light and makes day and night on earth, likewise God the Word keeps the upper world forever, and maintains and attends to the lower world, measuring it in time.

Second, as the one sun is perceived to be an elemental vessel with its light and fire, likewise God the Word is one Christ in His entire body indivisibly.

Third, the sun enlightens us rising from the east, and our Lord enlightened us being oriented from the Father and having appeared to us from a mother. Hence: “I have come as light into the world” (Jn 12:46).

Fourth, the sun completes the year in four seasons, and our Lord completed the year of His dispensation in four [phases]. That is, by being conceived in the womb and being born, by teaching, by dying, and by resurrection and ascension unto the Father, as the complete circle of a year, entering behind the curtain by our nature.

Fifth, from east to south it [the sun] sets in the west and rounding north rises again in the east. Likewise, the conceivable sun, Christ is inconceivable in His paternal bosom and having risen from the Holy Virgin like the rising of the sun from the east, and having lowered [Himself] in humankind with warm affection like [the setting of the sun] in the west, and having encompassed our icy natures, and from the grave ascended again to the Father in the east.

Sixth, it [the sun] enlightens the eyes so they may identify colors. And we, enlightened through Christ, distinguish both good and evil.

Seventh, every person engages in a job. And instigated by love of God some engage in philosophy, others in ascetic life, virginity, and in diverse virtues.

Eighth, [the sun] grants [ability] to choose between beloved and hated [things]. Likewise, we received the spirit to choose between the angels and the demons, [and] evil and good people.

Ninth, [the sun] chases away harmful [things], and we have become refuters of such contemptible [things].

Tenth, [the Sun] grants growing to plants and shrubs, and makes

plants of diverse characteristics grow.

Eleventh, [the sun] adorns the year with four seasons. Likewise, they [the faithful] are adorned with four virtues.

Twelfth, [the sun] is creator of hours and times. Likewise, order and limits are established generally for all enlightened [creatures].

Thirteenth, [the sun] puts the elements of birth and life into motion. And the Lord [puts human elements into motion], the virtues of people, by spiritualizing [them] and filling that which is deficient.

Fourteenth, [the sun] tempers the hours of heat and cold. And the Lord [tempered] the Old Testament, which was severe and murderous, by mingling it with the New Testament, which has spirit and is life-giving.

Fifteenth, form precedes the inseparable substance. And first is God the Word, and then it united with the body indivisibly: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:8). Because as there is no beginning to His divinity, so there is no end to His humanity.

Sixteenth, [the sun] coming in between the stars enlightens, like the middle branch of a seven-candle light. And Christ is the mediator for conciliation between God and humans; also between angels and humans, and also between Jews and heathens. Whereby: “He has made both [groups] into one” (Eph 2:14). Because the first were enlightened by Him through counsel and paradigm, [and] the last through fact and truth, since the water of grace emanated from Him like this: “Half of it after Him, and half of it before” (cf. Zech 14:8).

Seventeenth, [the sun] is equal in heat and light, because where the light reaches, there reaches also the heat. And our Lord is equal in mercy and justice, because [the faithful] seek the grace of justice to the extent that they attain knowledge through mercy.

Eighteenth, [the sun] is many folds greater than the earth but appears in small size. Great is our Lord and great is His power, but He appears in our size limited in body. Also, He appears great to the faithful and limited to unbelievers.

Nineteenth, [the sun] illuminates some by itself and others through intermediaries. Like it, also, our Lord chose the Apostles and

through them called upon the faithful. Similarly, also, through prophets, doctors [of the church], miracles, and other means.

Twentieth, [the sun] is called righteous; and righteousness is in two modes—balanced and worthy. The balanced mode is the equal origin of the light, while the worthy mode means that able eyes become enlightened, and weak eyes become dark.

Similarly, also, the conceivable sun of righteousness, Christ, equally grants to the corporeal [beings], whereby: “He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous” (Mt 5:45) here, in this life. And [He grants] to the worthy spiritual grace and faith here, and immortal glory in the world to come. Because to some [it] is given and is increased, and from others [it] is removed and decreased, according to the degree of capability of the recipients.

So much on this.

If you want to add the properties of the sun, I will discuss it in future [chapters of the *Book of Questions*]. Likewise, it is easy to compare the properties of light and fire with the true conceivable light, as is written in section thirty-five of chapter twenty [of the *Book of Questions*]. See there.

Section Twenty-one *On the astonishment and jealousy of God.*

Question: How can it be said that God is astonished?

Answer: For us to be astonished and amazed means [the act of] effusion and expulsion from the mind. And this [results] either in to be crazed or grow stupid, or to be surpassed outwardly.

For example, to be effused from the [the] senses is understood to mean to fall asleep or doze. Similarly, to be effused from [the] mind is understood to mean to be astonished according to Paul who was ravished, and according to David who was struck with admiration, or according to Adam who fell asleep. And astonishment occurs out of love toward the beloved because a lover sets aside his mind, his life, and everything, and attributes [all these] to his beloved.

Like the Apostle who attributed his life to Christ: “I live; yet not I, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2:20). Thus, because of the sublime love that God has for beings, it is said that [God] is astonished; that is, to come out, be effused and poured into beings, and to be united with them in immutable nature. Wherefore the name of God is called with amazement: “O the depth of the riches” (Rom 11:33), “O Creator of the waters” (Judith 9:17), and so on.

Question: How can there be jealousy in God; hence: “I, God, am jealous” (Ex 20:5), since jealousy is a vice for us?

Answer: As it is related to God to wake up, to become angry, to be astonished, likewise [is related] being jealous, which does not exist [in God] but is said [to exist].

Again, jealousy is equivocal, for jealousy is to envy and to hate; hence: “through envy of the devil came death into the world” (Wis 2:24). And envy is to love and to desire; hence: “Strive for the greater gifts” (1 Cor 12:31). And [this] love and desire are called *envy* in relation to God.

Again, naturally, every jealousy has in it the loving of self and the hating of others, while the jealousy of God simply has [in it] the loving of others and not the hating, because the jealousy of God is excess of love, as flame to fire. And as the astonishment is excess of knowledge, likewise jealousy is excess of will.

Again, He [God] is both envious and enviable; that is, He is envious as the lover, and enviable as the beloved, because He moves us to His love.

Again, He is self-envious, because love is not roused in Him by another, as is in us, but He by Himself stirs His love toward others and the love of others toward Himself. And “I, envious, I do not will my glory in another” (cf. Isa 42:8). He designates man as His glory, first, because he is His image, and then he glorifies God.

And that *another* is Satan, the rebellious dragon that captured humans. Wherefore He [Christ] descended into hell and delivered the souls from the mouth of the beast.

Section Twenty-two
On love and good.

Question: How is God called *lover*, and *love*, and *beloved*?

Answer: First, as a cause, as a producer, and as a giver of birth. Some interpret this as follows with regard to the Holy Trinity: The Father is lover, the Son is beloved, and the Holy Spirit is love.

Second, because the essence of God is love, and He is moved to us, and stirs us to love Him.

Third, because He by Himself is a producer, thereby He is called *lover*. And He Himself is good and beautiful, [thereby] He is called *beloved*. And He is called *love*, because He stirs us; also, He is a producing power, one who makes things appear, and He is a unifier, for these are acts of love. Therefore, He is called *love*.

Fourth, [He is] *lover*, as our origin; and *love*, as a foundation; and *beloved*, as completion.

Thus, the good is our beginning, middle, and end. Because we have come forth from the good, and are established in the good, and become completed in the good. Then, therefore, the good is our beginning and end.

And He Himself is without beginning and without end. Likewise, He [is] the love, and the nobility,³⁴ and the wisdom, and so on.

Question: Is the good prime in God or love?

Answer: In divinity these cannot be perceived as before and after, because they are simultaneous powers in the Godhead. But according to our comprehension, the good is more common than love. Because we say that love is good, the nobility is good, and so on. As we say that man is a living creature, and the horse is a living creature, and so on. But in the creation of beings, love is before the good, because out of love He was stirred to do good and provide.

³⁴ The manuscript has this as *noble*.

Section Twenty-three

Question: The Apostle Paul says: “What is the breadth and length and height and depth . . . of God?” (Eph 3:18).

Answer: Breadth is wisdom, length is might, depth is obscurity, and height is unattainability.

St. Dionysius says: “All objects have three forms.” That is, breadth, length, and depth. Breadth is the broad path of God, which is His providence in all of us beings. Length, which is not the broad and vast, but only the long, [is ascribed to God] because He is stretched in all of us by power. And depth [is ascribed to God], because [His] hiddenness and incomprehensibility are unbounded for all beings. This means [God is] concealed as to His depth, and high as to His incomprehensibility.

Others say that in God there is breadth of love, by which He turns us back from errors because of His abundant love. Length is patience, by which He tolerates the evil people, and because of repentance ignores sins. Height is wisdom, which is superior to all minds; everything is explicitly present before Him. And depth is justice, by which He condemns the evil people; hence: “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire” (Mt 25:41). And David says: “Your judgments are as a great deep” (Ps 36:6).

Again, these are perceived to relate to the economy of the Word in four modes. That is, the length of [His] love [is] endless until completion; and the breadth [applies to] the entire humankind; and the depth [is] that He [Christ] descended unto earth and hell; and the height [is that] He ascended unto the heavens.

Section Twenty-four *Alpha and O[mega].*

Question: What does Revelation mean by “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev 1:8), that is, *ayb* and *k'ē?*³⁵

³⁵ The first and last letters of the Armenian alphabet as it was created and practiced until two more characters were added to it centuries after their creation.

Answer: First, the meaning is that *ayb* is first and *k ‘ē* is last. That is, I am first in my divinity and I am last in my humanity, for man is the last among creatures.

Second, I am the beginning and the end of all, because from the Word of God all were made and in the same Word they will end.

Third, I am the beginning by creation and the completion by providence to all beings.

Fourth, since He is the beginning and the end, He is without beginning and without end.

Fifth, without beginning in divinity and without end in humanity, because as there is no beginning to the divinity, there is no end to the humanity.

Sixth, the beginning of the church as to its foundation, and the end as to its head and completion.

Seventh, beginning and end is perceived to be by knowledge, because He has contained in His omniscience the beginning and the end of beings.

Eighth, He is the beginning of promises, and the completion of results.

Ninth, He is the beginning of grace, as now, and the completion of glory in the hereafter.

Tenth, He is the beginning of laws and the completion of the truth, as for the old, likewise for the new [Testaments].

So much on this.

Section Twenty-five

Question: Why is the foot of Christ called His body?

