

{12:19} But by such works hast thou taught thy people that the just man should be merciful, and hast made thy children to be of a good hope that thou givest repentance for sins.

{12:20} For if thou didst punish the enemies of thy children, and the condemned to death, with such deliberation, giving them time and place, whereby they might be delivered from their malice:

{12:21} With how great circumspection didst thou judge thine own sons, unto whose fathers thou hast sworn, and made covenants of good promises?

{12:22} Therefore, whereas thou dost chasten us, thou scourgest our enemies a thousand times more, to the intent that, when we judge, we should carefully think of thy goodness, and when we ourselves are judged, we should look for mercy.

{12:23} Wherefore, whereas men have lived dissolutely and unrighteously, thou hast tormented them with their own abominations.

{12:24} For they went astray very far in the ways of error, and held them for gods, which even among the beasts of their enemies were despised, being deceived, as children of no understanding.

{12:25} Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, thou didst send a judgment to mock them.

{12:26} But they that would not be reformed by that correction, wherein he dallied with them, shall feel a judgment worthy of God.

{12:27} For, look, for what things they grudged, when they were punished, that is, for them whom they thought to be gods; [now] being punished in them, when they saw it, they acknowledged him to be the true God, whom before they denied to know: and therefore came extreme damnation upon them.

{13:1} Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen know him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster;

{13:2} But deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world.

{13:3} With whose beauty if they being delighted took them to be gods; let them know how much better the Lord of them is: for the first author of beauty hath created them.

{13:4} But if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them, how much mightier he is that made them.

{13:5} For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is seen.

{13:6} But yet for this they are the less to be blamed: for they peradventure err, seeking God, and desirous to find him.

{13:7} For being conversant in his works they search him diligently, and believe their sight: because the things are

beautiful that are seen.

{13:8} Howbeit neither are they to be pardoned.

{13:9} For if they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the world; how did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof?

{13:10} But miserable are they, and in dead things is their hope, who call them gods, which are the works of men's hands, gold and silver, to shew art in, and resemblances of beasts, or a stone good for nothing, the work of an ancient hand.

{13:11} Now a carpenter that felleth timber, after he hath sawn down a tree meet for the purpose, and taken off all the bark skilfully round about, and hath wrought it handsomely, and made a vessel thereof fit for the service of man's life;

{13:12} And after spending the refuse of his work to dress his meat, hath filled himself;

{13:13} And taking the very refuse among those which served to no use, being a crooked piece of wood, and full of knots, hath carved it diligently, when he had nothing else to do, and formed it by the skill of his understanding, and fashioned it to the image of a man;

{13:14} Or made it like some vile beast, laying it over with vermilion, and with paint colouring it red, and covering every spot therein;

{13:15} And when he had made a convenient room for it, set it in a wall, and made it fast with iron:

{13:16} For he provided for it that it might not fall, knowing that it was unable to help itself; for it is an image, and hath need of help:

{13:17} Then maketh he prayer for his goods, for his wife and children, and is not ashamed to speak to that which hath no life.

{13:18} For health he calleth upon that which is weak: for life prayeth to that which is dead; for aid humbly beseecheth that which hath least means to help: and for a good journey he asketh of that which cannot set a foot forward:

{13:19} And for gaining and getting, and for good success of his hands, asketh ability to do of him, that is most unable to do any thing.

{14:1} Again, one preparing himself to sail, and about to pass through the raging waves, calleth upon a piece of wood more rotten than the vessel that carrieth him.

{14:2} For verily desire of gain devised that, and the workman built it by his skill.

{14:3} But thy providence, O Father, governeth it: for thou hast made a way in the sea, and a safe path in the waves;

{14:4} Shewing that thou canst save from all danger: yea, though a man went to sea without art.

{14:5} Nevertheless thou wouldest not that the works of thy wisdom should be idle, and therefore do men commit their lives to a small piece of wood, and passing the rough

sea in a weak vessel are saved.

{14:6} For in the old time also, when the proud giants perished, the hope of the world governed by thy hand escaped in a weak vessel, and left to all ages a seed of generation.

