

Homily I. Acts I. 1, 2 ·The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, concerning all things which Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day on which, having given charge to the Apostles, whom He had chosen, by the Holy Spirit, He was taken up.· To many persons this Book is so little known, both it and its author, that they are not even aware that there is such a book in existence.³³ St. Chrys. had made the same complaint at Antioch in the Homilies (a.d. 340). Principium Actorum, etc. t. iii. p. 54. ·We are about to set before you a strange and new dish.·-strange, I say, and new. Not strange; for it belongs to the order of Holy Scripture: and yet strange; because peradventure you are not accustomed to such a subject. Certainly, there are many to whom this Book is not even known (.....) and many again think it so plain, that they slight it: thus to some men their knowledge, to some their ignorance, is the cause of their neglect.·We are to enquire then who wrote it, and when, and on what occasion, and why it is ordered (.....) to be read at this festival. For peradventure you do not hear this Book read [at other times] from year's end to year's end.· For this reason especially I have taken this narrative for my subject. I may draw to it such as do not know it, and not let such a treasure as this remain hidden out of sight. For indeed it may profit us no less than even the Gospels; so replete is it with Christian wisdom and sound doctrine, especially what is said concerning the Holy Ghost. Then let us not hastily pass by it, but examine it closely. Thus, the predictions which in the Gospels Christ utters, here we may see these actually come to pass; and note in the volume the bright evidence of Truth which shines in them, and the mighty change which is taking place in the disciples as the Spirit has come upon them. For example, they heard Christ say, ·Whoso believeth on Me, the works that I do also, and greater works than these shall he do· (John xiv. 12): and again, when He foretold to the disciples, they should be brought before rulers and kings, and in their synagogues they should scourge them, and that they should suffer grievous things, and overcome all (Matt. x. 18): and that the Gospel should be preached in all the world (Matt. xxiv. 14): now all this, how it came to pass exactly as it was said, may be seen in this Book, and more besides. He told them while yet with them. Here again you will see the Apostles themselves, speeding their way as on water, land and sea; and those same men, once so timorous and void of understanding, on the sudden become quite another were; men despising wealth, and raised above glory and passion and concupiscence, and in short all such affections. Moreover, what unanimity there is among them now; nowhere any envying as there was before, nor any of the others after the preeminence, but all virtue brought in them to its last finish, and shining through all, with surpassing lustre, that charity, concerning which the Lord had given so many charges saying, ·In this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another.· (John xiii. 35.) And then, besides, there are doctrines to be found here which we could not have known so surely as we now do, if this Book had not existed, but the very crowning promise of salvation would be hidden, alike for practice of life and for doctrine. The greater part, however, of this work is occupied with the acts of Paul, who ·laboured more abundantly than they all.· (1 Cor. xv. 10.) And the reason is, that the author of this Book, that is, the blessed Luke, was his companion: a man, whose high qualities, sufficiently in many other instances, are especially shown in his firm adherence to his Teacher, whom he constantly followed. The two reasons which Chrysostom urges for the study of the Acts are also the two chief grounds upon which modern criticism depends for establishing not only the general trust-worthiness of the book, but also its authorship by Luke. The substance, (1) The continuity of the history as connected with the gospels and, particularly, coincidences of style, matter and diction with the third gospel, and (2) The remarkable undesigned coincidences of statement between the Acts and Pauline Epistles which exclude the possibility of inter-dependence. From Col. i. 11, 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. i. 18 we learn that Luke was a close companion of Paul. In the part of the Book of Acts which treats especially of the travels of Paul, the writer frequently refers to himself in the use of the first person plural as an associate of the apostle (v. 1; xvi. 10; xx. 6 sq.; xxi. 1 sq.; xxvii. 1). These considerations demonstrate the fitness of Luke to prepare such a treatise as the Acts and render the supposition of his authorship plausible. When they are combined with those which depend upon (1) and when the dedication of both books to a certain Theophilus is considered, the argument becomes complete.·G.B.S. Thus at a time when all had forsaken him, one gone into Galatia, another into Dalmatia, he says of this disciple: ·Only Luke is with me.· (2 Tim. iv. 10.) And giving the Corinthians a charge concerning the love of one another, he says, ·Whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches.· (2 Cor. viii. 18.) Again, when he says, ·He has been seen of Cephas, then of the twelve,· and, ·according to the Gospel which ye received· (1 Cor. xv. 5, 1), he means the Gospel of this Luke.⁵⁵ The reference in the Text of the expression: ·the Gospel which ye received,· (1 Cor. xv. 11) to Luke's ·gospel· is, of course, groundless. Paul speaks of it as the gospel which he preached unto them. It is ·his