Answer: First, Gregory the Theologian says that the foot symbolizes the economy by body, because [Christ] made our salvation coming by body, and He ascended unto the Father by body. Second, because the foot is the posterior [body] part, and Christ appeared in body in the posterior time.

Third, the two feet signify the spirit and the body.

Fourth, [the foot] is beneath the entire body, and Christ is the

foundation of the church according to the Apostle.

Fifth, His believers and disciples are the foot, and Christ is the head, because we are His [body] members and His body, according to the Apostle.

Chapter Nine *On Angels.*

Section One

Question: What is the intelligible and the intelligent?

Answer: The intelligent is he who comprehends, whereas the intelligible is that which is conceived, because the intelligible is nutrition for the intelligent and is placed before him. Know this, that God alone is intelligent and unintelligible, and the angels are intelligent and intelligible, for the superiors are intelligent and the inferiors are intelligible. Whereas the human spirit is only intelligible but not intelligent; if they comprehend the superiors, they are intelligent. And this is followed by the mindless sentient, for which reason it is not [considered to be] intelligent by others.

Section Two

Question: Why does God give the rewards differently and not equally, as He gives more to the angels and less to humankind, and even less to the animals, the plants, and the lifeless [things]?

Answer: First it is an act of God's wisdom, by which creatures are differentiated from each other by receiving more or less, and not chaotically and without differentiation.

Second, it is an act of justice, because according to their worthiness the big and the small, the primary and the secondary are compensated.

Third, it is an act of providence, that they [creatures] be rewarded according to their proper abilities, so that the little ones do not suffer from great things and the great ones do not remain deficient.

And as to how they differently receive one and the same simple reward, St. Dionysius says: "As to their pronunciation." Because the sound that comes forth from the speaker is one, but the listeners receive it more or less.

And these are the two reasons for the listener: First, he could be

either close or far. Second, he could have either healthy or weak ears.

Likewise we, the creatures, are classified. Some are close to the Creator in essence, and some are far, as the spiritual beings [are closer] than the rational beings, while these [latter are closer] than animals, and those [animals are closer] than the plants, and finally [there come] the lifeless beings; they receive [rewards] differently according to their close and far natures. And healthy and weak ears are reason [for diversity] among those who have the same class and are equal in nature but are more or less in intelligence, love, and operation. Therefore, they receive more or less reward.

As in the classes of angels, the first three classes are more glorious than the middle and last [classes]. And as in the classes of people, prophets and apostles are [more rewarded].

Question: What is the reason that our pronounced words are united with sound, and those who are absent hear the sound, but not the word?

Answer: The word and the sound are different from each other. The word is the incorporeal birth of minds, while the sound is the movement of the air, resulting from the resonance of sound instruments in the air. In the heart they, meaning the word and the sound, unite and through the tongue, resonating in the air, reach our ears. There the sound remains outside and the incorporeal word finds its place in the minds of the listeners.

Now, first, we say that the sound is a cover for the word; therefore, those who are distant recognize the cover [alone] and not that which is covered. Second, because the receptacle of the sound is the ears, which are close to the air, while the receptacle of the word is the mind, which is deep and distant.

Third, he who is distant, indistinctly hears not the sound of the mouth but the sound of the resonance of the air, such as the echo that represents in itself the sound and not the word. Likewise, the rainbow in itself changes appearance and becomes different. Likewise, that diminished sound is the changing of the original sound; therefore [the distant listener] hears the sound but not the word.

On the Appearance of the Angels.
Section Three

Question: Why did the prophets who spoke of God portray the heavenly [beings] in ignoble fashion, as lion, ox, thrones, chariots, and so on?

Answer: We say that there are two kinds of impressions—first through resembling, as light, fire, and so on; and second [through] incomparable similarity, such as lion, ox, and so on.

And they [the prophets] wrote by incomparable similarity for many reasons.

First, because the material mind through the intercession of matter attains the immaterial; as when we see the book, we learn its power; and when we see the quality and the quantity, we comprehend the substance of the object.

Second, because [heavenly beings] were veiled for those who are unworthy in mind and in deeds; hence: “that they shall not see with their eyes and understand with their heart” (Jn 12:40).

Third, for [heavenly beings] to be revealed to us through veiled mystery; hence: “To you it has been given to know the mysteries” (Lk 8:10).

Fourth, because if they had appeared in noble substance, as the sun, fire, gold, and jewelry, we would have known that they have the same nature, and not another superior [nature].

Fifth, because by seeing the worthless appearance, we seek true knowledge.

Sixth, because although they are worthless, they have [the ability of] being good by creation and providence.

Seventh, because we attain the knowledge of [the] ultimate Godhead through elimination rather than assertion. As when we say light, life, and so on, we remain outside the knowledge. And when [we say] timeless, incomprehensible, we come closer. Likewise is [the case of] incorporeal beings.

Eighth, because the altar had first, second, and third curtains that veiled and unveiled each other. Thus, the first altar is that of the

divine, and the second is that of angels, while the third is ours [human beings]; each is covered with veils that reveal each other.

Ninth, because those that were distinguished appeared as wild beasts, fiery, and winged showing that they are external, remote, unfamiliar, and strange to the natures of us, the visible [creatures].

Tenth, because from these we comprehend the unparalleled similar. In this fashion, since these [wild beings] have passion and desire, while the others [the angels] have courage and love for God, these [wild beings] are called irrational and insensible because of deficiency, while the others [are perceived] according to their superabundance, because they have the intellectual faculty, reason, and sensation.

Section Four

Question: What are the four-faced living creatures that Ezekiel saw?

Answer: First, it signifies the natural quality of the heavenly [creatures]. That is, the man's reason, the lion's anger, the ox's desire, and the eagle's flight of justice above these.

Second, it shows that whoever is seated above is the Lord of heaven, earth, and sea; because the eagle is heavenly, while man is from earth, and animals from the sea.

Third, since the four living creatures are regal. The eagle [is king] of birds, the ox of animals, the lion of beasts, and the man of all living things; and He who is seated above them is the King of Kings.

Fourth, they indicate the economy of the Savior. The lion [does so] because it is king; the ox because it is priest and sacrament; the man because he is humanized God; and the eagle because it is the Spirit granted from above.

Fifth, it signifies the four evangelists. The man [indicates] Matthew, showing the humanization of the Word. The lion [shows] Mark, who evangelized courageously: "He was with the wild beasts" (Mk 1:13) [the Gospel says]. The ox [signifies] Luke with prolonged narrative; and the ox is called fatted. The eagle [indicates] John, who evangelized the Word from above.

Sixth, in a different way, as says Irenaeus. The regal lion indicates John, showing God the Word that was in the beginning and is eternal king. The ox is laborious, as Luke showed the large race of the Lord's lineage. The swift eagle [shows] Mark, who made the beginning from the prophecy of the Spirit. The man [shows] Matthew, who revealed the legitimate birth.

Seventh, to us the man is reason, the lion is anger, the ox is desire, and the eagle is the knowledge that flies above in order to always think about that which is above.

Section Five

Question: How does the incorporeal appear: in body, in fantasy, or in reality?

Answer: We say that their appearance is not in fantasy, as the counterfeited appear to eyes. And [this], first, because they do not have substance, but they are seen like ghosts, like a hallucination in the mind, while here the essence of the angel is shaped in visible body.

Second, there the sight blurs seeing the ghost, while here the sight is empowered seeing the visible image composed in the air.

Third, because there the sight of many becomes dazzled, while here the visual part of one [person] only becomes stronger, like the apprentice of Elishah.

Fourth, there happens a change of sight alone, while here [happens a change] of the object and eye.

Fifth, that miracle is only a deceit of sight, while this is a miracle for sight and intelligence.

Sixth, that is a miracle according to the order of nature, while this is a supernatural sign.

Seventh, that is seen but has no existence, while this is seen and has existence, as we say that the chimera is named but is not substantiated; while the horn is named and exists.

Eighth, there is appearance but no symbol [proof], while here is appearance and a symbol [proof] of actualities to come.

Ninth, there is appearance that adds nothing, while here [is] appearance and advice for direction, and punishment or reward for goodness.

Tenth, again they are differentiated because illusions change only the common sensation, while demons change the imagination, like the intensity of temperature.

The angels, however, change these [sensation and imagination] and the intellective [capacity] for the sake of good, which demons cannot change, while God can change also the will, which is inclination from evil to good, which the angels cannot change; [angels] can only awaken the desire and assist God in intensifying the desire, like a fire that burns wood. And the desirable object instigates the desire, as wood [does] to fire. And the angel incites the desire like someone who puts wood in the fire.

On the Classes of Angels.
Section Six

Question: How many classes of angels are there?

Answer: We say nine classes divided according to three triples. The first of these are the Thrones, the Cherubs, and the Seraphs. And these are the first classes of hierarchy.

Second, the Dominions, the Powers, and the Authorities, which are the middle classes.

Third, [the] Principalities, [the] Archangels, and [the] Angels, who are the last order. And [those of] the first [classes] are intelligent, while [those of] the last are intelligible, and the middle ones are both intelligent and intelligible, as it was said previously in a different mode.

And if some say that there are ten orders from which one is fallen, comprehend this in two modes, and not one.

First, that those who fell from them were in the size of one class. Second, that one fell from ten classes, and nine were left.

However, the first opinion [of nine classes] is common and true. First, according to St. Dionysius, who says that there are nine

classes of their [angels'] hierarchy. Second, because man is considered to be the tenth [class], according to the hundredth wandering sheep, and the lost tenth of the money. Otherwise, [man] would have been the eleventh [class].

Again, because the tenth is the thearchy and the completion above all.

And the three triples mentioned are comprehended in many ways.

First, as to the Trinity and the homogenous reality.

Second, it is a perfect number—first, middle, and last.

Third, they are essence, power, and activity.

Fourth, [they have] three qualities—nature, grace, and glory.

Fifth, [they] cleanse, illuminate, and complete.

Sixth, [they] are with God, in themselves, and in creatures.

Seventh, of thrones, lordships, and angels.

Eighth, some govern the affairs of the church, others are delegated to do so, while those in the middle both govern and are delegated to do so.

Ninth, the three separate classes, such as the Seraphs, [the] Cherubs, and the Thrones.

Tenth, in each class [there is] the head of the class, the middle [one], and the last [one].

Question: Why does Dionysius say nine classes of angels, while [St.] Irenæus and St. Epiphanius say seven heavens and seven orders?

Answer: The holy doctors [of the church] are in accord. Dionysius says [that there are] nine classes of angels, but [those in] the first classes are immediately with the divine intellection, and [they are] equally honored and glorified. Therefore, Irenæus orders them as one [class]. And he says [that there are] seven heavens for the classes of angels, one higher than the other in each heaven.