{14:7} For blessed is the wood whereby righteousness cometh.

{14:8} But that which is made with hands is cursed, as well it, as he that made it: he, because he made it; and it, because, being corruptible, it was called god.

{14:9} For the ungodly and his ungodliness are both alike hateful unto God.

{14:10} For that which is made shall be punished together with him that made it.

{14:11} Therefore even upon the idols of the Gentiles shall there be a visitation: because in the creature of God they are become an abomination, and stumblingblocks to the souls of men, and a snare to the feet of the unwise.

{14:12} For the devising of idols was the beginning of spiritual fornication, and the invention of them the corruption of life.

{14:13} For neither were they from the beginning, neither shall they be for ever.

{14:14} For by the vain glory of men they entered into the world, and therefore shall they come shortly to an end.

{14:15} For a father afflicted with untimely mourning, when he hath made an image of his child soon taken away, now honoured him as a god, which was then a dead man, and delivered to those that were under him ceremonies and sacrifices.

{14:16} Thus in process of time an ungodly custom grown strong was kept as a law, and graven images were worshipped by the commandments of kings.

{14:17} Whom men could not honour in presence, because they dwelt far off, they took the counterfeit of his visage from far, and made an express image of a king whom they honoured, to the end that by this their forwardness they might flatter him that was absent, as if he were present.

{14:18} Also the singular diligence of the artificer did help to set forward the ignorant to more superstition.

{14:19} For he, peradventure willing to please one in authority, forced all his skill to make the resemblance of the best fashion.

{14:20} And so the multitude, allured by the grace of the work, took him now for a god, which a little before was but honoured.

{14:21} And this was an occasion to deceive the world: for men, serving either calamity or tyranny, did ascribe unto stones and stocks the incommunicable name.

{14:22} Moreover this was not enough for them, that they erred in the knowledge of God; but whereas they lived in the great war of ignorance, those so great plagues called

they peace.

{14:23} For whilst they slew their children in sacrifices, or used secret ceremonies, or made revellings of strange rites;

{14:24} They kept neither lives nor marriages any longer undefiled: but either one slew another traiterously, or grieved him by adultery.

{14:25} So that there reigned in all men without exception blood, manslaughter, theft, and dissimulation, corruption, unfaithfulness, tumults, perjury,

{14:26} Disquieting of good men, forgetfulness of good turns, defiling of souls, changing of kind, disorder in marriages, adultery, and shameless uncleanness.

{14:27} For the worshipping of idols not to be named is the beginning, the cause, and the end, of all evil.

{14:28} For either they are mad when they be merry, or prophesy lies, or live unjustly, or else lightly forswear themselves.

{14:29} For insomuch as their trust is in idols, which have no life; though they swear falsely, yet they look not to be hurt.

{14:30} Howbeit for both causes shall they be justly punished: both because they thought not well of God, giving heed unto idols, and also unjustly swore in deceit, despising holiness.

{14:31} For it is not the power of them by whom they swear: but it is the just vengeance of sinners, that punisheth always the offence of the ungodly.

{15:1} But thou, O God, art gracious and true, longsuffering, and in mercy ordering all things,

{15:2} For if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy power: but we will not sin, knowing that we are counted thine.

{15:3} For to know thee is perfect righteousness: yea, to know thy power is the root of immortality.

{15:4} For neither did the mischievous invention of men deceive us, nor an image spotted with divers colours, the painter's fruitless labour;

{15:5} The sight whereof enticeth fools to lust after it, and so they desire the form of a dead image, that hath no breath.

{15:6} Both they that make them, they that desire them, and they that worship them, are lovers of evil things, and are worthy to have such things to trust upon.

{15:7} For the potter, tempering soft earth, fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and likewise also all such as serve to the contrary: but what is the use of either sort, the potter himself is the judge.

{15:8} And employing his labours lewdly, he maketh a vain god of the same clay, even he which a little before was made of earth himself, and within a little while after returneth to the same, out when his life which was lent him

shall be demanded.

{15:9} Notwithstanding his care is, not that he shall have much labour, nor that his life is short: but striveth to excel goldsmiths and silversmiths, and endeavoureth to do like the workers in brass, and counteth it his glory to make counterfeit things.