gospel- as in Rom. ii. 16; xvi. 25; Gal. i. 11, etc. The use of to denote a book is post-apostolic.-G.B.S. So that there can be no mistake in attributing this work to him: and when I say, to him, I mean, to Christ.⁶⁶ Hom. i. Princip. Act. p. 54. -First we must see who wrote the Book.-whether a man, or God: and if man, let us reject it; -Call no man master upon earth:- but if God, let us receive it.- And why then did he not relate every thing, seeing he was with Paul to the end? We may answer, that what is here written, was sufficient for those who would attend to the sacred writers ever addressed themselves to the matter of immediate importance, whatever it might be at the time. There was no object with them to be writers of books: in fact, there are many things which they have delivered by unwritten tradition. Now while all that is contained in this Book is worthy of admiration, so is especially the way the Apostles have of coming down to the wants of their hearers: a condescension suggested by the Spirit who has so ordered the subject on which they chiefly dwell is that which pertains to Christ as man. For so it is, that while they discourse so much about Christ, they have spoken but little concerning His Godhead; it was mostly of the Manhood that they discoursed, and of the Passion, and the Resurrection, and the Ascension. For the thing required in the first instance was this, that it should be believed that He was risen, and ascended into heaven. As then the point on which Christ himself most insisted was, to have it known that He was come from the Father, so is it this writer's principal object to declare, that Christ was risen from the dead, and was received up into Heaven, and that He went to God, and was with God. For, if the fact of His coming from God were not first believed, much more, with the Resurrection and Ascension added thereto, would the Jews have found the entire doctrine incredible. Wherefore gently and by degrees he comes on to higher truths. Nay, at Athens Paul even calls Him man simply, without saying more (Acts xvii. 31). For if, when Christ Himself spoke of His equality with the Father, they often attempted to stone Him, and called Him a blasphemer for this reason, it was little to be expected that they would receive this doctrine from the fishermen, and that too, with the Cross coming before it. But why speak of the Jews, seeing that even the disciples often upon hearing the more sublime doctrines were troubled and offended? Therefore also He told them, -I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.- (John xvi. 12.) If those could not, who had been so long time with Him, and had been acquainted with so many secrets, and had seen so many wonders, how was it to be expected that men, but newly dragged away from idols, and sacrifices, and cats, and crocodiles (for such did the Gentiles worship), and from the rest of their idolatrous ways, should all at once receive the more sublime matters of doctrine? And how in particular should Jews, hearing that they did every day of their lives, and having it ever sounded in their ears, -The Lord thy God is one Lord, and besides Him is none other- (Deut. vi. 4): who also had seen Him hanging nailed on the Cross, nay, had themselves crucified, buried Him, and not seen Him even risen: when they were told that this same person was God and equal with God, how should they, of all men, be otherwise than shocked and revolted? Therefore it is that gently and little by little they carry them on, with much consideration and forbearance 3letting themselves down to their low attainments, and themselves the while enjoying in more plentiful measure the grace of the Spirit, and doing greater works in Christ's name than Christ Himself did, that they may at once raise them up from their grovelling apprehensions, and come to saying, that Christ was raised from the dead. For this, in fact, is just what this Book is: a Demonstration of the Resurrection:⁷⁷ Hom. cur in Pentec. Acta legantur, t. iii. p. 89. E. -The demonstration of the Resurrection is, the chief of the Apostolic miracles: and of the Apostolic miracles this Book is the school.- ⁸⁸ The statement that the Acts is a -Demonstration of the Resurrection- has a certain profound truth, but is incorrect if intending to assert that such was the conscious purpose of the author. The resurrection of Jesus is a prominent theme in the Apostolic discourse, but the book is no more designed primarily to prove the resurrection than are the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. The immediate purpose of the book is to record the labors and triumphs of the Apostolic Church as supplementary to the narrative of the teaching and work of Jesus (i. 1, 2). The events narrated presuppose the resurrection and would have been impossible without it.-G.B.S. this being once believed, the rest would come in due course. The subject throughout the entire scope of this Book, in the main, is just what I have said. And now let us hear the Preface itself. -The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach.- (v. 1) Why does he put his name at the head of the Gospel? To intimate how strictly he may be depended upon. For at the outset of the former work he says, -I seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order.- (Luke i. 3.) Neither is he content with his own testimony, but refers the whole matter to the Apostles, saying, -Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.- (v. 2.) Having then accredited his account in the former instance, he has no need to put forth his credentials afresh.