On the Orders of the Classes of Angels.

Section Seven

Question: Is Seraph first in rank in the first order of hierarchy, or the Thrones?

Answer: We say that these three classes—that is, the Thrones, the Cherubs, and the Seraphs—are one in rank, in reverence, and are transcendent beings, because all the splendor, wisdom, and grace flow directly to them in the same order, and afterward [flow] through them to all heavenly and earthly beings.

But because of the solitariness of classes, there is a rank in them, as Dionysius ranks [them]. First, the Thrones, then the Cherubs, and then the Seraphs. And this is for three reasons:

First, because Ezekiel and Isaiah saw the Throne closer to the seated one, and the Cherubs and Seraphs around.

Second, because the Thrones relate to the Father; hence: “Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever” (Ps 45:6; Heb 1:8). And that “Thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took His throne” (Dan 7:9); that is the Father. And the Cherub, who is abundant knowledge, relates to the Son, because He [the Son] is the wisdom and knowledge of the Father according to the Apostle. And the Seraph, who is healer, relates to the Holy Spirit, because He [the Spirit] is the fire of love that our Lord sent unto earth.

Third, because the Seraph is perceived to be purifying and flaming, whereby he purified the Prophet. And the Cherub [is perceived to be] illuminator by wisdom, while the Thrones are those who bring to perfection by correction. And presently, in church, in the same mystery, the image of the Seraph, which is the flabellum, is deposited in the hands of the deacon, who is purifier and third in rank after the priest and the hierarch. Thus the nature of the rank is obvious.

But some say that the Seraph is higher. First, because the Seraph thinks the good of God, while the Cherub [thinks] truth, and the Thrones [think] correction.

Second, because the Seraph burns in love, which is a connection without medium, while the Cherub [burns] in comprehending truth, and the Thrones [burn] in correction. And they are the overseers of the judgment of rights. Whereby, thus is presented the order of the classes, and their dissonance indicates the equality of their classes.

And if elsewhere is said that He is seated on the Cherubs, [it is

said so] because they all bear God and support the will of God.

And so that you know the order of things, we will follow the aforementioned St. Dionysius. As was taught to him by the Apostle Paul, who was caught up to the third heaven. Similarly, in the middle order of the hierarchy, first come the Dominions, then the Powers, and after that the Authorities. Although some change this order and talk about the Powers and the Dominions, which is not acceptable to us. We follow St. Dionysius, as we have stated.

First, because Dominion refers to the Father, and Power to the Son, and Authority to the Holy Spirit, which is a joint ruler [with the Father and the Son].

Again, in the first ones God rules as greatness, in the second ones He governs as power, and in the third ones He protects as salvation.

Again, the first ones regulate the works of angels and the dominions of humans. The [second ones] give strength in wondrous works and during spiritual wars. The third ones draw back the authority of demons and evil. This is their middle order of hierarchy and of their work.

And the last is arranged as follows.

First, the Principalities, then the Archangels, and lastly the angels. And this order is thus directly. First, because Principalities are appropriate for the Father, and the Archangels for the Son as being united to both, and the angels in place of the Spirit as to those who first settled everywhere and then took habitation in the Son and the Father.

Again, in the first ones God governs as the first principality. In the second ones He is revealed as light. And in the third ones He nourishes as energizer.

Again, the first ones govern nations and kingdoms, such as Michael. The second ones evangelize the sublime, such as Gabriel. The third ones protect each individual, such as Raphael.

And other specific revelation on the titles of all classes you may find elsewhere in the written word that says: “Who makes His angels spirits” (Ps 104:4).

On the Names of Angels.
Section Eight

Question: Why are all classes equally called angels, as in “Who makes His angels spirits” (Ps 104:4)?

Answer: We say for three reasons. First, because they are equal in nature, incorporeal, fiery, intelligent, and so on. Second, the angel is heard as messenger and one who reveals; and in general, they take what is hidden from those that are first and reveal it to those that are second. Third, because the superiors possess entirely all [that which characterizes] the inferiors, while the inferiors partially possess [that which characterizes] the superiors, according to their capacity, and the hierarch possesses entirely the ranks of the inferiors, while the inferiors partially possess [that which distinguishes] the superior hierarch.

Then it is obvious that the ranks of that which is natural and that which is granted are different. Because in the case of those that are natural, the inferiors have entirely what the superiors possess and are called [by the same name as the superiors], but not vice versa. Such as the individual totally possesses the species and the genus and is called [accordingly], for Peter is man and is living creature and is called [living creature]. But the living creature is not man or is not Peter [per se] and they are not designated as such.

Contrary to this, the hierarch, who is superior, has that which is possessed by the priest and is called [priest]. But the priest or the deacon does not have [that which is possessed by] the superiors and is not called [hierarch]. The reason is that that which is first and superior possesses [the characteristics of] the second and the inferior.

And if someone asks, why are men called *angels*, and [why are] the angels called *God*, which are names for those who are superior?

We say first that as we have mentioned, the inferiors partially have that which the superiors possess, as the superiors possess [the characteristics of] the inferiors entirely. Now, when the inferiors through purification and knowledge become God-like, they are called gods, both angels and holy men, such as Moses.

Again, they are called gods not synonymously, but homonymously; that is, nominally, not in nature.

Question: Why are the heavenly bodies in common called powers; hence: “The powers of heaven will be shaken” (Mt 24:29)?

Answer: We say that for three reasons.

First, because the classes in common and every individual [class] have essence, power, and activity. Meaning, they have come to existence, they have ability, and they affect. Whereby, in periphrasis they are called beings, powers, and so on.

Second, since it is the character of powers; that is, they in common have courage in things that are divine, [the character of] becoming immobile, [the character of] empowering. Whereby they are commonly called powers.

The third reason is that powers are classified as the middle of all, in their own classes and in the three [classes]. And now, as it was shown, the superiors have entirely all that is possessed by the inferiors until the middle ones, and the inferiors partially have [that which the superiors possess] until the powers, wherefore they are commonly called powers.

On the Commonality and Property of Angels.

Section Nine

Question: What is common for the celestial beings and what is proper?

Answer: First, common is their being spirit, incorporeal, and intelligent.

Second, they all are called angels, as teachers and revealers to each other.

Third, they all are called powers, since they have power, essence, and activity.

Fourth, because they all are caretakers of the corporeal [beings].

Fifth, they are immortal and eternal.

Sixth, they are obedient in serving the will of God.

Seventh, because they are blessed in the love and vision of God.

Eighth, because they choose by their own free will the good and avoid evil, and they are easily established in the good, and are slow moving toward the evil.

Ninth, because they all have fiery nature immutable in grace and glory.

Tenth, because they constantly move in three directions; that is, circular, straight, and diagonal, as we will show later.

As to their property:

First, personal differentiation, since they are different from each other in person.

Second, glory and honor, since some are more glorious than others.

Third, in seeing and knowing God, since some [see and know] more and others less.

Fourth, their rank is proper, since some are superior to others.

Fifth, since some are rulers and others subjects.

Sixth, in activity, whereby they purify or are purified, and so on.

Seventh, in education, since they teach and are taught.

Eighth, in providence, since some protect a nation and a kingdom, and others an individual and a specific person.

Ninth, some intercede to correct great events and others serve smaller [events].

Tenth, proper are particularly the mystic impressions, as the Cherubs have many eyes and eight wings, while the Seraphs sing the Trisagion with the four-faced Thrones. And there are other commonalties and properties for them, but this much is enough for the time being.

On Hierarchy.

Section Ten

Question: How is the hierarchy among angels and how is it among us?

Answer: Hierarchy as an order is one and the same among men, angels, and the Holy Thearchy, as follows.

First, because to purify, to illuminate, and to bring to perfection is common in them.

Second, because first is the purifying, and then the illuminating, and then the bringing to perfection. And this order is common in them.

Third, because it is indivisible in the possessors, in God as in angels, and likewise in the worthy person, since habit is everlasting and an inseparable seal. This much are the commonalties.

And [now] the differences.

First, because in God hierarchy is self-made and accomplished beforehand. While in angels and human[s] it is made by another, accessorialy.

Second, because God always gives and does not receive, while the angel receives and gives, because He receives from the firsts and gives to the lasts. And a human always receives.

Third, because God possesses [hierarchy] without beginning and by nature, while the angel [possesses it] by nature and with beginning. And a human [possesses hierarchy] not by nature, but by receiving it later and by habit. This difference is between the three essences, as was demonstrated.

But there is differentiation among the celestial beings.

First, because the first classes receive from God directly, while the middle and last classes [receive] indirectly.

Second, the firsts receive knowledge without hesitation, while others first hesitate and then receive; because they are hesitant about that which the first class received first, until they also receive it.

Third, because the firsts are enlightened more with knowledge, while the others [are enlightened] according to their capacity [moderately]. This is the difference between the hierarchies of the celestial beings.

And [the differences] between angels and humans [are as follows]:

First, because humans receive through the intercession of angels, and not vice versa, although [the receiving could be] through the humanized Word.

Second, the hierarchy of humans is performed by material mystery, such as by bread and wine and others, while theirs [angels'] is completed immaterially.

Third, humans are cleansed from stain, while angels are holy without stain. And they [angels] are enlightened themselves being lights, while we come to the light from darkness. And they are perfected by divine intelligence through superb knowledge, while we are perfected through the steps of faith.

Again, among angels the one and same divine knowledge is their purity, illumination, and completion, because the divine knowledge cleanses them from primal ignorance and illuminates them, and they become perfect with the same intelligence [of God]. For example, the knowledge of humans in its beginning, middle, and end first dismisses ignorance, then illuminates the mind, and then completes it. Then it is obvious how hierarchy is common and different with God, in angels, and in men.

Question: Why are angels pure and free from all evil?

Answer: For ten reasons.

First, because God is closer to them.

Second, because God's will is rested in them and guides them.

Third, because they are contained in truth.

Fourth, because they loved the good.

Fifth, because they are steady in contemplating about God.

Sixth, because they are immutable in essence.

Seventh, because they are blessed in their life.

Eighth, because they dwell in light.

Ninth, because they are light in the heights.

Tenth, because evil by himself hated them and departed, and as a sediment settled on earth. Whereby evil presently is in the whole world, and it is darkened by diverse sins.

There is that [evil] which is internal and is called wickedness and vice; and there is that which is external and is called passion and blemish.

While they [angels] are called pure and immaculate.

On Graces.
Section Eleven

Question: What does grace mean?

