

not deceived us, nor the shadow of a picture, a fruitless labour, a graven figure with divers colours,

5 The sight whereof enticeth the fool to lust after it, and he loveth the lifeless figure of a dead image.

6 The lovers of evil things deserve to have no better things to trust in, both they that make them, and they that love them, and they that worship them.

7 The potter also tempering soft earth, with labour fashioneth every vessel for our service, and of the same clay he maketh both vessels that are for clean uses, and likewise such as serve to the contrary: but what is the use of these vessels, the potter is the judge.

8 And of the same clay by a vain labour he maketh a god: he who a little before was made of earth himself, and a little after returneth to the same out of which he was taken, when his life, which was lent him, shall be called for again.

9 But his care is, not that he shall labour, nor that his life is short, but he striveth with the goldsmiths and silversmiths: and he endeavoureth to do like the workers in brass, and counteth it a glory to make vain things.

10 For his heart is ashes, and his hope vain earth and his life more base than clay:

11 Forasmuch as he knew not his maker, and him that inspired into him the soul that worketh, and that breathed into him a living spirit.

12 Yea, and they have counted our life a pastime and the business of life to be gain, and that we must be getting every way, even out of evil.

13 For that man knoweth that he offendeth above all others, who of earthly matter maketh brittle vessels, and graven gods.

14 But all the enemies of thy people that hold them in subjection, are foolish, and unhappy, and proud beyond measure:

15 For they have esteemed all the idols of the heathens for gods, which neither have the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear, nor fingers of hands to handle, and as for their feet, they are slow to walk.

16 For man made them: and he that borroweth his own breath, fashioned them. For no man can make a god like to himself.

17 For being mortal himself, he formeth a dead thing with his wicked hands. For he is better than they whom he worshipping, because he indeed hath lived, though he were mortal, but they never.

18 Moreover, they worship also the vilest creatures: but things without sense, compared to these, are worse than they.

19 Yea, neither by sight can any man see good of these beasts. But they have fled from the praise of God, and from his blessing.

Chapter 16

For these things, and by the like things to these, they were worthily punished, and were destroyed by a multitude of beasts.

2 Instead of which punishment, dealing well with thy people, thou gavest them their desire of delicious food, of a new taste, preparing for them quails for their meat:

3 To the end, that they indeed desiring food, by means of those things that were shewn and sent among them, might loath even that which was necessary to satisfy their desire. But these, after suffering want for a short time, tasted a new meat.

4 For it was requisite that inevitable destruction should come upon them that exercised tyranny: but to these it should only be shewn how their enemies were destroyed.

5 For when the fierce rage of beasts came upon these, they were destroyed by the bitings of crooked serpents.

6 But thy wrath endured not for ever, but they were troubled for a short time for their correction, having a sign of salvation, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of thy law.

7 For he that turned to it, was not healed by that which he saw, but by thee, the Saviour of all.

8 And in this thou didst shew to our enemies, that thou art he who deliverest from all evil.

9 For the bitings of locusts, and of flies, killed them, and there was found no remedy for their life: because they were worthy to be destroyed by such things.

10 But not even the teeth of venomous serpents overcame thy children: for thy mercy came and healed them.

11 For they were examined for the remembrance of thy words, and were quickly healed, lest falling into deep forgetfulness, they might not be able to use thy help.

12 For it was neither herb, nor mollifying plaster, that healed them, but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things.

13 For it is thou, O Lord, that hast power of life and death, and leadest down to the gates of death, and bringest back again:

14 A man indeed killeth through malice, and when the spirit is gone forth, it shall not return, neither shall he call back the soul that is received:

15 But it is impossible to escape thy hand:

16 For the wicked that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thy arm, being persecuted by strange waters, and hail, and rain, and consumed by fire.

17 And which was wonderful, in water, which extinguisheth all things, the fire had more force:

for the world fighteth for the just.

18 For at one time the fire was mitigated, that the beasts which were sent against the wicked might not be burnt, but that they might see, and perceive that they were persecuted by the judgment of God.

19 And at another time the fire, above its own power, burnt in the midst of water, to destroy the fruits of a wicked land.

20 Instead of which things, thou didst feed thy people with the food of angels, and gavest them bread from heaven, prepared without labour; having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste.

21 For thy sustenance shewed thy sweetness to thy children, and serving every man's will, it was turned to what every man liked.

22 But snow and ice endured the force of fire, and melted not: that they might know that the fire, burning in the hail, and flashing in the rain, destroyed the fruits of the enemies.

23 But this same again, that the just might be nourished, did even forget its own strength.

24 For the creature serving thee, the Creator, is made fierce against the unjust for their punishment: and abateth its strength for the benefit of them that trust in thee.

25 Therefore even then it was transformed into all things, and was obedient to thy grace, that nourisheth all, according to the will of them that desired it of thee:

26 That thy children, O Lord, whom thou lovedst, might know that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth men, but thy word preserveth them that believe in thee.

27 For that which could not be destroyed by fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, presently melted away:

28 That it might be known to all, that we ought to prevent the sun to bless thee, and adore

thee at the dawning of the light.

29 For the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice, and shall run off as unprofitable water.

Chapter 17

For thy judgments, O Lord, are great, and thy words cannot be expressed: therefore undisciplined souls have erred.

2 For while the wicked thought to be able to have dominion over the holy nation, they themselves being fettered with the bonds of darkness, and a long night, shut up in their houses, lay there exiled from the eternal providence.

3 And while they thought to lie hid in their obscure sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly afraid, and troubled with exceeding great astonishment.

4 For neither did the den that held them, keep them from fear: for noises coming down troubled them, and sad visions appearing to them, affrighted them.

5 And no power of fire could give them light, neither could the bright flames of the stars enlighten that horrible night.

6 But there appeared to them a sudden fire, very dreadful: and being struck with the fear of that face, which was not seen, they thought the things which they saw to be worse:

7 And the delusions of their magic art were put down, and their boasting of wisdom was reproachfully rebuked.

8 For they who promised to drive away fears and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of a fear worthy to be laughed at.

9 For though no terrible thing disturbed them: yet being scared with the passing by of beasts, and hissing of serpents, they died for fear and

denying that they saw the air, which could by no means be avoided.

10 For whereas wickedness is fearful, it beareth witness of its condemnation: for a troubled conscience always forecasteth grievous things.

11 For fear is nothing else but a yielding up of the succours from thought.

12 And while there is less expectation from within, the greater doth it count the ignorance of that cause which bringeth the torment.

13 But they that during that night, in which nothing could be done, and which came upon them from the lowest and deepest hell, slept the same sleep,

14 Were sometimes molested with the fear of monsters, sometimes fainted away, their soul failing them: for a sudden and unlooked for fear was come upon them.

15 Moreover, if any of them had fallen down, he was kept shut up in prison without irons.

16 For if any one were a husbandman, or a shepherd, or a labourer in the field, and was suddenly overtaken, he endured a necessity from which he could not fly.

17 For they were all bound together with one chain of darkness. Whether it were a whistling wind, or the melodious voice of birds, among the spreading branches of trees, or a fall of water running down with violence,

18 Or the mighty noise of stones tumbling down, or the running that could not be seen of beasts playing together, or the roaring voice of wild beasts, or a rebounding echo from the highest mountains: these things made them to swoon for fear.

19 For the whole world was enlightened, with a clear light, and none were hindered in their labours.

20 But over them only was spread a heavy