this treatise, seeing his disciple has been once for all satisfied, and by the mention of that former work he has reminded him of the strict reliance to be placed in him for the truth. For if a person has shown himself competent and trustworthy to write of things which he has heard, and moreover has obtained our confidence, much more will I have right to our confidence when he has composed an account, not of things which he has received from others, but of things which he has seen and heard. For thou didst receive what relates to Christ; much more wilt thou receive what relates to the Apostles. What then, (it may be asked), is it a question only of history, with which the Holy Spirit has nothing to do? Not so. For, if those delivered it unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, then, what he says, is theirs. And why did he not say, 'As they who were counted worthy of the Holy Spirit delivereth them unto us;' but 'Those who were eyewitnesses?' Because, in matter of belief, the very thing that gives one authority to be believed, is the having learned from eyewitnesses: whereas the other appears to foolish persons mere pretension. And therefore John also speaks thus: 'I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.' (John. i. 1.) And Christ expresses Himself in the same way to Nicodemus, while he was dull of apprehension, 'We speak that we have seen, and testify that we have heard; and no one receiveth our witness.' (Ib. iii. 11.) Accordingly, He gave them leave to bear their testimony in many particulars on the fact of their having seen them, when He said, 'And do ye bear witness concerning Me, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.' (John xv. 27.) The Apostles themselves acted in a similar manner; 'We are witnesses, and the Holy Spirit which God hath given to those that obey Him.' (Acts ii. 32.) and on a subsequent occasion, Peter, still giving assurance of the Resurrection, said, 'Seeing we did eat and drink with Him.' (Acts x. 41.) For they more readily received the testimony of persons who had been His companions, because their notion of the Spirit was as yet very much beyond them. Therefore John also at that time, in his Gospel, speaking of blood and water, said, he himself saw it, making the fact of his having seen it equivalent, for them, to the highest testimony, although the witness of the Spirit is more certain than the evidence of sight, but not so with unbelievers. Now that Luke was a partaker of the Spirit, is abundantly clear, both from the miracles which even now take place from the fact that in those times even ordinary persons were gifted with the Holy Ghost; and again from the testimony of Paul, in these words, 'Whose praise is in the Gospel' (2 Cor. viii. 18); and from the appointment to which he was chosen: for having said this, the Apostle adds, 'But also appointed of the Churches to travel with us with this gospel, which is administered by us.'⁹⁹ Chrys. states too confidently that 'the brother' whose praise is referred to in 2 Cor. viii. 18, is Luke. It cannot be determined who this 'brother' was. See Meyer in loco. Other conjectures are: Barnabas, Mark, Erastus, and an actual brother of Titus.-G.B.S. Now mark how unassuming he is. He does not say, 'The former treatise which I preached, but, 'The former treatise have I made;' accounting the title of Gospel to be too great for him; although it is on the score of this that the Apostle dignifies him: 'Whose praise,' he says, 'is in the Gospel.' But he himself modestly says, 'The former treatise have I made'-O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, not simply 'of all,' but from the beginning to the end; 'until the day,' he says, 'in which He was taken up.' And yet John says, that it was not possible to write all: for 'were they written, I suppose,' says he, 'that even the world could not contain the books written.' (John xxi. 25.) How then does the Evangelist here say, 'Of all?' He does not say 'all,' but 'of all,' as much as to say, 'in a summary way, and in the gross;' and 'of all that is mainly and pressingly important.' Then he tells us in what sense he says all, when he adds, 'Which Jesus began both to do and to teach;' meaning His miracles and teaching; and not only so, but implying that His doing was also a teaching. But consider the benevolent and Apostolic feelings of the writer: that for the sake of a single individual he took such pains as to write for him an entire Gospel. 'That thou mightest have,' he says, 'the certainty of those things, which thou hast been instructed.' (Luke i. 4.) In truth, he had heard Christ say, 'It is not the will of My Father that one of these little ones should perish.' (Matt. xviii. 14.) And why did he not make one book of it, to send to one man Theophilus, but has divided it into two subjects? For clearness, and to give the brother a pause for rest. Besides, the two treatises are distinct in their subject-matter. But consider how Christ accredited his words by His deeds. Thus saith, 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' (Ib. xi. 29.) He taught men to be poor,^{1010 Ms. C. has , merciful; the rest,, without possessions, which is certainly the true reading.} Thus in the Sermon de futuræ Vitæ deliciis, where Chrys. discourses largely on the harmony of Christ's teaching and actions, he says , , .. , .. , 1111 'He taught them to be poor.' Here we have a tinge of asceticism. Even if we suppose that the beatitude of the poor refers to literal poverty (Luke vi. 20) as well as to poverty in spirit (Matt. v. 3), it is still incorrect to say that Jesus taught his disciples