{15:10} His heart is ashes, his hope is more vile than earth, and his life of less value than clay:

{15:11} Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspired into him an active soul, and breathed in a living spirit.

{15:12} But they counted our life a pastime, and our time here a market for gain: for, say they, we must be getting every way, though it be by evil means.

{15:13} For this man, that of earthly matter maketh brittle vessels and graven images, knoweth himself to offend above all others.

{15:14} And all the enemies of thy people, that hold them in subjection, are most foolish, and are more miserable than very babes.

{15:15} For they counted all the idols of the heathen to be 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 go.

{15:16} For man made them, and he that borrowed his own spirit fashioned them: but no man can make a god like unto himself.

{15:17} For being mortal, he worketh a dead thing with wicked hands: for he himself is better than the things which he worshippeth: whereas he lived once, but they never.

{15:18} Yea, they worshipped those beasts also that are most hateful: for being compared together, some are worse than others.

{15:19} Neither are they beautiful, so much as to be desired in respect of beasts: but they went without the praise of God and his blessing.

{16:1} Therefore by the like were they punished worthily, and by the multitude of beasts tormented.

{16:2} Instead of which punishment, dealing graciously with thine own people, thou preparedst for them meat of a strange taste, even quails to stir up their appetite:

{16:3} To the end that they, desiring food, might for the ugly sight of the beasts sent among them lothe even that, which they must needs desire; but these, suffering penury for a short space, might be made partakers of a strange taste.

{16:4} For it was requisite, that upon them exercising tyranny should come penury, which they could not avoid: but to these it should only be shewed how their enemies were tormented.

{16:5} For when the horrible fierceness of beasts came upon these, and they perished with the stings of crooked serpents, thy wrath endured not for ever:

{16:6} But they were troubled for a small season, that they might be admonished, having a sign of salvation, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of thy law.

{16:7} For he that turned himself toward it was not saved by the thing that he saw, but by thee, that art the Saviour of all.

{16:8} And in this thou madest thine enemies confess, that it is thou who deliverest from all evil:

{16:9} For them the bitings of grasshoppers and flies killed, neither was there found any remedy for their life: for they were worthy to be punished by such.

{16:10} But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous dragons overcame: for thy mercy was ever by them, and healed them.

{16:11} For they were pricked, that they should remember thy words; and were quickly saved, that not falling into deep forgetfulness, they might be continually mindful of thy goodness.

{16:12} For it was neither herb, nor mollifying plaister, that restored them to health: but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things.

{16:13} For thou hast power of life and death: thou ledest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again.

{16:14} A man indeed killeth through his malice: and the spirit, when it is gone forth, returneth not; neither the soul received up cometh again.

{16:15} But it is not possible to escape thine hand.

{16:16} For the ungodly, that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm: with strange rains, hails, and showers, were they persecuted, that they could not avoid, and through fire were they consumed.

{16:17} For, which is most to be wondered at, the fire had more force in the water, that quencheth all things: for the world fighteth for the righteous.

{16:18} For sometime the flame was mitigated, that it might not burn up the beasts that were sent against the ungodly; but themselves might see and perceive that they were persecuted with the judgment of God.

{16:19} And at another time it burneth even in the midst of water above the power of fire, that it might destroy the fruits of an unjust land.

{16:20} Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.

{16:21} For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking.

{16:22} But snow and ice endured the fire, and melted not, that they might know that fire burning in the hail, and sparkling in the rain, did destroy the fruits of the enemies.

{16:23} But this again did even forget his own strength,

that the righteous might be nourished.

{16:24} For the creature that serveth thee, who art the Maker increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in thee.

{16:25} Therefore even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to thy grace, that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that had need:

{16:26} That thy children, O Lord, whom thou lovest, might know, that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man: but that it is thy word, which preserveth them that put their trust in thee.

{16:27} For that which was not destroyed of the fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, soon melted away:

{16:28} That it might be known, that we must prevent the sun to give thee thanks, and at the dayspring pray unto thee.

{16:29} For the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's hoar frost, and shall run away as unprofitable water.