Answer: Grace sometimes is placed in the place of greeting; hence: “Grace to you and peace” (Rom 1:7), by which the Holy Spirit is given.

Sometimes physical gifts are called grace; hence: “I will send them . . . to take your gift to Jerusalem” (1 Cor 16:3).

Sometimes it replaces thanksgiving; hence: “I am grateful to Him [Christ] who has strengthened me” (1 Tim 1:12).

Sometimes it indicates trouble; hence: “to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking” (2 Cor 8:19); that is [undertaking] troubles and grief.

Sometimes it means forgiveness; hence: “Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive” (2 Cor 2:10).

Sometimes it means assistance; hence: “so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many” (2 Cor 1:11).

Sometimes it means preaching; hence: “Grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God” (2 Cor 4:15).

Sometimes it recalls miracle and wonder; hence: “We have behaved in the world . . . not by earthly wisdom, but by the grace of God” (2 Cor 1:12).

Sometimes it recalls faith and love; hence: “We are workers with you for your joy” (2 Cor 1:23); that is faith. And that: “Strive for the greater gifts” (1 Cor 12:31); that is love.

Sometimes [it recalls] the diverse gifts of the Spirit that grant prophecy, priesthood, [and] knowledge of languages from the font; hence: “There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:4). Where He counts them, saying: “To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge” (1 Cor 12:8); and so on.

Question: What is the grace of hierarchy?

Answer: Concerning this, we say that the nature of a thing is known by its name or definition. And the name [in this case] is known by itself. And the definition is put like this: “The grace of hierarchy is a holy order, talent, and activity, God-like likeness according to ability.”

There are three questionable aspects in this regard. First, whether this grace is created or uncreated; second, [whether] it is one or many; third, [whether] it is unlimited or limited.

Concerning the first, it is to be known that all graces are emanation and ray, descended unto all intelligent and sensible creatures from the uncreated light that adorns them according to the likeness of the granted grace, both by nature and individually, in angels and in humankind. And that grace by its own self is uncreated, coming forth from the uncreated being and communicated to us, the beings by providence, and not changing its essence.

Concerning the second, whether it is one or many, we say that at the beginning it is one as to its essence, having come forth from one cause, and is multiplied in many according to their qualities, as to seven celestial [bodies] and according to degrees. And also it unites the many by itself with its cause, such as the light of sun in many eyes.

Concerning the third, [whether] it is unlimited or limited, it is to be known that grace is unlimited as to its self, but it is limited according to the will of the grantor and the needs of the recipient, such as the word of a human in ears.

Likewise are [its] simplicity, immutability, and so on.

Differentiation of the [Human] Spirit and Angel. **Section Twelve**

Question: What are the differences and similarities of the angel and the spirit of man?

Answer: They are equal in four modes. They are simple in

intellec[t]ion, free in will, and sovereign in their anger, and they have the desire for good.

Thus they are equal.

But they differ in four modes.

First, because the spirit is rational, while the angel is intelligent.

Second, the spirit unites with the body, while the angel does not.

Third, the angel is [a complete] person by himself, while the spirit is a complete person by body.

Fourth, the angel is immutable, while the spirit changes, as we have said in chapter twenty-six [of the *Book of Questions*].

And at resurrection they [humans] likewise become equal to the angels in intelligence, perfect person, incommensurable body, and immutable.

Question: How is the intellec[t]ion of angels and [human] spirits different?

Answer: In four [modes].

First, because the angel understands singularly and comprehensively, while the [human] spirit [understands] in ratios and partially, whereby it is called rational.

Second, the angel comprehends simply, while the spirit intermingles with the object. Fourth,³⁶ the spirit comprehends transformatively and through paradigms, while the angel [comprehends] the archetype without paradigms. And other things [on this] we have stated in chapter eight [of the *Book of Questions*]. This also changes at resurrection, and the [human] spirit becomes equal to the angels.

On the Numbers of Angels.

Section Thirteen

Question: What is the thousands of thousands and the myriads of myriads that Daniel saw?

Answer: For us perfect and ultimate are those numbers that are

³⁶ Either the third mode is skipped or overlooked in the printed version of Tat'ewac'i's work, or the fourth needs to be read as the third mode.

grouped in four according to the four elements. That is: ten, hundred, thousand, myriad. For ten tens are one hundred, and ten hundreds are one thousand, and ten thousands are myriad. And again, a hundred tens is a thousand, and a hundred hundreds is ten thousand, which is one myriad, and a hundred thousands is ten myriads, and a thousand thousands is one hundred myriads, and a thousand myriads is ten hundred thousand. And thus, multiplying the thousand and the myriad we reach the infinite.

Wherefore [when Daniel] talks about thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads, he means not the quantity, but the infinity.

Since we know, according to St. Dionysius, that they [angels] have nine classes, and that they are defined in three triads before the Trinity. Also [we know that] the Lord in the Gospel showed the twelve legions of angels, according to the number of twelve Apostles and twelve signs of the zodiac.

But the number of each solitude is unknown to us, as are the stars of heaven. Because our number is material and weak and limited, whereby it cannot measure their infinity. Therefore, it is evident since we do not know our number either.

But to them, the celestial beings, they know their number by the grace of the omniscient knowledge.

Thus [will be] at the resurrection of the righteous [people].

And how does God know the number of all; hence: “He numbers the multitude of the stars” (Ps 147:4)? We say that this is in three modes.

First, since He is the origin and cause of all, He knows those originated from Him.

Second, since He has all at once and maintains [them], therefore He knows what He has with Him and maintains.

Third, since He is the completion and totality of all, therefore He knows all, whereby He is the beginning and the completion, and is within all and has them all.

And since the origin, the completion, and the existence within all is one, He alone and by Himself knows the many, and not like us [who know] the many with many.

On the Movement of Angels.

Section Fourteen

Question: What is the standing still and moving of the angels according to Isaiah that: “Seraphs were standing round about him . . . and they were flying” (Isa 6:2)?

Answer: Every object has standing still and moving [modes]. Standing still according to nature, and movement according to intelligence and operation.

And there are three kinds of movements according to St. Dionysius. That is, circular, straight [i.e., linear], and sideways. And this [happens] with the angels, with the spirits [of human beings], and in bodies. With the angels it is the circular movement from the same to the same [point], like the wheel that Ezekiel saw. That is, they have originated from the same God and will remain eternally in the same. And straight, because they descend to the seconds providentially, not from the same to the same, but from one to another. And sideways, by returning from those protected to unite with God, the first origin.

Likewise, the spirit [of human beings] moves circular, round, and straight. It is circular when the knowledge of the minds of all creatures gathers together in itself and thus in its entirety approaches God and unites with Him. And this is loving God by all heart and by all thoughts, and this is what the chosen prophets and Apostles possess. And round, which is sideways, is the movement of the spirit, when rationally shines the thearchic knowledge by sight and by thinking. And thus [it] spiritually unites with God, as [happened] to the Apostles and prophets. And it moves straight when through paradigms and examples we approach the archetype God using the senses.

Likewise corporeal things move in three modes. Circular, that is, by natural energy, such as the burning of fire and the freezing of the snow. And sideways, such as things transmitted from each other—a son from a father, and the aquatic animals from the water. And straight, such as corrupted things that change in each element.

And the knowledge of mind is different in other ways.

First, that which knows and perceives by itself. Second, that which [perceives] through senses.

And that which [perceives] by itself is divided into two [modes].

There is that which gathers in itself the knowledge of mind from recollections, logic, opinions, and other things, and thus according to its own knowledge approaches God; this is the sublime knowledge and is called intellectual knowledge. And there is that [knowledge] when the knowledge is divided in memories, logic, and in other things, and by them perceives and knows God; and this also is a perfect knowledge, and this is called natural knowledge.

And that which comprehends through senses, that is, color by eyes, sound by ears, and so on, is called sensory knowledge.

And this needs two things: that is, healthy senses and the clarity of the object that is placed before to be sensed, [and] then the simple knowledge is formed within from these. Otherwise, the mind cannot comprehend clearly by these.

Section Fifteen

Question: Why did man need writing?

Answer: Because he has senses; that is, eyes, ears, and so on. Whereby through written and uttered words, that is, by reading and hearing, we gather knowledge. While the angels, since they do not have senses, do not need written and uttered words. Besides, it is obvious that the written word influences knowledge that is by itself and which we mentioned before. And that which is most perfect comprehension and natural knowledge does not need written words and syllables.

On the Movement of Love and Loving.

Section Sixteen

Question: How much does love move?

Answer: Love also is one of a kind as well as diverse. It is one of

a kind when it gathers by itself from all the senses, and in total and single love approaches God. And this is the most perfect love. And it is diverse when it multiplies having come into senses.

And this happens in two modes. If you will love God by senses and by body, that will be perfect love.

And if you will love corporeal things by senses, then it will be imperfect love.

This is the diversity of love—super perfect, perfect, and imperfect:

The first is pleasing love;

The second is natural; and

The third is frenzied.

The first is commendable love. The last is condemnable. And the middle, which is the natural, is neither commendable nor condemnable. And the aspects of loving are defined in two modes—toward oneself and toward others. Toward oneself, because every person loves himself and desires his [own] existence. And that which is toward others is defined in three modes; that is, toward the sublime, such as God, and the angels, and the saints; and toward the inferiors, such as the subjects and the children.

And toward the equals, such as brothers and friends.

Now, with the love [toward] inferiors God takes care of the creatures, and the first classes of angels [take care of] the last [classes], and the fathers [take care of] the sons, and the masters of the apprentices, and the rulers of the subjects, and the lords of the servants; and they go on with this love with them. And with the love [toward the] supreme the creatures love God, and the last angels the first [angels], and the sons their fathers, and the inferiors the superiors. And with this love they unite with them. And with love [toward the] equal people love people, a friend the friend, and also humans [love] the angels, and the angels [love] humans, since they are equal creations. Also, humans [love] the living [creatures] and the lifeless, since they are beings of the same genus. And they are attached to each other with this love.

And love and compassion are differentiated as follows. First,

compassion is natural, while love is acquired.

Second, compassion is irrational, while love is rational.

Third, compassion is for those who are familiar, while love is for strangers.

And because compassion properly is seen toward irrational animals, while love is proper toward God. And since a human is made of both, a human has the natural compassion and the divine love.

On the Names of Angels.

Section Seventeen

Question: How many names of Archangels are recounted or interpreted?

Answer: First, Gabriel, which is the image of God; second, Michael, he who is as God or mighty; third, Raphael, which is cure; fourth, Anaiel, which is the completeness of God; fifth, Uriel, the vision of God; sixth, Daguel, himself divine; seventh, Barkiel, the origin of those who are divine; eighth, Adoniel, the lord of my God; ninth, Panuel, revelation of God.