that poverty was in itself a virtue. The ascetic principle is of heathen, not of Christian origin. It is noticeable that Chrys. quotes no passage to sustain his statement. G.B.S. and exhibited this by His actions: 'For the Son of Man says, 'hath not where to lay His head.' (Ib. viii. 20.) Again, He charged men to love their enemies; and He taught the same lesson on the Cross, when He prayed for those who were crucifying Him. He said, 'If any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also' (Ib. v. 40): now He not only gave His garments, but even His blood. In this way He bade others teach. Wherefore Paul also said, 'So as ye have us for an example.' (Philip. ii. 1.) For nothing is more frigid than a teacher who shows his philosophy only in words: this is to act the part not of a teacher, but of a hypocrite. Therefore the Apostles first taught by their conduct, and then by their words; nay rather they had no need of words, when their deeds spoke so loud. Nor is it wrong to speak of Christ's Passion as accomplished in suffering all He performed that great and wonderful act, by which He destroyed death, and effected all else that He did for us. 'Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments to the Apostles whom He had chosen. After He had given commandments through the Spirit' (v. 2); i.e. they were given in words that He spake unto them, nothing human; either this is the meaning, or, that it was by the Spirit that He gave them commandments.¹²¹² The latter is doubtless the correct interpretation. (So Meyer, Hackett). Cf. Matt. xii. 28; Luke iv. 1. G.B.S. Do you observe in what low terms he still speaks of Christ, as in fact Christ had spoken of Himself? 'But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils' (Matt. xii. 28); for indeed the Holy Ghost wrought in that Temple. Well, what did He command? 'Go ye therefore,' He says, 'make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' (Ib. xxviii. 19, 20.) A high encomium this for the Apostles; to have such a charge entrusted to them, the salvation of the world! words full of the Spirit! And this the writer hints at in the expression, 'through the Holy Ghost' (and, 'the words which I spake unto you,' saith the Lord, 'are Spirit') (John vi. 63); thus leading the hearer on to a desire of learning what the commands were, and establishing the authority of the Apostles, seeing that the words of the Spirit they are about to speak, and the commandments of Christ. 'After He had given commandments to them, He was taken up.' He does not say, 'ascended'; he still speaks as concerning a man. It appears then that He taught the Disciples after His resurrection, but of this space of time no one has related to us the whole in detail. John indeed, as also does the present writer, dwells at greater length on this subject than the others; but none of them clearly related every thing (for they hastened to something else); however, we have learnt these things through the Apostles, for what they heard, that did they tell. 'To whom also He shewed Himself alive.' Having first spoken of the Ascension, he adverts to the Resurrection; for since thou hast been told that 'He was taken up,' therefore, lest thou shouldst suppose Him to have been taken up by others¹³¹³ i.e. as 'Cumenius explains in I., lest any should suppose this to have been done by the power of another, he adds, to show that it was His own act, To whom also, etc., he adds, 'To whom He shewed Himself alive.' For if He shewed Himself alive in the greater, surely He did in the minor circumstance. Seest thou, how casually and unperceived he drops by the way these great doctrines?¹⁴¹⁴ It is more than doubtful whether the mention of the resurrection is introduced (i.e. for the purpose of meeting sceptical objections. The writer will rather make it the point of departure for his subsequent narrative. He has mentioned the ascension; the resurrection is the other great event and he will introduce a resumé of the more important circumstances which happened during the period between these two events and which have an important bearing upon the history about to be related. G.B.S. 'Being seen of them during forty days.' He was seen by them now, as He was before the Resurrection. For the writer does not say 'forty days,' but, 'during forty days,' He came, and again disappeared; by this leading them on to higher conceptions, and no longer permitting them to be affected towards Him in the same way as before, but taking effectual measures to secure both these objects, that the fact of His Resurrection should be believed, and that He Himself should be ever after apprehended to be greater than a man. At the same time, these were two opposite things; for in order to the belief in His Resurrection, much was done of a human character, and for the other object, just the reverse. Nevertheless, both results have been effected each when the fitting time arrived. But why did He appear not to all, but to the Apostles only?¹⁵¹⁵ Chrys. seems to overlook the appearance 'to above five hundred brethren at once,' 1 Cor. xv. 6. G.B.S. Because to the many it seemed a mere apparition, inasmuch as they understood not the secret of the mystery. For if the disciples themselves were at first incredulous and were troubled, and needed the evidence of actual touch with the hand, and of His conversation with them, how would it have fared in all likelihood with the multitude? For this reason therefore by the miracles

[wrought by the Apostles] He renders the evidence of His Resurrection unequivocal, so that not only the men of those times—this is what would come of the ocular proof—but also all men thereafter, should be certain of the fact, that He was risen. Upon this ground also we argue with unbelievers. For if He did not rise again, but remains dead, how could the Apostles perform miracles in His name? But they did not, say you, perform miracles? How then was our religion instituted? For this certainly they will not controvert nor impugn what we see with our eyes: so that when they say no miracles took place, they inflict a worse stab¹⁶¹⁶ , ms. C. and Cat. (see 1 Tim. vi. 9, pierced themselves through with many sorrows), and in this sense Hom. in Matt. 455 B. 463 A. The word is used as he in C. where several mss. have , for upon themselves. For this would be the greatest of miracles, that without any miracles, the whole world should have eagerly come to be taken in by twelve poor and illiterate men. For not by wealth of money, not by wisdom of words, not by any thing else of that kind did the fishermen prevail; so that objectors must even against their will acknowledge that there was in these men Divine power, for no human strength could ever possibly effect such great results. For this He then remained for some time on earth, furnishing in this length of time the sure evidence of their seeing Him in His own proper Person, that they might not suppose that what they saw was a phantom. And not content with this, He added also the evidence of His presence to them at their board: as to signify this, the writer adds, 'And being at table¹⁷¹⁷ In the margin of E.V. 'Eating together with them.' The Catena here and below, had pr. man. the other reading, , but corrected in both places. St. Chrys. so takes the word, Hom. in Princip. Act. §11.767 E. in Joann. 522 D. 'cumen. in 1. explanat. , , 'Partaking of the salt, partaking of the table.' with them, He commanded.