{17:1} For great are thy judgments, and cannot be expressed: therefore unnurtured souls have erred.

{17:2} For when unrighteous men thought to oppress the holy nation; they being shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness, and fettered with the bonds of a long night, lay [there] exiled from the eternal providence.

{17:3} For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished, and troubled with [strange] apparitions.

{17:4} For neither might the corner that held them keep them from fear: but noises [as of waters] falling down sounded about them, and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances.

{17:5} No power of the fire might give them light: neither could the bright flames of the stars endure to lighten that horrible night.

{17:6} Only there appeared unto them a fire kindled of itself, very dreadful: for being much terrified, they thought the things which they saw to be worse than the sight they saw not.

{17:7} As for the illusions of art magick, they were put down, and their vaunting in wisdom was reprov'd with disgrace.

{17:8} For they, that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear, worthy to be laughed at.

{17:9} For though no terrible thing did fear them; yet being scared with beasts that passed by, and hissing of serpents,

{17:10} They died for fear, denying that they saw the air, which could of no side be avoided.

{17:11} For wickedness, condemned by her own witness,

is very timorous, and being pressed with conscience, always forecasteth grievous things.

{17:12} For fear is nothing else but a betraying of the succours which reason offereth.

{17:13} And the expectation from within, being less, counteth the ignorance more than the cause which bringeth the torment.

{17:14} But they sleeping the same sleep that night, which was indeed intolerable, and which came upon them out of the bottoms of inevitable hell,

{17:15} Were partly vexed with monstrous apparitions, and partly fainted, their heart failing them: for a sudden fear, and not looked for, came upon them.

{17:16} So then whosoever there fell down was straitly kept, shut up in a prison without iron bars,

{17:17} For whether he were husbandman, or shepherd, or a labourer in the field, he was overtaken, and endured that necessity, which could not be avoided: for they were all bound with one chain of darkness.

{17:18} Whether it were a whistling wind, or a melodious noise of birds among the spreading branches, or a pleasing fall of water running violently,

{17:19} Or a terrible sound of stones cast down, or a running that could not be seen of skipping beasts, or a roaring voice of most savage wild beasts, or a rebounding echo from the hollow mountains; these things made them to swoon for fear.

{17:20} For the whole world shined with clear light, and none were hindered in their labour:

{17:21} Over them only was spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them: but yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness.

{18:1} Nevertheless thy saints had a very great light, whose voice they hearing, and not seeing their shape, because they also had not suffered the same things, they counted them happy.

{18:2} But for that they did not hurt them now, of whom they had been wronged before, they thanked them, and besought them pardon for that they had been enemies.

{18:3} Instead whereof thou gavest them a burning pillar of fire, both to be a guide of the unknown journey, and an harmless sun to entertain them honourably.

{18:4} For they were worthy to be deprived of light and imprisoned in darkness, who had kept thy sons shut up, by whom the uncorrupt light of the law was to be given unto the world.

{18:5} And when they had determined to slay the babes of the saints, one child being cast forth, and saved, to reprove them, thou tookest away the multitude of their children, and destroyedst them altogether in a mighty water.

{18:6} Of that night were our fathers certified afore, that assuredly knowing unto what oaths they had given

credence, they might afterwards be of good cheer.

{18:7} So of thy people was accepted both the salvation of the righteous, and destruction of the enemies.

{18:8} For wherewith thou didst punish our adversaries, by the same thou didst glorify us, whom thou hadst called.

{18:9} For the righteous children of good men did sacrifice secretly, and with one consent made a holy law, that the saints should be like partakers of the same good and evil, the fathers now singing out the songs of praise.

{18:10} But on the other side there sounded an ill according cry of the enemies, and a lamentable noise was carried abroad for children that were bewailed.

{18:11} The master and the servant were punished after one manner; and like as the king, so suffered the common person.

{18:12} So they all together had innumerable dead with one kind of death; neither were the living sufficient to bury them: for in one moment the noblest offspring of them was destroyed.

{18:13} For whereas they would not believe any thing by reason of the enchantments; upon the destruction of the firstborn, they acknowledged this people to be the sons of God.