On the Praises of Angels.

Section Eighteen

Question: What is the praise of the nine classes of angels?

Answer: The inferior classes of angels, who are messengers and commanders, their praise is: Glory to God in the highest.

Second, the classes of Archangels, and their praise is: Lord have mercy upon your creatures.

Third, [classes of] Principalities, and they say: You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec [Ps 110:4].

Fourth, of Authorities, and they say: The heathens are given to you for your inheritance and . . . possession [Ps 2:8].

Fifth, of Powers, and they say: The Lord with mighty power, the Lord mighty in battle [Ps 24:8].

Sixth, of Dominions, and they say: Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations [Ps 145:13].

Seventh, of Seraphs, and they say: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, as Isaiah heard [Isa 6:3].

Eighth, of Cherubs, who are fiery hairs, and who say: Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place [Ezek 3:12].

Ninth, of Thrones, and they say: Your throne, God, is forever and ever [Ps 45:6].

On the Conversation of Angels.
Section Nineteen

Question: Why do the doctors [of the church] say that there are three kinds of words—of mind, of mouth, and of deed?

Answer: Now, with the word of mind God speaks with the angels; likewise the angels with God.

Again, God [communicates with the word of mind] with the spirit, and the spirit with God. Again, devils [communicate] with God, because [their] intention cannot be hidden from God.

While with the word of mouth a human speaks with a human, and angels [speak] with a human, in a formed body.

And with the word of deed God speaks with the devil, also the angels with Satan, as to the thunder and lightning of fire upon them; hence: “The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Highest uttered His voice in hail and in the flash of lightning” (Ps 18:13–14).

Also, the angel speaks with God, because he offers Him his wish.

And the angel speaks with angel, showing him the thoughts of mind through the intercession of spiritual rays; and thus speak angels with each other.

Again an angel does the same thing before another angel whom first he did not know, and thus speak the superiors to the inferiors and the inferiors to the superiors.

Also, angels speak by the communication of the divine light.

And thus speak only the superiors with the inferiors, so that they

may be communicated with the divine revelations.

Again, the angels have the knowledge of morning and evening; that is, seeing God the Word is called morning knowledge, and seeing the creatures in God the Word is called evening knowledge.

And the angel speaks to a human in two modes. First, by uttered word, in formed body. As the sound is not produced through vocal instruments, it does not change the air that is in between, likewise someone sees the appearance of the angel, but those who are close to him cannot see, as it is evident from the teenager Elisha. But others say that the angel does not appear in formed body and does not speak to a human, but he places the resemblance of his look in the eyes or the ears of a human, and there he receives the common sensation of that kind, and conveys it to the imagination and reason. Thus angels appear and speak to a human. The second mode of the conversation of the angel with a human is through the impression of imagination. And thus he speaks to those who are awake and those who are asleep.

And the angel speaks to the devil, showing him the kinds of his knowledge with no illumination whatsoever. And speaks the devil to a human either by changing his existence like the angel, or showing a resembling image to the eyes, or impressing the imagination. And similar [to the angels, he] implants evil thoughts in both those who are awake and those who are asleep. But he cannot implant evil thoughts in those who are evil by consent alone. There is also the speech of spirit. Because the spirit speaks with God through wishes that are exposed before Him. The spirit also speaks with the angel bodily, so that the angel may comprehend like other sensitive beings so long as he is in the body. But when he becomes deprived of body, he needs a special power by which he can speak to the angel.

Again, the spirit speaks with the devil, so that he may impress the senses with the wishes of the heart. And there the devil reads like on a parchment and learns from it.

This much on the holy angels.

On Devils.
Section One

God created all angels good, but not extreme good, but medium [good], which is in between the immutable and mutable good; so that if they turned toward and loved that which is superior to them, they would rise to the qualities of grace and glory, as the good angels are at present; but if they turned to that which is inferior to them, toward the changing good, they would fall into evil transgressions and into evil punishments, as the devils [are] at the present and at the Last Day.

On the Fall of Devils.

Question: How did the devils fall?

Answer: The fall of the devils was in two modes; that is, spiritual and local. The spiritual is that he [the devil] fell by his free will from the good into evil, from the light into darkness, from knowledge into ignorance, from innocence into sin, from happiness into misery, from love into hate. Because after his fall he became hardened and impenitent in evil, swerved from truth, fallen from the good, deprived from strength, expelled from divine meditation. Also, his impious will is turned toward hating and envying man, because he [the devil] by all efforts strives at his [man's] destruction through diverse temptations. And he [the devil] is blinded so much that he wars against God, although he knows that he harms himself, because whatever evil he commits by his free will, he sins deadly sins.

Question: Why is he [the devil] against man?

Answer: For four reasons he entraps and deceives people.

First, because he is against God, and man is the image of God; since he is powerless against the archetype [God], he opposes the image.

Second, because he wants to reduce by that [adversarial stand] the glory and reverence of God [in humans].

Third, so that he may deprive us of the love of God in order to win.

Fourth, so that he may pull [humans] with him into torments, because he is not as sad about his fall from favor as he is about man's glorification.

Question: What is their local fall?

Answer: Now, the local fall of the devil was either to hell or to the gloom of air, which is the middle terminal of the air. Because devils are not in the upper part of air, [so] that they [may] not enjoy the light, nor are they in the lower part, that they may not harm humans more. Wherefore three things are visible in the devil; that is, his nature, his task, and his sin. Now, [concerning] nature, they are fit to the high places, which is heaven, where they were created, for had they stayed there, they would have been completed there. And their task, which is training humans, fits the air, which is close to us in order to tempt us, but not in the light, that they may not rejoice.

And for sins are appropriate the lower places, which is hell. Because at the Last Day when the task of devils ends, they all will be locked in hell.

Question: Did he [the devil] foreknow his fall, or not?

Answer: Not at all.

Question: For how long did he stay in heaven?

Answer: [For] not a single perfect time. Because "He does not stand in the truth," says the Lord (Jn 8:44). But as soon as he was created, he fell and did not procrastinate, nor did he taste the eternal sweetness, wherefore he did not become blessed, nor did he remain in the good. But immediately was he blown by arrogance and turned his self from the light of truth and was darkened.

Question: Why do they appear as light at the present?

Answer: Because whatever the devils naturally possessed, God let them have it after their transgression, and whatever they were to receive by blessing was deprived to them. Since their nature was incorporeal and light and immortal, it remained the same. Incorporeal, so that it may be distinguished. And light, so that it may deceive. And immortal, so that it may be tortured forever.

And although he appears as light, he cannot see his light, as we cannot [see the light] of our spirits.

On the Transgression of Satan.
Section Two

Question: What was the transgression and the cause of their destruction?

Answer: Many say many things. Paul in his third epistle to the Corinthians says: “The unrighteous prince wanted to become God,” and the same repeats our Illuminator. And others [say] that he was silent and did not glorify God. And this is in two versions.

First, when the Seraph said *holy*, and the other seconded him, this one [Satan] remained silent in seconding his comrade in glorifying God, so that the glory may fall on him and he may become God, as Paul said.

Second, they say that at the time of the coming of the stars into existence, the angels blessed God, according to Job. Also, at the time of the making of man and the naming of the animals they [the angels] glorified God, while he [Satan] kept silence.

And some say that he [Satan] was jealous of [God’s] favor to man, and began to think that what might be the completion of this, but he could not comprehend. For the Theologian says: “We approached God and we became God,” which happened through the coming of Christ, and which the messengers learned from the church according to Paul, while Solomon says: “In the failure of people is the breaking of the powerful” (Prov 14:28).³⁷ And John says: “Wandering on the way occurs when one looks to another.” And the reason for looking [to others], Irenæus interprets as follows. He [Satan] saw the being of man so glorious that he contemplated, as Job says: “They committed their works to me” (cf. Job 39:11). And the Revelation of John and Methodius says: “He wanted to drag with him a third of the stars” (cf. Rev 12:4); that is, from the class, three out of four divisions fell down and one remained there and mingled with the class of Principalities. Whereby Satan is called author and father of evils.

³⁷ In the Septuagint: “In the failure of people is the ruin of a prince.”

Because by a self-invented evil first he became evil, to be called author, and then he made others evil, to be called mother, as the origin and sower of evils in others. And who by his destruction tormented the superior classes with grief, and the inferior classes with trembling, and dragged with him those who agreed with him.

Also, he deceived and made evil our patriarchs. Also, those who collaborated with him were named like him and were called evil.

But the true reason is revealed by the Prophet Isaiah: “How has Lucifer that rose in the morning, fallen from heaven!” (Isa 14:12).

And the Lord says that [it was like] lightning fell from the heavens.

Now, “Lucifer fallen” [means] as if [it was] deprived of light and turned into darkness, since they were composed of light, and since the natures of stars are pure and everlasting. Also, it is called Lucifer, because more than others, its own light’s beauty blinded itself and [thus it] indicates that Satael was the prince and head of his own classes.

While “in the morning” [is said] since at the beginning of the creation of the world, with the separation of light and darkness, they suddenly rose on the first day and fell from the heavens. Although some say [that it happened] on the second day.

Again, the end of this world is called morning, which is the beginning of a day without night. And close to the end it will rise again over humans through the Anti-Christ. And then it will fall unto earth and his deception will be lost, according to David: “Early did I slay all the sinners of the land” (Ps 101:8).

“Fell unto the earth” (Isa 14:12). How does the incorporeal fall? This is the sin of arrogance, which is an earthly vice and which made him heavy and threw him unto earth.

“He that sent to all the nations” (Isa 14:12); that is, he spread the vice of arrogance among all humans. As he caused Adam’s fall unto earth by his desire to become God, so did he to others.

“You said in your heart, I will go up to heaven” (Isa 14:13). First, he argues the evil counsel of Satan. Then, so he may show that there is revenge and punishment for evil counsels.

“I will sit on a lofty mount” (cf. Isa 14:13), which are the angels’ “lasting mountains” (Gen 49:26).

“On the lofty mountains of the north” (Isa 14:13); that is, [he will sit] upon his cold and icy evil.

“I will set my throne in the clouds” (cf. Isa 14:13–14).

Cloud means elevation over others. Also, [it means] the prophets, as to be giver of commands to the prophets. Also, *cloud* means heaven, since some say heaven is made of air. Also, because it is said that God moves with cloud and wind; and in a similar manner [Satan wanted] to resemble God; that is, by moving above the clouds, winds, and angels.

And others say thus [Satan wanted] to oppose God, when he saw himself superior in glory and splendor to all classes, [and] desired to be superior to all and equal to God.