¹⁸¹⁸ Chrys. here follows the interpretation which derives (i. 4) from ... and ... (salt) hence eating together. So several ancient authorities as Vulgate (convesceus) and even modern, as Meyer. But the proper derivation is from ... and ... (crowded), hence to be assembled, to meet with (sc.). So Olshausen, Hackett, Lechler, Thayer's Lex. and most modern authorities. G.B.S. (v. 4.) And this circumstance the Apostles themselves put forth as an infallible token of the Resurrection; as where they say, 'Who did eat and drink with Him.' (Acts x. 4.) And what did He, when appearing unto them those forty days? Why, He conversed with them, says the writer, 'of the kingdom of God.' (v. 3.) For, since the disciples both had been distressed and troubled at the things which had taken place, and were about to go forth to encounter great difficulties, He recovered them by His discourse concerning the future. 'He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.' (v. 4.) First, He led them out to Galilee, afraid and trembling, in order that they might listen to His words in security. ⁶Afterwards, when they had heard, and had passed forty days with Him, 'He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem.' Wherefore? Just as when soldiers are to charge a multitude, no one thinks of letting them issue forth until they have armed themselves, or as horses are not suffered to start from the barriers until they have got their charioteer; so Christ did not suffer these to appear in the field before the descent of the Spirit, that they might not be in a condition to be easily defeated and taken captive by the many. Nor was this the only reason, there were many in Jerusalem who should believe. And then again that it might not be said, that leaving their old acquaintance, they had gone to make a parade among strangers, therefore among those very men who had previously seen Him do they exhibit the proofs of His Resurrection, among those who had crucified and buried Him, in the very town where the iniquitous deed had been perpetrated; thereby stopping the mouths of all foreign objectors. For when those who had crucified Him appear as believers, clearly this proved both the fact of the crucifixion and the iniquity of the deed, and afforded a mighty evidence of the Resurrection. Furthermore, lest the Apostles should say, How shall it be possible for us to live among wicked and bloody men, they so many in number, we so few and contemptible, or how does away their fear and distress, by these words, 'But wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of.' (v. 4.) You will say, When had they heard this? When He said, 'It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go away, the Comforter will not come unto you.' (John xvi. 7.) And again, 'I will pray the Father, and He shall send another Comforter, that He may abide with you.' (ib. xiv. 16.) But why did the Holy Ghost come to them, not when He was present, nor even immediately after his departure, but, whereas Christ ascended on the fortieth day, the Spirit descended 'when the day of Pentecost,' that is, the fiftieth, 'was fully come?' (Acts ii. 1.) And how was it, if the Spirit had not yet come, that He said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost?' (John xx. 22.) In order to render them capable to meet for the reception of Him. For if Daniel fainted at the sight of an Angel (Dan. viii. 17), much more would they have fainted when about to receive so great a grace. Either this then is to be said, or else that Christ spoke of what was to come.

as if come already; as when He said, 'Tread ye upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the devil' (x. 19.) But why had the Holy Ghost not yet come? It was fit that they should first be brought to have a longing for that event, and so receive the grace. For this reason Christ Himself departed, and then the Spirit descended. Had He Himself been there, they would not have expected the Spirit so earnestly as they did. On this account He came immediately after Christ's Ascension, but after eight or nine days. It is the same with us also; for our hearts towards God are then most raised, when we stand in need. Accordingly, John chose that time to send his disciples to Christ when they were likely to feel their need of Jesus, during his own imprisonment. Besides, it was fit that our nature should be seen in heaven, and that the reconciliation should be perfected, and then the Spirit should come, so that the joy should be unalloyed. For, if the Spirit being already come, Christ had then departed, and the Spirit remained, the consolation would not have been so great as it was. For in fact they clung to Him, and could not bear to part from Him; wherefore also to comfort them He said, 'It is expedient for you that I go away.' (John xvi. 7.) On this account He also waits during those intermediate days, that they might first despond for awhile, and be made, as I said, to feel their need of Him. and then reap a full and unalloyed delight. But if the Spirit were inferior to the Son, the consolation would not have been adequate; and how could He have said, 'It is expedient for you?' For this reason the greater matters of teaching were reserved for the Spirit, that the disciples might not imagine Him inferior. Consider also how necessary He made it for them to abide in Jerusalem, by promising that the Spirit should be granted them, lest they should again flee away after His Ascension, by this expectation, as by a bond, He keeps them to that place. Having said, 'Wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of Me,' He then adds, 'For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.' (v. 4, 5.) For now indeed He gives to see the difference there was betwixt Him and John, plainly, and not as heretofore in obscure hints; for in fact He had spoken very obscurely, when He said, 'Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;' but now He says plainly, 'John baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.' (Matt. xiii. 12.) And he no longer uses the testimony, but merely adverts to the person of John, reminding the disciples of what John had said, and shows them that they are now become greater than John; seeing they too are to be baptized with the Spirit. He did not say, I baptize you with the Holy Ghost, but, 'Ye shall be baptized;' teaching us humility. For this was enough from the testimony of John, that it was Christ Himself Who should baptize: 'He it is that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire' (Luke iii. 16.); wherefore also