{18:14} For while all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course,

{18:15} Thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction,

{18:16} And brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth.

{18:17} Then suddenly visions of horrible dreams troubled them sore, and terrors came upon them unlooked for.

{18:18} And one thrown here, and another there, half dead, shewed the cause of his death.

{18:19} For the dreams that troubled them did foreshew this, lest they should perish, and not know why they were afflicted.

{18:20} Yea, the tasting of death touched the righteous also, and there was a destruction of the multitude in the wilderness: but the wrath endured not long.

{18:21} For then the blameless man made haste, and stood forth to defend them; and bringing the shield of his proper ministry, even prayer, and the propitiation of incense, set himself against the wrath, and so brought the calamity to an end, declaring that he was thy servant.

{18:22} So he overcame the destroyer, not with strength of body, nor force of arms, but with a word subdued him that punished, alleging the oaths and covenants made with the fathers.

{18:23} For when the dead were now fallen down by

heaps one upon another, standing between, he stayed the wrath, and parted the way to the living.

{18:24} For in the long garment was the whole world, and in the four rows of the stones was the glory of the fathers graven, and thy Majesty upon the daidem of his head.

{18:25} Unto these the destroyer gave place, and was afraid of them: for it was enough that they only tasted of the wrath.

{19:1} As for the ungodly, wrath came upon them without mercy unto the end: for he knew before what they would do;

{19:2} How that having given them leave to depart, and sent them hastily away, they would repent and pursue them.

{19:3} For whilst they were yet mourning and making lamentation at the graves of the dead, they added another foolish device, and pursued them as fugitives, whom they had intreated to be gone.

{19:4} For the destiny, whereof they were worthy, drew them unto this end, and made them forget the things that had already happened, that they might fulfil the punishment which was wanting to their torments:

{19:5} And that thy people might pass a wonderful way: but they might find a strange death.

{19:6} For the whole creature in his proper kind was fashioned again anew, serving the peculiar commandments that were given unto them, that thy children might be kept without hurt:

{19:7} As namely, a cloud shadowing the camp; and where water stood before, dry land appeared; and out of the Red sea a way without impediment; and out of the violent stream a green field:

{19:8} Wherethrough all the people went that were defended with thy hand, seeing thy marvellous strange wonders.

{19:9} For they went at large like horses, and leaped like lambs, praising thee, O Lord, who hadst delivered them.

{19:10} For they were yet mindful of the things that were done while they sojourned in the strange land, how the ground brought forth flies instead of cattle, and how the river cast up a multitude of frogs instead of fishes.

{19:11} But afterwards they saw a new generation of fowls, when, being led with their appetite, they asked delicate meats.

{19:12} For quails came up unto them from the sea for their contentment.

{19:13} And punishments came upon the sinners not without former signs by the force of thunders: for they suffered justly according to their own wickedness, insomuch as they used a more hard and hateful behaviour toward strangers.

{19:14} For the Sodomites did not receive those, whom they knew not when they came: but these brought friends into bondage, that had well deserved of them.

{19:15} And not only so, but peradventure some respect shall be had of those, because they used strangers not friendly:

{19:16} But these very grievously afflicted them, whom they had received with feastings, and were already made partakers of the same laws with them.

{19:17} Therefore even with blindness were these stricken, as those were at the doors of the righteous man: when, being compassed about with horrible great darkness, every one sought the passage of his own doors.

{19:18} For the elements were changed in themselves by a kind of harmony, like as in a psaltery notes change the name of the tune, and yet are always sounds; which may well be perceived by the sight of the things that have been done.

{19:19} For earthly things were turned into watery, and the things, that before swam in the water, now went upon the ground.

{19:20} The fire had power in the water, forgetting his own virtue: and the water forgot his own quenching nature.

{19:21} On the other side, the flames wasted not the flesh of the corruptible living things, though they walked therein; neither melted they the icy kind of heavenly meat that was of nature apt to melt.

{19:22} For in all things, O Lord, thou didst magnify thy people, and glorify them, neither didst thou lightly regard them: but didst