Question: How [did Satan want to be] equal [to God] and greatest?

Answer: He wanted to usurp for himself the best position that God had given him, despite God’s will, and to tyrannically rule over others and give them commands. Therefore, he fell and became lost.

Question: And what sins did others commit who fell with him?

Answer: His [Satan’s] elevation pleased them. Thinking that if he defeats God, they would rule and command others. Therefore, his princes fell with him and were subjected to torments.

Question: Why did He [God] not create other angels instead of them?

Answer: There was no need to create other angels instead of them. First, because there were such angels who remained in the good. Second, it was necessary for others to see their [Satan’s and his followers’] sins and punishment, and to stay in the good.

Question: Why did Christ not save them as He saved humans?

Answer: All angels were equally [alike] created by God, and not one from another, [not] as man gives birth to man. Therefore, had Christ received the nature of an angel, He would have saved him alone, while others would have remained without salvation. Again, He did not save him [the angel] alone, because he [the angel] cannot

perish. Because God willed his [Satan's] death instead of repentance, while angels are immortal. Whereby they remained without salvation.

Question: Why did He [God] not create them [Satan and followers] such that they would not have sinned?

Answer: For justice, so that they may justly receive rewards. For if they were such that they could not sin, they would have been like bound and forced [to be good], and would not have received rewards. But He gave them free will, so they may willfully choose the good and justly receive the compensation, so they may never be able to sin.

Question: And since God was foreknowing, why did He create them the way they became?

Answer: As an adornment to His work, like a painter who places the dark color underneath, so that the white and other noble colors appear. Likewise, by the appearing of evils, the righteous [people] will be seen brighter.

Question: Can they do all they want?

Answer: They do not want the good and cannot do [good] at all. While with evil they are very efficient; not as much as they want, but as much as is allowed to them as angels.

Section Three

Question: Which class [of angels] did they [Satan and followers] fall from?

Answer: It is a common conception that the tenth class of angels fell and that humans fill the place of those who fell.

But it is not a common [conception] that there were ten classes of angels and one of them fell. Because some say that three parts of the middle classes fell and one mingled with the other Principalities. Others say that they fell in numbers equal to one class from all the classes below the Cherubs, [beginning with the class of Dominions down]. And Gregory of Nyssa in his *Book of Nature* says that they fell from the last classes of angels, while others say that his [Satan's]

place was in the firmament of heavens, and since they [Satan and followers] did not glorify God, they fell. And David testifies: “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Ps 19:1), who are the highest classes, and the firmament indicates the creatures and not the glory, as it has been shown.

Question: Why are they [Satan and followers] called princes of air?

Answer: Angels are above water, but they are assigned as caretakers of the world and humankind underneath the firmament. And in the commentary of John’s vision [Revelation], he [John] says: “One [has power] over water, and one [has power] over fire” (Rev 16:5, 14:18). And John considers him [having power over the] air, whereby Paul with the same name calls [him] prince of [the power of the] air. Or [they were designated as such], because they dwell in the air and rule over mankind.

Section Four

Question: What are the nymphs,³⁸ the daredevils,³⁹ and others?

Answer: There are no nymphs, as some think that they are rational beings made of two elements; that is, from fire and air, and who have birth and death. This opinion is false and vain, and is contrary to the Holy Scriptures. Because rational being and mortal is the man alone who has resurrection and judgment. But all the others belong to the kind of devils, and according to their diverse works are called in diverse names, like the devil for adultery and [the devil for] pride, and Beelzebub, Behemoth, and so on. Similar [to these] are the nymphs, because they always deceive people with joy. And those who reign in rocky places were called daredevils. And those who [reign] in waters and [are present] at the time women give birth were called Als,⁴⁰ because they cause the loss of spirit by lewd

³⁸ *Yawerzhahars* in Armenian.

³⁹ *K’aj* in Armenian.

⁴⁰ Male and female mythical beasts (Mardiros H. Ananikian, “Armenian Mythology,” in

vice and [the loss] of the bodies and spirits at birth. Likewise all the others.

And as by David's song the Satan of wickedness calmed in Saul, likewise [it does] at the present.

Section Five

Question: Why is the sin of Satan unforgivable?

Answer: First, because the doctors [of the church] say that he did not sin driven by someone's counsel, and he will not be renewed by someone's help.

Second, like a servant against his master, he sinned against the God-like intelligence. And the immensity of the error is comparable with the immensity of the cognition [of God-like intelligence].

Third, according to the Damascene, the angel is not prone to repentance; similarly, [he is not prone] to forgiveness.

Fourth, because in the devil the grumbling faculty is transmuted by moving forward toward the good.

Fifth, because spiritual nature is convertible once only, for it completely converts him [Satan], which a human cannot do, since the body always fights with the spirit, as shall be said later in chapter thirty-two [of the *Book of Questions*]. And it is obvious from this that the state of angels is threefold.

First was of innocence.

Second, of sins.

Third, of punishment and misery.

Again, some are from the heavens and in the heavens, such as the holy angels.

And some are not from the heavens but in the heavens, such as the holy among humans.

And some are from the heavens but not in the heavens, such as the devils.

The Mythology of All Races, vol. 7, ed. Canon John Arnott et al. (New York, Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), 88–89.

On the Fiery Dragon.
Section Six

Question: What is the fiery dragon as the vision [Revelation] says in thirty-three verses?

Answer: The dragon is the adversary, as Job says: “He put a gag in his mouth and is made to be played with by his angels” (cf. Job 40:14). And David says: “This dragon whom you have made to play in it” (Ps 104:26). About this dragon it is said that the Savior smashed the head of the dragon in Jordan. It is that dragon that received the entire water of the sea in his eyes.

This is called fiery first, because he rejoices over those whom he kills. Second, he burns and torments with everlasting fire those who approach him. Third, because of his substance, he who fell forms the fiery classes.

And their being has three characteristics: incorporeal, immortal, and fiery. Hence: “Who makes his angels spirits and flaming fire” (Ps 104:4).

And although they fell and became devils, their characteristics remained with them and are transformed into an angel of light according to the Apostle [2 Cor 11:14].

Question: What are the seven heads and the ten horns?

Answer: The seven heads are his seven evil powers, as in the spirit of man there are seven good powers and seven virtues. As the Lord says: “These seven spirits dwell in a man whom they find void of good works” (cf. Mt 12:44–45). And Solomon says: “If your enemy entreats you, consent not, for there are seven abominations in his heart” (Prov 26:25), which are pride, envy, and so on.

And the ten horns are the violation of the Ten Commandments by which he fights against men. Because the maintaining of commandments is weapon for man to fight, while the violation of commandments becomes weapon and means for devils to fight against men.

And ten is a perfect number; it indicates the perfect strength of the enemy by which he fights us, and that is the horns.

And about the ten horns and seven heads, [know] that three heads have two horns [each]; that is, pride, jealousy, and anger, for he fights left and right by these, and these three vices are often visible in both worthy and worthless [people], while laziness, avarice, gluttony, and lasciviousness are found only in those who are vicious.

Question: What is the diadem on the dragon's head?

Answer: The seven diadems indicate the demonic energy by which he conquers man and is crowned. For whom he conquers by sweat and effort, he puts the same crown on his head. Likewise among us, for those who combat and exert efforts against the adversary and kill his seven heads, they receive the same crown with chastity and virtue on their heads for each of their victories, as he [John] says in the vision [Revelation]: “Whoever conquers will receive the crown of life on his head” (Rev 2:10–11).

Question: What is: “His tail swept down a third of the stars” (Rev 12:4)?

Answer: He [John] calls the angels “stars” for their height and bright light, like the angels in heaven.

While “a third,” according to St. Methodius, are the rebellious angels who went astray from the numbers of the heavenly classes. Because while they were not destroyed, in each class there were four orders, as is evident from the four-faced living creatures. But the adversary, Satael, swept down one of the three parts, the fourth, with himself and was destroyed on earth, as the vision says: “The dragon . . . was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev 12:9). And because of this Isaiah says: “How has Lucifer, that rose in the morning, fallen from heaven” (Isa 14:12).

Again, as those who are enlightened through baptism have put their thoughts in the stars and heavens [i.e., on things that are high], the devils sweep down those who are uncertain in their mind and crush them on earth with earthly thoughts. And with them they are expelled to the bottom of hell.

While the “tail” signifies:

First, the last followers with him, because he was the first author in evil and others followed him.

Second, the tail is the strong part of reptiles; it shows the forceful pulling toward themselves.

Third, the head of the dragon is the sin, while the tail is death and hell.

This means to pull down and cast the followers into death and hell.

Fourth, the tail indicates the Anti-Christ, who at the end time tyrannizes and drags along one third of the stars. That is, some escape and hide in the desert, while others become martyred and delivered, and some are lost and deceived, which is the third part of the lost ones.

Section Seven

Question: How much is the fall of Satan?

Answer: The fall of Satan needs to be understood in three phases—first, middle, and last. The first is local, the second is demonstrative, [and] the third is punitive.

The local fall of devils occurred at the beginning of their creation because of their pride and envy against the glory of the Creator. Therefore, he [Satan] fell from heaven, from the classes of angels and their glory, as has been said.

While the demonstrative fall of devils happened by the coming of Christ through the cross, and this [fall happened] in four ways.

First, the fall of condemnation; hence: “The ruler of this world has been condemned” (Jn 16:11).

And this [happened] because he [Satan] slandered men that they sinned by their free will and by nature, and not through his impositions, just as he slandered Job: “Does Job worship the Lord for nothing?” (Job 1:9). And David says: “The princes sat and spoke against me” (Ps 119:23).

Likewise all humans. Wherefore the Lord coming in innocent and pure body defeated the sins and spread justice upon humans. He condemned Satan as a betrayer of people and made him treaded upon by people. Hence: “I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of

lightning. I have given you authority to tread on him” (cf. Lk 10:18–19).

The second fall happened from the hope of glory. Hence: “The ruler of this world will be driven out” (Jn 12:31). As St. Irenaeus cites the words of Justinian, that the martyr Justinian spoke well when he said: “Until the coming of Christ he [Satan] did not dare to dishonor God because he had hopes to return to the glory; but when he heard his condemnation and his being driven out of glory, his heart hardened from his evil thoughts and began to shamelessly dishonor Him, surrendering himself to eternal torments.”

Their third fall was the expectation for torments. And until [the coming] of Christ they did not know these torments prepared for them. But when they heard the exposition of hell by Christ, they said: “Do not torment us before the time, O Holy God; we know that you are He who torments us.”