He made mention of John. 1919 So mss. C. F. D. and Catena. The others have -----, 'of him (John) alone,' not of his testimony. The Gospels, then, are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that 'other Comforter' said and did. Not but that the Spirit did many things in the Gospels also; even as Christ here in the Acts still works in men as He did in the Gospels: only the Spirit wrought through the Temple, now through the Apostles: then, He came into the Virgin's womb, and fashioned the Temple; now, into Apostolic souls: then in the likeness of a dove; now, in the likeness of fire. And wherefore? So there the gentleness of the Lord, but here His taking vengeance also, He now puts them in mind of the judgment. For, when need was to forgive, need was there of much gentleness; but now we have obtained the gift, it is the time for judgment and examination. But why does Christ say, 'Ye shall be baptized,' when in fact there was no baptism in the upper room? Because the more essential part of Baptism is the Spirit, through Whom indeed the water has its operation; in the same manner our Lord also is said to be anointed, not that He had ever been anointed with oil, but because He had received the Spirit. Besides, we do in fact find them receiving a baptism with water [and a baptism with the Spirit], and these at different moments. In our case both take place under one act, but then they were divided: in the beginning they were baptized by John; since, if harlots and publicans went to that baptism, much rather than they who thereafter were to be baptized by the Holy Ghost. Then, that the Apostles might not say, that they were having it held out to them in promises (John xiv. 15, 16), (for indeed Christ had already discoursed much to them concerning the Spirit, that they should not imagine It to be an impersonal Energy or Operation, (.....)) that they might not say this, then, He adds, 'not many days hence.' And He did not explain when, that they might watch: but, that it would soon take place, He told them, that they might not faint; yet the exact time He refrained from adding, that they might always be vigilant. Nor does He assure them by this alone; I mean, by the shortness of the time, but withal by saying, 'The promise which ye have heard of Me.' For this is not, saith He, the only time I have to perform, but already I have promised what I shall certainly perform. What wonder then that He does not signify the day of final consummation, when this day which was so near He did not choose to reveal? And with good reason; to that

may be ever wakeful, and in a state of expectation and earnest heed. For it cannot, it cannot be, that a man should enjoy the benefit of grace except he watch. Seest thou not what Elias saith to his disciple? ·If thou see me when I am taken up· (2 Kings ii. 10), this that thou askest shall be done for thee. Christ also was ever wont to say unto those that came unto Him, ·Believest thou?· For if we be not appropriated and made over to the thing given,²⁰²⁰
 Erasm. Nisi rei datæ addicti fuerimus. neither do we greatly feel the benefit. So it was also in the case of Paul; grace did not come to him immediately, but three days intervened, during which he was purified the while, and prepared by fear. For as those who dye the purple first season with other ingredients the that is to receive the dye, that the bloom may not be fleeting;²¹²¹
 Comp. Plat. Republ. iv. vol. i. p. 289. Stallb.,,,

& 219., so in
 this instance God first takes order that the soul shall be thoroughly in earnest, and then pours forth His grace. On this account also, neither did He immediately send the Spirit, but on the fiftieth day. Now if any one ask, why we do not baptize at that season of Pentecost? we may answer, that grace is the same now as then;²²²² The question expressed, is, ·Why do we baptize, not at Pentecost, but on Easter Eve?· And the answer is, ·Because the Lent forms a meet preparation for the reception of baptism. And moreover, there is a reason which weighed with our fathers in respect of this season of the fifty days, the time of the Church's great festivity. The baptism newly received was to restrain the neophytes from giving loose to carnal lusts; having prepared them to keep the feast with a holy and gladness.· It should be borne in mind, that these Homilies were commenced during the, i.e. the period of fifty days between Easter and Pentecost; at which season the Book of Acts was usually read in the Churches. This becomes more elevated now, by being prepared through fasting. And the season too of Pentecost furnishes another reason. What may that be? Our fathers held Baptism to be just the proper curb upon evil concupiscence, and a lesson for teaching to be sober-minded even in a time of delights. As if then we were banquetting with Christ Himself and partaking of His table, let us do nothing at random, but let us pass our time in fastings, and prayers, and mortification of mind. For if a man who is destined to enter upon some temporal government, prepares himself all his life long, and that he may obtain some dignity, lays out his money, spends his time, and submits to endless troubles, shall we deserve, who draw near to the kingdom of heaven with such negligence, and both show no earnestness before we have received, and after having received are again negligent? Nay, this is the very reason why we are negligent after having received, that we did not watch before we had received. Therefore many, after they have received, immediately have returned to their former vomit, and have become more wicked, and drawn upon themselves a more severe punishment when having been delivered from their former sins, herein they have more grievously provoked the Judge, than when delivered from so great a disease, still they did not learn sobriety, but that has happened unto them, which Christ threatened to the paralytic man, saying, ·Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee· (John v. 14): and which He also predicted of the Jews, that ·the last state shall be worse than the first.