The fourth fall is from their power and their subjection to inactivity; and this in two ways. First, because they deceitfully attracted people to sins and paganism. Second, forcefully they led the spirits [of people] unto torments until the coming of Christ. And by His coming the Lord Himself said: “tying up the strong man” (Mt 12:29). And through Christ they [devils] lost their double strength; hence: “The swords of the enemy have failed utterly” (Ps 9:6). They confessed this in the vision of Anthony as being related to them. This concerning the first.

As to the second, the Lord Himself says [about] tying up the strong man and plundering his house, which is hell. Hence: “you have destroyed cities; their memorial has been destroyed with a noise” (Ps 9:6), because Satan stopped taking the spirits [of people] to hell after [the coming of] Christ, as St. Epiphanius says. And this second fall of devils also is in four ways.

While the third fall is into the torments of eternal fire. Hence: “Depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Mt 25:41).

And here Irenaeus says that since the fire is eternal, how can those who are given to futile thoughts bring an end to eternal torments?

Perhaps presuming that he [Satan] will be cleansed in fire, so that the disciples would not think and speak of truth?

So much on devils.

The end of the third volume on the theology of Dionysius.



Index of Biblical Verses

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Cor 1:10–25, 169 | 1 Pet 5:5, 114 | Bar 3:36, 38, 139 |
| 1 Cor 1:19, 216 | 1 Sa 2:2, 179 | Col 1:15, 130 |
| 1 Cor 1:24, 121, 146,
189, 216 | 1 Thess 2:15, 117 | Col 1:16, 182 |
| 1 Cor 2:10, 157 | 1 Thess 5:19, 156 | Col 1:18, 131, 182 |
| 1 Cor 2:11, 157 | 1 Tim 1:12, 288 | Col 1:20, 155 |
| 1 Cor 2:8, 117, 180, 183 | 1 Tim 2:4, 141 | Col 2:3, 220 |
| 1 Cor 3:16, 158, 171, 179 | 1 Tim 3:16, 213, 221 | Col 2:9, 184, 187, 220,
236 |
| 1 Cor 4:1, 217 | 1 Tim 6:16, 261 | Dan 2:22, 158 |
| 1 Cor 4:5, 158 | 2 Cor 1:11, 288 | Dan 7:9, 249, 281 |
| 1 Cor 6:11, 157 | 2 Cor 1:12, 288 | Deut 13:17, 104 |
| 1 Cor 6:19, 156 | 2 Cor 1:21–22, 155, 215 | Deut 30:3, 104 |
| 1 Cor 8:4–6, 175 | 2 Cor 1:23, 288 | Deut 32:39, 31, 55, 156,
177 |
| 1 Cor 8:6, 156, 177, 180,
214, 235, 240 | 2 Cor 1:7, 61 | Eccl 1:6, 45 |
| 1 Cor 12:11, 159 | 2 Cor 11:14, 306 | Eph 1:17, 134 |
| 1 Cor 12:31, 269 | 2 Cor 2:10, 288 | Eph 1:20–21, 219 |
| 1 Cor 12:4, 288 | 2 Cor 4:15, 288 | Eph 1:4, 148, 247 |
| 1 Cor 12:4–6, 159 | 2 Cor 4:4, 121 | Eph 2:14, 155, 267 |
| 1 Cor 12:8, 288 | 2 Cor 6:14–15, 48 | Eph 3:12–17, 171 |
| 1 Cor 13:12, 221 | 2 Cor 8:17, 156 | Eph 3:18, 271 |
| 1 Cor 14:21, 158 | 2 Cor 8:19, 288 | Eph 4:10, 181 |
| 1 Cor 14:24–25, 159 | 2 Kings/Sam 16:22, 103 | Eph 4:30, 148, 155, 161 |
| 1 Cor 15:20, 131 | 2 Kings/Sam 17:14, 103 | Ex 3:14, 181, 244 |
| 1 Cor 15:28, 244 | 2 Pet 1:21, 158 | Ex 4:22, 63 |
| 1 Cor 15:45, 189 | 2 Pet 2:21, 117 | Ex 7:3, 31, 55 |
| 1 Cor 15:47, 189 | 2 Pet 3:10, 249 | Ex 8:19, 164 |
| 1 Cor 16:3, 288 | Acts 1:5, 90 | Ex 20:4, 84 |
| 1 Jn 1:1, 181 | Acts 2:31, 189, 221 | Ex 20:5, 269 |
| 1 Jn 2:18–22, 118 | Acts 2:36, 191 | Ex 25:18–19, 152 |
| 1 Jn 2:2, 223 | Acts 2:4, 159 | Ezek 3:12, 296 |
| 1 Jn 2:23, 118 | Acts 3:25, 181 | Ezek 38:2, 105 |
| 1 Jn 3:2, 221 | Acts 5:3, 159 | Ezek 39:27), 104 |
| 1 Kings/Sam 7:13, 104 | Acts 5:4, 159 | Ezr 2:70, 105 |
| 1 Pet 1:11, 164 | Acts 7:48, 83 | Ezra, 104, 105 |
| 1 Pet 2:22, 172, 189, 221 | Acts 13:2, 148 | Gal 2:20, 269 |
| | Acts 19:26, 44 | |
| | Acts 28:25–26, 158 | |

Index of Biblical Verses

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Gal 4:4, 181 | Isa 33:22, 156 | Jn 5:17, 135, 137, 178 |
| Gal 4:4–5, 159 | Isa 40:12, 163 | Jn 5:19, 137, 178 |
| Gal 5:22, 155 | Isa 40:18, 84 | Jn 5:20, 218 |
| Gen 1:1, 177 | Isa 40:21, 43 | Jn 5:21, 157 |
| Gen 1:2, 51, 154, 159,
161 | Isa 40:22, 45 | Jn 5:22, 178, 222 |
| Gen 1:22, 62, 74, 75 | Isa 40:26, 43, 45 | Jn 5:25, 29, 177 |
| Gen 1:27, 83 | Isa 42:8, 178, 269 | Jn 5:30, 134, 135 |
| Gen 1:31, 87 | Isa 44:3, 167 | Jn 5:44, 115 |
| Gen 1:5, 97 | Isa 44:6, 44 | Jn 6:27, 139 |
| Gen 3:8, 161 | Isa 45:7, 31, 55 | Jn 6:37, 214 |
| Gen 15:16, 106 | Isa 48:16, 160, 163 | Jn 6:38, 138, 141, 177 |
| Gen: 14:18–20, 144 | Isa 53:8, 144 | Jn 6:40, 182 |
| Gen 18:21, 161 | Isa 53:9, 179 | Jn 6:51, 181 |
| Gen 22:12, 160 | [Isa 57:16], 83 | Jn 6:54, 222 |
| Gen 26:4, 189 | Isa 61:1, 219 | Jn 6:55, 172, 190 |
| Gen 49:26, 302 | Isa 61:2, 249 | Jn 6:57, 176 |
| Heb 1:12, 249 | Isa 63:1, 219 | Jn 6:58, 157 |
| Heb 1:1–2, 217 | Isa 63:2, 219 | Jn 6:63, 157 |
| Heb 1:2, 251 | Isa 63:3, 219 | Jn 6:64, 156, 162 |
| Heb 1:3, 176, 179, 259 | Isa 66:1–2, 83 | Jn 7:37, 201 |
| Heb 1:8, 281 | Isa 66:12, 155 | Jn 7:39, 162 |
| Heb 6:13–14, 128 | Jas 4:12, 178 | Jn 8:12, 156 |
| Heb 6:6, 117 | Jer 17:10, 159 | Jn 8:29, 127 |
| Heb 9:11, 189 | Jer 2:13, 156 | Jn 8:32, 172 |
| Heb 10:5, 182 | Jer 23:24, 128, 155, 158 | Jn 8:55, 219 |
| Heb 11:3, 137 | Jer 23:6, 105 | Jn 8:58, 182 |
| Heb 11:6, 44 | Jer 32:19, 179 | Jn 9:22, 115 |
| Heb 13:8, 183, 189, 249,
267 | Jer 48:29, 115 | Jn 9:37, 182 |
| Isa 2:2, 103 | Jn 1:1, 181, 244 | Jn 10:15, 178, 218 |
| Isa 2:4, 103, 104 | Jn 1:3, 130, 136, 137,
150, 151, 155, 181,
247 | Jn 10:18, 177 |
| Isa 6:2, 292 | Jn 1:12, 172 | Jn 10:28, 182 |
| Isa 6:3, 296 | Jn 1:14, 180, 222 | Jn 10:30, 182 |
| Isa 6:8, 157, 180 | Jn 1:16, 171 | Jn 10:33, 117, 208, 216 |
| Isa 9:6, 128 | Jn 1:17, 218 | Jn 10:34, 236 |
| Isa 11:2, 219 | Jn 1:18, 217 | Jn 10:36, 64 |
| Isa 11:6, 104 | Jn 2:25, 218 | Jn 10:38, 127, 143, 238 |
| Isa 14:12, 301, 307 | Jn 3:13, 179, 182 | Jn 11:25, 156 |
| Isa 14:13–14, 302 | Jn 3:16, 132, 183 | Jn 12:26, 102 |
| Isa 14:13, 301, 302 | Jn 3:36, 64 | Jn 12:28, 163, 213 |
| Isa 25:4, 180 | Jn 4:24, 159 | Jn 12:31, 309 |
| | | Jn 12:34, 217 |
| | | Jn 12:40, 276 |