· (Matt. x. 45.) For if, saith He, showing that by their ingratitude they should bring upon them the worst of evils, ·if I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin· (John xv. 22); so that the guilt of sins committed after these benefits is doubled and quadrupled, in that, after the honour put upon us, we show ourselves ungrateful and without the Laver of Baptism helps not a whit to procure for us a milder punishment. And consider: a man has gotten guilty of sins by committing murder or adultery, or some other crime: these were remitted through Baptism. For there is no impiety, which does not yield and give place to this gift; for the Grace is Divine. A man has again committed adultery and murder; the former adultery is indeed done away, the murder forgiven, and not brought up again to his charge; the gifts and calling of God are without repentance· (Rom. xi. 29); but for those committed after Baptism he suffers punishment as great as he would if both the former sins were brought up again, and many worse than these. For sin is no longer simply equal, but doubled and tripled.²³²³ This view, that baptism cleansed from all sin, and that, therefore, sin after baptism was far more heinous and hard to be forgiven, held wide sway in the early church and operated as a powerful motive for the delay of baptism. The reception of the grace of baptism involves this increased liability to deadlier sin. For this reason Tertullian had urged its postponement. ·And so according to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children.· ·If any understand the weighty import of baptism, they will fear its reception more than its

delay, etc. De Baptismo, xviii. Chrys. did not carry the idea to this length. G.B.S. Look: in proof that the penalty for these sins is greater, hear what St. Paul says: 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?' (x. 28, 29.) Perhaps we have now deterred many from receiving baptism. Not however with this intention have we done so, but on purpose that having received it, they may continue in temperance and much moderation. 'But I am afraid of one thing. If thou wert afraid, thou wouldest have received and guarded it. 'Nay,' saith he, 'but this is the very reason why I do not receive it, that I am frightened.' And art thou not afraid to depart thus? 'God is merciful,' saith he. Receive baptism then, because He is merciful and ready to help. But thou, where to be in earnest is the thing required, dost allege this mercifulness; thou thinkest of this only where thou hast a mind to do so. And yet that was the time to resort to God's mercy, and we shall then be surest of obtaining it, when we do our part. For he that has cast his matter upon God, and, after his baptism, sins, as being man it is likely, he may, and repents, shall obtain mercy; whereas he that prevaricates with God's mercy, and departs this life with no portion in that grace, shall have his punishment without a word to be said for him. 'But how if he depart,' say you, 'after having had the grace vouchsafed him?' He will depart empty again of all good works.²⁴²⁴
, Cod. C, and so A, but with In the latter recension this sentence is omitted, and instead of it, we have,; 'But why dost thou put forth such pretences against thine own salvation?' Chrys. had just said, The objector (with the usual prevaricating formula, & 129; Hom. in Matt. 229 D.) says:, sc.; to which Chrys. answers:: He will depart as empty of good works as he was before his baptism: adding, For it is, I think, utterly impossible that such an one [though he should live so long after baptism] would have wrought out his own salvation. For it is impossible, yes, it is in my opinion impossible, that the man who upon such hopes dallied with baptism should have effected ought generous and good. 'Dost thou harbor such fear, and presume upon the uncertain chance of the future? Why not convert this fear into labor and earnestness, and thou shalt be great and admirable? Which is best, to fear or to labor? Suppose some one should place thee, having nothing to do, in a tottering house, saying, Look for the decaying roof to fall upon thy head: perhaps it will fall, perhaps not; but if thou hadst rather it should not, then work and inhabit the more secure apartment: which wouldest thou have rather chosen, that idle condition accompanied with fear, or this labor with confidence? Why then, act now in the same way. For the uncertain future is like a decayed house, ever threatened with fall; but this work, laborious though it be, ensures safety. Now God forbid that it should happen to us to fall into great straits as to sin after baptism. However, even if aught such should happen, God is merciful, and has given many ways of obtaining remission even after this. But just as those who sin after baptism are punished for this reason more severely than the Catechumens, so again, those who know that there are medicines in repentance, and yet will not use of them, will undergo a more grievous chastisement. For by how much the mercy of God is enlarged, by so much the punishment increase, if we do not duly profit by that mercy. What sayest thou, O man? When thou wast full of grievous evils, and given over, suddenly thou becamest a friend, and wast exalted to the highest honor, not by thine own, but by the gift of God: thou didst again return to thy former misconduct; and though thou didst deserve to be sorely punished, nevertheless, God did not turn away, but gave unnumbered opportunities of salvation, where thou mightest yet become a friend: yet for all this, thou hast not the will to labor. What forgiveness canst thou deserve henceforth? Will not the Gentiles with good reason deride thee as a worthless drone? For if there be power in the doctrine of yours, say they, what means this multitude of uninitiated persons? If the mysteries be excellent and desirable, let none receive baptism at his last gasp. For that is not the time for giving of mysteries but for making of wills; the time for mysteries is in health of mind and soundness of soul. For, if a man would not prefer to make his will in such a condition; and if he does so make it, he gives a handle for subsequent litigation (and this is the reason why testators premise these words: 'Alive, in my senses, and in health, I make this disposal of my property:'), how should it be possible for a person who is no longer master of his senses to go through the right course of preparation for the sacred mysteries?²⁵²⁵: alluding to the, i.e. the course of instruction by which the catechumens were prepared for baptism. See the Catechetical Discourses of St. Cyril of Jerusalem. For if in the affairs of this life, the laws of the world would not permit a man who was not perfectly