Index of Biblical Verses

- Jn 12:46, 266
Jn 14:6, 172, 180, 218
Jn 14:9, 143, 182
Jn 14:10, 184
Jn 14:17, 221
Jn 14:20, 143
Jn 14:23, 179
Jn 14:26, 158, 160, 163
Jn 14:28, 126, 141
Jn 14:30, 179
Jn 15:3, 134
Jn 15:26, 149, 169
Jn 16:7, 162
Jn 16:13, 164, 170
Jn 16:14, 162, 163, 169
Jn 16:15, 163
Jn 16:17, 163
Jn 16:28, 64, 182
Jn 17:3, 139, 140, 221
Jn 17:5, 176, 213
Jn 20:17, 134
Jn 20:22, 162, 163, 175
Jn 21:17, 219
Job 1:9, 308
Job 24:16, 114
Job 33:4, 51, 154, 159
Job 39:11, 300
Job 40:14, 306
Joel 2:28, 161
Js 1:17, 249
Judg 9:8, 104
Judith 9:17, 269
Lev 22:32, 157
Lk 1:19, 128
Lk 1:33, 131
Lk 2:40, 218
Lk 6:45, 140
Lk 8:10, 276
Lk 10:18–19, 309
Lk 10:22, 157, 178
Lk 11:20, 163
Lk 12:49, 265
Lk 22:19, 94
Lk 22:42, 138
Lk 24:39, 179
Mal 1:2–3, 33, 57
Mal 1:13, 190
Mal 3:6, 179
Mal 4:2, 266
Mk 14:61, 175
Mk 2:7, 178
Mk 2:8, 178
Mk 9:24, 114
Mk 10:18, 140, 156
Mk 12:29, 240
Mt 3:16, 175
Mt 3:17, 64, 90, 173
Mt 4:10, 157, 178
Mt 5:14, 134
Mt 5:45, 268
Mt 6:23, 133
Mt 6:24, 152
Mt 7:6, 262
Mt 7:17, 38
Mt 8:3, 179
Mt 9:2, 178
Mt 9:4, 218
Mt 9:20, 163
Mt 10:19–20, 141
Mt 10:20, 158, 167
Mt 10:32, 223
Mt 10:33, 64
Mt 11:25, 216
Mt 11:27, 217, 218
Mt 12:28, 184
Mt 12:29, 309
Mt 12:34, 135
Mt 12:44–45, 306
Mt 13:57, 67
Mt 14:21, 31, 56
Mt 15:14, 114
Mt 16:13–16, 67
Mt 16:16, 182
Mt 16:27, 178
Mt 17:25, 172, 189
Mt 19:16, 140
Mt 21:38–39, 172
Mt 24:29, 284
Mt 24:35, 220
Mt 25:31, 222
Mt 25:41, 271, 309
Mt 27:46, 132
Mt 28:18, 126, 180
Mt 28:19, 94, 146, 175
Mt 28:20, 131
Neh 1:8–9, 104
Num 12:6, 158
Phil 2:10, 172, 174
Phil 2:10–11, 178
Phil 2:5–6, 181
Phil 2:6, 127, 213
Phil 2:6–7, 182
Phil 2:7–8, 174
Phil 2:8, 133
Phil 2:9, 176, 212, 213,
 214
Phil 3:3, 157
Phil 3:21, 179
Prov 2:6, 170
Prov 2:10, 170
Prov 2:14, 116
Prov 2:15, 115
Prov 3:19, 137, 254
Prov 8:2, 129
Prov 8:15, 45
Prov 8:25, 129
Prov 14:28, 300
Prov 18:2, 113
Prov 26:25, 306
Prov 30:29–31, 152
Prov 31:6, 89
Ps 2:8, 295
Ps 2:9, 105
Ps 3:7, 61
Ps 7:10, 218
Ps 9:6, 309

Index of Biblical Verses

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ps 10:5, 156 | Ps 101:5, 114 | Ps 147:5, 155 |
| Ps 11:4, 179 | Ps 102:27, 249 | Rev 1:8, 153, 271 |
| Ps 12:6, 259 | Ps 104:4, 282, 283, 306 | Rev 1:10, 142 |
| Ps 17:12, 261 | Ps 104:5, 45 | Rev 2:10–11, 307 |
| Ps 18:13–14, 296 | Ps 104:10, 45 | Rev 5:12, 222 |
| Ps 19:1, 304 | Ps 104:14, 45 | Rev 12:4, 300, 307 |
| Ps 24:8, 295 | Ps 104:20, 45 | Rev 12:9, 307 |
| Ps 24:10, 180, 183 | Ps 104:26, 306 | Rev 16:5, 14:18, 304 |
| Ps 32:6, 143 | Ps 104:30, 179 | Rom 1:4, 143 |
| Ps 33:5–6, 155 | Ps 105:19, 154 | Rom 1:7, 288 |
| Ps 33:6, 51, 137, 259 | Ps 106:40, 161 | Rom 6:3, 176 |
| Ps 33:10, 45 | Ps 110:3, 64 | Rom 8:11, 157 |
| Ps 33:15, 178 | Ps 110:4, 295 | Rom 8:15, 159 |
| Ps 35:10, 146, 265 | Ps 111:7, 130 | Rom 8:26, 140, 160 |
| Ps 35:19, 115 | Ps 113:3, 179 | Rom 9:5, 181 |
| Ps 36:6, 271 | Ps 114:3–6, 129 | Rom 11:33, 269 |
| Ps 36:9, 167 | Ps 119:131, 145 | Rom 11:36, 248 |
| Ps 45:6, 281, 296 | Ps 119:23, 308 | Sir 1:9, 157 |
| Ps 57:8, 105 | Ps 125:4, 140 | Sir 24:5, 130 |
| Ps 59:3, 138 | Ps 135:6, 121, 122, 179 | Song 5:5, 163 |
| Ps 77:14, 178 | Ps 138:16, 56 | Tob 12:12, 160 |
| Ps 82:6, 63 | Ps 139:16, 31, 255 | Wis 1:7, 51, 155, 158 |
| Ps 94:9, 254 | Ps 143:10, 156 | Wis 2:24, 269 |
| Ps 94:10, 158 | Ps 145:13, 250, 296 | Zech 14:8, 267 |
| Ps 95:4, 254 | Ps 147:18, 45 | |
| Ps 96:10, 178 | Ps 147:4, 291 | |

Index of Nonbiblical Personalities

- Abgar V, King of Osroene in early first century, 84
- Abu-Bakr as-Siddiq (573–634), father-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad and the first Caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate, 74
- Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib (546–70 or 71), Prophet Muhammed's father, 73
- Adom, a student of Tat'ewac'i, 8
- Albert the Great, thirteenth century saint and Catholic Doctor of the Church, 222
- Alexander the Great, fourth century BC, king of Greek Macedonia, 105
- Anthony the Great or Anthony of the Desert (251–356), Christian saint, 129, 145, 309
- Anti-Christ, 47, 68, 117–20, 301, 308
- Apollinaris of Laodicia, fourth century bishop, 192, 195, 204
- Aquinas, Thomas (1255–74), Christian saint, Catholic Doctor of the Church, 223
- Aristotle (384–322), Greek philosopher, 6, 16, 17, 22–3, 77, 100, 264
- Arius (c. 250–336), theologian, founder of the Arian doctrine, 8, 47, 73, 74, 121, 123, 126, 151, 154, 164, 175–6, 191, 193, 195, 197, 214, 237
- Athanasius the Great (c. 296–373), Christian saint, Bishop of Alexandria, 142, 192, 197
- Augustine of Hippo (354–430), Christian saint, Doctor of the Church, 223
- Augustus Caesar, Roman Emperor, a contemporary of Jesus Christ, 105
- Bahira, also known as Serguis the Monk, a Christian contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad, 73
- Cerinthus (c. 50–100), known as heresiarch, 47, 74
- Claudianus, Coptic priest, a contemporary of Gregory Nazianzus, 200
- Chrysostom, St. John (c. 349–407), Archbishop of Constantinople and Church Father, 160
- Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376–444), Christian Saint and Church Father, 117, 138, 191–2, 197, 208, 209, 216
- Cyrus II or Cyrus the Great (c. 600–530), founder of the first Persian Empire, 105
- Dajjal, the false Messiah, 68
- Darius I or Darius the Great (c. 550–486), Persian king, 105
- Dionysius [Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite] (late fifth – early sixth century), Christian saint and theologian, 8, 41, 168, 197–8, 200, 227, 230, 234–5, 274, 279, 280–2, 291–2, 310
- Epiphanius of Salamis, c. 310–403), Christian saint and Church Father, 280, 309
- Eunomius of Cappadocia (c. 335–394), Bishop of Cyzicus and founder of the Eunomian sect, 121
- Eutyches (c. 380–456), monastic leader and founder of Eutychianism, 111,

- 185–6, 193–4, 196, 207
- Eutyches [the other], possibly Eutychius of Eleutheropolis in Palestine, 195
- Ezr of P’aražnakert (?–641),
Catholicos of All Armenians (630–641), 73
- Flavianus or Flavian I, (?–449),
Patriarch of Constantinople, 196
- Gregory the Illuminator (c. 257–331), a Holy Father of the Armenian Apostolic Church credited with converting Armenia to Christianity, 3, 100
- Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–395), Christian saint and Church Father, 23, 303
- Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzus] (c. 329–390), Christian saint and Church Father, 42, 121, 132, 141, 169, 183, 191–2, 200, 209, 216, 223, 233, 262, 272
- Gregory the Chainbearer [Grigor VI Shirawanci] (1670–1749), Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem (1715–1749), 3
- Hierotheus, Christian Saint, first Bishop of Athens, 197, 198
- Irenaeus (c. 130–c. 202), Christian saint, 278, 280, 300, 309
- Isidorus or Isidore of Seville (c. 560–636), Christian saint and Doctor of the Church 222
- John of Damascus (c. 675–749), Christian saint and Church Father, 222
- Justinian I (482–565), Emperor of Byzantine Empire declared saint, 309
- Karapet of Zeitun [Karapet II Owlneč’i], Catholicos of All Armenians (1726–1729), 3
- Leo , also Leo the Great (c. 400–461), Christian saint and Pope, 117, 196
- Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople in the fourth century, 110, 154, 159, 160, 164
- Mani (c. 216–274), a prophet of Persian origin, founder of Manichaeism, 11
- Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra (?–374), 195, 205
- Methodius of Olympus (?–c. 311), a martyred saint and Church Father, 300, 307
- Muhammad (c. 570–632), Prophet and founder of Islam, 47, 69, 71–4, 86, 87, 96, 100–2
- Muhammad ibn Marwān, prince who completed the Arab conquest of Armenia, 74
- Nebuchadnezzar II (c. 634–562), king of Babylon, 105
- Nestorius (c. 386–450), Archbishop of Constantinople, 8, 111, 117, 138, 173–4, 184–5, 191–5, 203, 205, 207, 214, 216, 220–1
- Osman [Uthman ibn Affan] (579–656), son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad and the third Caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate, 74
- Paul of Samosata (200–275), Bishop of Antioch, 195, 220
- Photinus (?–376), Christian heresiarch 195, 205
- Porphyry of Tyre (c. 234–305), a Neoplatonic philosopher, 202–3, 206
- Sabellius, third century theologian, 48, 193
- Sakarinus, 74
- Sahak of Jorop’or, Catholicos of All Armenians (677–703), 74
- Succensus, Bishop of Diocaesarea, 197
- Theodoros [Theodore of Mopsuestia] (c. 350–428), Christian saint, Archbishop of Mopsuestia, 195
- Yōhannēs IX of Bitlis [Yovhannēs Kolot Bahšec’i] (1678–1741), Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople (1715–1741), 3