in mind to make a will, although it be in his own affairs that he would lay down the law; how, when thou art received instruction concerning the kingdom of heaven, and the unspeakable riches of that world, shall it be possible for thee to learn all clearly, when very likely too thou art beside thyself through the violence of thy malady? And when wilt thou say those words²⁶²⁶ .. & 208..... : i.e. not (as Ben. seems to interpret) 'Buried with Christ;' as if this were part of the form of words put into the mouth of the person to be baptized; but the words, 'I renounce thee, O Satan, and all thy angels, and all thy service, and all thy pomp: and I enlist myself with Thee, O Christ.' St. Chrysost. Sermon pop. Antioch, xxi. p. 244. The words, 'buried with Him,' serve to show more clearly the absurdity of such delay: 'buried with Christ in His death,' that we may rise again to newness of life, not that we should pass at once from spiritual burial to the literal. to Christ, in the act of being buried with Him when at the point to depart hence? For indeed both by works and by words must we show our good will towards Him. (Rom. vi. 4.) Now what thou art to do, one, as if a man should want to be enlisted as a soldier, when the war is just about to break up; or to strip for the contest in the arena, just when the spectators have risen from their seats. For thou hast thine arms given thee, that thou shouldest straightway depart hence, but that being equipped therewith, thou mayest raise a trophy over thy enemy. Let no one think that it is out of season to discourse on this subject, because it is not Lent now. Nay, that is that vexes me, that ye look to a set time in such matters. Whereas that Eunuch, barbarian as he was and on a journey, yea on the very highway, he did not seek for a set time (Acts viii. 27); no, nor the jailer, though he was in the midst of a set of prisoners, and the teacher he saw before him was a man scourged and in chains, and whom he was to keep in his custody. (ib. xvi. 29.) But here, not being inmates of a jail, nor out on a journey, many are putting off their baptism even to their last breath. Now if thou still questionest that Christ is God, stand away from the Church: I am not here, even as a hearer of the Divine Word, and as one of the catechumens:²⁷²⁷ The catechumens were allowed to be present at the first part of the service (Missa catechumenorum); and were dismissed after the Sermon, before the propitiatory prayer of the Church, or Missa Fidelium. but if thou art sure of this, and knowest clearly this truth, why delay? Why dost thou back and hesitate? For fear, say you, lest I should sin. But dost thou not fear what is worse, to depart for the next world with such a heavy burden? For it is not equally excusable, not to have gotten a grace set before you, and not to have failed in attempting to live uprightly. If thou be called to account, Why didst thou not come for it? what wilt thou answer? In the other case thou mayest allege the burden of thy passions, and the difficulty of a virtuous life: but that is nothing of the kind here. For here is grace, freely conveying liberty. But thou fearest lest thou shouldest sin? Let this be thy language after Baptism: and then entertain this fear, in order to hold fast the liberty thou hast received, not now, to prevent thy receiving such a gift. Whereas now thou art wary before baptism, and negligent after it. Now thou art waiting for Lent: and why? Has that season any advantage? Nay, it was not at the Passover that the Apostles received²⁸²⁸ .., as above, p. 8, note 1,; the grace, but at another season; and then three thousand (Luke says,) and five thousand were baptized: (ch. ii. 41; iv. 4, and ch. x.) and again Cornelius. Let us then not wait for a set time, lest by hesitating and putting off we depart empty, and destitute of great gifts. What do you suppose is my anguish when I hear that any person has been taken away unbaptized? I reflect upon the intolerable punishments of that life, the inexorable doom! Again, how I am grieved to behold others drawing near to their last gasp, and not brought to their right mind even then. Hence too it is that scenes take place quite unworthy of this gift. For whereas there ought to be joy, and dancing, and exultation, and wearing of garlands when another is christened; the wife of the sick man has no sooner heard that the physician has ordered this, than she is overcome with grief, as if it were some dire calamity; she sets up the greatest lamentation, and nothing is heard over the house but crying and wailing, just as it is when condemned criminals are led away to their doom. The sick man again is then more sorely grieved; and if he recovers from his illness, is as vexed as if some great harm had befallen him. For since he had not been prepared for a virtuous life, he has no heart for the conflicts which are to follow, and shrinks at the thought of them. Do you see what devices the devil contrives, what shame, what ridicule? Let us free ourselves of this disgrace; let us live as Christ has enjoined. He gave us Baptism, not that we should receive a gift and depart, but that we should show the fruits of it in our after life. How can one say to him who is departing and bringing down, Bear fruit? Hast thou not heard that 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace?' (Gal. v. 22.) How comes it then that the very contrary takes place here? For the wife stands there mourning, when she ought to rejoice; the children weeping, when they ought to be glad together; the sick man himself lies there in darkness, and surrounded with noise and tumult, when he ought to be keeping high festival; full of exceeding despondency at the thought of leaving

children orphans, his wife a widow, his house desolate. Is this a state in which to draw near unto mysteries? and is this a state in which to approach the sacred table?²⁹²⁹ The Holy Communion, administered immediately after death. Are such scenes to be tolerated? Should the Emperor send letters and release the prisoners in the jails, there is joy and gladness: God sends down the Holy Ghost from Heaven to remit not arrears of money, but a whole mass of sins. Ye all bewail and lament? Why, how grossly unsuitable is this! Not to mention that sometimes it is upon the dead that the water has been poured, and holy mysteries flung upon the ground. However, not we are to blame for this, but the Emperor is so perverse. I exhort you then to leave all, and turn and draw near to Baptism with all alacrity, that having good proof of great earnestness at this present time, we may obtain confidence for that which is to come; whereunto we may attain, may it be granted unto us all by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory and honor for ever and ever. Amen.